

# NEWSPAPERS IN EDUCATION

## DEAR Day: Why you should read

BY RITAH MUKASA

**G**race Bernice Apolot used to be a shy girl. She feared to raise her hand in class even when she knew the correct answer. Her hands and lips would shake whenever she tried to speak in public. But things changed when Apolot joined the reading club at her school. She is in Primary Five at Kirowooza Primary School in Mukono district.

"Reading boosted my confidence and I became a prefect," Apolot says.

She also developed a reading culture, and her performance improved greatly.

Apolot encourages children to read.

"You will develop leadership skills, learn to spell and also be disciplined, confident and respectful."

### EXPOSURE

Simon Peter Sajja, a literacy advocate with Africa ELI says reading is essential even beyond the classroom. When you read, you are opened to a bigger world. You learn

### How to develop reading culture

- Create time for reading, even if it is 20 minutes a day.
- Start with a small but interesting book that will not bore you.
- Start small, with one page or two, then chapters.
- Do not read one book and give up. Keep reading more books.
- Always have a book; at home and in your bag at school.
- Interest your friends in reading. Read to each other during your free time.
- Review the books you have read.
- Create activities based on stories you have read.
- Join a book club at school or in the community.

about different people, cultures, experiences and innovations. Besides, reading will boost your vocabulary and comprehension. Every time you read, you learn new words. But also, you develop critical thinking and imaginative skills which you will need even in adulthood.

### DEAR DAY: SIGNIFICANCE

In order to encourage children to read, the Ministry of Education and Sports designated March 15 as the national DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) Day for Ugandan primary schools. On this day, at 11:00am, all children are required to drop everything and read. You can get a story book, magazine such as *Toto* or newspaper articles. It does not matter where you are. Whether home or at school. Even if you have a disability, put everything aside and read.

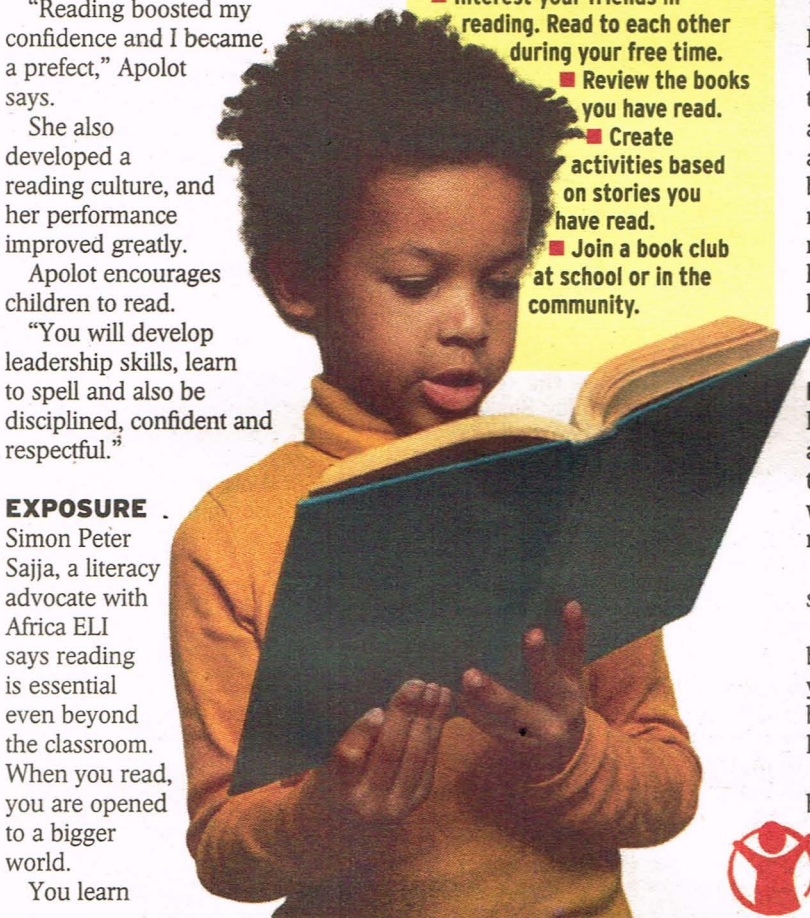
### NAVIGATING DIFFICULTY

If you find reading difficult, Sajja advises that you choose a story that sparks joy and curiosity. You will enjoy exploring something new.

"Reading is a powerful habit you should develop," Sajja says.

You will discover worlds far beyond the classroom. When you read a story today, you will become a confident and curious learner tomorrow.

"Remember, readers today become leaders tomorrow."



**Save the Children**