

CHILDREN'S AUTHORS DOMINATE LOANS FROM UK PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Public libraries providing 'vital' service for younger readers

UK public libraries continue to foster an appetite for reading among the nation's children, according to the latest annual data released today by Public Lending Right (PLR) on the eve of National Libraries Day.

Children's authors are strongly represented in the most borrowed listings with five children's authors among the Top 10 Most Borrowed Authors in UK libraries. They dominate amongst the four authors who clocked-up over 1,000,000 loans from UK public libraries during 2014-15. The three are former Children's Laureate Julia Donaldson; Daisy Meadows, the brand behind the "Rainbow Magic" series and Francesca Simon, author of the "Horrid Henry" series. The fourth is thriller writer James Patterson, who also topped the chart for the ninth year running.

David Walliams, Holly Webb, and Valerie Thomas are three other children's authors 'on the up'. Holly Webb is the 32nd most borrowed author this year (from 68th two years ago) and Valerie Thomas came in 44th position up from 115th two years ago. David Walliams' popularity continues to grow and he's now the 41st most borrowed author compared to being in 157th position in 2012-13, and his book *Awful Auntie* was also the most borrowed title in libraries in Northern Ireland.

"What fantastic taste the children of Northern Ireland have," said David Walliams. "I am beyond delighted. Libraries are vital for children and adults to discover a wide variety of books. Long may they live!"

Top 10 Most Borrowed Authors, 2014/15 (2013/14 position in brackets)

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| 1. James Patterson (1) | 6. Adam Blade (6) |
| 2. Julia Donaldson (3) | 7. Nora Roberts (8) |
| 3. Daisy Meadows (2) | 8. Jacqueline Wilson (7) |
| 4. Francesca Simon (4) | 9. Lee Child (9) |
| 5. M C Beaton (5) | 10. Anna Jacobs (12) |

M C Beaton author of the *Agatha Raisin* and *Hamish Macbeth* crime fiction books is the most borrowed British author of books for adults, at number five. She has held this title for the last six years. M C Beaton commented:

"I am thrilled to bits to be the most borrowed British author in UK public libraries. PLR means a great deal to me. Writing is a very isolating job and, as I am only human, PLR is a sort of lifeline to me from the general borrowing public. I thank PLR from the bottom of my inky heart."

Top 10 Most Borrowed Titles, 2014/15

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| 1. <i>Personal</i> | Lee Child |
| 2. <i>Never Go Back</i> | Lee Child |
| 3. <i>Abattoir Blues</i> | Peter Robinson |
| 4. <i>The Silkworm</i> | Robert Galbraith |
| 5. <i>Invisible</i> | James Patterson |
| 6. <i>Unlucky 13</i> | James Patterson |
| 7. <i>Gone Girl</i> | Gillian Flynn |
| 8. <i>Want You Dead</i> | Peter James |
| 9. <i>Be Careful What You Wish For</i> | Jeffrey Archer |
| 10. <i>Diary of a Wimpy Kid</i> | Jeff Kinney |

Overall, crime fiction and thrillers are hugely popular, with UK library borrowers and the table above shows, nine of the Top 10 most borrowed books belonging to this genre. This included two titles by the most borrowed author, James Patterson.

Public Lending Right (PLR) was established by Act of Parliament in 1979 and is the responsibility of the British Library. PLR gives authors the legal right to receive payment from government each time their books are loaned through the public library system.

This year's PLR payments include, for the very first time, loans of audio-books that were made by public libraries in 2014-15. Again, on the most-loaned items list, children's titles were strongly represented, with two separate editions of David Walliams' *Demon Dentist* making the top 10 most borrowed audio-book titles (in 4th and 6th position, with his *Ratburger* also at 10th most loaned title) and two J K Rowling's Harry Potter titles occupying the 2nd and 3rd most loaned slots.

Top 10 Most Borrowed Audio-books, 2014/15 (includes both registered and unregistered titles)

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| 1. <i>Without a Trace</i> | Lesley Pearce, read by Emma Powell |
| 2. <i>Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone</i> | J K Rowling, read by Stephen Fry |
| 3. <i>Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows</i> | J K Rowling, read by Stephen Fry |
| 4. <i>Demon Dentist</i> | David Walliams, read by David Walliams |
| 5. <i>The Cuckoo's Calling</i> | Robert Galbraith, read by Robert Glenister |
| 6. <i>Demon Dentist</i> | David Walliams, read by David Walliams |
| 7. <i>The Silkworm</i> | Robert Galbraith, read by Robert Glenister |
| 8. <i>Never Go Back</i> | Lee Child, read by Jeff Harding |
| 9. <i>Be Careful What You Wish For</i> | Jeffrey Archer, read by Alex Jennings |
| 10. <i>Ratburger</i> | David Walliams, read by David Walliams |

In February 2016, PLR will make payments totalling £6 million to 22,347 writers, illustrators, photographers, editors, translators, adaptors, narrators, producers and abridgers. This year's Rate Per Loan is 7.67 pence.

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Editors' Notes

1. The Public Lending Right scheme is the responsibility of the British Library. It is administered from PLR's existing offices in Stockton-on-Tees.
2. PLR is funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) through the British Library. This year PLR is distributing £6 million to 22,347 authors at a Rate Per Loan of 7.67 pence. Since its inception in 1979, PLR has distributed over £150 million to authors. The Chancellor announced the results of the government's spending review on 25 November 2015. As part of this announcement the British Library was informed that PLR has received a 'flat-cash' settlement. Its funding will therefore remain at £6.6m up to 2019.
3. Authors are eligible for payment if their PLR earnings reach a minimum of £1. There is a maximum payment threshold of £6,600 for the top-lending authors. This year, 202 authors will receive the maximum payment.
4. The Digital Economy Act, passed in March 2010, cleared the way for the UK PLR legislation to be extended to include public library loans of audio-books ('talking books') and ebooks downloaded to library premises for taking away as loans ('on-site' ebook loans). The UK PLR Scheme has been extended from 1 July 2014.

During the PLR year 1 July 2014- 30 June 2015 almost 16,000 audio-books were registered for PLR.

The government-commissioned Sieghart Report (published December 2014) on the future of public libraries in the UK has recommended that the government seeks to secure changes in European and UK copyright law in the next legislative term to extend PLR to include remote ebook loans.

5. British authors qualify for payment from a number of other European PLR systems. These include the Irish PLR system which is now administered through the UK PLR office on behalf of the Irish government. Payments to UK authors from PLR systems in countries such as France, Germany, Austria and the Netherlands are distributed by the Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society.
6. PLR's data analysis system (LEWIS) offers public libraries a vital tool to support effective and efficient business decisions. The analysis gives them a comprehensive picture of national reading trends, changes in our national and regional reading habits and a fascinating insight into our preferences, pastimes and obsessions.
7. "What Are Words Worth Now?", a survey commissioned by the Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society (ALCS) and carried out by Queen Mary University of London found that in 2013, just 11.5% of professional authors earned their incomes solely from writing. In 2005, 40% of professional authors said that they did so.
8. National Libraries Day (6 February 2016) is primarily a celebration of public libraries. It is strongly supported by libraries of all kinds including school, university, workplace and government libraries and by organisations, politicians, public figures, celebrities, writers and illustrators and service users. National Libraries Day will be the finale of a week's celebrations in all types of library. For more information see <http://www.nationallibrariesday.org.uk/>.
9. For all the latest news follow PLR on Twitter **@PLR_UK**