



VOICEBOX

AWARDS 2024

VOICEBOX Awards 2024

INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS AND SCHOOL PRACTITIONERS

VoiceBox is a national joke competition for primary school children developed by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT), designed to raise awareness of the fun and importance of communication.

All primary schools in Scotland are invited to nominate one joke from their school for the 2024 VoiceBox Awards. Schools can hold a joke telling competition to find their entry or support one pupil who wishes to put themselves forward to take part.

A responsible adult (parent/guardian or teacher) should send us your school's nominated joke by 1 April 2024 and we will shortlist the best joke from each local authority area. Up to 32 finalists will be invited, along with their parent/guardian or teacher, to the Scottish Parliament on 6 June 2024 to take part in the National Final, where they can tell their jokes in front of a panel of judges and MSPs.

WHY TAKE PART IN VOICEBOX?

VoiceBox offers an opportunity to focus on the fun aspects of communication and build children's communication and confidence in a friendly and supportive environment. It is a fun activity to get pupils enthused in the early months of the new year.

WHO IS VOICEBOX FOR?

VoiceBox is for any pupil who is interested in getting involved. The competition is open to children from P1 to P7. In previous competitions held in other parts of the UK, we have seen great contributions from children with learning disabilities and children with communication aids.

Children do not have to be especially confident in or have had any experience of public speaking. VoiceBox is about providing an inclusive way to build children's communication skills whatever their starting point. The only requirement is that they should be able to take part in the National Final, if your school's nominated joke is shortlisted.

USING VOICEBOX CAN HELP SUPPORT DELIVERY OF THE LISTENING AND TALKING CURRICULUM

Everyone can have a go at telling a joke and, as well as being great fun, it is actually one of the most advanced linguistic skills!

Telling a joke uses inference and requires a high level of receptive and expressive language, as well as good auditory memory. Pupils can practice their intonation and conversational style of communication.

Joke telling also requires the use of non-verbal communication, the ability to keep listeners' attention and deliver the often unexpected punch line with the right emphasis. If using speech, the children will need to project their voice enough to be understood by the audience (a microphone will be provided at the National Final).

In getting their entry ready, pupils will need to think about the language in the joke they want to tell, decide if it is suitable for their audience, and plan how they will deliver it. Practising it at home can engage their parents and family about communication skills in a fun way. You might also involve pupils in judging or voting for your school's nomination to the competition.





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BENEFITS TO YOUR SCHOOL

Taking part in VoiceBox gives pupils in your school the chance to practice all of the communication skills mentioned above and can help boost their confidence and social skills.

If your school's nominated joke is shortlisted to compete in the National Final, your pupil will get the chance to represent your school, attend the final at the Scottish Parliament, meet with MSPs and give interviews to the media. We will be able to assist with travel costs for the pupil and the accompanying parent/guardian or teacher attending the National Final. All finalists attending the National Final will receive £100 worth of HarperCollins books, and the pupils with the three best jokes will receive a toy gift card worth up to £100 and up to £500 worth of Collins Big Cat books for their school.

VoiceBox offers a great platform to showcase your school to your local community and elected representatives.

TIPS FOR RUNNING YOUR OWN VOICEBOX SCHOOL COMPETITION:

Your school can choose how to run its own VoiceBox competition to suit your pupils. You may just have one pupil who is keen to enter or you may feel it would suit a particular class or year group. You may want to open it up to your whole school.

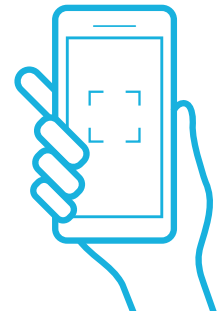
Whatever type of competition you decide to run, please visit our online toolkit to find everything you need to get started.

VOICEBOX ONLINE TOOLKIT

Online we have a fully downloadable VoiceBox toolkit with lots of additional resources your school can use to run a simple but effective VoiceBox competition.

You can access the toolkit at

<https://www.rcslt.org/scotland/voicebox-2024/> or by using the QR code below.



Online Toolkit

1. Inside the toolkit
2. Information for Teachers
3. A4 VoiceBox poster
4. Letter to parents
5. Letter to pupil council
6. Letter to local councillors or MSP
7. Press release template
8. Participant certificate

We really look forward to getting an entry from your school and would love to see and hear how your school is getting involved in VoiceBox. Email us at voicebox@rcslt.org or share on social media using [#voicebox2024](https://twitter.com/voicebox2024).

Please note that we will only accept one entry from each school to be considered for the National Final.

SUGGESTIONS FROM TEACHERS

INVOLVE YOUR PUPIL COUNCIL – why not ask your pupil council to run your school's VoiceBox competition? They could write and invite external judges using the template letters available in our online toolkit, or they might want to ask permission to hold a school-wide competition at lunch time with pupil judges. This pack contains a letter you can give to your pupil council inviting them to participate.

PERFECT FOR PUPILS WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS – VoiceBox is a great activity for a small group of pupils in your school who already receive additional support. Perhaps you have a supported reading group, a lunch club, or after school club for children with additional support needs. They might want to hold their own mini VoiceBox competition as part of their activities with help from their teachers or classroom assistants.

ENGAGING PUPILS IN THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS – with the final event being hosted by the Presiding Officer in the Scottish Parliament, VoiceBox can be used as a great way to introduce a discussion about what the Scottish Parliament does and how MSPs are elected to represent their local area. Scottish Parliament Education Services offer a number of free online resources for schools, and they also offer education sessions suitable for primary (P5, 6, 7) pupils, in Parliament, in your school and online which can be booked through their website.

Find out more here

<https://www.parliament.scot/get-involved/education>