

# Final Countdown to BETT special needs awards

The shortlists for the BETT awards have been announced and there are seven candidates left in the running for the ICT Special Educational Needs Solutions award:

**Soundbeam 5**, uses motion sensors to help those with physical, sensory or learning disabilities to create music.  
<http://www.soundbeam.co.uk/>

**VOICEYE**, Forcetenco makes Word documents accessible to those who need learning print or speech support  
[www.forcetenco.co.uk/voiceye](http://www.forcetenco.co.uk/voiceye)



Signed Stories

**Signed Stories**, ITV SignPost. At last, there is a nomination which benefits the deaf community. It has a host of stories with a strong visual appeal in British Sign Language (BSL) and subtitles to be shared with hearing family and friends .  
<http://www.signedstories.com>

**Something Special – Out and About**, BBC. To celebrate the 100th episode of the very popular programme Something Special the BBC has a new website with lots of accessible games and of course  
Mr Tumble  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/somethingspecial/games/something-special-outandabout>

**Boardmaker Studio**, Mayer-Johnson comes with device overlays and starter templates for hundreds of activities including maths surveys, quizzes and games. Students can record and playback their own audio recordings for speech and language activities. <http://www.mayer-johnson.com/boardmaker-studio/>

**Matrix Maker**, Inclusive Technology. This has a mass of templates, symbols, pictures and resources. It will help teachers and therapists make communication overlays as well as

worksheets, timetables labels and games.

<http://www.inclusive.co.uk/matrix-maker>

**Smooth Talker** from Inclusive Technology is a really simple single switch communicator for special schools and early years settings. It will help children to develop basic communication skills <http://www.inclusive.co.uk/smooth-talker-p4946>

All will be revealed at the awards ceremony on Wednesday 11 January 2012 at the Hilton, Park Lane, London and on this site on 12th January.

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## **nasen Awards 2011 – Celebrating Inclusive Practice**

I am heading north this week to cover the nasen awards for Special Children magazine. Four products have been shortlisted for the ICT Resource to support Teaching and Learning Award. 2011 is the National Year of Communication so fittingly 3 entries support speaking and listening skills:



Short listed entry  
Recordable Bar

Recordable Bar/Story Sequencer from TTS Group can be used to create talking stories, class timetables or question and answer games

Sound Shuffle from TTS Group was created by Carol Allen, advisory teacher for ICT and special needs in North Tyneside. It is a brand new device for creating stories, sequencing and

sound effects.

Logan Proxtalker was created by Glen Dobbs for Logan Technologies. It is a moveable picture communication device originally devised for children with autism

MyZone from Inclusive Technology Limited provides a simple desktop and a wealth of activities for people with disabilities who need to access a computer via speech and pictures rather than text

The winners will be announced at a special ceremony at the Reebok Stadium in Bolton as part of Special Needs North.

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## National Schools Film and Animation Awards 2010



A firm but fair  
chair of judges

Children's TV presenter Lady Floella Benjamin is a superstar. She is also a great chair of judges as I discovered yesterday at the Bli National Schools Film and Animation Awards 2010 in Sheffield where a group of educators and journalists spent the day looking at over 40 shortlisted entries covering all the key stages.

We saw reworkings of familiar stories such as the Three Little Pigs and Tell Tale Heart, several pieces on internet safety and lots of entries focusing on environmental issues. There were some strong issues-based pieces covering teenage pregnancy, under age drinking and life in the run down areas found in so many cities in Britain. These would not have

looked out of place on Channel 4 and were highly polished productions which avoided the sanctimonious preaching tone often associated with teenage documentaries. Other pieces were very school based and provided a little affectionate mockery of teachers, their habits and mannerisms.

As judges, we learned a lot about film making and animation as we got a crash course in what works and what doesn't. You could see where entries were under-rehearsed or needed editing. It was obvious where technology dominated and the focus or storyline had become obscured. We talked about everything from the colour of titles to the use of camera angles and sound effects.

Floella is passionate about encouraging children to be creative but she is also a stern critic," 'Good enough' is just not good enough. They should be aiming for the best," she said of one entry. But she was also quick to point out where pupils had conveyed a story or communicated to their audience particularly effectively.

The results of the awards will be announced early in 2011 but you can be certain that whatever form the ceremonies and celebrations take, Floella Benjamin will be there, sharing her passion for creativity and encouraging children to try that little bit harder to be the very best that they can be.

<http://www.floellabenjamin.com/>

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## [Prizes mean purchasers](#)

It's autumn. The nights are drawing in and the leaves are falling so this is a really good time to think about PRIZES. Every year at this time, software companies need to do an

audit of their latest products and check out potential winners. If you don't enter, no one will do it for it and there is a world of potential purchasers out there who may never know just how good your software is.

Some of you will have entered for BETT awards (<http://tinyurl.com/http-bettapp-com>)

The closing date is 4th October so get your skates on if you haven't applied yet.

But for those of you in the world of special needs, the nasen awards might be even more relevant. These awards have been going for 18 years and are described as, "amongst the most prestigious in the UK, representing a recognised hallmark of inclusivity and excellence for educational suppliers, authors and publishers."

This year nasen has announced a new category : ICT Resource to Support Teaching and Learning. This is to celebrate the power of technology as a tool for communication and they are looking for the most innovative and targeted ICT SEN resources which represent value for money. Entries must have been published between 1st May 2009 and 31st December 2010

Have a look at

<http://www.nasen.org.uk/uploads/publications/144.pdf> for the full list of criteria and details of how to enter.

The closing date is 31st December and the winners will be announced at nasen Live 2011 at the Reebok Stadium, Bolton on Tuesday 24th May 2011.

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# BETT Awards open for business

The BETT Awards for 2011 are finally open. The awards are the educational technology equivalent of the Oscars and can generate very welcome publicity for small companies.



A device to help children with ADHD

Last year's special needs short list included two products from TTS Group Limited, *Attention Tracker* which helps children with ADHD to keep on task and *Chatter Block* which can be used for creating stories, sequencing and talk time activities. Other products included *Farview* from Optelec Limited, a handheld video magnifier, Crick's online word processor, *WriteOnline* and CBBC's *Accessible Newsreader*, a talking news website which is also switch accessible. The winner was *RoboBraille* from Royal National College for the Blind in Hereford. This was an internet service which converts digital text documents into [Braille](#) or [audio file format](#).

Special needs company Inclusive Technology which runs a Fringe Show at the Hilton Hotel during BETT each year won the prestigious ICT Company of the Year 2010. The judges praised the company for championing the cause of special educational needs/inclusion through ICT. They also said Inclusive Technology had "gone above and beyond the expectations of an ICT-solutions provider."

This year's awards will be run by Emap Connect and BESA (British Educational Suppliers Association). Because the government is closing Becta, the main sponsor of previous awards, the organisers will be charging an entry fee of £175 plus VAT per product (£155 plus VAT for BESA members).

BETT award entries can be completed online

at <http://www.bettawards.com/>. The closing date is October 4 and the shortlist will be announced at the end of October.