

# RENAISSANCE

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Case Study | May 2022

## Partnership with Seychelles Ministry of Education



## Introduction

Founded over 35 years ago in the USA, Renaissance has become a leader in pre-K–12 education, serving 20 million students in 45,000 schools in around 100 countries worldwide. We help governments, families and communities fuel student growth so all learners can achieve their full potential. A recipient of numerous international awards, we are widely recognised as a leading authority with a research base of over 450 studies and articles.

## Summary

In early 2019, Seychelles Ministry of Education and Renaissance met to discuss the literacy needs of pupils who are learning English as an additional language. The key objective was to improve attainment in English language, while also supporting schools in developing a culture of reading in both schools and homes. This required an increase in provision of engaging, appropriately levelled books, along with the means to build pupils' enthusiasm for reading, overcoming the increasing draw of modern technology – a challenge shared by schools around the world.

Renaissance recommended a programme focused on personalised reading practice for all students, with a strong emphasis on building reading comprehension. The key component of this programme was myON by Renaissance, an online learning platform containing over 8,000 authentic books written in English, with audio narration and other integrated scaffolding tools. The programme matches pupils with exciting, modern books which align to their chronological age, reading ability and interests. These are available to read 24/7 online and offline. Teachers have access to thousands of non-fiction texts to augment their teaching in all subjects, providing further opportunities for students to develop a broad range of vocabulary. In addition, the online platform works alongside, rather than in competition with, students' interest in technology.

The Ministry of Education and Renaissance agreed that a small-scale trial of the programme was required to assess the reception and scope of such a programme. This was offered free of charge from Renaissance.



## myON Implementation

The Ministry of Education chose to focus on two year groups, P2 and P4, within five schools which were carefully selected based on their geographical locations, size, and academic history to be representative of the wider population. The trial ran for 9 weeks, between May and July 2019. Participating teachers were provided with training and support from Renaissance in the form of a 1.5-day workshop and remote support throughout the trial. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education engaged with participating schools in-person through meetings, guided by regular updates from Renaissance.

Following the launch of the programme, Renaissance monitored implementation within schools, focusing on the amount of reading taking place and on pupils' comprehension of their books. These figures were shared with the Ministry of Education, and schools were updated on their individual school data during weekly email updates.

A huge quantity of reading was achieved across all schools in the trial. A total of 5,143 books were completed, with an additional 3,177 books being partially read. This resulted in 55,823 minutes of reading time across the schools throughout the two-month trial.

In December 2019, Seychelles Ministry of Education made the decision to implement Renaissance's reading solution to all 25 primary schools over 3 years, launching in Spring 2020.



## Impact

Renaissance launched myON across all primary schools in February 2020. To help keep pupils reading during the pandemic, a free-to-use myON site was offered to all secondary schools until the end of 2020. Primary pupils spent over 400 hours reading 11,000 books on myON during Seychelles' first wave of school closures. During 2020, pupils spent a total of 3,746 hours reading outside of school hours, meaning 59% of total reading time took place before 8AM, after 4PM, and during the weekends. During 2021, this increased to 5,970 hours of reading outside school hours, indicating that pupils have taken ownership of their reading journeys with many choosing to read for pleasure in their free time.

Renaissance delivered on-site and remote professional development to launch myON across primary schools. A whole country reading competition took place over the summer holidays to drive engagement and encourage pupils to read at home. During this time, teachers and librarians became empowered to lead their own initiatives around Renaissance's reading solution. These educators became known as myON champions and have hosted networking sessions to share their experiences, knowledge and best practices.

As the project has moved forward, schools have embraced myON not only as a digital library, but also a classroom resource with many class teachers using the Library and Project features as a teaching tool for subject lessons including English, Science, and Maths.

The following quotes from pupils, parents, and school staff highlight the success of the project and the impact myON has had on creating a reading culture:

***"myON has rekindled learners' interest in reading. There are more pupils showing interest in reading, and more engagement in classroom discussions especially in science. There is also an increase in using myON as a research tool."***

– Librarian, Seychelles Reading Journey Webinar

***"I love reading with my daughter on myON, we both enjoy the collection of books and it's a great bonding tool for us."***

– Parent

***"I could not imagine a day without reading on myON. I read every day and seize every opportunity I get. What makes it more fun is the quizzes. It gives me a chance to evaluate how well I have read the book. I really get excited when the score pops up. I always try my very best to score more than 80% as this shows I have read with understanding."***

– P5 Pupil

***"It's really nice to hear the impact that Renaissance is having in Seychelles. I use myON with my pupils during English reading periods and plan to continue."***

– Teacher

Having access to myON and having built up the skills and knowledge around best practice has allowed school staff to create an environment where reading is championed, valued, and accessible to all.

Since myON was launched in 2020, pupils have spent over **1,000,000 minutes reading**, with over **150,000 books completed**. This is a great achievement for one of the world's smallest countries.

Our collaboration with Seychelles Ministry of Education was recognised at the 2022 BETT Awards being shortlisted for International Digest Educational Resource Award.



## Project Management

At Renaissance, we value the importance of building strong, open relationships, which is why a dedicated Project Manager was assigned to support Seychelles Ministry of Education throughout the contract to ensure a successful implementation.

Our experts have the knowledge and experience of using personalised data to drive improvement, and pupil outcomes are always at the heart of what we do. Quality support has been given throughout the contract duration, and a bespoke training package has provided opportunities to upskill staff and maximise the full use of Renaissance products.

## Reporting

Regular conversations between the Ministry of Education stakeholders and the dedicated Projects Team at Renaissance has informed a systematic approach to ensuring success for students across all schools. Bespoke reporting has been offered quarterly, focusing on the metrics most relevant for the Ministry of Education. Stakeholders have been supported in interrogating this data to learn what is and what is not working and to build a data culture which has student outcomes at the centre. Frequent analysis meetings with the project manager at Renaissance offer opportunities to review the success of the implementation and create strategic next steps.

## Bespoke Professional Development

Tailored resources have been provided as part of a personalised training plan to support all end users, from Ministry leaders down to those in the classroom, helping to build a foundation for success across all schools. Exclusive training sessions grounded in research and best practice have been delivered to all schools remotely and on-site to help school leaders, teachers, and support staff to expand their understanding and delve deeper into Renaissance products. Additionally, a range of resources were made available on-demand for those who prefer to learn in their own time and at their own pace.

## Engagement

Since our partnership began in 2020, Renaissance has run four country-wide competitions to promote and drive participation and best practice across all schools. Renaissance has worked closely with key stakeholders to identify any areas of focus and has designed competitions around these focal points to build success.

At Renaissance, we believe everyone can be a successful learner and it is our conviction that empowering teachers is integral to school success. We are a company founded by parents, upheld by educators, and enriched by scientists, who all understand that learning is a growth process: a continual journey from year to year and for a lifetime. To learn more about our products, services, and success stories, visit our website:

[intl.renaissance.com](http://intl.renaissance.com)

**250<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY BOOK CHALLENGE**

To celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Seychelles, we are running a reading competition from **28th September to 1<sup>st</sup> December**.

**CHALLENGES:**

- Read at least one book from each category.
- Try to read every day!

**AWARDS:**

**Pupil Awards**

- Bronze Award** – All students who read 250 Minutes to mark the 250th anniversary.
- Silver Award** – All students who read 100,000 Words to represent the growing population of the Seychelles.
- Gold Award** – All students who read 115 Books to symbolise the 115 islands.

**Individual Pupil Awards within each school:** Most books read, most words read, most time spent reading, highest percentage of books completed.

**School Awards:** Average minutes read, average books read, average minutes spent reading at the weekends.

**Ministry Award:** Best school engagement.

**Sail Away with a Good Book this August!**

**Seychelles Reading Challenge**

**15<sup>th</sup> August to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020**

All students are encouraged to read on myON as much as they can this August.

Winning schools will be selected based upon total minutes read on myON during the August break.

Time spent reading will be recorded automatically within each myON account.

There will be one Primary School Winner and one Secondary School Winner.

**Winners will be announced 11th September 2020.**

Schools with the most minutes read will be awarded certificates!

[www.myon.co.uk](http://www.myon.co.uk)

**RENAISSANCE myON**

Explore a **World of Reading Competition**

Monday 4th October – Friday 3rd December

**WIN a box of BOOKS**

**myON**

**School Awards:**

- 100% Participation on myON for a Year Group
- 100% Participation on myON for a School
- Highest Percentage of Books Completed
- Best Average Minutes Read
- Best Average Books Read

**End of Year Awards:**

- Word Millionaires
- Outstanding Achievements
- Ministry Award 2021