

Digital partnerships in Lancashire

Litcraft: Literacy partnership

Lancashire and Leeds, Westminster, Devon, Somerset and Surrey library services are working with Lancaster University on the Litcraft project which uses Minecraft to encourage reading. We have run sessions across Lancashire with a range of young people including schools, scouts and code clubs and the project was featured in the Guardian. Lancaster University are creating library resources that include audio and in-game reading and writing as well as graphic novels as a step to the full text.

We have seen good engagement by children with the sessions whose activities have included writing a journal as well as reading the books. One teacher said attending the session really helped a shy and reluctant reader to 'open up' and another was more engaged and spoke more than in their other lessons. The students also worked well together as those with differing levels of ability helped each other.

Our staff have enjoyed being involved in a digital literacy project and were inspired by the levels of interest and the increased confidence in many of the participants. Working with a group of boys who were reluctant readers, we used Litcraft to introduce them to the story of Treasure Island and used some other easier reading material around pirates to encourage reading.

CREATE Education: Making in libraries partnership

We held six 3D printing workshops in the summer of 2018 delivered, free of charge, by the CREATE Education team. From this a longer-term project was started in May this year where library staff across Lancashire have been trained to deliver a 3D printing and a basic electronics session.

The sessions are part of the Lancashire Reading Journey SCART (Science, Culture, Active, Reading and Technology) Club summer activities. The 3D printing is based around group sessions where the participants design their own bookmark and have it printed. The craft electronics session involves creating a clown's face which lights up. Both have been well received by children and many of the adults were also intrigued with the technology!

The project is continuing for the next eighteen months and will develop skills of staff and volunteers and deliver sessions to a wide range of age groups. We are collecting individual data and impact evidence from each library to help inform and develop future work.