



BIBBIDI BOBBIDI BOOK!

CHILDREN'S LITERACY PROGRAM PROPOSAL

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August 6, 2021

Anita Elliott
Principal Officer
Dollar General Literacy Foundation
100 Mission Ridge
Goodlettsville, TN 37072

Dear Ms. Elliott:

As we drive in our cars, thoughts focused solely on our lives and our difficulties and our destination, we don't spare a thought to the people we pass by in the street. Each of us are tuned in to a radio station that plays just one song. And to us, the world seems quiet. But that's only because we can't hear the cries for help.

In 2003, more than 34 million Americans were considered illiterate, and were shackled from accomplishing even the most basic achievements like reading a map or giving their child medicine.

I grew up in Johnstown, PA—aka Flood City. Our history is flooded with stories of perseverance, of getting back up and rebuilding from nothing. I'd like Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! to be a part of the foundation of the city, of what its people can build. But it's not going to be easy. Up to 38.4% of Johnstown's population is living in poverty. That's more than 7500 people who are struggling to make ends meet every day.

Their struggles can be overcome. Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! wants to help fight illiteracy in Pennsylvania by encouraging a love of reading in students at an early age. Our plan to achieve our dream and decrease illiteracy is to:

1. **Establish** a reading program for 1st through 5th graders at Eastside Elementary in Johnstown, PA during 2021-2022 school year that will encourage students to read two books per month that are outside of the student curriculum.
2. **Donate** 100 books to school's library to increase book variety throughout all reading levels and increase chances of children finding a book that sparks a love of reading.
3. **Create** book matchmaking quiz to match students with books that suit their interests and reading levels.
4. **Establish** partnership between Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! and The Meadows, an ice cream shop in Johnstown, which will reward students who meet reading goals with ice cream.

Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! is requesting a total of \$4500 to fulfill these goals. With this money, we can help combat illiteracy and give children a better chance at a career. With his money, we take a step in fighting poverty. And, really, that's the ultimate dream.

The Dollar General Literacy Foundation knows the importance of education, and how a skill as





simple as reading can make all the difference to a child. You don't take literacy for granted, and neither do we. With the Dollar General Literacy Foundation acting as the Gandalf to our Frodo, the Dumbledore to our Harry, the, uh, Edward to our Bella, I know that we can make a difference to Pennsylvania, to Johnstown, and—most importantly—to the children who reside there.

Thank you so much for your time. I look forward to the opportunity to present a full proposal, to discuss the struggles children face every day, and how Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! can help prove to those children just how powerful they are.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Rehann R. Rheel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R'.

Rehann R Rheel
Executive Director
Bibbidi Bobbidi Book!



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PROJECT NARRATIVE

There are children who struggle to read. Who feel ashamed of that struggle.

There are children who are often stuck at home, who don't have friends, who always, always feel alone.

There are children with potential enough to set a blaze to the world...but nothing to trigger that spark.

But it doesn't have to be like that.

Their struggles can be overcome. All creatures, in order to become good at something, need to practice that something. A child with a plethora of books at their fingers will be able to hone this skill, improving with each and every book they read. There are even books about people with learning disabilities and people who struggle to read, to help inspire these kids to continue battling forward.

Companionship can be found outside of school and work and family. After all, I have many best friends I've never even met. Perhaps you've heard of some of them: Nancy Drew, Rose Hathaway, Harry Potter, Mia Thermopolis, Feyre Archeron. Since I was a child, if I were sad or scared or lonely or bored, I had friends who'd take me away with them on an adventure. And when I came back to real life—even if things were technically still as awful as I'd left them—somehow, things were better. I was better.

Exploration and growth can happen anywhere, at any time. If a mind is limited, a person's potential is limited. And a lack of experience is very limiting. How could you imagine something like the ocean if you've never seen a picture of it? Never even been told of it? Books allow children to safely explore the farthest places on Earth—and even places that will never, can never, exist. Stimulating their imagination breaks down barriers and lets them hope and dream and—as Nancy Duarte, author and CEO, said—to create the future.

This is the reality for many children. They have access to books and support, and can thus take advantage of these opportunities so that they can create their best future. Unfortunately, for many other children this is nothing but a fantasy.

In 2003, an assessment from National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) showed that around 11.8% Americans were considered illiterate. That means there were more than 34 million American citizens who were shackled from accomplishing even the most basic achievements like reading a map or giving their child medicine, let alone larger accomplishments like graduating college and getting a job that pays a living wage.

The good news is that illiteracy in America is on the decline. In the 1992 NAAL study, 13.7% lacked basic prose literacy skills. But in 2003, that number had fallen to 11.8%.

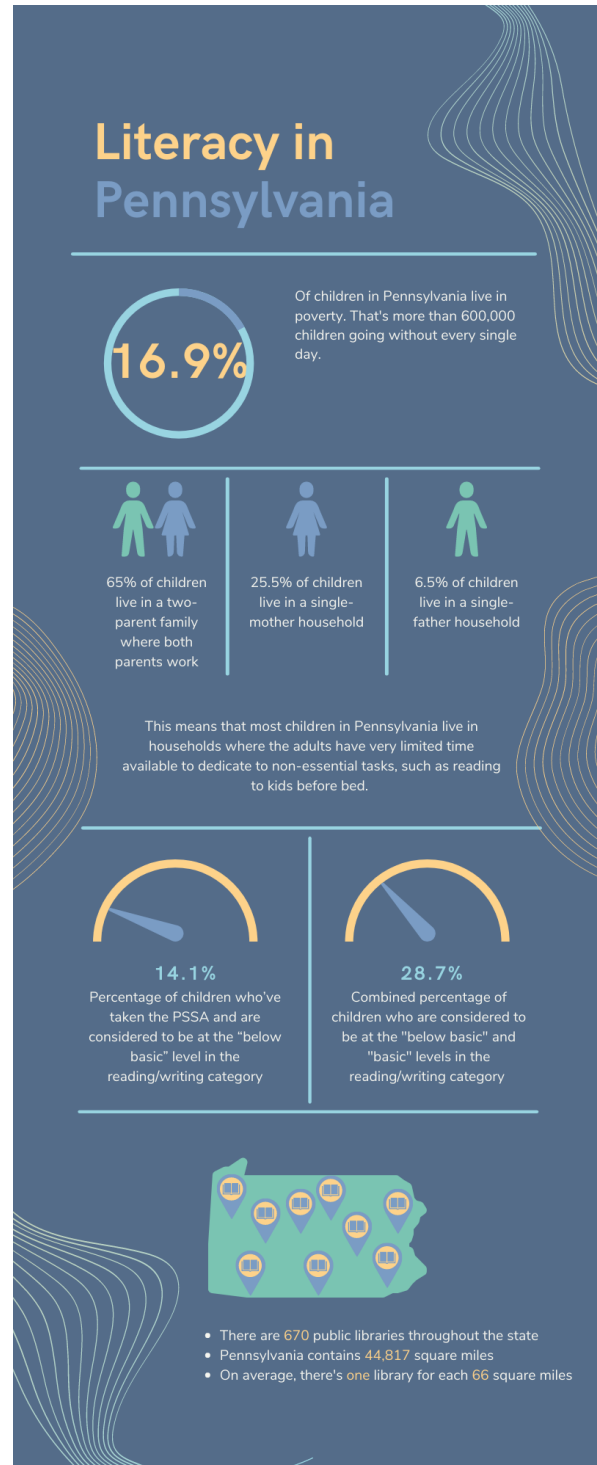
Still, 34 million illiterate Americans is far too many. And the results from the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) study in 2017 showed that 19% of Americans studied were at Level 1 (out of 5) proficiency for literacy. This number is unacceptable—especially for a country that calls itself the leader of the free world. How can somebody be free if they're not even free to read a takeout menu?

That is the focus of my organization, Bibbidi Bobbidi Book!: to decrease illiteracy in Pennsylvania by encouraging a love of reading in students at an early age. Studies have shown that preschoolers' language skills benefit from "shared storybook reading." Students build their vocabulary, learn grammar rules, and strengthen comprehension skills by listening to and reading stories. But not all children have equal access to books, and not all children have parents with enough spare time to devote to shared reading. That's where Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! will come in.

In order to decrease illiteracy, our plan is to:

1. Establish a reading program for 1st to 5th graders at Eastside Elementary in Johnstown, PA during 2021–2022 school year that will encourage students to read two books per month that are outside of the student curriculum.

2. Donate 100 books to school's library to increase book variety throughout all reading levels and increase chances of children finding a book that sparks a love of reading.



3. Create book matchmaking quiz to match students with books that suit their interests and reading levels.

4. Establish partnership between Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! and The Meadows, an ice cream shop in Johnstown

a. Students who've read two books at the end of the month get a coupon for a free ice cream cone at The Meadows

b. Students who've met the monthly book goal every month of the school year get a coupon for a free sundae

Illiteracy is a dangerous problem in the United States and in Pennsylvania. But it doesn't have to be. Children feel ashamed of their struggle to read. But they don't have to be. Children feel alone and desperate. But they don't have to be. Children feel like they have nothing to contribute to the world. But they do.

They do.

And we can prove it to them.

BIBBIDI BOBBIDI BOOK! PROJECT TIMELINE

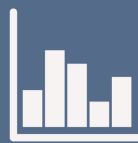


6/21

Obtain list of current books from Eastside Elementary library

6/28

Pull data from list to discover genres, topics, and reading levels that are lacking



7/5

Research books that would fill these gaps

7/12

Finish drafting content for book quiz webpage



7/26

Finish designing webpage

BIBBIDI BOBBIDI BOOK! PROJECT TIMELINE (CONT.)

8/2

Buy books, and then
donate to Eastside



8/18

Finish designing
coupons for ice
cream cones and
sundaes



8/25

Publish book quiz
webpage



9/1

Launch Bibbidi
Bobbidi Book!
reading program



1/17

Reach out after 4.5
months for mid-
point check-in



5/31

Conclude first year of
Bibbidi Bobbidi
Book! reading
program





METHODOLOGY

Our goal is to increase children’s literacy in Pennsylvania by encouraging a love of reading and providing access, support, and encouragement to students who need it. To do this, Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! will establish a reading program for 1st through 5th graders at Eastside Elementary in Johnstown, PA during 2021–2022 school year. The program will encourage students to read two books per month that are outside of the student curriculum.

The methodology for the Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! reading program can be broken down into three aspects:

DONATING BOOKS

We all have our own interests. Some people are into sports, others history, and some others the supernatural. Trying to get somebody invested in a topic they have no interest in can be like fighting gravity. So, to help increase chances of children finding a book that sparks a love of reading, Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! will donate 100 books to Eastside’s library to increase book variety throughout all reading levels.

To make sure that the books are shelved by the beginning of the school year, Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! will retrieve Eastside current inventory towards the end of June. This will give us enough time to:

1. Evaluate the list
2. Find books that compensate for any current deficits and also match genres that are currently popular with students
3. Buy the books
4. Deliver them to Eastside so that they are inventoried and put on shelves by the beginning of August

MATCHING STUDENTS WITH BOOKS

Just stocking the books on the shelves may not be enough. Especially for children who’ve never read for pleasure, finding a book that interests them may be overwhelming. So Bibbidi Bobbidi

Book! will create a book matchmaking quiz that will match students with books that suit their interests and reading levels.

Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! will first draft the content of the webpage and quiz parameters, which will be completed around mid-July. Once we have this content drafted, we will better able to design the webpage for the book quiz, which will need to be completed around the end of July. This will give the team enough time to test, troubleshoot, and modify the webpage, so that it will be in perfect working order by the start of the school year.

MOTIVATING WITH ICE CREAM

Finding the time to do the things we love can be tricky, and finding time to do things we don't love—or don't yet know we could love—is even trickier. Children aren't exempt from this. Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! wants children to give books a fair chance, and we're not above using the tool in every desperate parent's arsenal: bribery. So the Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! reading program will include a rewards program. We've already established a partnership with The Meadows, an ice cream shop in Johnstown. So the only thing left to complete for this step is to design the coupons for the ice cream cones and sundaes, which should be finished around mid-August.

The schedule for the above tasks has been created so that the program will be ready by the start of Eastside Elementary's 2021-2022 school year. However, Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! does not intend for the program to begin on the very first day of school. The plan is for the Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! reading program to commence on September 1st.



EVALUATION

SURVEY

Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! will also send out two surveys to the teachers involved in the program. The first survey will happen halfway through the year, and the second at the end. The survey will aim to discover:

- Student attitudes towards the program
- Student difficulties (particularly, how difficult is reading two books per month? Should future iterations of the program have students log daily minutes, instead?)
- Instructor attitudes towards the program
- Instructor insights or suggestions

DATA ANALYSIS

The goal of Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! is to teach children to love to read. If we're successful, then students will check out more books at Eastside Elementary after the program. To evaluate success we will obtain book checkout data from:

- Before the program; 2020-2021 school year
- During the program; 2021-2022 school year
- After the program; 2022-2023 school year

By obtaining the before and after data we can compare how many books were checked out the year before the program and then compare them to the year after the program and see if there's an increase in reading among the students. By obtaining the data from during the program, we can verify books that were checked out during the program.

In addition, we can evaluate if the books we donated to the school were popular among students. If any weren't, we can use this information to help inform future book donations.

BIOGRAPHY

REHANN RHEEL - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Stories have been a significant part of Rehann's life since the time she was a toddler, when she'd force guests to sit on the staircase landing while she made up a story on the spot. When she started learning how to read, it was like stepping through the wardrobe to Narnia: a magic world opened up. She read book after book after book, and would brag to people how she could read a Nancy Drew book in just one day. Reading was like breathing.

As the years passed, she learned that there were children who struggled—for many different reasons—to read. The fact itself was shocking, but learning that some schools were failing students in this regard was even more so. Surely somebody could do something?

This question kept repeating in her head every now and then, first in high school, then at York College of Pennsylvania as she sought a Bachelor's in Professional Writing, and then again at Chatham University, when she was in the Masters of Professional Writing program. Until suddenly she thought: well, I'm somebody. Why aren't I doing something?

And that's how Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! was born.



BUDGET

Item	Projected Number
Books	
Number of books:	\$100
Average cost of book:	\$15
Total cost of book:	\$1500
Ice Cream	
Number of students:	600
Cost of ice cream cone:	\$3.00
Total cost of cones:	\$1800
Cost of sundae:	\$4.00
Total cost of sundae:	\$2400
Total ice cream cost:	\$4,200
Percentage of cost Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! has to pay for:	60%
Total cost Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! has to pay for:	\$2520
Book Matching Making Quiz	
Website hosting:	N/A (considered a general operating cost, and not program-specific)
Webpage design and content creation:	\$200 (does not include rest of organization's website)
Program Total:	\$4220

BUDGET NARRATIVE

Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! is requesting a total of \$4220 to support implementation of the program at Eastside Elementary. The rationale for this number is as follows:

BOOKS:

Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! is going to donate 100 books to Eastside. We plan to work with Eastside to determine which books would best support the school's needs. This donation will give the school more variety, and thus increase the chances that a student will find a book they love. To get the estimated cost of books, we chose a number in between the average cost of a picture book (\$10) and the average cost of a children's chapter book (\$20).

ICE CREAM:

To encourage students to meet the monthly book requirement, Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! will offer coupons for ice cream cones to each student who meets the requirement, and then a coupon for an ice cream sundae to each student that met the requirement every month of the school year.

BOOK MATCHMAKING QUIZ:

To match children with books that match who they are, Bibbidi Bobbidi Book! is adding a webpage to our current website. This page will contain a quiz that students can take to find books and genres that suit them. Because only one page of a website is needed—and the website should fit the design and tone of the rest of the site—we anticipate the costs for this to be low.



CONCLUSION

Heroes don't save the world on their own. Harry had Hermione, Sailor Moon had the Sailor Scouts, and Frodo had...well, a whole extended family, to be honest. Everybody needs support in order to succeed, in order to take their potential and turn it into reality.

With the Dollar General Literacy Foundation's support, we can help children overcome their struggles, find companionship, and grow to be the people they're supposed to be. We can take that spark of potential and turn it into an inferno, a blaze that slowly but surely consumes the doubt and leaves behind a better world.

