HELPING YOUNG DREAMERS BECOME STRONG READERS

Summer 2024
Dear friends,

Education will look radically different in five years. Conflict and climate will disrupt more education systems, placing greater responsibility on parents and caregivers. Digital technology will play an even bigger role in family life. To ensure reading remains a positive, reliable presence in each child’s life, we must evolve with the learning landscape.

Worldreader is steadfast in our commitment to being families’ trusted reading partner and has made change a key component of our strategy.

Over the past year, we’ve worked to enhance BookSmart, keeping it a free, innovative, engaging reading solution that accompanies millions of children and their families as they grow, learn, and thrive. Recently, we were awarded the 2024 EdTech Cool Tool Awards in open educational resources (OER) / open learning solution. As you read this, BookSmart is evolving into an even bigger, more innovative (dare I say, cooler?) tool, and you’ll be the first to get a sneak peek in this Report.

We’ve updated our reading programs to adapt to local needs while staying true to formulas that work. Our small yet passionate teams are meeting parents and children in Kenya’s libraries, parks, and family centers like never before. The Let’s Get Children Reading Grant has returned to support over 60 US-based community-based organizations, bringing reading where families need it most, including prisons, clinics, laundromats, community centers, and more. And we continue to draw readers into BookSmart across the globe.

I’m thrilled that you’re joining us and helping shape the future of education for young readers worldwide. Thank you for your continued support.

Wishing you a wonderful summer season,

Rebecca Chandler Leege,
CEO of Worldreader
“Technology has the potential to address some of the greatest challenges in education today.”

UNESCO

Students from Cahokia School District in Cahokia, Illinois, were excited to use new bookmarks featuring checkboxes to track the number of books they read.
Your impact in 2024

+33%
more readers in comparison to last year

+51%
more books distributed in comparison to last year

+80%
more readers completing 25+ books in comparison to last year

193K
children's lives changed with books

1.15 million
books distributed to children and families through BookSmart

3,662
families and children completing 25+ books
Powering the solutions that will build a learning world

You’re among the first to hear this...
The Worldreader team has been working hard behind the scenes to enhance our award-winning BookSmart reading experience. You can anticipate a personalized journey with the ability to create profiles, set goals, earn and track points, and more. Here are just a few of the enhanced features you can look forward to:

- Beautiful illustrations and colors that spark children’s imagination during reading time.
- A more personalized reading journey with unlimited unique profiles for your family, fun avatars to choose from, and more.
- Read Together as a family and Track Progress of individual sessions – ready to set a Reading Challenge?
- Tons of exciting reading activities to nurture wonder and creativity in your young dreamer, including rhyming games, quizzes, and more!
- Search your next BookSmart read and explore collections of stories about topics children care about.

As always, BookSmart is available free of cost, anytime, anywhere, on any device.
You’re improving the lives of children around the world

“We know our giving is making an impact. Worldreader’s approach is one that you get without having to think. You know that if you get children reading they will learn.”

Neen Koenigsbauer, Worldreader Board Member and Kirk Koenigsbauer, Worldreader Founders Circle Member
Your impact on young readers

In Kenya, a staggering 80% of 10-year-olds are unable to read and understand a simple story, and most families don’t have children’s books in their homes.

Worldreader launched a new partnership with Safaricom, the leading telecommunication company in East Africa, to bring the transformative experience of reading to Kenyan families.

Thanks to this joint effort, over 2,000 Safaricom subscribers will be able to access the BookSmart app without incurring data usage charges, meaning that the data they use will not count towards their data plan or mobile data usage.

Learn more here
Inspiring the future in Kenya

Nelly’s mother, Lydia, had struggled to find suitable reading materials for her young daughter. With the demanding work schedule of running her own store in Kangemi, Kenya, it was hard for Lydia and Nelly to spend quality time reading together. For Nelly, an excited five-year-old who loves stories, not being able to enjoy the adventures and delight of a book was difficult.

This all changed for them with BookSmart.

BookSmart’s simple language and engaging content mean that Lydia can help Nelly read accessible, age-appropriate books. As she continues to read and explore her dreams, Nelly’s love for books has grown. Together as a family, Nelly and Lydia are experiencing the power of BookSmart to foster love, learning, and friendship.

Nelly’s favorite book is Rafiki Yangu Musa, a story that teaches children the value of friendship.
Your impact in communities

We’re excited to have confirmed our Let’s Get Children Reading Grant for a second edition in the United States.

The 2024 program’s call for applications received a tremendous response. We’re proud to partner with over 60 grantees – each community-based organization has been carefully selected based on its ability to directly engage children and families, promote the importance of reading, and build the reading confidence of caregivers and families to support their child’s literacy development.

The Let’s Get Children Reading Grant has an ambitious goal of getting 75,000 children reading through the program.

See all 2024 grantees here
Connecting families in the US

Being incarcerated puts limits on many important parts of life, including spending time with your family. Aftan, mother to three children, ages 3, 12, and 13, is reaching out to her young readers from beyond the bars.

With the help of Little Readers program at The Next Door Transitional Center in Antioch, Tennessee, she recorded herself reading a story from BookSmart.

HeartBound Ministries, one of our Let’s Get Children Reading Grant recipients, was then able to send her children the video of her reading and information about BookSmart.

As a mom, Aftan finds BookSmart to be a great tool for families because not everyone can afford books. She thinks the digital library is important to younger generations, especially because of their increased time spent online.

“It’s literally the coolest thing I have ever heard of,” Aftan says, stating that she believes that Worldreader will have a huge impact on her family, including her younger son as he learns to read. Having access to so many digital books has Aftan excited about the future.

“I am so grateful to y’all and to the Worldreader team!”
Your impact on stories that matter

We’re proud to present Worldreader Originals, the first collection of books published by Worldreader, designed to drive impact and inclusivity through reading.

To make the magic of books accessible to everyone, all Worldreader Originals are published under a Creative Commons license. So far, the books have been translated into several major and local languages, including but not limited to English, Spanish, Hindi, and Kiswahili.
Spreading the word

Over the last 6 months Worldreader has attended and presented at various events, contributing towards important conversations around the future of learning.

We presented with organizations like Opportunity International EduFinance about engaging communities and unlocking the potential of EdTech at CIES 2024.

At the Akili Treasure Hunt at the Ngong Racecourse in Nairobi, Kenya, we met with young readers and their caregivers to read books together and share what BookSmart can offer.

We discussed ideas and strategies aimed at boosting reading and numeracy skills among children at the eLearning Africa 2024 Conference in Kigali, Rwanda.
Spreading the word

We’ve also been **recognized in the news:**

- **EdTech Digest Cool Tool Award 2024 Finalists & Winners**
- **Unlocking Literacy: Navigating Parental Engagement with Worldreader’s BookSmart in Kenya**
- Worldreader supports pupils in Keta Municipality with reading and learning materials
- **Safaricom partners with Worldreader to bring BookSmart reading app to Kenyan children**
THANK YOU

With your support, we’re using stories to turn dreams into reality for young readers everywhere.