



7th to 13th November 2011
www.nationalshortstoryweek.org.uk

What is National Short Story Week?

National Short Story Week is an annual awareness event, to focus the attentions of the public and the media on the short story and short story writers, publishers and events. It is intended as a framework for promoting literary events and publications at a national and local level.

What are the aims of National Short Story Week?

The aims of National Short Story Week are to:

- 1) get more people reading and listening to short stories;
- 2) get more people writing short stories;
- 3) develop creative and commercial opportunities for individuals and organisations involved in the short story form.

Who is behind National Short Story Week?

The idea for National Short Story Week came from audio producer Ian Skillicorn. As the founder of www.shortstoradio.com, Ian has been producing and broadcasting short stories, and supporting the work of both new and established short story writers, for many years. As the Director of National Short Story Week, Ian is responsible for making sure people know about and take part in National Short Story Week.

The aims of National Short Story Week are supported by an independent steering group made up of experts in the fields of writing, editing, publishing, teaching, producing, broadcasting and performing. The patron of National Short Story Week is best-selling writer Katie Fforde.

National Short Story Week: beginnings

The first National Short Story Week was launched at Charles Dickens Museum in London on Saturday 25th September 2010. Around seventy guests met to talk about plans for the week, including representatives from the Booksellers' Association, Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), Granta magazine, National Academy of Writing, National Association for Literature Development, Romantic Novelists' Association, University of the Third Age (U3A) and numerous publishers.

National Short Story Week took place between 22nd to 29th November 2010. During the week over 60 events were held around the UK; in bookshops, libraries, schools, colleges, universities, pubs and online. National Short Story Week was featured in the press, including *The Guardian*, on the radio and on a large number of websites and blogs.

The National Short Story Week website

The National Short Story Week website continues to be updated throughout the year. Each month the website has a different guest editor. Previous guest editors include prize winning short story writers Sarah Salway, Valerie O'Riordan, Vanessa Gebbie and Adam Marek. The website also includes information on the latest short story collections, short stories to read and listen to online, and recommendations and messages of support from best-selling writers such as Joanne Harris, Alexander McCall Smith, Peter Carey, Michael Arditti and Patricia Dunker.

National Short Story Week 2011

Preparation have already begun for National Short Story Week 2011, which will take place between 7th to 13th November 2011 and which will include a number of regional and national projects and events.

One of the first events to be held in association with National Short Story Week 2011 was the Get Writing Conference, featuring top authors and publishing industry leaders, and which took place on 19th February at the University of Hertfordshire.

National Short Story Week for Libraries

Public and school libraries around the UK have already pledged to celebrate this year's National Short Story Week. During National Short Story Week many libraries will:

- have a short story display
- invite a local short story writer to give a talk or writing workshop
- invite a local short story writer to give a reading
- encourage students to enter the Young Writer competition (Year 7 and 8 students)

A reading list is available to download from the website on request. Please email schools@shortstoryweek.org.uk

Library events can be publicised on the online website events calendar.

National Short Story Week Young Writers Competition

To celebrate National Short Story Week 2011, and to further the aim of getting younger people into writing, reading and listening to short stories, we will be running a short story competition for year 7 and 8 students.

We invite entrants to write a short story of 1,000 words with the title "The Choice". There is no charge for entry to the competition.

The competition was launched to school librarians at the School Library Association meeting on April 7th.

Entries will be accepted by email from the first day of National Short Story Week - Monday 7th November 2011. The deadline is Monday 9th January 2012. Two winners will be chosen - one boy and one girl - and the result will be announced in the spring of 2012.

The shortlist judges are Chris Priestley (*Tales of Terror*, Bloomsbury) and Aidan Chamber (*The Kissing Game*, Random House).

The two winning stories will be recorded by professional actors and broadcast online and by podcast, free of charge, on www.shortstoryradio.com and www.nationalshortstoryweek.org.uk. Further prizes will be announced in September.

The winners and runners up will have their story published in an ebook, which will be available from the National Short Story Week website, free of charge.

Women Aloud: a charity anthology audiobook for National Short Story Week 2011

Women Aloud is an audio anthology of short stories written by eleven of the UK's best loved women's fiction writers. There's something for everyone in this unique audiobook - love, laughter, thrills and chills. It will make a great gift for a friend, mum, sister, grandmother, aunt, girlfriend, wife, partner or...yourself!

Listen to stories by Trisha Ashley, Judy Astley, Elizabeth Chadwick, Rowan Coleman, Katie Fforde, Milly Johnson, Catherine King, Sophie King, Carole Matthews, Sue Moorcroft and Allie Spencer.

The stories are narrated by a host of talented actors including current cast members from *The Archers* and former stars of *Neighbours* and *Doctors*.

Women Aloud will be available as a CD or download from October 2011.

Everyone involved in the production of *Women Aloud* has donated their time and talents to support this project. We would like to thank all the writers and actors for their generosity.

Women Aloud is directed and produced by National Short Story Week Director Ian Skillicorn, through www.talkingbookshelf.com

The Helena Kennedy Foundation

All of the proceeds from *Women Aloud* will go to the Helena Kennedy Foundation, to support them in the great work that they do. The Foundation provides financial bursaries, mentoring and support to disadvantaged students from the further and adult education sectors, enabling them to complete their studies in higher education and move on successfully into employment. www.hkf.org.uk

The Write Lines

One of the UK's most experienced and well known broadcasters, Sue Cook, brings her radio programme *The Write Lines* online for some exclusive shows to tie in with this year's National Short Story Week.

Sue will be interviewing a host of writers about the short story form, their favourite short stories and their own short story collections.

Guests lined up for The Write Lines include Helen Oyeyemi (*Mr Fox*), Stuart Evers (*Ten Stories About Smoking*), Sue Gee (*Last Fling*), Nicholas Royle (editor, *The Best British Short Stories*) and many other popular and best selling writers.

Recommended reading lists

Adult reading list

Ten Stories about Smoking* by Stuart Evers (Picador, 2011) **Book club choice*

A debut collection of stories loosely linked by, but not actually about, smoking. The believable characters are often living on the edge of society and facing life's challenges, but nevertheless the stories are infused with wit and humanity.

Last Fling* by Sue Gee (Salt Publishing, 2011) **Book club choice*

Haunting stories about love, life and loss. Certain themes run through the collection, several of the protagonists are artists and/or suffering from illnesses, and both city and rural life are depicted. Ideal for book clubs and reading groups as much discussion could come out of the experiences and dilemmas faced by the protagonists.

***Best British Short Stories* edited by Nicholas Royle (Salt Publishing, 2011)**

This collection aims to reprint the best short stories published by British writers in the previous calendar year. Includes stories by Hilary Mantel, Michèle Roberts and Sally Vickers.

***Eleven* by Patricia Highsmith (Bloomsbury, 2007)**

Chilling tales of death, love and revenge by the acclaimed novelist of *Strangers on a Train* and *The Talented Mr Ripley*.

***The Complete Short Stories of Saki* by Saki (HH Munro) (Digireads, 2011)**

Complete collection of the celebrated British writer who is considered a master of the short story form. His witty stories satirized Edwardian society but his observations and insights into the human character are just as relevant and recognisable today.

Suitable for both adults and teenage readers

***From Hereabout Hill* by Michael Morpurgo (Egmont, 2007)**

Poignant stories about topics such as adoption and war told with clarity and empathy. Stories that stay with you long after reading, like all good short stories do.

***Whodunnit - Detective Stories Chosen* by Philip Pullman (Kingfisher, 2007)**

A round up of classic detective fiction personally chosen by the much loved author. A great introduction to some iconic crime writers and their best known characters, such as Arthur Conan Doyle (Sherlock Holmes) and Agatha Christie (Hercule Poirot).

***The Kissing Game* by Aidan Chambers (The Bodley Head, 2011)**

For older teenagers, this collection is about the difficulties and emotions experienced by young adults and examines themes including sexuality and mortality.

***Skin and other stories* by Roald Dahl (Puffin, 2001)**

Tales of the unexpected. Dahl tackles the darker side of human nature with his celebrated wit.

***Tales of Terror from the Tunnel's Mouth* by Chris Priestley (Bloomsbury, 2011)**

Great for Halloween, which is the week before National Short Story Week. The protagonists of Priestley's stories often reflect on the inadequacies of adults, but the children are shown to be imperfect too.

Children's reading list

***The Happy Prince and other stories* by Oscar Wilde (Puffin Classics)**

Favourite classics such as The Happy Prince, The Selfish Giant and The Nightingale and the Rose.

***My Naughty Little Sister* by Dorothy Edwards (Egmont, 2002)**

A timeless classic, 60 years old in 2012, with humorous short stories that will resonate with anyone who's ever known a wilful child!

***The Secret Seven Short Story Collection* by Enid Blyton (Hodder Children's, 2007)**

A good entry into reading short stories for younger children. Adventure, mystery and humour - each with a happy ending.

***Short and Shocking* by Maggie Pearson (OUP, 2002)**

Another title that would be great to tie-in with Halloween. Short, sharp and ghoulish with a sense of humour.