

Nurturing A Nation of Readers in Singapore

The Singapore National Library Board Experience



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I) Introduction

1. This paper serves to provide an overview of the various initiatives, programmes and campaigns organized by the Singapore National Library Board to promote the love of reading and to inspire lifelong learning among Singaporeans.
2. The Singapore National Library Board's mission is to provide a trusted, accessible and globally-connected library and information service through the National Library and a comprehensive network of Public Libraries. Also under its management are 24 public libraries throughout the Island. Through its innovative use of technology and collaboration with strategic partners, NLB ensures that library users have access to a rich array of information services and resources that are convenient, accessible and relevant. More information on NLB can be found on www.nlb.gov.sg
3. To promote and nurture a nation of readers, the National Library Board has implemented many nation-wide reading programmes targeting at different segments of the community.

Followings are highlights on some of the Nation-wide, Community-based reading campaigns and programmes.

II) Nation-wide Reading campaigns & Initiatives

1) READ! Singapore: Nurturing a Nation of Readers

- **Why READ! Singapore**

“Reading is one of the best habits to cultivate in enriching our lives so that we become more confident to acquire new knowledge and skills. Despite the advent of the Internet, many reading groups have sprung up around the world. There are many ‘One Book, One City’ projects in the United States and Australia. In Singapore, we have READ! Singapore.

READ! Singapore is a nationwide initiative of the National Library Board (NLB) that aims to cultivate the joy of reading, enhance community bonding and spark imagination and creativity among Singaporeans. Held over a 12-14 week period from May annually, the campaign seeks to encourage communal reading, with facilitated discussions and activities centered on a common set of books and stories selected according to a different theme every year. Communal reading also offers many great opportunities for individuals to

socialise, develop critical thinking skills and confidence in self-expression through book discussions and story dramatisation.

- **Objectives and Justification**

In a knowledge-based economy, there is a vital need for individuals who can grasp a diverse spectrum of viewpoints and tap on a broad worldview for new ideas and innovation. Working in a globalised environment also requires an understanding of how different people and cultures think and relate to each other. Fiction provides an effective and accessible means of cultivating such a mindset. However, a survey by NLB in 2003 revealed that many Singaporeans read only work or study-related books. READ! Singapore thus seeks to bridge this gap with the following strategies.

- **Our Goals**

- ✓ To create a vibrant reading culture in Singapore
- ✓ To provide a common topic for discussion and conversation between families, colleagues, schoolmates and communities.
- ✓ To cultivate community bonding through book discussions and other literacy related events in public venues and heartland across the island.
- ✓ To provide a platform and build social capital through book themes that inspires an emotional response as well as opportunities for readers to share cultural experiences and personal lessons.
- ✓ To support and promote equal access to reading, literacy and learning in libraries and community organisations, thereby creating social good for the community, in particular, for special needs groups, the under privileged and under served.

- **Our Reach**

- ✓ Since its inception in 2005, READ! Singapore has reached out to more than 160,000 participants through more than 1,600 activities.
- ✓ We have attracted the participation of 100 schools and rallied the support of more than 100 partners from Government/Ministries, Community/Grassroots organisations as well as partners from the Service and Hospitality industries to organise reading carnivals and set up reading clubs.
- ✓ READ! Singapore had also successfully influenced taxi drivers, hairstylists, teachers, healthcare/hospitality/service officers, civil servants, grassroots leaders, youth, general public and senior citizens to set up reading clubs. To date, more than 90 Reading Clubs have been formed.

Eight books and eight short stories from the four official languages are selected for READ! Singapore, out of which, one book will be voted in by the public with the rest selected by the Steering Committee. These books are written by local and

international authors, and each of the selected short stories will be translated into three other languages, to encourage reading across communities.

Each year, NLB will seek various strategic partnerships to deliver new innovative reading-related ideas through the campaign. For example, NLB partnered Silk Air to organize a “Booklovers on Board” programme where some 7000 passengers were able to request for a READ! Singapore 2008 short story to read on board during their flights. The programme also included working with Mediacorp Radio for an inaugural production of 3000 copies of an **audio book** which were distributed to hospitals, voluntary welfare homes and the Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped (SAVH) for book discussion purposes. It also united the entire nation by encouraging them to read/listen to the stories from each of the 4 languages, regardless of linguistic background or physical disability.

On the whole, READ! Singapore selected novels, short stories and the audio books have helped to promote community bonding and understanding. It has provided a platform for the community to come together, to mingle with people of all races all over the island who will be reading the same books and coming together for sharing and discuss the common stories at community centres, grassroots organisations, libraries, schools reading clubs, military camps, hospitals, societies and private organizations.

- **Benefits**

- ✓ **Reach out to more than 160,000 participants in 2010**

Working with more than 100 partners, book agencies, schools, community and business organizations and the campaign has over the past 6 years, resulted in more than 1,600 book discussions and other reading-related activities and attracted over 160,000 participants from all over Singapore. We have reached out to a wide and diverse target audience, such as the National servicemen, taxi drivers, hairstylists, healthcare/hospitality/service Industry workers and civil servants.

- ✓ **From baby steps to bigger strides: Reading Clubs are going strong**

NLB is working with partners to promote a culture of reading through community reading groups. We are collaborating with Organisations/Community Clubs, supply reading material and assist in the facilitation of the book discussion sessions at a start; to encourage their staff, members and residents to read and set up reading club at your work place or community clubs. The monthly reading sessions help to enhance racial harmony/ work-life balance and team bonding, stimulating imagination and creativity among the members.

Working closely with different partners, we have reached out to a wide and diverse target audience, presently more than 90 reading clubs at the community at large were formed since 2005. Regular monthly book discussions were

conducted in English, Chinese, Malay and Tamil. Book discussion sessions were carried out in schools, colleges, hospitals and welfare homes, army camps, hair salons, cafes, food courts, community centres, shopping malls, government ministries and statutory boards and private companies/organisations.

Some examples of reading clubs are as follows:

- **Reading Clubs for Taxi Sifu**

- ✓ The Taxi Sifu Reading Club is possibly the most active of the Reading Clubs that were formed when READ! Singapore was launched in 2005. With a membership of 70 strong (started off with 15 members) it continues to meet regularly at Ang Mo Kio Public Library to discuss their latest adventures in reading.

- **Reading Clubs for Hairstylists (Hairdressers)**

- ✓ The Jean Yip Reading Club for hairstylists in its island wide chain of hair salons has carried on with 20 members. 4 more hairstylists reading clubs at other service operators will be set up in other regions by 2025.

- **Reading Interest Clubs at CCs/Working with grassroots leaders**

- ✓ A total of 20 Reading Clubs were set up at the Community Clubs from 2007 to date. The Senior Reading Clubs at Clementi and Bishan Community Clubs celebrated their 4th anniversary with a membership of over 120. The members continue to conduct monthly book discussions for their members.

- **Partnership with Schools, Colleges, ITEs**

- ✓ Well-trained and motivated reading facilitators are key to getting the book-reading ball rolling in various communities. A team of well-trained and motivated reading facilitators is crucial catalysts to spark lively book readings and discussions especially with participants from diverse background.
- ✓ Schools remain vital partners, with students from more than 100 schools taking part in READ! Singapore Campaign. Around 15 training sessions were conducted for 350 teachers from 160 schools, 250 grassroots leaders and volunteers annually.
- ✓ A group of specially selected students was trained under READ! Singapore as reading ambassadors/facilitators to lead book discussions, reading sessions and other book-related activities in their classes in schools. In 2010, Singapore St Joseph Institute piloted the whole level approach, set up 150 reading circles in the Secondary 1 and Secondary 2

level (each class set up 5 reading circles led by a trained student facilitator under the supervision of their teacher).

- ✓ READ @ ITE – Institute of Technical Education, West and East Colleges are key partners with READ! Singapore for the past few years. The colleges sent teachers and students for the facilitator training workshops. Special projects were assigned for students to enhance their reading. For example, in 2009, ITE West, after the reading facilitator training workshop, held book discussion session for a group of students on the selected story, “No Looking Back”. Students were so inspired that they opted to animate the story. The students took three months to complete the project and their short animation was launched during the closing ceremony of READ! Singapore 2009. Other ITE students trained as Reading Ambassadors volunteered at hospitals and participated in Reading Marathons also.
- **Partnership with Homes for youths at risk**
 - ✓ READ @ Singapore Boys’ Home and Singapore Girls’ Home – Monthly book discussion sessions were conducted at these two homes. The teens were able to share their views on the stories and participated actively.
- **Partnership with Hospitals and Welfare Home**
 - ✓ READ! Singapore is working with Alexandra Hospital, Institute of Mental Health, Kwong Wai Shiu Hospital, Singapore General Hospital, Tan Tock Seng Hospital, to set up reading clubs for nurses and conduct reading activities at these hospitals for their patients.
 - ✓ Is working closely with Welfare Homes to set up reading clubs for nurses and patients, provide audio books as well as conduct reading activities at these homes for their patients.
- **Partnership with Government Ministries and Statutory Board**
 - ✓ During these past 6 years, READ! Singapore has worked with many Government/Ministries and Statutory Board, self-help groups to set up reading clubs for staff, provide READ! Singapore reading materials, audio books as well as conduct reading activities for staff and their clients.
- **Partnership with Hospitality and Service Industry Group**
 - ✓ During the past 6 years worked with Conrad Centennial Singapore, AMARA Hotel, Mandarin Hotel and Grand Mercure Hotel on the READ! Singapore campaign.
 - ✓ Selected READ! Singapore books were distributed to staff and clients at the hotels. These hotels were sponsors for the opening/closing ceremony

of READ! Singapore campaign for certain years, sponsored activities like Reading Marathon.

- ✓ Book discussion sessions were conducted at Cafe, Fast Food Outlets, Food Courts and Restaurants, for example, at ICE3 Cafe, Safra Turkish Cafe and Restaurant, Koufo Food Court, Republic Food Court, etc.

- **Partnership with Private Companies**

- ✓ Worked with State Bank of India, Keppel Land, Bovis, India Se, MPH, Panpac, Reader's Digest and Fraser & Neave for sponsorship and as partners to set up reading clubs for staff and conduct activities for staff and their clients.

Some programmes highlights:

Spotlight on Youth and Family

Young people from 15 to 19 years of age, as well as their families, are the focus of READ! Singapore campaign, which aimed to nurture a lifelong reading habit amid multiple lifestyle demands and distractions. For examples:

- **Youth Writers Awards Asia**

- ✓ To boost the participation rate of this reader segment, READ! Singapore 2009 joined hands with popular magazine Reader's Digest to launch the Youth Writers Awards Asia 2010, a short story writing competition that celebrates Singapore's hosting of the first Youth Olympic Games (YOG) in 2010. 1,200 entries were received and the best 30 entries were published in a book 'Dare to Dream, Stories of Imagination, Passion and Sporting Excellence'. This publication was distributed to 5,000 YOG youth athletics in 2010.

- **'Reading Superstar' book review writing competition**

- ✓ New media tools were also roped in to engage young readers. NLB worked together with the Committee to Promote Chinese Language Learning for a 'Reading Superstar' Chinese Competition. This event sought to get students to express themselves freely through creative means such as multimedia or minibooks in response to reading one of the selected novels or short stories of READ! Singapore.
- ✓ Open to all students from secondary schools, junior colleges, institutes of technical education and polytechnics, the competition received more than 200 entries. Ten finalists in each category had been short listed and were posted on the Internet for public voting, with the final result to be based on both voters' choices and the assessment of professional judges. The top

three entries in each category were awarded the title 'Reading Superstar' in a prize-giving ceremony.

- **Cyber wellness in Gaming and Reading**

- ✓ Two well-received talks on 'Cyberwellness for Youth on Extreme Gaming and Reading' were organised by experts from Touch Youth and the Singapore Cybersports & Online Gaming Association (SCOGA).
- ✓ The speakers based on their presentations on the classic Chinese fable, *Red Cliff*, which is one of the short stories selected for READ! Singapore. They even used the video game version of 'Red Cliff' to further illustrate their points through this tale of strategy thinking and warcraft.

- **Game2Read**

- ✓ A joint initiative with the Singapore Cybersports and Online Gaming Association (SCOGA), which enabled gamers, youths, and the community-at-large to discover the joy of reading through games and sports, and in the process inspire our youth to explore new horizons and reach for their dreams. Gaming and reading activities were held over the two-day event which attracted about 2,000 participants. Books related to gaming and sports were also showcased and were available for borrowing
- ✓ The Game 2 Read Book club was formed in Aug 2010 with 20 new members. The club meets monthly at the Central Public Library and the Serangoon Public Library. More such reading clubs for gamers will be formed at partners venue and libraries.

- **144-hour Reading Marathon: Setting new records and building fond memories**

READ! Singapore continued to break new grounds with event that engaged the mind and won over the hearts of both new and veteran readers. The initiatives include a record-setting reading marathon.

- ✓ For the first time, a 144-hour long Reading Marathon was held at The Plaza of the National Library Building. From 1.00pm, 3 July to 1.00pm, 9 July, 428 participants took turns to read aloud from the selected novels and short stories, adding up to 144 hours of continuous reading over six days. The 428 readers from all walks of life participated in the reading.

- **READ! IT**

- ✓ One of the highlights of READ! Singapore 2010 was READ! IT, Singapore's first-ever infocomm enabled reading event. Jointly organised by NLB and the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA), READ! IT brought together reading events happening at six different venues simultaneously over a two-hour period with videos streamed live online. The event received an encouraging response of more than 800 website hits over the two-hour period.

- **Dramatization**

- ✓ A well-received aspect of the campaign are dramatized excerpts of the short stories which professional, volunteers and students re-enacted at hospitals and welfare homes to make the stories and characters come alive.
- ✓ Short stories were dramatized at SMRT train, bus stop, hospitals foyers, welfare homes and schools to highlight the publications and reach out to the unreached. For example, dramatised performances, book readings and road show activities bring the joy of reading to patients at Hospitals and Welfare Homes.

Moving forward

A key lesson from earlier campaigns has been that focusing on just two novels for each language (compared to 3 novels each in 2005) and providing bilingual editions of the short stories help readers to focus better and improve the quality of shared experiences during discussions. This decision also makes publicity and outreach efforts simpler and more effective amongst potential new readers.

With a bigger and broader scope of programmes to meet the needs and expectations of more readers both old and new, READ! Singapore has come a long way since its origin sixth years ago. The growing support of the public, commercial and educational institutions as well as the media is a testament to the status of READ! Singapore as an annual nationwide event to look out for.

The crucial mission of READ! Singapore remains its ability to help Singaporeans become more aware of the possibilities for personal enrichment and social development through reading fiction. Sustained involvement in Reading Clubs and other literary activities following the campaign period suggest that this strategy is working. Along with a lifelong habit and love for books and fiction, READ! Singapore has through its choice of themes that resonant with Singaporeans who discovered a bit of themselves and learnt what it means to belong and be home and their dreams through the themes of the past years.

Most importantly more funding and integration is required for the campaign to rise further thereby supporting and promoting access to reading, literacy and creating

social good for the community, in particular for special needs groups. With the right amount of synergy and support READ! Singapore will continue to ascend further.

2) **kidsREAD**

- This nation-wide reading programme was officially launched on 23 April 2004 by the then Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong. It is a collaborative effort by NLB, People's Association (PA) and 5 community self-help groups to promote the love of reading and cultivate good reading habits among children aged 4 – 8 years old from low-income families in Singapore.
- Through this collaborative reading programme, 120 kidsREAD clubs have been set up throughout Singapore so far, involving more than 4000 volunteers and over 10,500 children have been reached. While the initial plan was to set up reading clubs at community clubs, public libraries and service centres affiliated with the community self-help groups, other agencies have come on board during the implementation phase. These include Primary Schools, Family Service Centres, Student Care Centres, Community Children's Libraries, Kindergartens, special needs organizations and children's homes.
- The extension of the kidsREAD programme beyond the community to primary schools began in 2007. The Ministry of Education assisted with the dissemination of publicity materials and information on the programme to all primary schools. To-date, we have more than 40 primary schools offering the kidsREAD programme.
- Volunteers to administer and manage the kidsREAD clubs and programme are mainly recruited through the community self-help groups' own networks of contacts. In addition, students from secondary schools, junior colleges, polytechnics and tertiary institutions are also recruited as kidsREAD volunteers to administer reading activities for the children. Parent support groups from the primary schools are also a useful source of volunteers for the programme.

3) **10, 000 & More Fathers Reading**

- The 10,000 Fathers Reading! aims to provide focused support to fathers from all walks of life on reading to or with their children so as to cultivate good reading habits and further strengthen father-child bonding through reading. This also serves to aid children's development and creativity in the long run. The programme also includes prospective fathers and grandfathers who are involved in reading to or with their young charges. Close to 60,000 participants have benefited from this programme since its inception in 2007. More than 400 Primary schools and kindergartens/childcare centres participated in the "Read a story with my Dad!" book review contest since 2008 till date.

III) Promote Creativity through Read & Learn

1) Read and Reap

- A reading initiative that aims to recommend good reads, spark imagination and thinking via engaging extracts from literary works and thought-provoking questions. Readers are encouraged to share their thoughts and comment about the question via the Read and Reap blog. Librarians and members of the public are invited to submit their favourite passages from books.
- This programme aims to introduce readers short interesting excerpts from books on universal themes and provide thought-provoking questions for them to think and discuss. It is targeted at primary and secondary (inclusive of JC, ITE) school students extracts chosen for primary and secondary schools were age-appropriate and book recommendations were targeted at the specific age segments.
- To-date, very positive feedback from students, teachers, NLB staff and members of the public were received. Most found the programme to be an interesting and insightful way to promote reading especially among time-starved Singaporeans.

2) Quest I & II

- Quest is targeted at reluctant readers aged 9-12 years old, particularly boys, using a winning combination of game play, collectible cards, story line based on adventure-fantasy and manga genres.
- Quest” revolves around a storyline of a Fantasy Adventure genre which was delivered in the form of Collectible Cards. The Collectible Cards each has part of the text of the whole storyline. Children aim to collect all the collectible cards in a bid to complete the storyline. We have received very good response from the boys.

3) Whole School Reading Programme

- A year-long programme that involves the entire school – students, teachers, administrators and support staff (including school libraries). Its broad aim is to raise reading levels among students, through a range of reading-related activities held throughout the school year. The programme involves about 16,500 students from 15 participating schools (5 Primary and 10 Secondary) in 2011.
- A pre and post programme survey with all students would be conducted, on the volume and frequency of their reading of non-school materials. At the moment the pilot project was limited to 15 schools, as it is offered in addition to all other Public Library services being provided to all schools in Singapore.

4) **Work Book and Copyright Day & NLB Book Exchange**

- Celebrates the love of books with various reading and book based activities before and after World Book Day which falls on 23 April each year. The project aims to contribute toward NLB's overall goal of promoting a reading culture in Singapore, as well as introduce the concept of sharing and "recycling" of reading materials.
- Into its third year, NLB Book Exchange 2011 was organised under the World Book Day on 16 April. It was a very successful and meaningful event which had attracted more than 7,700 participants and exchanged 77,802 books in a day.
- Besides this hugely popular NLB Book Exchange, book talks, meet-the-author sessions, reading discussions and dramatization were organised.
- NLB also collaborated with community reading clubs, grassroots leaders and residents of constituencies and secondary schools to organize the "Spot The Reader" event. On 21 April 11, more than 500 volunteers, served as marshals to seek out members of the public who are reading books and delight them with a reward of a token. These marshals roved within SMRT's Circle Line stations and around bus interchanges, food courts, neighbourhood markets and shopping malls from 11.00am to 3.00pm. The 500 volunteers spotted 5,411 readers and presented a token to each of them, much to their delight.
- Presently, more than 20,000 participants benefited from the World Book Day programme each year

IV) Reaching the under-served

1) Project Deliver Me

- As part of the National Library Board's (NLB) continuous effort to promote reading among the less mobile community, sometimes we say that NLB stands for "No One Left Behind" because we believe that everyone has the right of access to our rich resources of library materials and collections. The NLB's Project Deliver Me is a special service that rally National Library Board's staff, volunteers and other stakeholders in the delivery of library materials to the doorsteps of our less mobile library members. This project emphasizes our commitment that no one should be left behind in the journey of lifelong learning! More than 100 members have benefited from this special service since it was launched in January 2009. The members get to enjoy the benefits of borrowing privileges with premium membership at no cost such as the option of either reading more books, or complementing their literary diet with a selection of audio-visual materials.

1) MOLLY[®], the Mobile Library Bus

- With sponsorship from SBS Transit, Wavex Technologies and NEC Asia, MOLLY[®] is a SBS-refurbished mobile library bus that was launched on 3 April 2008 at Pathlight School. It reaches out to children from disadvantaged background or under-served community by bringing its services and books to them at their premises.
- MOLLY[®] is designed as a one-stop mobile library service where users enjoy the same transactions found in the branch libraries. Such transactions are online and real-time made possible via wireless connectivity.
- Since its inception, MOLLY[®] has reached the following target groups:
 - ✓ Students from Special Needs Schools
 - ✓ Residents in Homes and Orphanages
 - ✓ Young students in primary schools
- These groups either could not make it to the libraries on their own or they require adults to accompany them.

V) Segment –Based Reading Programmes

Children

1) Born to Read, Read to Bond

- A programme designed to encourage parents to inculcate reading habits in their children at an early age and to promote reading as an activity that bonds a family. Parents are guided on their child's reading and learning journey even before the child is born. Expectant mums or parents of newborns can redeem the Born to Read, Read to Bond care packs which contain a Baby Journal to mark the critical milestones in a child's reading journey, Baby's First CD and Baby's Height Chart.

2) Regular Storytelling sessions

- NLB organises regular storytelling sessions and special holiday programmes for children aged 4 to 12. Children get to listen to interesting stories or facts, and enjoy hands-on craft sessions, conduct experiments or even create their board game.

3) Fun with Tots sessions

- These are conducted for parents and children aged 1 to 3. In each session, the Children's librarian will engage toddlers in stories and catchy rhymes while giving parents tips on inculcating the 6 early literacy skills that children require in order to learn to read. Fun With Tots highlights the importance of the role of parents in early literacy.

4) Children's Reading Clubs

- Organised for both reluctant readers as well as avid readers, guiding them in the exploration of a variety of books. Conducted in English, Chinese and Malay, the Children are introduced to different authors, genres and basic story writing skills. In addition, they get to play fun games.

5) The Junior Reading Ambassadors (JRA)

- JRA programme aims to encourage reading among peers. Primary school students, who are avid readers, are nominated by their schools to be part of this programme, where they promote a love of reading through creative means like storytelling, recommendation of favourite stories and buddy reading in the libraries, schools and public platforms.

Teens

1) Teen Expressions @ the Public Libraries

- Teen reviews of their favorite reads were collected and displayed at the Young People Sections of select public libraries that are frequented by teens.

2) "What I'd Like the World to Read"

- This initiative invites teens to post their recommendations of books they think their peers and ought to read. The submissions are in multimedia formats, such as audio, video and Powerpoint slideshows.

3) Teen Reading Workshops

- Other efforts made to promote reading among teens include packaging a series of library workshops focusing on the popular teen fiction and non-fiction genres launched since FY07. About 27 workshops reaching 853 students were conducted in a year.

Adult/Seniors

1) Learning Communities

- Book Clubs/Learning Communities are set up in public libraries with the following objectives:
 - ✓ To promote a culture of reading among Singaporeans
 - ✓ To provide an opportunity to rediscover the joy of reading by creating a common topic of discussion and conversation
- Besides Reading Clubs, public libraries also focus on having a mix of reading-focused and activity-based learning communities and we are working towards the self-sustainability of these clubs via training and annual review.

2) Info Literacy Programmes for Seniors

- Library enrichment workshops targeting at senior library users are developed as one of the strategies under the Services for Senior Adults Roadmap to reach out and engage senior library users. The main aim is to equip seniors with basic information literacy skills in order to enhance the accessibility of library collections and services to seniors thus encouraging active learning through reading and use of the library.
- Three basic modules in English and Chinese covering an introduction to the public library collections, basic search skills and introduction to e-resources and multimedia services at the library were developed. Members of the Seniors Reading Clubs were invited to participate in the initial runs of the workshops. Public runs were also organized and actively promoted during outreach activities targeted specifically at seniors.

3) Raise-A-Reader workshops (Parents & Caregivers)

- This interactive workshop is for parents and caregivers to discover ways to cultivate and foster the love of reading in a child; create a supportive reading environment for a child through meaningful activities and play and understand how the parent-child bond can be strengthened through reading together. Our librarians also share tips on how to select books for children.

4) Library enrichment workshops for Seniors

- A series of workshops designed for Seniors, conducted in English and Mandarin. Its aim is to attract seniors into libraries by introducing

relevant collections that might appeal to them. A total of 27 sessions were conducted, with an average attendance of 10 to 12 participants per workshop.

5) With My Grandma/ Grandpa

- An initiative targeting at grandparents and grandchildren, where we want them to share their personal experiences; and we will use their stories to connect across different generation.

IV) Conclusion

NLB has done well in the application of technology to improve our basic lending service and processes and redefining library spaces in terms of capitalizing on the positive spin-offs from co-location with commercial or civic institutions.

In particular, the Public Library Service has moved away from a “one-size-fits-all” approach to a multi-prong strategy of leveraging on programmes, outreach, delivery of customer segment-specific services and user-centric collection development to meet the diverse reading and lifelong learning needs of Singaporeans, much like many of the overseas public libraries that we have visited or studied.

However, while much has been done over the last few years in promoting the reading and learning culture, there is still a sizeable segment of Singaporeans who remain as non-users of the public library. More efforts must therefore be continually expended to engage existing active members as well as to attract new members to the library.

