



African Storybook Introduces New App: African Storybook Maker

The **African Storybook Maker** allows users to create their own storybooks offline on their mobile phone or tablet. The app was created with children from 3-10 years of age in mind. Parents, caregivers, teachers, young people and children can use their phones or tablets to create picture storybooks for children to enjoy.

In most of the 1500 languages of sub-Saharan Africa there is a severe shortage of contextually appropriate materials for young African children learning to read. This is a major obstacle in tackling the low levels of school literacy in many African countries. Children can't learn to read if they don't have books in a familiar language to practise their reading skills and learn to love reading.

Saide's African Storybook initiative addresses this challenge by working with local educators and illustrators (including children!) to develop, publish and use contextually appropriate storybooks that can be read online or offline, or downloaded and printed.

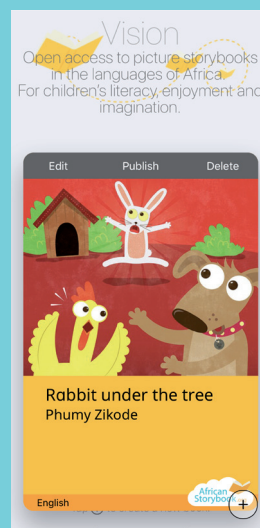
The project, launched in 2014, is a registered Non-Profit Organisation governed by a Trust and based in Johannesburg. The African Storybook website has thousands of openly licensed free picture storybooks in the languages of Africa for children's literacy, enjoyment and imagination. It also has tools for the translation, adaptation and creation of picture storybooks for children aged two to ten (early childhood and first three years of primary school).

African Storybook was initially piloted in Kenya, South Africa, Lesotho and Uganda, and then extended to Ethiopia, Rwanda, Cameroon,

DRC, Nigeria, Ghana, Benin, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Namibia. From 2014 to the end of 2018, African Storybook had reached 48,303 educators and 1,145,226 children.

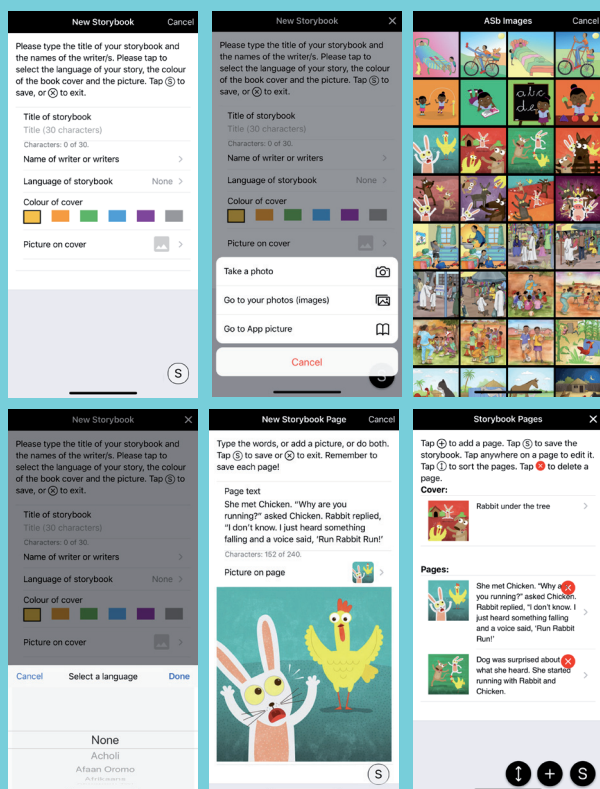
African Storybook has two apps for mobile devices downloadable for free from Google Play and the iStore: The **African Storybook Reader** gives parents and children access to the storybooks even when they are offline; the **African Storybook Maker** allows people to create picture storybooks offline on their mobile phone or tablet, and publish them on the African Storybook website when they are connected to the internet.

The African Storybook Maker



Users are able to use their own photographs and pictures or they can choose pictures from the African Storybook picture library. Once they have made their storybook and have an Internet connection, they can easily upload in order to publish the storybook to the African Storybook website. Books can be created and read to young children in any of the languages of Africa.

How to use the app



1 When creating a new storybook, you will be asked to enter the title of the storybook, the name of the writer/s, select the language of the book, choose a colour for the book cover and select/add a picture for the cover.

2 Type the words, or add a picture or do both in each of the pages of your storybook. Each page has a place for a picture and up to 50 words of text.

Users can illustrate their books in three ways; users can take a photograph, they can also use a picture from their own image library, or select from the free to use African Storybook images included in the app.

3 Your book can be published with a simple click of the publish button. From the website you will also be able to download and print the book you've just created.

The African Storybook Maker provides the following solutions:

- The app addresses the connectivity challenges of many African users by providing an offline solution to create storybooks for children. African users have easier access to phones but not computers.
- It addresses the lack of computer skills by making it easy for users to create their own storybooks following simple instructions.
- It highlights the importance of visual literacy in a web 2.0 environment.
- The app makes it possible to write in any African language increasing the supply and availability of African language books.

“ I see the app as a publisher on your personal device – I like to call it ‘a publisher in your pocket’. The African Storybook Maker enables the creation of a picture storybook, using your text and your photos in the storybook and these could be pictures of your children’s artwork, pictures of a bean plant growing in your garden, pictures of a day in the life of your pet and more. There is also a picture library of 250 pictures selected from African storybook books, which can be used to inspire stories, and even create whole storybooks. ”

Publisher: African Storybook



Download the **African Storybook Maker** for free from your preferred app store

