

Reading challenges: our proven way to get families reading

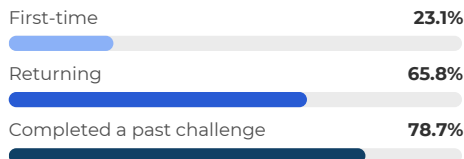
Our approach brings families back for new challenges and keeps them reading more books.



EVIDENCE OF IMPACT: SEPTEMBER 2026 READING CHALLENGE

1,957 families joined in 40+ countries
10,437 reading challenge books read
2,839 Vroom tips completed

Completion rate by experience



Launched in celebration of UNESCO's International Literacy Day, the first global *All Families Reading Challenge* brought families with young children together on BookSmart in September, with curated challenge books and activities in Arabic, English, French, Kiswahili and Spanish.

Reading challenges are designed to help families make reading part of their daily routines. With much of a young child's development occurring outside the classroom, shared reading supports language, social-emotional and early learning skills.

To complete the challenge, families read and complete ten books and five Vroom Tips™, short, science-informed brain building activities created by the Bezos Family Foundation. The selected Tips were designed to build focus and self-control, memory, listening, and early letter and language skills.



Families who completed a 10-book challenge read ~10 more books that month, twice the goal.

In Kenya, challenge participants read 6,582 additional books beyond the challenges across July and September.

WHERE FAMILIES JOINED AND READ, SEPTEMBER

Families joined

1,957 total



Books completed in challenges

10,437 total



Families who completed a brain-building activity

691 total



Kenya

972 families
6,361 books

Peru

456 families
2,411 books

South Africa

220 families
627 books

Guatemala

116 families
488 books

Other markets

193 families
550 books

Each segment is a country's share of the total, in the same order on all three bars.

BUILDING NEW WORLDS, ONE WORD AT A TIME

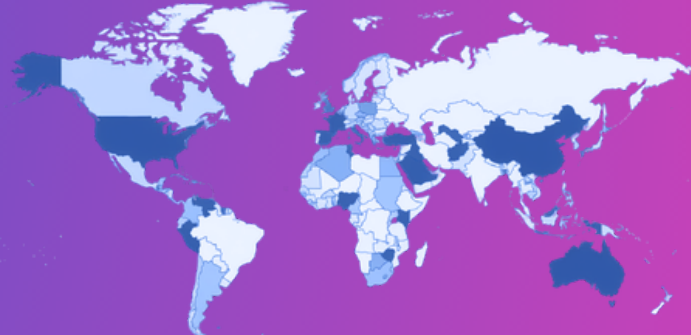
2,191

unique words across
 challenge collections

Books don't just add more words, they add different ones, and different worlds. Every book brings new settings, ideas and words, building background knowledge as well as vocabulary. For example, in Kenya, the September challenge collections contained 639 unique words for ages 3 to 5 and 1,552 for ages 6 to 8.

Learning together in over 40 countries

Sponsors and Family Engagement Champions helped bring families to the challenge.



JOURNEY TO SCHOOL READINESS

691

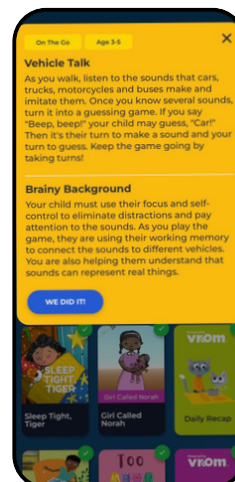
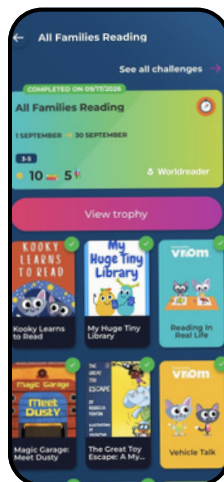
families in 25 countries completed at least one Vroom Tip in September

2,839

Vroom Tips completed by families in September

BookSmart is a free app with thousands of culturally relevant books and Vroom Tips, practical brain-building activities for everyday moments.

Vehicle Talk on a walk builds **focus and working memory**. *Letter Hunt* at an appointment builds **knowledge of letters and their sounds**. *Daily Recap* at mealtime builds **memory**.

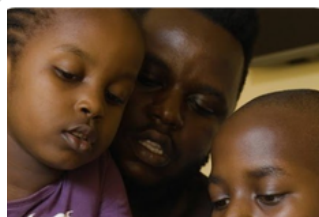


FAMILY VOICES FROM FOUR REGIONS



Peru

Outreach through Tambos, rural community service centers, helped drive a nearly 400% rise in books completed from Q2 to Q3.



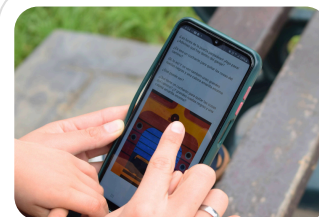
Kenya

Nehemiah Omoke found BookSmart through his local public library, began reading with his children, and now shares the app with other families nearby.



Zimbabwe

Patience Ziramba, a Family Engagement Champion in Zimbabwe, completed the Challenge with her son and encouraged over 100 families to join, including the family pictured here.



Guatemala

New families in Guatemala completed 2,225 books in September, 45% of this year's total so far, including 488 through the challenge.

The All Families Reading Challenge was made possible by the generous support of our sponsors and donors. To help support our November reading challenge, get in touch at development@worldreader.org.

Our sponsors

Bezos Family Foundation

Singer Family Foundation

Family Engagement Champions

Al Kotob Khan for Publishing Fundacion Azteca Guatemala

Early Childhood Development Action Network FACCT

Peruvian Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion (MIDIS) and PAIS

My Special Word Nal'ibali Page by Page Raincembra Publishing

Sabin Vaccine Institute Safaricom SHOFCO Smart Start

Talk Today USA United Way Ghana United Way Guatemala

United Way South Africa United Way Spain UNITI Wayfree