A Global Partnership
to Transform English Literacy
Across the Developing World
Jolly Futures provides a high quality literacy education in schools across sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, enabling all children to be able to read and write with confidence. The programme delivers effective learning of English through a comprehensive and contextually appropriate approach based on the proven, fun and multisensory synthetic phonics method to accelerate learning.

Jolly Futures delivers free teacher training and free education materials to government schools alongside ongoing support and monitoring for teachers. The programme aims to spread effective teaching and learning and improve literacy levels across low-income schools. We work in close partnership with the government to implement a year-long pilot before rolling-out the programme to all schools in the country to transform primary education nationwide.

Since 2005, Jolly Futures has reached over one million children in 9,755 schools, training 24,343 teachers across ten countries in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

**What is Synthetic Phonics?**

A method of teaching whereby the spoken word is synthesised, or made, from the letter sounds. Instead of learning the alphabet, children learn the sounds of letters, including those such as sh as in ship and ee as in tree - 42 in total.

There is a simple logic to the process, so reading comes from blending sounds together (d-o-g makes dog), while writing and spelling is the reverse. The spoken word ‘dog’ is segmented into the letter sounds d-o-g, which can each now be written. This gives children the ability to read words they may not have seen before.

"If the United Nations is serious about achieving the Millenium Development Goals... and the EFA Education For All goals, then we have no option but to adopt Jolly Phonics... it is the vehicle that enables every child to achieve."

Iro Umar, Director
Universal Basic Education Commission, Nigeria

**About Us**

Jolly Futures is a unique public private partnership between Jolly Learning, an educational publisher, and Universal Learning Solutions (ULS), a not-for profit organisation.

Jolly Learning’s flagship programme, Jolly Phonics, teaches children to read and write using synthetic phonics - widely recognised as the most effective way to teach children to read and write in English. Jolly Learning sells over two million products annually to over 90 countries, and also provides materials philanthropically, working closely with Universal Learning Solutions (ULS). ULS provides capacity building and advisory services to governments, enabling the project to deliver wider education transformation by maximizing the effectiveness and long term impact of the programme.
The Issue

Across the world, over 250 million primary school-aged children are unable to read or write (UNESCO, 2012). Even those who have spent four years in school are let down by a lack of quality education and frequently leave illiterate. Without these fundamental skills, the basis for all future learning is undermined. The new United Nations Sustainable Development Goals place an increased focus on providing this quality education – and Jolly Futures provides an important part of the solution.

The difference made by teaching with synthetic phonics is remarkable. Children learn twice as fast as the whole-word-memorisation teaching it typically replaces. In one study after another, children are found to have a reading age 12 months ahead of their actual age at the end of the first year (Johnston R and Watson J, 1998; Grant M, 1998; Stuart M, 1999). But the good news goes further. Boys do as well as girls. Children who do not have English as a first language keep up well with those who do, and those from poorer backgrounds can do just as well as those who are better off. Other methods typically take children four years to become literate - but many children still leave school unable to read.

Accelerated learning will enable children to increase their income by an estimated $16,000 over their lifetime. If all children nationally could achieve this, they would help the economy to grow by an extra 2% every year, and could reduce poverty within communities by 12% (UNESCO, 2014). Being able to read and write will help children to make important decisions such as what they would like to do in the future, and even their children will be more educated, healthier, and will be able to choose their own futures.

Why Jolly Phonics?

Whilst the synthetic phonics methodology is the backbone of Jolly Phonics, the programme provides much more than that. It is fun, multisensory, with games, songs, stories and activities that captivate children and help them to learn faster. For teachers, the programme is simple to follow, but provides them with a structure to innovate and personalise to their style of teaching.
Achievements to Date

10 Countries
where Jolly Futures is currently working

Over 1 Million
children have been reached worldwide

24,343
teachers have been trained impacting 9,755 schools

£23 Million
total worth of training and materials delivered worldwide

£900,000
donated by Jolly Learning to date

£1.8 Million
in additional funding leveraged from governments to support programmes

12 Months
after one year children are 12 months ahead

6 Times
gains made by synthetic phonics in word reading by end of primary 7

8/9 Measures
Jolly Phonics significantly outperforms conventional teaching methods on 8/9 EGRA tests*

*Early Grade Reading Assessment: On letter name knowledge, Jolly Phonics results were better, but not significantly so, therefore the result was not included
Where we work

11 Months Ahead
the gains made in reading age by children learning with Jolly Phonics in Cameroon after just 6 months

13 Months Ahead
the improvement in reading age over a six month period of 500 children in Hyderabad, India, using Jolly Phonics

Up to 29 Months Ahead
the gains made by 168 pupils in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, over a six month period, compared to children taught using conventional methods
Our Approach

We are now launching a new phase of Jolly Futures, focusing on 12 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia to accelerate literacy improvement. After a year-long pilot to gather academic evidence and local support, we scale to national level, build education systems and finally handover to government to ensure the sustainability of the programme and therefore long-term improvements in literacy.

Our approach delivers:

- **Materials**: we supply free contextually appropriate and engaging phonics resources to schools, free for the pilot and first year of scale-up. We use local printing and subsequently provide the government with a free license to print a teachers guide and pupil books for all children.
- **Training**: we enable teachers to deliver high-quality phonics teaching through three days of specialised training, free for every class one teacher and head teacher.
- **Further training** is provided to ensure the continual improvement of the teachers’ practice as well as training for government officials. The most promising teachers are offered advanced training and become trainers themselves.
- **Monitoring and Mentoring**: we work closely with government to create, train and implement a robust monitoring, research and mentoring programme that provides vital ongoing support to the trained teachers.
- **Advocacy and Advisory**: we work with governments and partners to embed synthetic phonics in a locally-owned, best-practice literacy curriculum as well as in the teacher training syllabuses to allow all teachers and pupils to benefit from this best practice.

Across the programme, we ensure:

- **Equality**: all children can learn through the synthetic phonics method, regardless of gender, income, language or ability
- **Expertise**: our quality-focused approach, built on years of experience, enables effective teaching and learning
- **Evidence**: we continually build on best-practice in order to catalyse change and improve literacy levels, working with local academic monitoring teams who measure children’s progress using internationally recognized literacy tests
- **Outcomes**: we are driven by a desire to transform education through improving national literacy levels rather than financial gain, and do not have any sales or profit targets
- **Sustainability**: working with governments and local partners to ensure local ownership in communities will embed change and create long-term adoption and impact

“I see a brighter future for my child because of Jolly Phonics... It is a source of pride for me to see my child aged 7 years is able to read and write better than a child of 12 years who did not receive Jolly Phonics teaching.”

*Parent*
*Zamfara State, Northern Nigeria*
Our Reach

Since 2005, Jolly Futures has implemented pilots in 10 countries, and is recommended by government for all schools' in two – The Gambia and Nigeria. In Nigeria, our largest programme, we have trained 20,870 teachers in over 8,500 schools, reaching over a million children.

Starting from a small pilot in the state of Akwa Ibom, our work has spread throughout the country, receiving endorsement at the highest levels of government. Working closely with the Universal Basic Education Commission, we are now operating in 31 states.

Our work is run by local teams, with training by local trainers, and in several states we are handing over operations to government – ensuring the programme’s sustainability. We have leveraged £1.8 million in additional funding from the Nigerian government to support our programmes nationwide.

We have additional pilots in Sierra Leone, Ghana, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Nepal and India, and we plan to expand these, bringing Jolly Futures to more children globally.

“A quick method of teaching reading and writing in primary schools is called the Jolly Phonics method... It’s incredible how just a small intervention like that can make a remarkable difference to the lives of young people.”

Yemi Osinbajo
Vice President of Nigeria

Our Impact

Multiple academic institutions and universities have assessed and evaluated Jolly Phonics pilot studies – including in Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda, the Gambia and India – plus many others in more developed countries. Research findings demonstrate that the synthetic phonics method is effective in improving the reading and writing skills of children. Children taught using synthetic phonics perform significantly better than those taught using conventional methods on a range of tests, and these differences increase where trained teachers are provided with further training and follow-up support.

Indeed, the national level of foundational reading in the Gambia has improved threefold from 2007-2013, as measured by the Early Grade Reading Assessment, EGRA (UNESCO, 2015). In 2008, synthetic phonics, and Jolly Phonics in particular, was embedded into teaching curriculums and teachers were trained nationwide. Synthetic phonics has become government policy in the Gambia, and national literacy is improving as a result. Now, we are seeing similar improvements in Nigeria.

Studies in Cross River and Zamfara states in Nigeria showed that synthetic phonics method works for ‘English as an Additional Language’ pupils, even where there is no focus on or link to mother tongue literacy and where children are unlikely to have pre-existing mother tongue literacy skills to build upon. Moreover, the Cross River State study found that synthetic phonics increases the comprehension skills of EAL pupils, without any additional focus on this (UKFIET, Gittins, 2015). In India, research showed that “children living in a slum environment, many with illiterate parents even in their mother tongue, are able to decode and blend English words” (Dixon, Tooley & Hunt, 2006).

For full details of these studies please visit: jollylearning.co.uk/research
Our Partners

Support from local partners including charities, academic institutions and government is a critical part of programme implementation, gathering evidence, and building institutional capacity.

NGOs

Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO)
Link Ethiopia
STIR Education

Academia

University of Calabar
University of Uyo
University of Bamenda
University of Education, Winneba

Government

Nigeria - Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC)
Nigeria - National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE)
The Gambia - Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education
Sierra Leone - Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
Cameroon - Ministry of Basic Education
Nepal - Ministry of Education

Our Ambition

Our vision is for a world where all children, regardless of their start in life, are provided with an opportunity to become fluent in English, thus building a foundation for learning and giving them the best promise for a future.

By 2020, Jolly Futures aims to train 58,000 teachers in 24,000 schools, reaching 9 million children in 12 countries. Jolly Learning will donate £3 million towards this, equaling over £23 million worth of materials and teacher training.

If we are to deliver our vision to transform the lives of 9 million children by 2020, we need your help. In particular, we are looking for partners to work with us to help carry out further research and measure the impact of our work; media partners to publicise our work; individuals and funders to invest in the capacity of our team and fund specific country programmes.

If you are interested in learning more or getting involved, please email:

futures@jollylearning.co.uk

or visit:

www.jollylearning.co.uk/futures
www.universallearningsolutions.org

Infographic Sources