

On January 31, 2022 the 26 branches of the Harris County Public Library system launched a three-fold early literacy program called Growing Readers. Parents registered their toddler in Little Buds, or their preschooler in Little Readers. Over the course of five weeks, each child received an activity kit with the goal of fostering interactions between parents and children to help "[develop] their child's skills to become lifelong readers and learners" (HCPL, n.d.-b). Each branch was allowed to enroll twenty children per program. 1000 Books Before Kindergarten, the third literacy program, is ongoing. Board books are given to preschoolers after they read increments of 150 books. Boosting the motivational forces with some Miracle Grow, I filled a treasure box with age appropriate prizes for them to choose from after every 100 books read. Currently, our branch has registered 184 children with 8,747 books read in just three months (Harris County Public Library, personal communication, March 2, 2022). That's some miracle! To include school age children in the Growing Readers, I designed a reading incentive program for our branch called Me and the Beanstalk. Children ages 5-10+ keep track of the books they read from various assigned categories on their beanstalk coloring page. They turn it in for a prize from a treasure box.

