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**READING FOR PLEASURE IS CRUCIAL,  
SAY LEADING AUTHORS AT UKLA**

*Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore and Washington DC (Monday 7 July 2008)* – Teaching children to enjoy reading rather than just to read is vital in improving literacy, according to two leading authors appearing at the United Kingdom Literacy Association (UKLA) international conference in Liverpool this week.

Prue Goodwin, Editor of *Understanding Children's Books: A Guide for Education Professionals* and Michael Lockwood, author of *Promoting Reading for Pleasure in the Primary School*, both published this month by SAGE, believe that while learning to read can be hard, it is significantly harder if children are not engaged and motivated with the right kind of literature. They further emphasize that teachers and parents working together play a vital role in nurturing young readers with a life-long love of reading. The promotion of reading for pleasure is a key part of the National Year of Reading, and government-led initiatives such as BookStart and Every Child Matters.

Both books offer practical guidance for teachers and families to better understand children's literature themselves, and to understand the role that books play in children's intellectual, spiritual and moral development. This engagement commences right from infancy (Goodwin features contribution on books for babies from Liz Attenborough of the National Literacy Trust) through to young adulthood. Most importantly, they promote the importance of all reading, from fiction to comics and traditional tales.

"There is no question that primary teachers need a really strong knowledge of a whole range of children's books – not just fiction – but also non-fiction and poetry," says Goodwin. "Teachers need to be able to use and share books with children that will engage them and motivate them, and in turn children need books that they can pick up and read comfortably so they experience being an engaged reader."

Bestselling children's author Philip Pullman agrees.

"Pleasure is not a frivolous extra, but the very heart and essence of what reading is about," says Pullman about Lockwood's book.

Both Lockwood and Goodwin emphasize the importance of the family in promoting reading for pleasure and that it should take place both in the classroom and elsewhere.

"Reluctant readers often show a lack of appreciation of the place of reading in daily life, equating books and reading with school literacy only, and making few connections with their home or community literacies," says Lockwood. "These are readers who can read, but perceive reading as something they are forced to do in the classroom and will not choose to do once out of it."

With advice from the leading experts in literacy and education, along with practical guidance and case studies based on first-hand research, these two publications provide detailed guidance and support on how to promote reading for enjoyment.

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Both authors will be launching their publications at the United Kingdom Literacy Association international conference, from 11-13th July 2008, Liverpool Hope University  
[http://www.ukla.org/site/conferences/event/international\\_conference\\_2008/](http://www.ukla.org/site/conferences/event/international_conference_2008/)

**Promoting Reading for Pleasure in the Primary School** by Michael Lockwood is published by SAGE, available in paperback and hardcover from <http://www.sagepub.co.uk/booksProdDesc.nav?prodId=Book230391>

**Understanding Children's Books** by Prue Goodwin is published by SAGE, available in paperback and hardcover from <http://www.sagepub.co.uk/booksProdDesc.nav?prodId=Book232225>

Both authors are lecturers at the University of Reading.

To arrange an interview with Michael Lockwood or Prue Goodwin contact [mithu.mukherjee@sagepub.co.uk](mailto:mithu.mukherjee@sagepub.co.uk)/ 020 7324 2223/ 07795 031 482

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