

Dunlop to share the gift of reading this Literacy Day

Issued by [Sumitomo Dunlop](#)

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This International Literacy Day, celebrated globally on 8 September, iconic tyre brand Dunlop will be sharing the joy of reading with South African families in partnership with NGO, Book Dash.



International Literacy Day coincides with South Africa's National Book Week celebrated from 6 to 12 September, and highlights the importance of literacy as a matter of dignity and human rights, with the goal to create a more literate society.

South Africa is not considered a reading nation. The vast majority of the country's school children still have inadequate literacy resources at home and in their communities. While there have been improvements in recent years, the country continues to underperform relative to the literacy levels of most other middle-income countries. Families, and not only schools, are considered important in shaping the literacy journey of the nation's children.

This is why, on the evening of Wednesday, 8 September at 7pm, South African families are invited to tune in to Dunlop's livestream reading of four South African bedtime stories read in four of the country's official languages.

What's more, viewers can also pay it forward by making an easy Zapper or EFT donation of R30 to Book Dash, which Dunlop will match, to get books into the hands of kids who need it most.

Dunlop's livestream event will be hosted on its YouTube channel and will see special guests and Dunlop employees reading stories by South African authors in English, Afrikaans, isiZulu and Setswana.

Lubin Ozoux, CEO of Sumitomo Rubber South Africa, which manufactures the Dunlop, Falken and Sumitomo tyre brands, said, "This is our way of bringing South African families together safely to share in the joy of reading. As a local nonprofit that is passionate about tackling the challenge of low literacy levels in South Africa, Book Dash is an ideal partner to help us in this pursuit."

Earlier this year, Dunlop sponsored 700 Book Dash books to be distributed to needy children and is now calling upon its employees and extensive dealer network to support its mission to kickstart the literacy journeys of South African children.



Majozi will read the story of Lory Dory



SA muso Majozi will read the story of Lory Dory

Igniting a love of reading

Lending his uplifting perspective to the Dunlop livestream event for International Literacy Day will be proudly South African musician, Majozi, who will read the story of *Lory Dory*, written by Brendon O'Neill.

"Some of my fondest memories growing up, involved reading. Whether it was discovering new words or new worlds, reading was and still is, an integral part of my creative foundation starting from a very young age. Reading is so important for the minds of our children," he said.

Also joining in will be Dr Nokubonga Khoza of Durban, reading a Zulu Book Dash bedtime story, *Little Ant's Big Plan*, written by Candice Dingwall.

Completing the line-up are Dunlop employees Itumeleng Majofi and Eugene Oosthuizen who will read *Tortoise finds his home*, in Sesotho, written by Maya Fowler and *Lesedi's Sandbox*, in Afrikaans, written by Mathapelo Mabaso.

Research shows that children who love reading typically excel at school and go on to become constructive members of society. However, as it stands, eight out of every 10 South African children cannot read properly. This is largely due to not having access to quality, culturally relevant reading material in their home languages. The inability to read makes a lifelong impact, hitting the brakes on how far these children can go in life.

With education as a key pillar of Sumitomo Rubber SA's corporate social investment strategy, the company supports two Ladysmith schools with learning materials, mentorship and careers days, and recently partnered with Book Dash to create the Dunlop "Are we there yet?" podcast which offers captivating locally inspired audio stories and is available on the Dunlop MyTyres app and other podcast platforms.

Each year Book Dash gathers creative professionals who volunteer their time, skill and passion over a 12-hour day to speedily create culturally relevant books, in South African languages and distribute them to underprivileged children. Volunteers include professional writers, illustrators, designers, photographers, technical and art directors, and storytellers. Since 2014, Book Dash has created more than 100 books and distributed more than a million copies to children, with the goal of putting 100 books into the hands of every child under the age of five.

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Sumitomo Dunlop



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