



How Vancouver Talmud Torah Used Simbi to **Champion Global Stewardship** Among Their Grade 5 & 6 Students During Literacy Week

January 2018



Reshaping Global Literacy through
Personalized Reading Journeys

Study Profile

School:
Vancouver Talmud Torah,
Vancouver 

Grades: K-7

Simbi Implementation:

- 67 students across grades 5 & 6
- 307 books read within the first 7 days
- Flexible Independent “Read for Good” Program
- iPad-Sharing Program + Soundproof Reading Booth

About the School

Vancouver Talmud Torah’s educational approach promotes critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity, enabling students to acquire the knowledge, skills, and confidence they will need to meet the challenges of a century in which change is a constant. Individual needs are met by recognizing and supporting diverse learning styles. In addition, students are encouraged to develop their unique strengths and interests through athletics, drama, music and the arts. Vancouver Talmud Torah strives to create global citizens and is committed to guiding their students to give back in any capacity both locally and abroad.

Implementation

Looking to have their students make a meaningful impact and facilitate global stewardship in the classroom, Vancouver Talmud Torah (VTT) reached out to Simbi. Understanding that VTT wished to have a sustainable program that would support both literacy and their students’ collective interest to give back to their global community, Simbi proposed the launch of a week-long campaign over literacy week in January 2018 to kickstart student interest in reading for good. Sharing the Simbi reading platform with the grade five and six classes, 67 students were able to start sharing their voice with more than 10,000 Simbi learners across 30 countries. To connect even more closely with our mission to reshape global literacy, the students chose to partner with a local charity, The Walking School Bus to raise money for the Jonathan Netanyahu Memorial School in Putti Village, Mbale, Uganda which is also a Simbi partner school. Through their donations, an offline version of the Simbi reading platform and a computer lab was gifted to the school, enabling VTT students’ voices to directly impact the students in Uganda.

The Simbi Journey

The literacy week campaign kicked off with Aaron Friedland, Simbi's Chief Executive Officer, explaining to the students at VTT how he had struggled to learn to read while growing up and that the technique of Read-Along helped him learn to read. He explained that when students at VTT Read-Aloud, their voices, and text come together to enable students in Uganda and India to Read-Along and shared that their voices were capable of making people around the world stronger readers which is the number one predictor of those students academic success. The students were enthusiastic about reading with Simbi! A quick demo was given on the classroom projector, the iPad and Chromebook carts were unloaded, and students signed up and got reading! In under 7 days, the classes had read over 300 books out-loud and one of the VTT's teachers, Shoshana Burton, commented: "I've never seen students so motivated to read!" The school even purchased three soundproof reading booths to support more students to Read-Aloud and ensure that they could enjoy silence to focus and ensure the narrations were of good sound quality for the library.



"I've never seen students so motivated to read!"

- **Shoshana Burton**, Humanities Teacher at Vancouver Talmud Torah

Solution

When VTT first started using Simbi, the goal was two-fold: to motivate their students to read more books, more often, understanding the global impact their voices were capable of and; to add to the Simbi library to enable more students in Uganda and India to Read-Along. Through this process, Simbi introduced features that empowered teachers to assign readings for in-class study and homework, as well as, enabling them to see how well their students' reading fluencies were improving. Furthermore, students embraced the behaviour of Reading-Aloud as they were able to track their impact globally

through Simbi and collect volunteer hours. Within days, students and teachers alike were encouraged to continue reading as they received emails outlining how many people around the world were listening to their Simbi book narrations. Through to today, many of the VTT's students notably prefer Reading-Along on Simbi's personalized reading journeys to traditional books.

Results

At Vancouver Talmud Torah, students read more than double the number of books than they had previously during Literacy Week activities. Most notably, Jessie Claudio, a math and science teacher at VTT, recalls "students formed line ups over recess and lunch breaks to read more than 300 books in VTT's soundproof reading booths." Remarkably, the grade 1 and 2 students at the Jonathan Netanyahu Memorial School in Putti Village increased their words correct per minute by 5X in just 3 months of using VTT's students' book narrations. Ugandan students in the third grade benefited by doubling their reading fluency in the same amount of time. Teachers at VTT loved using Simbi during their Literacy Week campaign and continue to use Simbi through to today as their students read more books, more often, while contributing to Simbi's growing library as truly global citizens. All students who participated were recognized through a personalized certificate for their efforts.

"Students formed line ups over recess and lunch breaks to read more than 300 books in VTT's soundproof reading booths."

- Jessie Claudio, Math & Science Teacher at Vancouver Talmud Torah

Want to get your school using Simbi?

Learn more about our research-backed approach and the science behind our proven Read-Along and Read-Aloud techniques at Simbi.io/the-science.

Reach out to Alex@Simbi.io to schedule a demo and see how Simbi can improve your students' reading fluency and integrate global stewardship in the classroom.