SMS Story:

UNESCO Mobile Learning Week
19th February 2014

Alison Gee
Purna Kumar Shrestha
Our Vision for Action

A world where all children and youth are able to realise their full potential, have a choice, voice and control over their lives
Where we work

Recruitment Countries
China, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Kenya, the Netherlands, Philippines, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Uganda and UK.

Where we work (and have education Programmes)
Cambodia, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Ethiopia, the Gambia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda.
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* We are in the process of starting a new VSO programme in DRC
VSO Education dimensions of change

VSO works to bring about sustainable improvements in education systems, working through multiple interventions at multiple levels of the system, from the school and local community level to national policy level.
WELCOME
"SMS STORY TEAM"
TO:
WAI'DORKUA
Elementary School
NIGL KANDE, GEMBOGL DISTRICT
S.L.I.P SCHOOL
Papua New Guinea education context

- Low English literacy rates in early years
- The difficulties and cost of getting books to schools
- The high cost of in-service training
Baseline data confirmed low achievement in rural students’ reading.

Only 1 child out of 2478 was considered a fluent reader. The other 2477 were not.

- 50% of children could not read any common sight words.
- 75% of children could not read any invented words.
Baseline data has also confirmed that teachers have access to mobile phones. On average they had had them for 2.7 years. 92% teachers had access to one.
Primary Research Question:

Can mobile phone text message lesson plans and stories for teachers improve the reading ability of students in elementary classrooms in Papua New Guinea?
Every day a new story and a new lesson plan

1. 7:00 am

2. February 15th 2013
   Weather: Sunny day
   Phone call
   Is the pig in the pen? No, it's not.
   Every day.

3. 8:00 am

4. I will read the story first and then we will read it together.

5. Look at the flash card.
   This is a new word.
   Say the new word.
   “Pen!”

6. Which other words have this sound?

7. What happens to the pig?
   When have you helped out?
   Where is the pig?
   Who is in the story?
   What happens next?
   More, let's read our own story.

Want to get a daily story?
Please text JOIN to...
7222 9900

If you lose your mobile phone,
Please text your OLD & NEW mobile number to...
7222 9900
### Example story Term 1, Week 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Story</th>
<th>Lesson Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>I sit and nap. I nap at the tap. I sit and nap at the tap. Papa naps at the tap. We sit and nap.</td>
<td>1. Teach sound ‘n’. (nap). 2. Teach: nap, we. 3. Revise words, sounds and letters used last week. 4. Write and read story. 5. Make flash cards: s, a, t, i, p, n, c/k. Use cards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>The ant sits at the tap. The ant sips at the tap. The ant naps at the tap. I sit on the ant. Ants in my pants! Ow!</td>
<td>1. Revise all words, sounds and letters. 2. Teach: ant, pants, Ow! 3. Write and read story. 4. Use flash cards. Say sound on each card, class says sound on each card. Repeat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day</td>
<td>Story</td>
<td>Lesson Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>A long, long time ago there was a sad King. “Please bring me a man to sing me a song,” he said. A man came running and sang a song but the King was still sad.</td>
<td>1. Follow the poster. 2. Teach new sound ‘ng’. 3. Teach new ‘ng’ words: long, king, bring, sing, song, running, still. 4. What other words use the ‘ng’ sound?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>A long, long time ago there was a sad King. “Please bring me a gold ring to look at.” he said. A girl came running with a ring of gold but the King was sad.</td>
<td>1. Follow the poster. 2. Teach new words: gold, ring, look. 3. Why might the King be sad? What makes you sad? When are you sad? What makes you happy?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Homemade story books

The Yellow Bird

The yellow bird is in the coconut tree. She is not in the sun.

Your yellow bird is on your mat. He is very hot in the sun.

You need some water for your yellow bird.
Stories in classrooms
Community involvement and support
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Familiar decodable word reading:</strong></td>
<td>ability to read commonly used decodable words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Familiar sight word reading:</strong></td>
<td>ability to read familiar but non-decodable words selected from the 100 most common English words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Invented words:</strong></td>
<td>ability to read words that could exist, but do not have meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Oral reading (read a story) fluency:</strong></td>
<td>ability to read a story of 55 words. The test was timed to one minute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading comprehension:</strong></td>
<td>ability to answer questions about the story read in the previous section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time period</td>
<td>Data category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 1</td>
<td>Student reading assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 2</td>
<td>Teacher phone interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Random lesson observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 3</td>
<td>Random lesson observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 4</td>
<td>Student reading assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher interview</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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School characteristics are the same for control and active schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Treatment group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average teacher's age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average years of teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher qualification</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Still in training</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training in phonics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>33</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Reading assessments
Do text message lesson plans and stories lead to a significant improvement in student reading ability?

Yes!
Statistics from different reading tests

![Bar chart showing average scores for different reading tests: Decodable words, Sight words, Invented words, Oral reading, and Reading comprehension. The chart compares Baseline Active, Baseline Control, Final Active, and Final Control groups.]
Children who could read no words in our tests in term 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Decodable words</th>
<th>Sight words</th>
<th>Invented words</th>
<th>Oral reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active</strong></td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control</strong></td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Children who could read no words in term 4
Good practice observed in active schools

- 98% of teachers read story to the class from the chalkboard
- 98% of children read story aloud from chalkboard
- 50% of observed pupils read in groups
- 83% of pupils answering, relevant questions.
- 69% observed teachers teaching sounds
- 79% observed teachers explaining new English words
Positive teacher feedback

• All teachers used stories
• All teachers rated lesson plan and story content good or very good
• 81% of teachers write the story in a notebook
• 98% of teachers thought the stories and lesson plans had influenced the way they teach reading
• 53% now prepare their lessons
• 94% thought they had gained more competence in teaching.
Assessment Report (Summary) for download

SMS Story – Final Impact Assessment Report

SMS Story – Final Assessment Report (Full)

http://bit.ly/1ID6kr0
About SMS story project

• Implemented by VSO in partnership with the Papua New Guinea Department of Education.

• Funded by the Australian Government, through a research grant from the Economic and Public Sector Program.

Research team included:

  Nasiib Kaleebu,
  Alison Gee
  Richard Jones
  Marshall Jauk
  Amanda Watson
Thank you and stay in touch

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If you would like to explore partnership opportunities with VSO on similar research based education projects in countries where VSO works, we would love to hear from you, contact us:
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