



Press release

This winter, share the magic of story

StorySpark

A season of tales, literature and imagination

Presented by **The Ark** in partnership with **Children's Books Ireland** and **Poetry Ireland**

Taking place at The Ark, A Cultural Centre for Children, Eustace Street, D 2

From 23rd November – 19th December

Top writers including Derek Landy, Roddy Doyle, Philip Ardagh, John Boyne and Mary Arrigan and master storytellers Liz Weir, Pat Ryan, Niall de Búrca to take part in unique celebration of story in Dublin.

This winter The Ark has partnered with Children's Books Ireland and Poetry Ireland to present *StorySpark*, a celebration of children's literature and story that will light up even the darkest of days.

StorySpark illuminates the continuing power of story to inspire and entertain in all its forms – spoken, written, read and heard, and following Dublin's recent designation as a UNESCO City of Literature, provides the perfect opportunity to fill The Ark's award-winning building with tales, literature and imagination.

Many of the top names in children's literature will be taking part: Derek Landy, Anthony McGowan, Roddy Doyle, Frank Cottrell Boyce, Mary Arrigan and Aubrey Flegg, Ali Sparkes, Tony Mitton, Enda Wyley and Larry O'Loughlin, Marcus Sedgwick, Guy Bass, John Boyne, Ian Beck, Philip Ardagh, Oisín McGann and Joe O'Brien, Niamh Sharkey, Sarah Webb, Brianóg Brady Dawson and Gillian Perdue.

A world of stories for all the Family

Each weekend from 27th November The Ark will become a hive of story-centred activity for families to explore. On Saturday and Sunday mornings, the creative facilities of **The Story Lab**, a facilitated interactive space, will be open to those wishing to write and record their own stories, or to enjoy those left by others.

Later in the afternoon, **The Reading Room** will play host to some of the most talented children's authors writing today, with a series of exclusive readings at 2pm and 4pm.

This is an unmissable chance to go behind the scenes of favourite books and put questions to the people who created them. The latest titles by all participating authors will be available from **The Story Store** (hosted by The Gutter Bookshop), with signings taking place after each event.

Weekdays (Tue – Fri) *StorySpark* welcomes schools to take part in a morning visit to The Ark comprising two separate hour-long storytelling experiences:

At **The Telling Point** class groups will spend an hour in the company of one of the country's most talented storytellers - Liz Weir, Pat Ryan or Niall de Búrca - as students are invited to gather round to watch and listen as words and imagination are expertly woven together. Every week a different master 'teller will be in residence, each

with their own style and repertoire for students to enjoy.

Students will also visit **The Story Lab**, a hands-on workshop space inspired by the idea that stories never stay still, but keep changing as they pass from person to person and generation to generation.

One of the *StorySpark* facilitators (Clare Muireann Murphy or Fiona Dowling) will guide students as they create their own stories in a creative yet structured environment. Using the facilities on offer, class groups can choose to write a story of their own and add their finished work to the growing library of self-penned tales, or to record it for others to hear.

For full programme details, times and all you need to know go to www.ark.ie

The Ark gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Arts Council in making *StorySpark* possible. The Ark also acknowledges its other annual supporters: Department of Education and Skills; Temple Bar Cultural Trust; and Dublin City Council. The Ark's media partners for *StorySpark* are The Irish Times and RTÉ.

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Weekend schedule for The Reading Room: (age groups in brackets)

Saturday 27 Nov – Heroes and Villains (and Some Folks in Between)

2pm: Derek Landy (8-12)

4pm: Anthony McGowan (8-12)

Sunday 28 Nov – Journeys to the Ends of the Earth – and Beyond!

2pm: Roddy Doyle (8-12)

4pm: Frank Cottrell Boyce (8-12)

Saturday 4 Dec – Once Upon a Time Adventures

2pm: Mary Arrigan and Aubrey Flegg (8-12)

4pm: Ali Sparkes (8-12)

Sunday 5 Dec – Rap, Rhyme and Rhythm

2pm: Tony Mitton (5-7)

4pm: Enda Wyley and Larry O'Loughlin (7-10)

Saturday 11 Dec – Puzzles, Secrets and Mysterious Goings-on

2pm: Marcus Sedgwick (7-10)

4pm: Guy Bass (7-10)

Sunday 12 Dec – Wild Woods and Magical Quests

2pm: John Boyne (8-12)

4pm: Ian Beck (7-10)

Saturday 18 Dec – Mad and (a Little Bit) Bad Stories

2pm: Philip Ardagh (7-10)

4pm: Oisín McGann and Joe O'Brien (6-9)

Sunday 19 Dec – Furry, Friendly and Fun Stories

2pm: Niamh Sharkey (4-7)

4pm: Sarah Webb, Brianóg Brady Dawson and Gillian Perdue (5-7)

Booking details / dates / times

StorySpark **November 23rd – December 19th**

SCHOOLS Weekdays

Title: The Telling Point and The Story Lab

Dates: Tue - Fri Nov 23rd - Dec 10th

Time: 10.15 a.m. - 12.30p.m.

Duration: 2 hours 15 minutes (includes both sessions)
Ages: 1st to 6th Class
Cost: €6.50/€4.50*

FAMILY Weekends

Title: The Story Lab
Dates: Saturday and Sunday Nov 27th - Dec 19th
Time: 10.30am, 11.00am, 11.30am, 12.00pm, 12.30pm, 1.00pm
Duration: 30 min facilitated session
Ages: Family Audiences (Ages 4+)
Cost: €3 (€2 if booked in conjunction with The Reading Room)

Title: The Reading Room
Dates: Saturday and Sunday Nov 27th - Dec 19th
Time: 2pm & 4pm
Duration: 1 hour
Ages: Family Audiences (Ages 4+)
Cost: €7/€5**

Family Ticket €24/18** (Group of 4 must contain at least 1 adult)

The Story Store hosted by The Gutter Bookshop, for book sales and author signings after weekend readings.
Dates: Saturday and Sunday Nov 27th - Dec 19th

* Price for Schools Serving Disadvantaged Areas and schools travelling from outside County Dublin.

** Price for students, senior citizens, the unwaged, those parenting alone and their accompanying children.

Tickets can be booked online at www.ark.ie by phone on 01 6707788 or in person at The Ark, 11a Eustace St, Temple Bar, Dublin 2.