

Kids join to make biggest book in Israel



English literacy Institute A.H.A.V.A launches its seventh annual read-a-thon by inviting local school children to help create 'The Giant's Book'

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English literacy Institute A.H.A.V.A has launched its seventh annual read-a-thon by inviting local school children to help create what is expected to be the biggest book ever made in Israel.

The book, titled "The Giant's Book", about a giant who can't find a book big enough to read, measures almost 2 meters (6.5 feet) tall, over 1 meter (3.2 feet) wide and is being made by school children from over 13 schools in Maaleh Adumim who will be given words to write and design.

Children's author and illustrator Netanel Epstein created the front cover for the book, which was unveiled at the Nofei Haselah School in Maaleh Adumim earlier this month.

A.H.A.V.A is the only non-profit organization in Israel dedicated solely to promoting English literacy for children. It is working hard to raise awareness of the importance of learning English in Israeli schools from a young age.

In 2009, of the total number of Israelis in the 12th grade age group just 39% matriculated at a level that would enable them to be accepted to university.



Capturing imagination of local school kids (Photo: Adam Ross)

According to A.H.A.V.A Director **Gaila Cohen-Morrison**, "English is crucial for children to learn well at school. It opens up a world of wider reading and opens up opportunities for them later on in life.

"We are delighted that Netanel Epstein has designed our giant front cover. By making Israel's biggest book we hope to capture the imagination of local school children and to inspire more interest and enjoyment of reading English."

She added, "Making a giant book does have some logistical questions including where we are going to store this book. We may have to build a giant library!"

A.H.A.V.A was founded in 2000 by Cohen-Morrison, an experienced English teacher and mother of five, who was determined to provide affordable English education to Israeli children.

All of the seminars and curricula are based on Cohen-Morrison's nearly 30 years of experience in the field, having taught over 2,000 students and

dozens of educators.

The read-a-thon attracts hundreds of local school children who are sponsored to read as many short English books as they can over the course of a month, culminating with a community party and award ceremony to be held this year on March 15.

The read-a-thon sponsors include Bank Hapoalim, Steimatzky, RE/MAX, Burgers Bar, Aroma and the Maaleh Adumim Municipality.

Once completed, the giant book will go on display at the local municipality and around schools in the Maaleh Adumim area after the read-a-thon concludes in mid February.

For more information about the read-a-thon or A.H.A.V.A please contact ahava.org@gmail.com