



THE GREAT
GET TOGETHER
INSPIRED BY JO COX

READ TOGETHER

The Great Get Together (21-23 June 2024) is the UK's annual celebration of everything that unites our communities, inspired by Jo Cox's belief that **"we have more in common than that which divides us"**. Find out more about the Great Get Together, which this year takes place on what would've been Jo Cox's 50th birthday, and access our full range of resources on our website.



Libraries serve as central hubs for our communities, providing unity, outreach groups, warm spaces, and, of course, places to read and learn. And few things emphasise what we have in common more than reading. That's why we're partnering with the Community Libraries Network and Libraries Connected for **this year's Great Get Together to encourage people to run Read Together events.**

IDEAS FOR YOUR READ TOGETHER

More in Common storytime: Storytimes are a great way for parents and young children to bond over books. It's easy to do: an adult reads and helps children interact with a picture book together. Some good inclusive books for kids are "Kind" by Alison Green and "Here We Are" by Oliver Jeffers.

Knit and Natter: Bringing people together for a shared activity is a great way to bring everyone closer and highlight our similarities. Many



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libraries and community groups already have knit and natter groups, which you could make part of the Great Get Together with some added promotion and conversation starters to help people connect.

More in Common book group: Fiction, as Neil Gaiman says, gives us empathy. It puts us inside the minds of other people, gives us the gifts of seeing the world through their eyes. Start a reading group or book discussion centred on a novel that embodies Jo's 'more in common' message. Whether it's a brief excerpt in one gathering or the entire book over a few weeks, discussing it brings people together.

Book competition: Everyone has a special book that opened their eyes to something new. Why not host a book competition where people nominate the novel that broadened their perspective the most? You can tie it into a larger book club or promotion.



Write together: Last year, the charity Give a Few Words, along with Batley Library and Batley Poets, organized a poetry workshop for their local community. Participants learned simple poetry and letter writing techniques and wrote poems or letters to share with locals feeling lonely or isolated. You could host a similar workshop for your Great Get Together, helping attendees write positive poems or letters to spread joy and connection.

Share cookbooks and recipes: Food is something we all love and it helps us share our culture. People could share their cookbooks and swap favourite recipes with others, either at one event or over a week.



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BOOKS WITH MORE IN COMMON THEMES

Refugee Boy – Benjamin Zephaniah Life is not safe for Alem. His father is Ethiopian, his mother Eritrean. Their countries are at war, and Alem is welcome in neither place. So Alem is excited to spend a holiday in London with his father – until he wakes up to find him gone. What seems like a betrayal is in fact an act of love, but now Alem is alone in a strange country, and he must forge his own path

Nation – Terry Pratchett Following a storm Mau is the last surviving member of his nation and the only person on his island. Then he finds the ghost girl. She and Mau will begin to forge a new nation.

The Giver – Lois Lowry At the age of twelve, Jonas, a young boy from a seemingly utopian, futuristic world, is singled out to receive special training from The Giver, who alone holds the memories of the true joys and pain of life.

Wolf Hall – Hilary Mantel England in the 1520s is a heartbeat from disaster. Into the impasse steps Thomas Cromwell: a wholly original man, a charmer and a bully, a idealist and opportunist, astute in reading people, and implacable in his ambition. But Henry VIII is volatile: one day tender, one day murderous. Cromwell helps him break the opposition, but what will be the price of his triumph?

I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings – Maya Angelou Sent by their mother to live with their grandmother in a small Southern town, Maya and her brother, Bailey, endure the ache of abandonment and prejudice. Eight years old and back at her mother's side in St. Louis, Maya is attacked by a man many times her age—and has to live with the consequences for a



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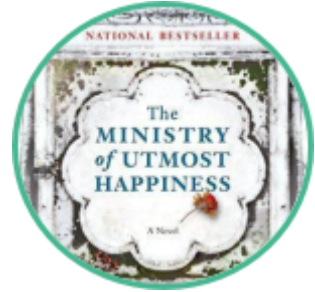


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lifetime. Years later, in San Francisco, Maya learns that love for herself, the kindness of others, her own strong spirit, and the ideas of great authors (“I met and fell in love with William Shakespeare”) will allow her to be free instead of imprisoned.

Ministry of Utmost Happiness - Arundhati Roy Anjum, who used to be Aftab, unrolls a threadbare carpet in a city graveyard that she calls home. A baby appears quite suddenly on a pavement, a little after midnight, in a crib of litter. The enigmatic S. Tilottama is as much of a presence as she is an absence in the lives of the three men who love her. The Ministry of Utmost Happiness takes us on a journey of many years, from the cramped neighbourhoods of Old Delhi to the valley of Kashmir and the forests of central India.



READ TOGETHER PARTNERS

Libraries Connected are an independent charity that supports, promotes and represents public libraries. Their work is driven and led by our membership, which includes every library service in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.



Communities Libraries Network The Community Managed Libraries National Peer Network helps community managed libraries (CMLs) to run effectively and successfully by sharing ideas, learning, experiences and inspiration.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Remember you can find the full range of event resources - including template press releases, planning checklists, and conversation starters - in [our toolkit](#), where you can also find a template poster for your Read Together event.