



Universal Learning Solutions' Rapid Response to School Closures Due to Covid-19: Nigerians Educate Everywhere at a Distance (NEED)

In response to the school closures due to Covid-19, Universal Learning Solutions is acting fast to ensure that children at home across Nigeria are still learning. We will be looking to expand the use of some existing tools and resources, and also to develop more guidance and content for parents and children alike. We aim to use a variety of mediums to reach homes, including websites, WhatsApp groups, batch SMS messages, radio shows, TV shows, free smartphone applications and more. This document provides more information on the various strategies and tools that we will be promoting.

Free Smartphone Applications

During this crisis, we will aim to promote these free apps as much as possible, so that more parents and carers also download them to use with their children whilst at home. We will also be creating video and written guidance for how to use the apps in the best ways to teach children at home.



Jolly Phonics Lessons



The Jolly Phonics Lessons App contains interactive content that shows the user how to teach a phonics lesson. It is simple, repetitive, multisensory, with audio and animations. As a result, children love to use the app too.



Jolly Phonics Fun

The Jolly Phonics Fun App contains animated games for children to play to practice reading sounds and words. Children gain points for correct answers and lose lives for incorrect answers. The games gradually get harder, so are always levelled appropriately for learners.



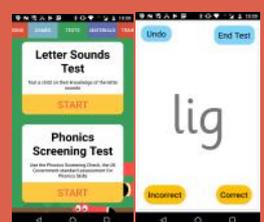
Reach for the Stars

Our "Reach for the Stars" app contains free African-ised decodable reading books for children to use to practice their reading skills. The app helps children to decode words by sounding them out when a word is tapped on. At the end of each book, there are questions for parents and carers to ask children to see if they understood the stories.



Jolly Phonics Tests

The Jolly Phonics Tests App contains a letter sounds test and a word reading test for parents and carers to see if their child is learning phonics, or whether more practice is needed.



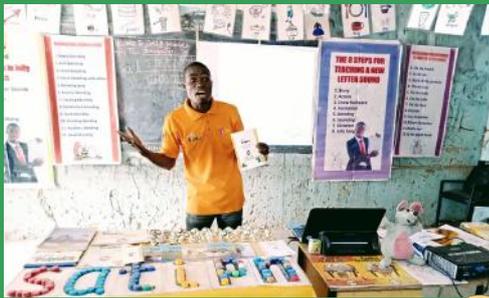


Television and Radio Shows

We recognise that it is not always possible for parents and carers to teach children themselves, and they also may not have a smartphone to access the free apps. In response to this, we will be looking to get as much learning content on TV & radio as possible. Here are some of our ideas...

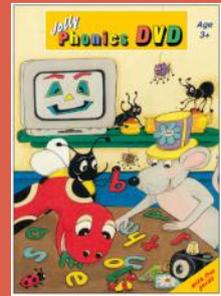
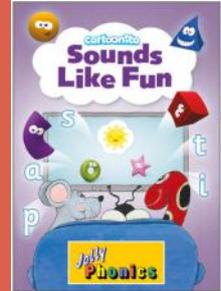
Jolly Phonics TV Lessons

Our fantastic team have already got to work recording a series of 15 minute Jolly Phonics lessons in a studio in Abuja. These lessons will cover all of the 42 letter sounds and all of the 8 steps included in usual Jolly Phonics lessons. By acting fast, we should have the lessons edited and ready to go within just a two-week period. These lessons will then be put on our dedicated website, on YouTube, shared on WhatsApp and other social media sites, and we are also going to work hard to get these lessons on Nigerian television.



Sounds Like Fun & Jolly Phonics TV

Jolly Learning, the publishers of Jolly Phonics, already have two television shows, that have appeared on UK TV, designed to help children to learn phonics in the same approach as Jolly Phonics. They both teach the 42 sounds of English, and how to use these sounds to read and write words, in an engaging way. Generously, Jolly Learning is offering the licences for these DVDs for free to Nigerian television channels, so that children can be reached at home. As part of the NEED project, we will be engaging with Nigerian television channels to get these shows on to Nigerian TV.



Jolly Phonics Radio Lessons

We have already successfully shared Jolly Phonics lessons via the radio in Nigeria. Although children can only hear and not see lessons, it is still possible to teach phonics. We can also combine this with visual content in newspapers. We will extend the existing range of lessons to cover the 42 letter sounds, and more, and air this state and country-wide as appropriate. These radio lessons will be aimed at parents with their children, and will be aired at least twice per week.

A Dedicated Website

We have already started to develop a website aimed at both parents/carers and children that are now learning at home. On this website we will provide:

- free resources;
- video guidance on how to teach children at home;
- the TV/radio lessons for children to watch/listen to in their own time;
- much more!

The website will be simple to use and readily accessible on smartphones too.

www.jollyphonics.ng



Learners



Parents

Utilising Our Extensive Networks

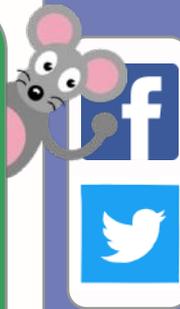
Universal Learning Solutions has the most extensive network of educators in Nigeria. Over 90,000 teachers, over 1000 local level “Teacher Leaders”, almost 5000 active government officials, 200+ teacher trainers and almost 100 project staff, who all oversee the largest English literacy project in the country. Through our existing WhatsApp groups and SMS messaging systems, we are able to quickly disseminate learning activities to the parents of millions of Nigerian pupils. We also plan to utilise social media to reach even more parents and educators.

Social Media

Social media is also a great way to reach parents and carers, with millions of Nigerians now having Facebook and other social media accounts. We will be making a huge effort to share our content through the different social media.

WhatsApp Groups & Batch SMS

Universal Learning Solutions currently manages hundreds of batch SMS and WhatsApp groups with thousands of teachers as members, and we will be looking to use these networks to share content as widely as possible, encouraging teachers to pass the content on to parents and carers. We will also be asking for teachers to gather parents' phone numbers so that we can create new groups and share the content directly.



1000 Distance Learning Tutors

We will work with our talented Teacher Leaders so that they become “Distance Learning Tutors”, disseminating resources and advice to local parents and teachers.

Hotline Numbers

All of our projects have Jolly Phonics “Hotlines” for teachers to call for advice. We will expand our hotlines so that parents can call too for advice.

Maths



Although Universal Learning Solutions only usually focuses on literacy, we know that at this challenging time, there will also be an urgent need for maths content too. We have therefore partnered with Tanzanian-based NGO, Ubongo Kids, in order to bring extensive maths content to Nigerian's children too. We can also be recording maths lessons for the TV and radio with talented Nigerian teachers.

Ubongo Maths Cartoons

Ubongo can provide fun cartoons that are Africa-focused and teach simple maths through more than 10 episodes, including maths songs covering place value, fractions, negative numbers, counting, addition and subtraction.

Ubongo Maths App

Every family in Nigeria will be given free access to the Ubongo Kids Maths and Science Apps that support the TV Ubongo programme. The maths app covers: Place Value, Addition, Subtraction.

Maths TV & Radio Lessons

Upon request, we can also record a variety of maths lessons by skilled Nigerian teachers, directly aimed at the ECCD-Grade 3 audience. These can be uploaded on a website for parents to access when they wish.



Videos



Audio



Apps

How Can Government Support the NEED Project?

If we are going to succeed in reaching millions of children across Nigeria then it must be a collective effort. Universal Learning Solutions will be dedicating time and resources to this new NEED project, but we cannot do this alone! There are many ways that the Nigerian Government can support this project...

How ULSI is Contributing

Already ULS is providing the following elements FREE to help Nigerian children in this crisis:

- Recording and license to 46 episode TV show;
- License to Jolly Phonics TV show and Sounds Like Fun Tv show;
- License to Ubongo maths TV show;
- Recording and license to 42 part Jolly Phonics TV show;
- Creation of 42 SMS lessons for parents on Jolly Phonics;
- Free Jolly Phonics and Maths Apps
- Free staff time to work on managing this project.

How Government Can Help

Government can help to ensure that the solutions set out in this document reach the children by:

- Sponsorship or support to help air the TV and radio shows nationally/locally
- Letters to ULS stating the government's willingness to push the TV, radio and App solutions to the parents through public messages and announcements. These letters can be shown to UK funders who may provide match funding support.
- Diverting available funds to cover: a small allowance for around 50 Distance Learning Tutors per state so that they can contact parents locally each week by SMS, WhatsApp, phone; setting up of a Jolly Phonics hotline for parents in each state; the cost of SMS messages; the cost of airing lessons on local/national radio and TV show.



Contact Us

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to support this project in any way.

Thank you!

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Together, we can ensure that Nigeria's children are happy, safe and learning.

