

# THE NATIONAL LITERACY AGENCY

MINISTRY FOR EDUCATION, SPORT, YOUTH, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION



## ANNUAL REPORT 2023 HIGHLIGHTS



# PROMOTING LITERACY SKILLS AND PRACTICES

## Inrawmu t-trabi jaqraw

### Nurturing the love of reading in babies

Seminars for expectant parents and parents/caregivers of new-born babies on the importance of reading aloud to babies.

**50 seminars**

**304 families**

**213 free literacy packs**



## Well Baby Clinic information sessions

Outreach initiative to encourage parents/caregivers to attend storytelling sessions and to read aloud to their babies at home.

**6,020 parents/caregivers**

**427 sessions**



## Ġenituri l-Ewwel Għalliema

### Parents the First Teachers

A course of 5 sessions offering practical tips to parents/caregivers in helping their children (1 to 3 years) develop linguistic and communication skills.

**7 courses**

**51 families**

## Aqra Miegħi

### Read with Me

An early literacy programme, sponsored by Bank of Valletta, intended for children aged between 0 and 3 years and their parents/caregivers. Each session features the sharing of storybooks, the singing of nursery rhymes and other fun activities for this age group.

**BOV**  
Bank of Valletta

**53 centres**  
**2820 sessions**  
**reaching 3095 children**

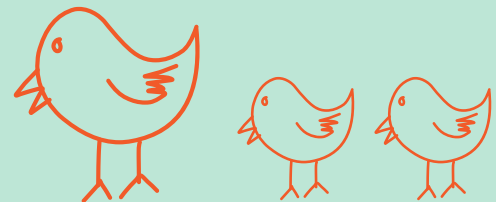


## Seher l-Istejjer The Magic of Stories



A bilingual literacy programme to promote a love of books among children aged 4 to 7 years through the involvement of their parents/caregivers or classroom educators.

**61 primary schools**  
**16 FES Klabb 3-16 centres**  
**16 local communities**  
**over 10,500 children**



## Gost il-Qari The Pleasure of Reading

A reading for fun programme for children aged between 7 and 11 that encourages self-expression through reading aloud, discussions, role-play, and other activities.

**56 primary schools**  
**5 FES Klabb 3-16 centres**  
**6 local communities**  
**over 6,200 children**

## AI for Literacy Education

A project undertaken with the Centre for Literacy (UoM) and the Malta Digital Innovation Authority to develop and promote AI in education projects with children (8- to 10-year-olds), educators and parents.

**Jan - Jun (pilot): 114 students in 2 schools**  
**Oct - Dec (one-off sessions): 494 children in 9 schools**



## KidzDesign

'KidzDesign-Young Designers through narratives: Building a Better World Together' was a pilot project organised through the collaboration between the Centre for Literacy – University of Malta and the National Literacy Agency.

The aim of this project was to teach young creatives the basics of design whilst getting inspirations from books, stories, and illustrations.

**1 primary school**  
**59 children**  
**10 educators**



**L-Università ta' Malta**  
Centre for Literacy



## Naqraw Flimkien

### Let's Read Together

A television programme, produced in collaboration with Public Broadcasting Services, to promote the love of reading through stories read in an interactive way and in a beautiful environment.

**65 new episodes**



## Naqra Naqra

A reading corner in the daily children's programme 'Hej' produced by Brandon Terribile with the support of the Agency and broadcast on the national television station.

**65 new episodes**



## Espressjoni Kuljum

Short clips including expressions in the Maltese language and their meaning, produced by Public Broadcasting Services in collaboration with the Agency.

**65 new episodes**

## Għidli Storja

### Tell Me a Story

Through the telling of folktales and legends in Maltese or English and the activities based on the stories, Y5 students are supported to develop their oracy skills, i.e., speaking and listening, and listening comprehension, as well as the ability to create and narrate stories.

**453 Year 5 students (full programme)**

**211 students (other year groups, one-off sessions)**

**98 students FES Klabb 3-16**



## Skejje! Rakkontaturi

### Storytelling Schools

The Storytelling Schools methodology provides children with the necessary storytelling skills to help build confidence and fluency in spoken language, and to raise the standards of reading and writing.

**19 primary schools**

**2 middle schools**

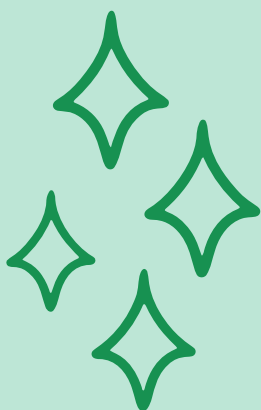
## Il-Festival tal-Irrakkontar tal-Istejjer

### The Storytelling Festival

The first edition of this festival, with Nick Hennessey, an internationally acclaimed storyteller and musician as the guest storyteller.

**434 children**

**11 primary schools**



## L-Ambaxxaturi tal-Qari

### Reading Ambassadors

A literacy initiative in schools to promote a positive attitude towards reading through organised events involving local personalities including footballers, singers, actors, presenters, broadcasters, and journalists. This programme is partially sponsored by Agenda Bookshop.

**18 personalities**

**30 activities**

**over 2,700 children**



## Bil-Qari u l-Kitba Niskorja

### Footballers' Read and Write Programme

A football and literacy programme that offers upper-primary and middle school students the opportunity to participate in reading and writing activities related to football.

**Cycle 10: 10 schools, 79 children**

**Cycle 11: 13 schools, 117 children**



## Sfidi Kalċistiċi

### Skills Challenge

A set of football related skills challenges with book gifts for participants and winners.

**20 children**

## Sports and Literacy Activities

Fun physical activities that seek to boost children's literacy, coordination, and communication skills

**7 schools**

**466 children**



## Naqra Teatru Literacy and Drama

A literacy and drama programme that aims to boost pupils' reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills through engaging language and drama activities.

**Cycle 3: 2 schools, 32 children**

**Cycle 4: 2 schools, 36 children**

## Raddiena Kliem

### Spell it out

An activity to encourage and support students to spell better in Maltese.

**Online: 6 schools, 15 sessions, 257 children**

**In-person: 41 schools, 169 sessions, 3,100 children**



## Il-Litteriżmu tas-Simboli

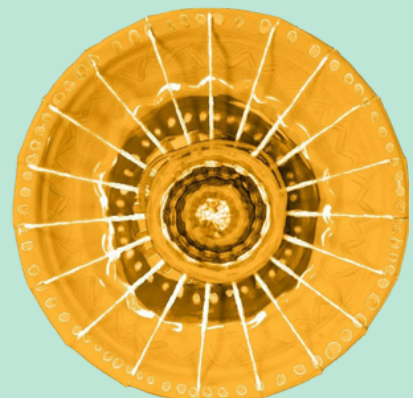
### Symbol Literacy

A project in collaboration with Professor A.M. Gellel from the University of Malta, grounded in socio-cultural theory and meant to help children develop their observation, thinking and creative skills.

**53 sessions**

**800 children**

**132 educators**



## Xalati ta' Kitba

### Family Writing Activities

Family writing activities in historical, cultural, or rural places that present writing as a positive experience and link it to everyday activities. Heritage Malta is the major collaborator and Merlin Publishers sponsors books given as a gift to attending students.

**3 activities**

**55 children**

**45 adults**



## Titkellem Ruĥna

### Soul Speak

Organised in collaboration with Spiritual Development in Schools, helps children develop further their writing skills, in English and Maltese, by making use of reflection and the writing process.

**4 sessions**

**2 children**



## Bil-qari u l-kitba nsib Spazju għal Qalbi

### With reading and writing I find a Beloved Space

Bilingual sessions for 8- to 10-year-olds and their families offering the opportunity to practise animated reading, creative writing and reflection based on a story from the book 'Spazju għal Qalbi - Beloved Space' by author Silvana Cardona. Organised in collaboration with Spiritual Development in Schools.

**3 bilingual sessions**

**28 children**

**24 adults**





## Promoturi tal-Qari

### Reading Champions

A nationwide campaign that rewards Y7 and Y8 students who are proficient readers in Maltese and English. It also awards students who improve their reading skills or promote reading and writing among their peers.

**33 schools**

**97 reading champions**



## Brillantini tal-Qari

### Reading Stars

This initiative rewards outstanding students of all ages who love reading and who read in public spaces, such as in public gardens, waiting rooms, playgrounds, and while waiting for the school transport. The initiative is sponsored by Merlin Library.



**33 reading stars**

## Brillantini tal-Kitba

### Writing Stars

Promotes and spreads the love for reading and writing and develops the creative writing skills of students in primary and middle schools.

#### 3rd edition of the Festival for Writing Stars:

##### School visits

- 4 schools
- 396 students
- 53 educators

##### Writing workshops

- 13 authors
- 48 students from 27 schools



## European Day of Languages

A language competition in which children and young adults are invited to take part in a competition: *What do you dare to do in a foreign language?* by creating a short video clip that demonstrates their skills in a foreign language. This initiative is supported by the Representation of the European Commission in Malta.

**35 submissions**

**6 winners**

**4 runners-up**



## Il-Jum Dinji tal-Ktieb

### World Book Day

The National Literacy Agency organised various competitions on the occasion of World Book Day 2023:  
K1 & K2 Decorate the classroom door as a book cover

Y1 & Y2 Decorate a notice board to promote or show the beauty of reading

Y3 to Y6 Create a book character using a potato

Y7 & Y8 Bookface competition

Y9 & Y11 Create a book cover



**1592 entries**

**34 winners**

## Skejjel Promoturi tal-Kotba

### Book Champion Schools

Schools are invited to submit a report on the organised activities to promote reading and literacy and to celebrate World Book Day.

**Gold Award - 55 schools**

**Silver Award - 19 schools**

**Bronze Award - 5 schools**

**€7,270 worth of book vouchers awarded**



# Qaritona Nazzjonali

## National Readathon

Organised by the National Literacy Agency and the Malta Trust Foundation, with the support of the Malta Public Transport, the National Readathon seeks to foster a love of reading in children with different abilities and empower and encourage them to reach their potential. Funds for this project are raised by school children as well as the corporate partners of the Malta Trust Foundation in aid of the purchase of tailor-made, augmentative communication devices to assist the education of children who are non-verbal and on the autism spectrum and assistive devices for children with visual impairments to help them to read and follow the educational curriculum.

around **8,500** children

**33** schools





## Aqra fis-Sajf

### Summer Reading Campaign

A campaign organised to sustain the abilities and skills pupils acquire throughout the school year.

In collaboration with:

5 Catch-Up Schools

47 SkolaSajf FES centres

28 School Libraries

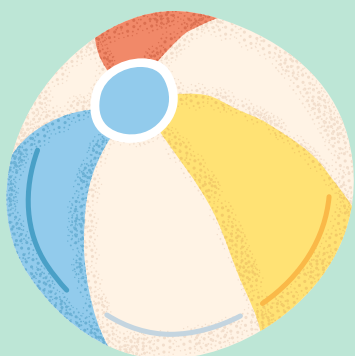
**3,880 reading sessions**

**91 storytelling sessions**

**2 FRWP (summer edition) groups**

**2,088 school library patrons**

**3,137 books borrowed**



# SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH LITERACY DIFFICULTIES

## Reading Recovery

Reading Recovery (RR) is an accredited school-based literacy programme in English for the lowest achieving children aged five or six, that enables them to reach age-expected levels within 20 weeks. It involves a series of daily one-to-one 30-minute lessons with a specially trained teacher.

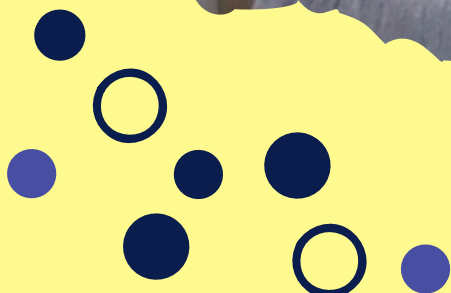
The programme is different for every child, starting from what the child knows and what s/he needs to learn next. The focus of each RR lesson is to comprehend messages in reading, construct messages in writing, and learn how to attend to detail without losing focus on meaning.

**56 schools**

**582 children entering RR**

**294 children exiting RR**

From July to September 2023, 116 RR learners benefitted from individual online literacy support in English provided by Reading Recovery teachers.



## Nwar Family Literacy Programme

Nwar is an after-school, family literacy programme for primary school pupils who have not acquired the required basic skills level. Dedicated literacy tutors who have followed a professional development course in literacy, provide systematic literacy intervention to children with literacy difficulties, as well as encourage, upskill and motivate parents/guardians to support their children to become confident readers and writers.

**10 Nwar centres**

**276 students accompanied by a significant adult**

Nwar also provided online support in summer to 200 children.



## Klabb Naħla Literacy Programme

Klabb Naħla is an after-school literacy intervention programme for children with literacy needs identified by their respective schools. The additional literacy support consolidates reading and writing skills through a balanced literacy and hands-on multi-sensory approach. Sessions are delivered twice or three times weekly by educators who work within the same school. Klabb Naħla is supported by Klabb Kotba Maltin.

**Jan - June : 452 children from 27 schools**

**Oct - December : 551 children from 27 schools**

Klabb Naħla also provided online support during summer to 232 children.



## **Flewwet il-Qari**

### **Read Aloud Programme**

This programme is offered to students identified by the National Literacy Agency as most likely to benefit from it. It consists of three weekly interactive one-to-one online read aloud sessions delivered, in either Maltese or English, by trained reading tutors

**Jan - June : 62 children**

**Oct - December : 54 children**

There is also the summer version of the programme from which 78 children benefitted.



## **Ir-Rimonta**

A Maltese literacy intervention programme designed for middle school students who are struggling to read and write. During scholastic year 2023-2024 this programme continued at St Ġorġ Preca College Blata l-Bajda Middle School under the guidance of Ms Stephanie Apap, Head of Department for Maltese. The aim of the school literacy team is to help certain students attain grade level proficiency and raise their reading comprehension and writing levels.



# PRODUCTION AND PUBLICATION OF LITERACY RESOURCES

## Bil-Ħila Tagħkom

Bil-Ħila Tagħkom fosters the creation by educators of innovative resources to promote Maltese among children, adolescents, and students with learning difficulties. The main purpose of this scheme is to enrich the classroom environment with books, to promote a love for reading amongst students.

**13 big books**

**51 reading books**

**2 other resources (playdough mats)**



## Bis-Sehem Tagħkom

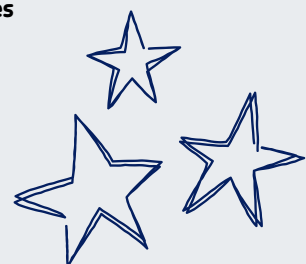
A scheme whereby local publishers are invited to submit original teaching and learning material for publication in Maltese through an expression of interest. Selected projects are funded up to €2,500 by the National Literacy Agency. An agreement outlining terms and conditions is established between the Agency and the publishers.

**35 reading books**

**31 audio-visual resources**

**1 CD**

**4 educational games**





# INCREASING ACCESS TO LITERACY RESOURCES

## Literacy Resource Centres

The Agency manages two Literacy Resource Centres, one in Malta and one in Gozo. These Centres cater for all education professionals who wish to use the books and resources. Resources in both Centres were selected on the recommendations of the heads of department literacy, literacy support teachers, class teachers, LSEs, and complementary teachers. These literacy resources can be delivered to educators' school or home address.



**Ġmiel il-Qari LRC (Malta) – 21,715 books and resources, 333 patrons**  
**Xagħra LRC (Gozo) – 6,552 books and resources, 51 patrons**

## Aqra d-Dar

### Read at Home

The 'Aqra d-Dar/Read at Home' scheme provides students aged 3 to 16 with attractive and diverse books they can read in the comfort of their homes. Through the 'Read at Home' scheme, all primary, middle, and secondary students can borrow up to six books, three in Maltese and three in English to be chosen from age-appropriate catalogues online. Books are delivered to the doorstep free of charge.

**1,363 new subscribers**

**4,764 new books**



## Librerija f' Kull Dar

### Home Libraries

#### *Scheme 9 distribution of books*

The National Literacy Agency, in collaboration with the National School Support Services and the Foundation for Social Welfare Services, distributed books to children (up to 11 years old) from vulnerable families as part of the Home Libraries programme through Scheme 9.

**840 children**

**2,092 books**



#### *Il-Kotba Hbieb tat-Tfal / Books are children's friends*

A set of four books per child (two in Maltese and two in English) distributed to children in all primary schools in Malta and Gozo. The initiative started towards the end of 2023 with children in Y1 and Y2.

**842 children**

**3,368 books**



#### *Sustainable Baby Boxes*

The National Literacy Agency assisted the Ministry for the Environment, Energy and Enterprise in the stocking of sustainable baby boxes by providing a set of two books, one in English and another in Maltese to be included in these boxes.



**3870 babies**

**7,740 books**



## L-Għodda f'Idejk

L-Għodda f'Idejk' scheme distributes literacy resources, mostly to kindergarten and primary classrooms, and to complementary education teachers. These resources include big books, reading books, posters, and flashcards. Most of the resources are sourced through the 'Bil-Ħila Tagħkom' and the 'Bis-Sehem Tagħkom' and are distributed free of charge.

**23,721 free books and other resources**



Furthermore, through L-Għodda f'Idejk scheme, the National Literacy Agency assists schools that wish to purchase graded readers or eBooks for the promotion of guided reading and/or shared and/or independent reading, storytelling, and guided and/or independent writing. Through this scheme, schools pay only half of the costs involved, with the other half being paid by the Agency.

**21 schools**

**4,037 books and other resources**

In the case of schools which commit themselves to implement guided reading the Agency provides the graded readers for free.

**11 schools**

**2,287 books**



## Ismagħni Naqra

### Talking Books Project

This project aims to make books available to all children, including children with visual impairment.

**12 new audio-books**

## Aqra Kemm Tiflaħ

### Enhancing Classroom Libraries

Through this programme, the National Literacy Agency, in collaboration with state primary schools, enhances classroom libraries enabling children to interact directly with books, demonstrate positive attitudes towards reading, spend more time reading and exhibit higher levels of reading achievement.



**56 new Kindergarten classes – 3,446 books and 112 hand puppets**

**118 additional Kinder and Primary classes – 11,302 books and 92 hand puppets**

**6 classes topped up with 220 books (lower bands)**

**40 Catch-Up Schools classes supported with 3,998 books**

### *Maltese Classroom Readers*

The Agency distributed classroom readers in Maltese to primary state schools. Reading in the classroom is a strategy which helps in improving reading skills amongst young children promoting greater concentration, comprehension, fluency, assessment, and motivation.

**55 schools**

**14,419 books**

## Digital Books in Maltese

In 2023, the National Literacy Agency initiated a new venture to acquire Maltese eBooks. The whole project is meant to acquire 300 new eBooks in Maltese over three years. This project involves Malta Libraries as an aggregator that uploads these eBooks on their platform Overdrive. Through Malta Libraries' platform, these books can be read for free by the public on the electronic application called Libby.



## Dissemination of audio-visual resources through the Agency's YouTube channel

The National Literacy Agency disseminates the audio-visual resources produced by its staff and those the production of which it supports, through its [YouTube channel](#). These resources include recorded reading and storytelling sessions, short cartoons in Maltese, and television programmes produced with the participation of the Agency.

**52 new resources**

**513,015 views (all uploaded resources)**



## Hi-Lo Books, Graphic Novels, and Dyslexia-Friendly Books and Resources

In 2023, the Agency distributed 5,129 dyslexia-friendly books, graphic novels, and high interest/low readability (hi-lo) books to all state middle and secondary schools and public libraries.

### Sidewalk libraries

The National Literacy Agency is collaborating with Project Green to install fifty sidewalk libraries in open spaces in various localities across the Maltese Islands over the coming four years.



Furthermore, in collaboration with the Directorate for Local Government, the Agency issued an Expression of Interest for Local Councils wishing to have one of these libraries in their open spaces. Eighteen local councils applied for this Expression of Interest, two of which are in Gozo.

The Agency is looking forward to sustaining the cooperation with these different entities to provide the public with easy access to books and promotion of book sharing through these sidewalk libraries.

# SPECIALISED UNITS

## The Literacy and Information Support Unit (LISU)

Within the Agency, the Literacy and Information Support Unit offers support to all school libraries in Malta and Gozo. It supports schools in both the technical and curricular aspects of libraries.

**26 middle, secondary, and post-secondary schools**

**68 primary schools**

**40,875 books processed**

## The Language Policy in Education Unit

The Language Policy in Education Unit works in collaboration with the Language Policy in Education Committee to draw up language in education policies for the early, junior, and secondary years. It also organises seminars for educators and parents/guardians on the use of languages with children and adolescents, creates resources and materials to promote bilingualism in educational settings, and conducts research in schools on language use and ways in which teachers can enhance children's bilingual development.



*Let us keep working together towards the fulfilment of our vision ...*

**To enrich the lives of people and communities  
by strengthening literacy skills  
and thus help reduce poverty,  
promote social inclusion,  
and foster personal well-being.**