

Practice guide for Shannon Trust mentors

**“You are not only turning pages of the book but you
are also turning pages of your life.”**

Mentor



Shannon Trust reading programme and how it works



Around half the people in prison find reading and numeracy difficult or impossible. Shannon Trust is a charity that helps people to improve these skills. Right from the start, mentors have been a crucial part of how our programmes work.

Our approach is 'by prisoners for prisoners'. Those that can, help those that need support. We have mentors working across most prisons in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The Shannon Trust programmes are for both complete beginners and those who want to develop their existing skills. It's one to one, confidential and uses short, regular sessions with mentors. These sessions can be held anywhere that the learner and mentor feel comfortable and can get together.

There are no exams and everyone improves at their own pace. Progress can be quick. Even if someone has a short sentence or is on remand, their skills can improve.

We also offer a range of self study options for learners on our reading programme - a video and a digital version that learners can use on their own or in addition to working with a mentor.

Shannon Trust provides you with all the resources that you need and support from a facilitator and volunteer.

Who are our programmes useful for?

Our programmes aim to provide anyone who needs help with reading or numeracy skills, usually those at Entry Level for English or numeracy, wherever they are during the core day, evenings and weekends.

Those identified at induction as potentially needing your support will be referred to your facilitator, but you, other prisoners and staff are also great at picking up those that need help.

Based on an initial assessment undertaken by prisoners, English and numeracy levels are classified as follows:

Entry 1 Entry 2 Entry 3 Level 1 Level 2
Needs more support <-----> Needs less support

What does it mean to be a Shannon Trust mentor?

You may have come across other people in prison who need support with reading or with basic numeracy skills and see how this can affect them.

You will be using or developing your skills in listening, empathy and patience. You will build an understanding and trusting relationship with your learner.

You will work with your learner at their own pace, offering sessions which suit them. Some learners might want to do just 5 or 10 minutes to start with, but then grow to do a longer session. You should work with your learner to see what works for them. Learners may feel they are progressing really well and will be keen to keep going.

Your role as a mentor is to help them progress without feeling the pressure of doing too much or not enough.

You may work with a learner on both programmes or exclusively on either.

Being a Shannon Trust mentor is a responsible role and you'll need to be cleared by security. You will find a copy of the role description on page 8 and your facilitator will give you a copy of the mentor compact for you to sign.

As well as working with learners regularly, mentors help to identify others who could benefit from taking part in the programmes. Mentors work together as part of a team to help promote Shannon Trust in their prison.

It is helpful to build positive relationships with staff to enable you to meet with your learners and identify possible future learners.

You will need to keep a record of your sessions with learners to report on how things are going. You will receive a log sheet to record your learners' progress.

Introduction to Turning Pages and phonic sounds



Our reading programme uses a set of manuals called Turning Pages. The Turning Pages manuals and accompanying Write Now activity books were specially developed to teach adults in custody to read. They're designed so any confident readers can pick them up and follow the instructions to help someone who struggles with reading.

There are 6 manuals and 5 accompanying Write Now activity books. Write Now activity books are designed to help a learner gain some writing skills and practice reading. Each book is split into 3 sections and is mainly based on words used in Turning pages but also has some practical activities such as filling in a form, writing a greetings card and answering questions about a story or note they have read.

Turning Pages Manuals.



Write Now Activity Booklets



You may have already been asked by someone to help them to read letters, help with an app or fill out a form. Once you're a Shannon Trust mentor, you may notice more people ask for your help. This is an ideal way to let people know how the mentoring sessions work and how they can improve their reading with Turning Pages.

As a mentor, you can still support people informally with practical tasks like filling out a menu sheet, but our aim (and your role as a Shannon Trust mentor) is to develop people's skills and confidence to read for themselves. We do this by working through Turning Pages.

Think about how you could encourage someone to try a Turning Pages session with you. We can follow this up in a future training session or mentor meeting.

Learners should receive a completion certificate after each manual. Ask your facilitator for a certificate when your learner is approaching the end of each manual.

Most learners will start on the mini manual or manual 1, but they can start further on in the programme if appropriate based on their existing reading ability.

As a mentor, you can use the progress checks in the manuals to help your learner find the right starting point for them. For example, if your learner can manage the progress check at the end of manual 2, they could then start on manual 3. We have a word document available if you don't want to use the manual. Please ask your facilitator about this.

Those who don't start on Turning Pages manual 1, may still need to start on Write Now book 1 to gain some confidence in writing.

You should have been given a copy of the mini manual with this practice guide, these are some of the key points:

- Turning Pages uses phonic sounds to teach people to read, so only letter sounds, not letter names, are used. It is important that mentors are able to model these sounds to help their learners.
- The pages up to page 21 contain all the information that you should need to use the manual.
- From page 22, instructions for the mentor are on the left hand side and the learner activities are on the right hand page.
- See page 9 for instructions on how the activities work

Before you begin your mentoring, make sure you have been given the following information and resources by your facilitator or mentor coordinator:

- Training, either by self study* or in a group
- A copy of manual 1
- The monitoring and evaluation forms: learning measure, log sheet, monitoring form and progress profile
- Where to source Turning Pages manuals and Write Now activity books

Mentor self study

If you can't attend group training, there is the option to be trained through self study, with a follow up training session by a volunteer when possible. This is in either booklet, CD format or can be accessed on most prison issues laptops and tablets.

The phonic sounds on page 25 can be heard on the self study training CD. If you are unsure or not able to access any of the formats, please ask your facilitator.

Our numeracy programme

Our numeracy programme, Count Me In works in a very similar way to Turning Pages. We designed it so that learners can quickly get used to the layout of our resources.

Just like Turning pages, there are:

- 6 manuals
- A certificate for when your learner completes each manual
- 3 monitoring and evaluation forms: monitoring form, log sheet and progress profile.

Count Me In Manuals



Before you begin working with learners on Count Me In, you'll be offered the chance to attend a specific 'bolt on' training session. If this isn't possible for any reason, our self study materials also cover what you'll need to know.

Whichever book your learner is using, make sure they work through it page by page and do not skip any of the activities.

Shannon Trust team

In your team you will have the following people:

- Staff facilitator – responsible for the day to day running of the programme. You will work closely with them and they will support you in your role.
- Mentor coordinator – works closely with the facilitator to support the day to day running of the reading programme, to support new mentors and help with monitoring and evaluation. Note that not all prisons will have a coordinator.
- Shannon Trust prison volunteer(s) – visits the prison monthly and will support with training mentors, chairing mentor meetings and growing the programme.
- Senior management team lead (SMT lead) – supports the programme by championing delivery across the prison.

Shannon Trust facilitator:	Mentor coordinator:
Mentors in my area:	

Shannon Trust mentor - role description

Shannon Trust is a national charity that helps thousands of men and women in prisons to improve their skills with the help of a trained mentor.

Our programmes are dependent on a large group of people all working together to make sure as many people as possible can have help with their reading and numeracy. Mentors are an essential part of this; you will be working directly with learners to help them improve their reading and numeracy skills. It can be difficult to tell someone that you need support with reading and numeracy so it is essential that mentors understand this then encourage and help learners to overcome any embarrassment.

This role could help you to develop your own skills around communication, organisation and supporting others. You will be making a difference by helping other people which can be very rewarding. You will be given training for the role and ongoing support from a facilitator and volunteer.

As a mentor, you will:

- support learners to develop their reading and numeracy skills using Shannon Trust resources
- provide learners with regular sessions, the frequency of this to be agreed with each learner
- help learners to set their own goals
- review and record progress
- keep all paperwork up to date; log sheets, monitoring forms and learner progress profiles then submit it to the facilitator on time
- attend mentor meetings and training sessions as and when required
- help to recruit new learners and promote the Shannon Trust programmes around the prison

The skills you need to have to be a mentor:

- Literacy and numeracy skills at or above Level 1
- The ability to actively listen to others and show empathy
- The ability to support adult learning in a non patronising way
- The ability to encourage and give positive feedback to learners
- To respect the right to confidentiality of all the individuals you support

To be a mentor, you will need to be:

- patient
- non judgemental and trustworthy
- encouraging and motivating
- interested in learning and helping others
- respectful of others
- organised and committed
- confident to ask someone for help and advice if you are unsure



A key part of your role as a Shannon Trust mentor is helping to track the progress of learners as they work through our reading and numeracy programmes.

You will help us to see how our learners are getting on at key points during their learning. The progress points on the reading programme are at the end of each manual for both programmes.

You will be using 4 types of forms to record your learners' progress as they work through our programmes:

1. Learner monitoring form – completed just once when a learner first starts with Shannon Trust. This form is used to gather some basic personal information on each learner; this information is very useful to us, but it is optional.
2. Learning measure – completed when you start working with your learner. The learning measure contains 50 words for reading and 50 basic questions for numeracy. You stop your learner when they make 3 consecutive errors and this will result in a score that helps us determine the learners' reading or numeracy skills at the start. Learners can choose not to do the learning measure.
3. Learner progress profile – completed when a learner first starts either programme and again each time they complete a manual. This form asks the learner to rate how they feel on a range of issues, including confidence in their own skills. There are separate versions of the learner progress profile for the reading and numeracy programmes, so always check you're using the right one.
4. Learner log sheet – used to record every session undertaken by a learner and handed in at the end of every month. If you are supporting more than one learner at a time, then you will need a separate sheet for each one. Again, there are separate versions of the log sheet for the reading and numeracy programmes, so make sure you're using the right one after each session!

Please ensure that you hand all completed forms into your mentor coordinator or staff facilitator as soon as possible.

You will be issued with copies of all these forms when you start your role. If you have any questions about how to use them, please speak to your facilitator or mentor co-ordinator.

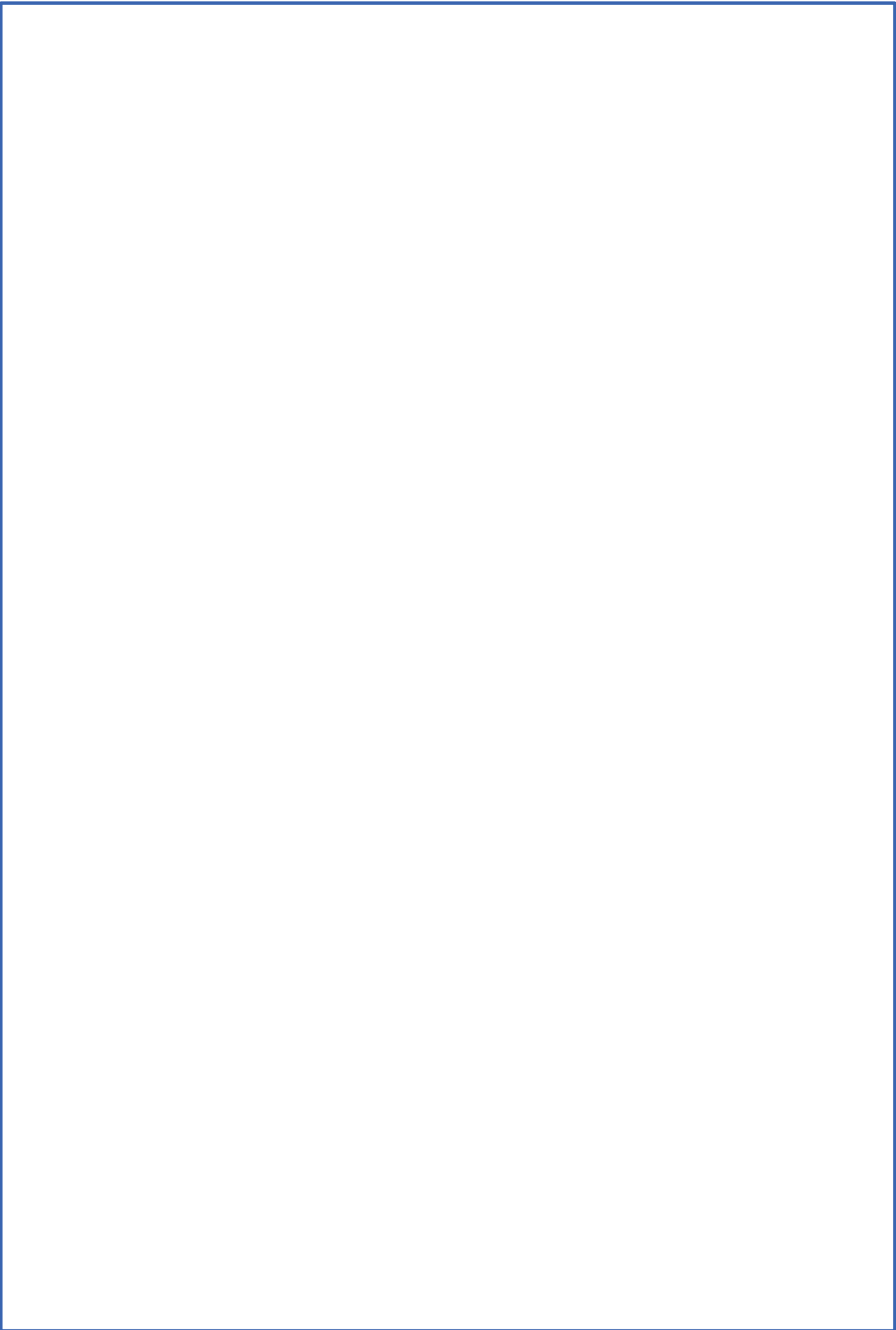
Your training notes and records

Your Shannon Trust training plan – you may be offered both independent study and group training delivered a volunteer:

- Self study booklet, audio by CD, laptop or tablet – all the information to get you started
- Core session – this will be your main training session with your Shannon Trust volunteer.
- Bolt-on sessions – These sessions address specific topics and will help you to develop and grow in your role. They may be conducted as part of mentor meetings or as separate sessions. This training will be conducted by your Shannon Trust volunteer.

The following pages give you space to write your own notes from the training that you attend:

Here's a space to record any notes that are useful:



Muddled Words 1

I cdnuolt blveiee taht I cluod aulacly
uesdnatnrd waht I was rdanieg.

The phaonmneal pweor of the hmuan
mnid;

aoccdrnig to a rseeearchr at
Cmabridge Uinervtisy, it dseno't mtaetr
what oerdr the ltteres in a wrod are in,
the olny iproamtnt tihng is taht the frsit
and lsat ltteer are in the rghit pclae.
The rset can be a taotl mses and you
can still raed it whotuit a pboerlm. This
is bcuseae the huamn mind deos not
raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the word
as a wlohe.

Azanmig huh? Yaeh and I awlyas
tghuhot slpeling was ipmorantt!

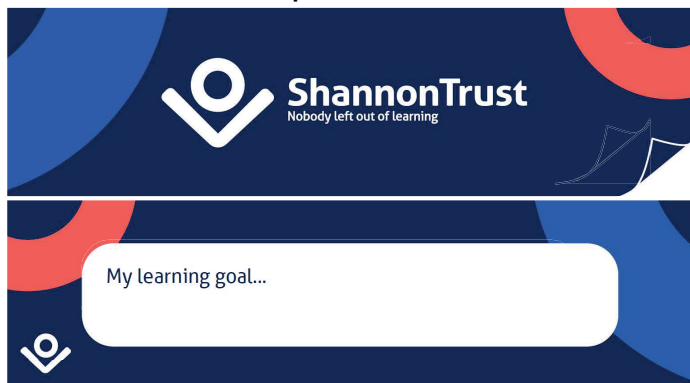
Muddled Words 2

There was still no sign of the others. The
singing had stopped as they approached the camp.
Now there was no one to be seen. Then, they
saw on the top of one of the boxes a great
white dog. It was no thoroughbred. But
it had stuck to its post – unlike the
other pets. They had disappeared
when the trouble first began. Now they
were on the spot. They were trapped.

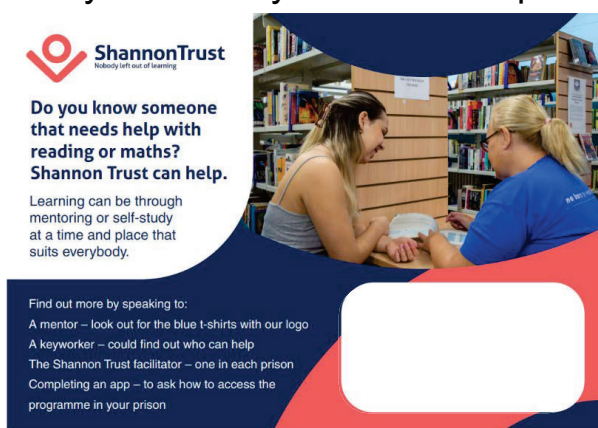
Promotional materials

We have a range of materials that help raise awareness.

Bookmarks and pencils:



Do you know flyer – aimed at prisoners and visitors (any non professionals)



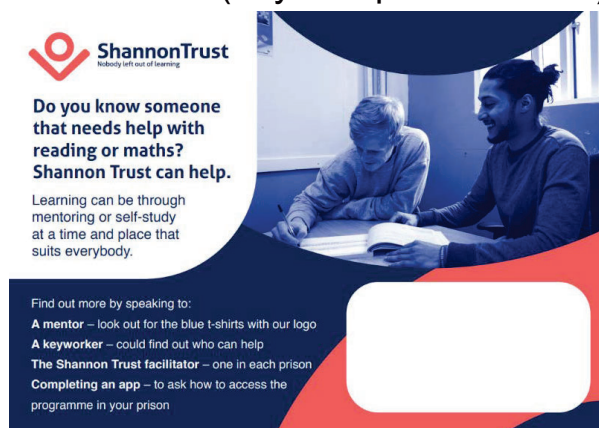
ShannonTrust
Nobody left out of learning

Do you know someone that needs help with reading or maths? Shannon Trust can help.

Learning can be through mentoring or self-study at a time and place that suits everybody.

Find out more by speaking to:

- A mentor – look out for the blue t-shirts with our logo
- A keyworker – could find out who can help
- The Shannon Trust facilitator – one in each prison
- Completing an app – to ask how to access the programme in your prison



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Working with flyer – aimed at all professionals



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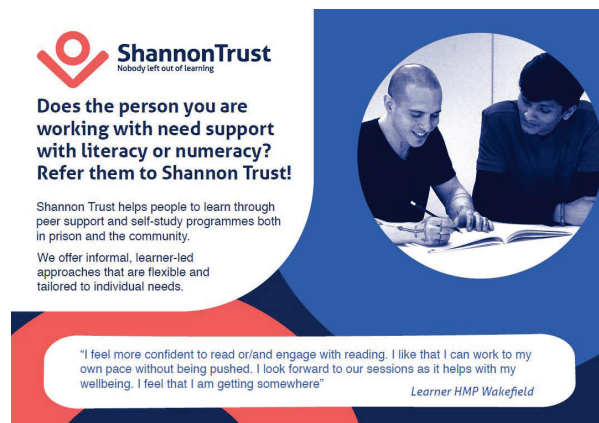
Does the person you are working with need support with literacy or numeracy? Refer them to Shannon Trust!

Shannon Trust helps people to learn through peer support and self-study programmes both in prison and the community.

We offer informal, learner-led approaches that are flexible and tailored to individual needs.

"I feel more confident to read or/and engage with reading. I like that I can work to my own pace without being pushed. I look forward to our sessions as it helps with my wellbeing. I feel that I am getting somewhere"

Learner HMP Wakefield



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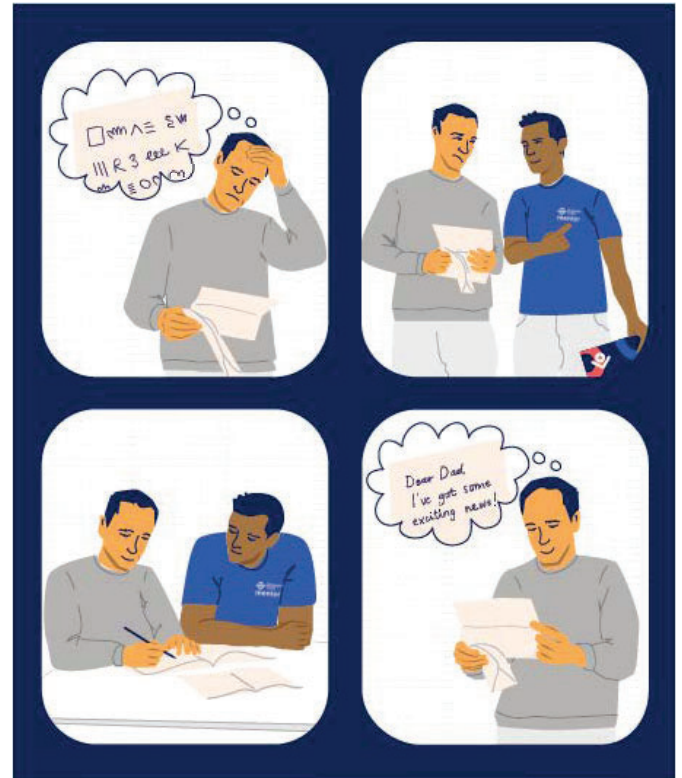
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Learner HMP Wakefield

Learner posters



Mentor recruitment posters

Make a difference, become a Shannon Trust mentor

Help your fellow prisoners learn to read and gain maths skills. Becoming a Shannon Trust mentor is rewarding. You will be trained and supported to work one to one with someone who needs your support.

"I have gained new skills and increased my self-confidence but most of all I have loved the joy it brings when listening to a learner reading a book or a letter from family after I have taught them. The gratification really makes the mentoring worthwhile."
Shannon Trust mentor

Apply today through your personal officer, or speak to someone in our blue t-shirt.

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Share your story

Learner and mentor case studies help us to raise awareness of Shannon Trust with the public. Your personal stories have a huge impact with the public and are vital for us being able to raise money to deliver the numeracy and reading programmes.

If you would like to share your experience, we would love to hear from you. Please also talk to your learners about sharing their stories – even if it's just a couple of sentences, this is still really useful to us.

You can talk to your volunteer or facilitator about filling in a case study form, or you can write to us at Freepost SHANNON TRUST.

