



## **THOMAS MORE COLLEGE STUDENTS ARE FLYING WITH SORA!**

### **ALIGNING WITH THE TRAJECTORY**

Penny Thompson, the High School Librarian, had everything covered for the launch and adoption of OverDrive and its Reading App by Thomas More College population. However, the uptake by the 'digital natives' started off at a snail's pace. Moreover a year prior to the introduction of OverDrive the teachers had already embarked on creating and using their own iBooks for reading and teaching. As the old adage says the best laid-plans can go astray. Penny was disappointed because she knew that getting the pupils used to reading on devices would assist them as the school was becoming a "Bring your own device school"; hence the School Leadership had endorsed signing up with OverDrive without any hesitation.

### **THE TIDE TURNS**

The turning point occurred when the Covid19 pandemic brought the country to a total lockdown. Aha! Does fortune not favour the brave? Penny Thompson was on course to direct the pupils to read on SORA. The disruption of pupils having to learn from home proved to give them no choice except to come on board. Well begun is half done.

### **AWARENESS DRIVE**

Penny fell in love with OverDrive after first hearing about it during a Librarians' Conference she had attended. Following the approval by the College Leadership, she began her collection development aiming to serve the reading needs of the pupils from Grades 4 to 12.

- EBook Day – Slideshows and static displays are mounted to showcase SORA.
- English Classes Visits – Once every 10<sup>th</sup> day when classes come to the Library, Library staff usurp some of the time to orientate students on SORA and demonstrate logging in and navigating the App.
- As Library staff drive reading on SORA, issue statistics are growing.

- Library staff send OverDrive produced marketing material to parents to drive awareness and sway the line of thought that the use of devices pose a distraction from doing school work. Screen time is time well used when it is spent on reading.

## **EXPANDED USE**

“All the pupils are on the system so they can log in anytime, anywhere using their devices. Audio Books have been added to the collection to entice reluctant readers. They happen to be the ones who like earning the badge that shows the number of pages they have read. Penny Thompson is running a challenge with the Grade 9s: to read for a minimum of 15 minutes per day. The Primary School Teachers have bought Read Alongs for use in class. SORA is embedded on the Library Management system. This facilitates a one-search on both platforms and enables pupils to borrow eBooks and Audiobooks on SORA” explains Penny Thompson.

## **FUTURE FOCUS**

Penny is planning ahead to increase readership on SORA.

- Looking in to introducing Class Sets (from OverDrive) especially for Grades 8 and 9.
- Hooking Grades 4 and 5 so that by the time they reach High School they are already acquainted with SORA.
- Putting up a board in the Library to showcase all badges that are attainable by reading on SORA. Running a reading contest to encourage pupils to read with the aim to all the badges.

## **ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL**

Penny is delighted that Thomas More College finally got where it is even though they've encountered glitches on the way. She advises that fellow Librarians should not be put off by the slow uptake because once children start to like SORA they just fly with it! “It's lovely to be able to offer the pupils something different. SORA also cuts down on the burden of overdue books.” She chuckles. “All's well that ends well.”