

For a long time, I have been thinking about how to help the kids in my community learn English better since not only is it the national language of Ghana, but to advance in their education, it was essential. I had heard about an organization that donated 20Lbs of books to Peace Corps Volunteers around the world called Darien Book Aid. You can request any kind of books that you would like, from text books to story books. Once I knew that there was an organization that donated any type of books, I thought about what my community needed and came up with the perfect idea: A reading club! Now that I had an idea, I talked it over with my counterpart and the English teacher at my local Junior High School to make sure that it would be a good match for my village. They both agreed and said it was an excellent idea, and that both the Primary school kids and the JHS students would benefit from it. So I set forth on this idea, and started to plan out the logistics of it: Who would run it? Would it be sustainable? Would the kids enjoy it and learn something?

This is how the plan looked, I would have the JHS teachers pick two kids that needed help speaking English or with public speaking to come and read story books to the Primary school once a month. I had wanted books that would be easy to read and understand, so I choose to have story books donated by Darien Book Aid. Not only would this benefit the JHS students reading English, but it would help the primary school students hear English better and more often. There are not many people in my village that speak English, so they are not exposed to as often as they should be.

At the first meeting, I choose the two books to be read; one was about dolphins and had great pictures, the other was a Dr. Seuss book, Cat in the Hat. The JHS students did an amazing job, and there were around 30 primary school kids to hear the stories. There was also a large crowd of adults that came to hear the stories as well. We meet at the primary school and choose to read the books under a large mango tree, with the readers sitting in chairs so that everyone could see the pictures. To make sure that this is a sustainable project, I am having the English teacher run the club and keep all the books. There were a few short novels in the box donated as well, and he had the excellent idea to loan them out to excellent students, so that they had a fiction novel to read as a treat. They are also to write down all words they don't know and look them up in a dictionary I gave to the English teacher. I could not be more pleased with how the project/club is going; I hope that it continues on getting stronger and preparing more kids for the chance to further their education and self confidence.