

Coronation rolls out 21 mobile libraries to disadvantaged schools this World Book Day

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Learners from Cypress Primary in Bridgetown celebrate the gift of new books in colourful fashion.



Book magic: The Grade 1 class of Cypress Primary in Bridgetown got to dress up as book characters and play literacy games in celebration of World Book Day this week. The celebration included the unveiling of five mobile libraries as part of an initiative by Coronation and literacy organisation Living Through Learning to roll out 21 mobile libraries at various schools in Cape Town this month. Since 2018, 74 mobile libraries in total have been rolled out across various schools. The aim is to foster a love of reading in children and to help address the early literacy crisis in the country. The mobile bookcases each contain a wide selection of storybooks and can be wheeled from class to class for the reading pleasure of the entire school.

Picture credit: Werner Ryke

Learners from Cypress Primary in Bridgetown today received five of 21 fully stocked mobile libraries as part of Coronation and literacy organisation Living Through Learning's campaign to support disadvantaged schools across the province for World Book Day. Coronation supports early literacy development to help address South Africa's early literacy crisis.

The colourful literacy event was packed with fun activities for the Cypress Primary juniors, who played literacy games, dressed as book characters, and unwrapped piles of newly received books in the school's vibrant Reading Adventure Room. Learners also received a meal from food relief NGO Ladles of Love.

Coronation board chairperson Alex Watson says: "Improving early literacy outcomes, and especially children's ability to read for meaning and enjoyment by Grade 3, is a critical step in solving South Africa's literacy crisis. We're here today at Cypress Primary to show our commitment to the cause, and also to show the learners that they matter and that a love of reading can open doors for a more prosperous future."



World Book Day delights: The Grade 1 class of Cypress Primary in Bridgetown had loads of literary fun in their school's Reading Adventure Room for World Book Day this week. The celebration is part of an initiative by Coronation and literacy organisation Living Through Learning to roll out 21 mobile libraries at various schools in Cape Town this month. Since 2018, 74 mobile libraries in total have been rolled out across various schools. Judith February, chairperson of Coronation's Social Ethics Committee (seated in the back) and her colleagues regaled the children with stories and games and gave each child their very own book to take home. Coronation's support of this initiative aims to foster a love of reading in children, to help address the early literacy crisis in the country.

Picture credit: Werner Ryke

"The fact is that real reading comprehension and enjoyment by Grade 3 is a critical determinant of future academic success and prosperity for all children. It directly correlates to dropout and pass rates in high school and employability later in life. Coronation is therefore absolutely committed to early literacy interventions in South Africa to help solve the literacy crisis the country is facing, and that is why we are celebrating World Book Day today."

[Recent research](#) reveals that fewer primary school children in SA can read for meaning now than before the Covid pandemic, and 60% of children entering Grade 2 do not know the alphabet. Three million South Africans lack basic education, which costs the economy ±\$6.7bn annually, according to new international [research](#). "More must be done to solve the literacy crisis and therefore the private sector must step in," says Watson.

Coronation is also a long-time partner of Ladles of Love, because of the conviction that hungry children cannot learn. "You can't teach a hungry child, so hunger and literacy are issues that should be addressed in tandem," says Watson.



Reading pleasure: Kim Larbi from Coronation reads a story to the Grade 1 class of Cypress Primary in Bridgetown to celebrate World Book Day. The celebration is part of an initiative by Coronation and literacy organisation Living Through Learning to roll out 21 mobile libraries at various schools in Cape Town this month. Since 2018, 74 mobile libraries in total have been rolled out across various schools. Larbi and her colleagues regaled the children with stories and games. Each child also received their very own book to take home. Coronation's aim is to foster a love of reading in children, to help address the early literacy crisis in the country.

Picture credit: Werner Ryke

“We understand that we are because of our communities, and we have a duty to be a good corporate citizen that enables our communities to reach their potential.”

Since 2018, Coronation and Living Through Learning have jointly rolled out 74 mobile libraries for 53 classrooms in 11 schools, reaching 2,760 learners on a daily basis. This World Book Day, they are installing 21 mobile libraries across various schools in the Western Cape.

“For more than a decade now, we've partnered with leading literacy organisations to address the significant deficit in primary school literacy through various interventions – ultimately to ensure that the children in our many beneficiary schools learn to read for meaning and enjoyment in their foundation phase years.”

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