

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



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.

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.

Sharing a platform with big names



I am very pleased to say that I will be presenting at the Literacy Forum at the Education Show in March. This features many well known names from the world of reading and children's literature, including former children's laureate Michael Rosen, Dr Rona Tutt OBE, chair of the board of trustees at the National Literacy Association, novelist Aidan Chambers and Wendy Cooling, who set up the Bookstart Project.



I am running a workshop in the afternoon, showing some of the materials and discussing findings from my book [Screens and Pages](#) published by NIACE.

I am particularly pleased that I will get a chance to meet Verna Wilkins, author and founder of [Tamarind Books](#) It is

really hard to find books which reflect a West Indian heritage and I usually buy some titles at the special needs show in Islington each October for Christmas presents. One of my favourites is Princess Katrina and the Hair Charmer, a great celebration of the beauty of unruly curly hair.

Come and join us on Friday 5th March, at the NEC and help to shape a 'manifesto' publication. This will be co-ordinated by the National Literacy Association, supported by Pearson and will reflect the views of delegates and presenters on the day. The aim of the manifesto will be to change attitudes towards reading in the UK, in order to improve literacy rates and encourage more children to read for pleasure.

If you want to make a difference to literacy and have your views included in the manifesto, visit www.education-show.com/reading and book your tickets. Attendance to the 'Future of Reading' Literacy Forum is £150 plus VAT for the full day programme.

After the Forum, delegates can come to the drinks reception sponsored by Scholastic. See you there!