

7 August 2025

National Book Week & International Literacy Day 2025

Dear Book Friends,

Once again, on behalf of the Publishers' Association of South Africa (PASA) Literacy Committee, I am writing to invite you to join a collaborative effort to celebrate the power of books and the joy of reading.

In September, we have the opportunity to use our collective reach to mark **National Book Week (5-11 September)**, incorporating **International Literacy Day on 8 September**. We know that this week is already a vibrant time of activation, with wonderful campaigns led by crucial partners like Nal'ibali.

PASA's goal is not to reinvent these efforts, but to enhance and amplify them. We want to harness the collective energy of our members and the wider book value chain to broaden the reach of these existing campaigns. Our aim is to encourage each player to use their respective platforms to create a joyous cacophony celebrating books, authors, readers and fun campaigns. We urge you to be creative, have fun and carry the message of literacy and the love of reading to every corner of the market – from our core partners to the book-buying public, schools and libraries.

By working together, we can create an even more impactful and visible national celebration. We invite your organisation to participate by creating your unique campaign that aligns with the spirit of the week. To help inspire your planning, the attached suggested **Action Plan** is filled with ideas for different stakeholders.

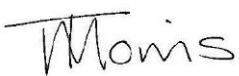
Your participation is a vital part of this collaborative effort. Together, we can build on previous campaigns and the important work already being done and ensure the call to read is heard far and wide. As a reminder the three key events in the annual calendar that this committee will continue to work on are:

- World Read Aloud Day – first Wednesday in February
- World Book Day – 23 April
- National Book Week/ International Literacy Day – 8th September

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to building a reading nation. We look forward to celebrating with you.

Yours in literacy,

Terry Morris



Chair, PASA Literacy Committee

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PASA Literacy Campaign: International Literacy Day & National Book Week 2025

Ideas for #NationalBookWeek #LiteracyDay

Here are some ideas to get you started. We encourage you to be creative and adapt these to suit your organisation and community.

For Publishers (using the hashtag and linking back to National Book Week and International Literacy Day):

- **Launch a Book:** Time the release of a new, exciting local title to coincide with the week.
- **Author Tours:** Organise virtual or in-person events with your authors at schools, libraries or bookstores.
- **Create Digital Packs:** Develop shareable digital content (author interviews, activity sheets, games) for booksellers, schools, and libraries.
- **Partner:** Collaborate with an NGO on a specific book drive or fundraising initiative.
- **Staff Activation:** Encourage your staff to participate in all campaigns and any outreach or community events.

For Booksellers:

- **Create a "Buy a Book" Drive:** Partner with a local school or library and encourage customers to buy a book to donate.
- **Host In-Store Events:** Organise author signings, story hours, or book-themed workshops.
- **Vibrant Displays:** Create eye-catching displays featuring local authors and books that celebrate South African stories.
- **Run a Promotion:** Offer special discounts on children's books or local fiction for the week.
- **Reading Corners:** Set up a comfortable National Book Week branded reading corner where customers especially children can relax and page through books.

For Libraries:

- **Membership Drive:** Run a campaign to sign up new members, highlighting the free access to a world of books.
- **Themed Exhibitions:** Set up displays on themes like "Our Nation's Stories," "Books Build Bridges," or "A Reading Nation."
- **Host Workshops:** Organise workshops on creative writing, illustrating, or even how to start a book club.
- **Partner with a School:** Work with a local school on a reading challenge or a class visit to the library.

For Schools:

- **DEAR (Drop Everything And Read):** At a set time each day, the entire school stops for 15-20 minutes of reading
- **Book Character Day:** Have learners and teachers dress up as their favourite book characters.
- **Book Swap:** Organise a school-wide book swap to give learners access to new reading material or an

opportunity to establish a Book Club.

- **Invite a Guest Reader:** Ask a local author, community leader or parent to come and read to a class.
- **"Shelfie" Competition:** Encourage learners to take a "shelfie" (a selfie with their favourite bookshelf) and share why they love the books on it.

For Families:

- **Visit a Book store or Library:** Make a special family outing to your local bookstore or library.
- **Daily Reading Time:** Dedicate 15 minutes every evening of the week to reading together as a family.
- **Create a Book Nook:** Work together to build a cozy and special reading corner in your home.
- **Gift a Book:** Let your child choose a book to give to a friend or to donate to a charity.
- **Share Stories:** Use dinner time to talk about the books you are each reading.

Why This Matters: The South African Context

Driving a culture of reading is more than a passion; it is a national imperative. Consider these facts:

- **81%** of South African pupils in Grade 4 cannot read for meaning in any language (PIRLS study, 2023).
- **63%** of households in South Africa do not own a single fiction or non-fiction book (NRB 2023).
- Only **8%** of our government schools have functional libraries (Equal Education).

Every book read, every story told, and every new reader created is a step towards building a reading nation.

Share Your Story & Keep the Momentum

1. Share your activities online and use the official hashtags so we can follow the national conversation and amplify your efforts.

Hashtags: #NationalBookWeek #LiteracyDay

2. Measure the impact of your campaigns and reach and report back to the PASA Literacy committee.
3. Write a short article about it for the PASA LinkedIn platform to drive awareness of PASA and the literacy committee.
4. After the week concludes, let's keep the energy alive. Encourage the book clubs, reading habits, and library visits to continue. By working together, we can ensure the excitement of National Book Week extends throughout the year, truly helping to build a reading nation.