

2002: 'Star In You'

Title: **The Star In You**

Produced by: *The Sunday Times*

Country: South Africa

Language: English

Category: Character



• **Introduction:** *The Sunday Times* ReadRight education initiative joined forces with Kellogg's, Rand Water and K-TV to introduce a national Star-in-You programme for primary school learners: a simple yet effective way to celebrate and reward star qualities such as compassion, perseverance, confidence and respect.

The Star-in-You initiative empowers learners to recognise and use their unique star qualities to achieve their full physical, intellectual, personal and social potential. The programme's resource materials - published weekly in ReadRight and promoted on K-TV, a daily children's TV programme - offer educators the tools to nurture and develop emotional intelligence (HEALTHY MINDS), physical wellness (HEALTHY BODIES) and environmental and social awareness (HEALTHY WORLD) in their learners.

The Star-in-You lessons and activities have been specially designed so that they are easy to implement in the classroom as part of three main learning areas in South Africa's outcomes-based education curriculum, Curriculum 2005: Life Orientation, Technology and Natural Sciences.

While the initiative is published and promoted nationally (any primary school in South Africa is eligible to enter the Star-in-You Recognition Awards), 1 000 specially selected urban primary schools have benefited from the Star-in-You roadshow and in-school support programme. These schools each receive 20 copies of ReadRight, partially funded by Kellogg's, on a weekly basis. On top of this, the Star-in-You team performs an interactive show for learners and provides a workshop and additional resources (in the

form of a Star-in-You “school kit”) for educators so that they are able to maximise the benefits of the programme. This in-school programme has enabled the Sunday Times - which up until now has focused its social responsibility efforts on disadvantaged rural and peri-urban schools - to expand (and measure) its reach into middle- to upper-income urban schools. Anecdotal evidence in the past has always suggested that ReadRight is popular and used widely in these schools, but the Star-in-You project provides a formal opportunity to build an ongoing relationship with the learners and educators in this market.

• **The Publication:**

The Sunday Times is South Africa’s largest weekly newspaper, with a circulation of about 504 000 and a readership of 3.2 million. ReadRight is a Sunday Times education supplement aimed at providing high-quality reading and learning materials for South Africa’s youth.

• **Rationale for starting the project:**

The motivation behind the project was three-pronged:

- (a) To provide a means of recognising and rewarding “star” qualities (other than academic and sporting excellence) in South Africa’s youth;
- (b) To provide primary school educators with top-quality classroom resources to assist their learners become well-rounded, caring South African citizens; and
- (c) To extend ReadRight’s reach into the middle- to upper-income urban school market - thereby opening up new revenue and readership opportunities.

• **Number of schools and learners reached :**

There are about 28 000 schools and more than 12 million learners in South Africa. Through single-copy purchases, ReadRight - which is inserted into every copy of the Sunday Times - is used countrywide by millions of parents, educators and learners who are regular Sunday Times readers. In addition to Sunday Times’ weekly copy sales, 50 000 sponsored copies of the newspaper are distributed free of charge to about 1 000 urban and 1 000 rural and peri-urban schools around the country. It should be noted that the 1 000 rural and township schools on the Sunday Times’ sponsorship programme are all under-resourced in different ways, but particularly in the quantity and quality of learning materials available to their learners. The 2 000 schools that receive bulk copies of the Sunday Times in the week following publication have an average of between 700 and 900 learners each - which means that, in addition to its traditional Sunday readership, ReadRight reaches a further 1.4 to 1.8 million schoolchildren every week. This makes it by far the largest print medium addressing South Africa’s youth market.

• Period of implementation:

Star-in-You was launched in ReadRight on January 20 2002 (the beginning of the academic year in South Africa).

A full page of materials is published every week, in addition to which double-page classroom wallcharts and support activities are carried once a term. The Star-in-You roadshow and school visits by the Star-in-You training team kicked off in mid-February and continued until mid-June (the end of the second quarter). The Star-in-You Kids' Choice Awards will be held at the end of November.

• Examples of work produced by teachers and learners using the Star-In-You programme: : a video

This video was compiled at the end of the second term (mid-June 2002) by youth marketing specialists Hot Dogz Inc for Kellogg's and Rand Water. It looks at the various elements of their sponsorship of the Star-in-You project (the roadshow, the ReadRight print supplements, TV support and the teacher-training programme) and forms part of a six-month assessment of the initiative.

• The Newspaper and its use by learners & educators:

As South Africa's leading weekly newspaper, the Sunday Times, together with like-minded corporate social investment (CSI) partners, is in a prime position to make a positive contribution to education in the country. ReadRight - the newspaper's weekly education supplement published during school terms for educators, learners and their parents - supports the formal school curriculum and promotes learning through reading by printing a range of high-quality, outcomes-based materials.

Launched in January 1999 in a bid to help the government provide teaching resources for South Africa's 12 million schoolchildren, ReadRight is endorsed by Education Minister Kader Asmal and has won widespread acclaim for its efforts to promote a love of reading and learning in South Africa's youth.

Studies in developing countries over the past 20 years have shown that the most important classroom resource, after the presence of a qualified teacher, is a basic textbook. However, the dearth of good learning materials in thousands of South African classrooms remains a stumbling block to the provision of quality education. It is in this climate that the ReadRight initiative has found its niche. Over the past three-and-a-half years, the Sunday Times has published close to 25 million complete storybooks for learners to cut out and keep! These stories are supported by suggested activities for teachers, as well as ideas on how to teach the skill of reading and assess learners' progress effectively.

In addition to its storybooks and double-page classroom posters, ReadRight is filled with cross-curricular materials and educator aids for learners between the ages of seven and fifteen. It also publishes materials aimed at reducing the spread of HIV-AIDS among South Africa's youth. All activities and resource materials are carefully designed to promote the underlying values of democracy, tolerance and integration.

One of ReadRight's principal objectives is to offer assistance to educators in their implementation of South Africa's controversial Curriculum 2005. To this end, the Sunday Times believes that its ReadRight initiative should be seen as complementary and supplementary to the South African educational publishing industry and the obligation of the State to provide schools with effective learning-support materials.

ReadRight is used extensively by schools across South Africa's demographic spectrum, in addition to which many regular Sunday Times readers use the supplement with their children at home.

The 2 000 schools on the Sunday Times' sponsorship programme each receive between 20 and 50 copies of the newspaper on a weekly basis, thus ensuring that whole classes benefit from the learning resources published in ReadRight. Distribution of the newspaper to these schools is supported by the Sunday Times national teacher-training project, through which regional training teams facilitate a series of print-media-in-education workshops for teachers. They also work closely with the non-governmental sector and other training agencies to offer ongoing support to ensure that educators are equipped to use the Sunday Times as a valuable classroom resource.

• Benefits of Star-In-You for the Sunday Times:

Apart from generating almost R400 000 in sponsorship revenue from Kellogg's and Rand Water, the Star-in-You project - through its roadshow and in-school support programme for 1 000 middle- to upper-income urban primary schools - has enabled ReadRight to penetrate the more affluent urban primary school market. This has opened up a range of new readership opportunities and potential income streams. *

While anecdotal evidence has always suggested that ReadRight is used fairly widely in this market (with teachers encouraging learners to bring their copies of the Sunday Times to school in the week following publication), there has been no way previously to measure single-copy usage of the supplement in urban

schools. (Sponsorships of bulk deliveries in the past have all been to disadvantaged rural and township schools. This has not worked in ReadRight's favour with regard to attracting "above-the-line" youth market advertisers, who are interested in targeting youth with access to disposable income.)

As part of the Sunday Times' trade exchange agreement with Kellogg's, ReadRight has received brand exposure on more than five million Kellogg's cereal packs and extensive coverage on K-TV.

The relationship ReadRight has established with K-TV as a result of the Star-in-You project has also had longer-term benefits for the newspaper: K-TV is now interested in partnering ReadRight on two other initiatives - a "Write Stuff" story-writing competition and a national Market Day for young entrepreneurs. It has been found that K-TV works exceptionally well as a marketing vehicle for ReadRight, as not only does its audience fall predominantly into the upper LSMs (living standard measures), but television is a highly effective means of pulling youth into print.

The popularity of the Star-in-You initiative has also improved the newspaper's corporate social responsibility profile and has helped build long-term brand loyalty in the youth market - the Sunday Times' future readers. * It is important to note that at this point the Sunday Times' strategy is to sustain rather than increase its current circulation figures. Established in 1906, the newspaper is now in a mature phase of growth. In line with international trends, it experienced a fairly dramatic decline in its circulation between 1995 and 1998. However, largely as a result of the launch of ReadRight in January 1999 (at which point the paper's circulation was 428 000), it has since managed to turn this around - and has in fact sustained weekly copy sales of more than 500 000 since mid-2000.

A 22% increase in the cost of newsprint at the beginning of this year (paper in South Africa is calculated at dollar prices as most of it is exported) has resulted in heavily increased production costs. Consequently, it has been decided that it is not economically viable right now to increase the newspaper's print run any further. (Sunday Times advertising rates reached a premium when the paper hit the 500 000 mark. It is not feasible, given the country's current economic climate, to raise these rates significantly above the rate of inflation in an attempt to accommodate the increase in production costs.)

The newspaper is therefore now exploring ways other than circulation growth to increase revenue - most notably: through growing its subscriber base and below-the-line income streams.

• Assessment of Star-In-You as an effective newspapers in education project:



Over the year we have conducted 60 in-field/telephonic surveys/6 focus groups of 6-8 teachers.

- ReadRight adds huge benefit as the Star-in-You newspapers-in-education partner.

- ReadRight is used extensively for the Star-in-You project.
- The material provided fits in with Curriculum 2005's outcomes-based education approach.
- Teachers like to make ReadRight their own.
- ReadRight is beneficial to learners beyond the Star-in-You programme as it exposes them to current news and events and encourages them to read.
- The material supplied through ReadRight is well supported and complemented by the roadshow, additional support material and teacher training programme.

- The programme is extremely credible:

Subtle branding

Available through ReadRight sponsorship programme

Enthusiastic educators and learners purchase additional copies for the classroom

Positive association for learners

Sincere approach

Touches the hearts of children

- Awards programme is precious - allows each teacher to recognise all children.
- Teachers feel that the programme has had a significant impact on learners - some schools even have a Star-in-You Moment in their school whilst others encourage educators and learners to explore and discuss their emotions every morning.

- All schools are using the Star Wall Chart that was published in ReadRight.
- The programme is a great example of cause-related marketing and a synergistic, holistic, sincere campaign that schools perceive to be educational rather than commercial.
- The print component provided by ReadRight has proven to be a highly effective means of leveraging maximum educational value from a commercially-funded, cause-related marketing project.

