Table of Contents

I. Introduction .................................................................................................................................................. 3

II. iREAD Vacation School Overview ........................................................................................................... 3
   A. Goals ...................................................................................................................................................... 4
   B. How it Worked ......................................................................................................................................... 4

III. Outcome .................................................................................................................................................. 5

IV. Follow-up ............................................................................................................................................... 6

Appendix A. Rationale (How and Why we decided on iREAD Vacation School) ........................................... 8

Appendix B. Financial Information .............................................................................................................. 9

Appendix C. Letter to Principals ................................................................................................................. 10
I. Introduction

June 2011 marked the conclusion of the 2010/2011 academic year and also the completion of the first year of iREAD, a pilot study in Ghana on the use of e-readers in primary, junior, and senior classrooms. During this year, with the help of teachers and volunteers, Worldreader accomplished the following:

- Delivered over 56,000 books
- Digitized around 100 African textbooks and storybooks
- Made reading fun by organizing out-of-classroom activities and reading competitions for students

As a result, the students in Worldreader’s iREAD program now:

- Spend 50% more time reading, on average, than they did before
- Download one book of their choice for every two that are provisioned to them
- Read better than before – over a 7 - 8 month period, the students in one iREAD primary school improved by 7.6% more than a control group on a government-recognized English exam

With students more excited about reading than ever, a simple question emerged: What to do over the long school break from late July to early September? This vacation period marks the end of one school year and the beginning of another. Student attrition is high in the villages of Ghana; many students transfer to a different school or drop out of school entirely the following year. For the iREAD program, if devices were distributed to students who were transferring or dropping out, they would likely not be returned at all. On the other hand, the vacation period was a great time for students to continue to discover the joy of reading; they could use this break to read books they might not have time for during the normal school year.

The iREAD Vacation School program was designed to allow students access to their e-readers over school break in a supervised environment with minimal risk of theft or loss.

II. iREAD Vacation School Overview

Worldreader started with a really simple idea -- to give students access to books during their long vacation. Between students moving and transferring schools, and dropping out for financial or academic reasons, letting the students take their devices home would have exposed Worldreader to too great a risk of inventory loss. On the other hand, over the course of the first year of iREAD, Worldreader has built a strong reading culture using e-readers and related trainings and activities, and it would be important to maintain this momentum into the second year. After conversations with teachers and some deliberating within the team, Worldreader decided to run what became iREAD
Vacation School -- a minimally-supervised environment where students were encouraged to use their e-readers to read for fun. The consensus was that the foundation laid during the first year would enable such a summer reading program to be a successful one. For more information on the rationale behind this program, see Appendix A.

A. Goals

The primary goal of the program was to encourage and maintain iREAD students' interest in reading by giving them access to books during their vacation, while minimizing the risk of lost devices due to the high student attrition rates. Students might read more and would overall benefit from having opportunities to read outside the home (insulated from distractions such as chores). It would also give Worldreader an opportunity to learn more about the students – would there be sufficient interest? What would students read when not directed towards textbooks by a teacher? How would they handle the e-readers in such an environment?

B. How it Worked

The program, which ran for five weeks (25 school days) in six schools over the long school break, was in essence more similar to an "iREAD vacation library" than iREAD vacation school.

Five teachers were paid per day to staff each of the following schools five days a week (Monday to Friday) from 9am to 1pm:

- Adeiso JHS (one teacher serving Adeiso JHS and Primary)
- Adeiso SHS
- Kade SHS (the Kade SHS teacher was based out of a classroom in Kade JHS)
- Kade JHS
- Kade Primary

The students who chose to participate came and checked out their e-readers and read in the classroom. By design, time spent at iREAD vacation school was largely undirected – we wanted them to read for fun. We asked the teachers to allow the kids an opportunity for unstructured reading. This was very new to them, and there was a fair amount of resistance at first. Some teachers said, "African children can't be left alone to read. We need to give them classes with exercises to do." After some discussion, the teachers were persuaded to give this new approach a try for just five weeks.

Students signed in and out using a log book. Teachers were asked to read at all times on their own e-readers to model good behavior for the students. Students were allowed to take their e-readers home at the teacher’s discretion. Teachers were responsible for keeping track of the e-reader inventory, in addition to keeping an accurate log of the student attendance.
Students who showed up to at least 12 of the 25 days of iREAD vacation school qualified to receive a small amount of credit on their e-reader to buy books of their choice at the start of the school year. In addition, Worldreader named them in a congratulatory note to the principals of their schools, and held a ceremony in which they were publicly recognized for their achievement. All the teachers would also receive a small amount of credit to spend on books at the start of the school year.

III. Outcome

The iREAD Vacation School program was a big success, with 181 student participants attending for a total of 1004 days of student attendance. The average iREAD student attended for seven days, whereas the average non-iREAD participant came for five. The high level of participation was attributable to the already developed reading culture using e-readers and related activities in these communities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th># Students Attended</th>
<th>Days of Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iREAD</td>
<td>non-iREAD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adeiso Primary</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adeiso JHS</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adeiso SHS</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kade Primary</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kade JHS</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kade SHS</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many students expressed regret that they could not attend because they were traveling to visit friends and family far away. Despite this challenge, the average student managed to come in for over a week of reading.

A few notable mentions: DeGraff and Deborah were regular attendees. DeGraff attended 17 days and Deborah attended 16 days. George came for 13 days, even though he was running his mobile phone credit stand at the same time.

No iREAD students at Adeiso SHS came to iREAD vacation school. Students are assigned to high schools without taking into account where they live, and most Adeiso SHS students live far away and attend school as boarding students. As such, their lack of attendance was not due to reduced interest in reading. Some of the Adeiso SHS students expressed their feelings by writing letters to Worldreader. One student, Haruna Salisu, remarked that “spending the holidays without my Kindle is like going to farm without a cutlass.” Even siblings, who had been introduced to the e-reader over the shorter
Christmas break, were affected when the iREAD student went home without his or her e-reader. Charlotte Tetteh wrote, "My smaller siblings ... quickly asked me about my e-reader because they wanted to read a certain interesting story called 'My Brother The Footballer.'"

Also worth noting was the participation of students who were not part of the iREAD program. Worldreader had set up the reading program only for the students involved in iREAD, but nobody had the heart to turn away the other students who showed up nonetheless. Their average attendance was slightly lower than the iREAD students, but one of them, Kingsley Komeku, a JHS student in Adeiso, showed up for 23 out of the 25 days. None of the non-iREAD students received any formal training in using the e-reader, but they learned how to use the e-reader quickly with no problem. They learned by watching their friends, and through trial and error.

IV. Follow-up

It was evident that the reading culture developed during the course of the first year of iREAD directly led to the success of iREAD Vacation School. It is heartening to know that there is so much interest in reading, and that there is so much demand for Worldreader to expand our program. There were 21 students who are part of the iREAD program that attended iREAD Vacation School for more than 12 days. Worldreader sent a letter to the principals of all iREAD schools, listing the names of these students. They will be further recognized during a small ceremony at the beginning of the school year, in the presence of their parents, peers, and some community members. Additionally, they are receiving $8 of e-reader bookstore credit so they can buy a book (or two) of their choice. The Worldreader digital publishing team is providing them with recommendations of books they can read for that price. Some children’s books are inexpensive, so they may even be able to buy more than one book. They have already put the books they want on their wish lists and we look forward to observing which books they are most interested in.

All iREAD teachers are receiving $15 of e-reader bookstore credit. The non-iREAD students who spent more than 12 days in iREAD Vacation School (9 students) are receiving school supplies to encourage them to read more. These students, iREAD and non-iREAD alike, were named in letters to their principals. Worldreader held a small ceremony for teachers and parents, in which a community leader who is also Worldreader’s liaison to the Ministry of Education, Dr. Nana Banchie Darkwah, publicly awarded the students their prizes. Public recognition is a useful tool in cultures like Ghana where social pressure is strong. The parents of the students who were singled out for praise clapped loudly, eyes glowing with pride. All parents present promised to encourage their children to read more in the future.
Additionally, five e-readers remain in each school library for any students and teachers to use at their leisure.
Appendix A. Rationale (How and Why we decided on iREAD Vacation School)

iREAD Vacation School and iREAD@Home were two options that had been carefully considered and discussed prior to the implementation of iREAD Vacation School. In the end, the teachers and headmasters were not in favor of iREAD@Home, where students would be allowed to take devices home with certain risk mitigation measures. The teachers and headmasters thought that the program would be too risky and a lot of devices might be lost over the vacation period. They explained that it was common for kids who transfer or drop out to never show up again, not even to request their transcripts. The estimated dropout/transfer rate is 15-20% and those devices would never be returned. The following sections describe the two options considered.

Option A: iREAD Vacation School

To allow kids access to their e-readers over school break in a supervised environment with minimal risk of theft or loss. Students come to school to check out e-readers to read, with some but minimal adult supervision.

Option B: iREAD@Home

We want kids to get excited about reading, and it is hard to do that with inconsistent access to books. We don't want them to lose momentum over the vacation period, and that might mean for us to have to take on some risks. Students are allowed to take their e-readers home over the break. They are also given chargers. Ideas to mitigate risk:

• Parents come in and sign a form (cannot happen in SHS as parents are far away)
• A community official comes in to give a talk about how they should keep their e-readers safe
• Head teachers make it clear that:
  o Students who don't return their e-readers can no longer participate in the iREAD program (affects continuing students)
  o Students will not get their transcripts if they don't return their e-readers (affects transferring students)
  o Students leave a small deposit that gets returned to them when they bring their e-reader back
Appendix B. Financial Information

The cost incurred for each child per day of iREAD Vacation School was only about $1.39 USD, as shown in the tables below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount (Ghanaian Cedi)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>739.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Wages</td>
<td>1350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stationary</td>
<td>105.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td><strong>2194.9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Days of Attendance: 1004

Cost per child per day: 2.186155378 (~$1.39 USD)

Additionally, to recognize and reward their excellent attendance, 21 children are receiving $8 USD online bookstore credit each to buy books of their choice, and nine (non-iREAD) children are receiving exercise books and pens. Six teachers are receiving $15 USD online bookstore credit each to purchase books of their choice.
Appendix C. Letter to Principals

To:
Kade Secondary Technical School, Kade Presby JHS, Kade Presby Primary
Adeiso Presby SHS, Adeiso Presby JHS, Adeiso Presby Primary

23 September 2011

Dear Head Teachers and iREAD Coordinators.

Congratulations to your students who have distinguished themselves by attending more than 12 sessions of iREAD vacation school.

Adeiso Primary - iREAD
Osare Solomon
Ansah Gyan Fredricka
Boakye Earnest

Adeiso JHS - iREAD
Owusu Daniel
Osae Joyce
Serwaa Alberta
Yahaya Jamailatu
Kini Evans
Sumaila Shaibu
Asare Mary Darkua

Adeiso JHS - non-iREAD
Asabea Mavis
Anagbla David
Komeku Kingsley
Gbogbo Charity
Kumah Francis
Ahiaavor Micheal
Ayeh Emmanuel

Kade Primary - iREAD
Agyare Linda
Tetteh De-Graft
Nadutey Deborah
O doom Francis

Kade Primary - non-iREAD
Asare Emmanuel
Darko Joshua

Kade JHS - iREAD
Deborah Tetteh
Awuah Prince

Kade SHS - iREAD
Afrifa Ampofo George
Affumaa Temah Mavis

We hope these students, and their classmates, feel encouraged to continue expanding their minds through reading.

Thank you for your continued support.

Regards

Zev Lowe
Director of Research and Pilot Operations