

Over 6,700 Champions joined hands with Pratham Books to spread the joy of reading.

One Day, One Story 2019 introduced thousands of children to stories about inclusivity and gender.

Bengaluru, September 8, 2019: Pratham Books' annual flagship event, **One Day, One Story** marked [International Literacy Day](#) (September 8) with a nationwide storytelling campaign to help children discover the joy of reading.

Now in its eighth year, **One Day, One Story** featured two books: [Gappu Can't Dance](#), written by Menaka Raman and illustrated by Krishna Chandran, for younger children, and [The Weightlifting Princess](#), written by Sowmya Rajendran and illustrated by Debasmita Dasgupta, for older ones.

In *Gappu Can't Dance*, Gappu is a little girl who just cannot dance - when all her classmates raise their left hand, she raises her right! The book explores the joy of dancing, and as author Menaka Raman puts it, "Children should dance like no one is watching! And write, create art and sing without worrying about what other people will say."

In *The Weightlifting Princess*, Princess Nila has her sights set on winning the most famous weightlifting contest in her kingdom, while overcoming her parents' expectations. Author Sowmya Rajendran has rewritten the traditional "princess" story, and as she says, "Exposing children to narratives that don't conform to gender norms is one way of getting them to think beyond gender binaries and abilities limited by these."

One Day, One Story is completely volunteer-driven, and enables individuals and organisations to be champions of literacy, and read a story with children in their neighbourhoods, cities, towns, and villages in a language of their choice. This year, over 6,700 Pratham Books Champions (#PBChamps) have conducted over 5500 sessions on and around September 8, 2019 – reaching an estimated 40,000 children. These sessions are spread across 24 states of India and will also be conducted in several other countries.

Both stories can be read and downloaded for free as e-books in over 20 languages on StoryWeaver, Pratham Books' digital platform. Community radio stations have carried the stories into rural India, while literacy partners like Worldreader have made digital versions of the stories available to children on their app. International partners like AfLIA (African Library and Information Associations and Institutions) helped translate the stories into Igbo, while the Uganda Christian University took them into Lusoga, and read them in their community in Uganda on International Literacy Day. Similarly, the Colmix Collectiv has translated the stories into the indigenous languages of Mexico, while Darakht-e Danesh has done the same in Dari. As always, our campaign strives to deliver a joyful story reading to children in the farthest corners of India, and the world - and to plant the seed of reading delight.

Suzanne Singh, Chairperson, Pratham Books, says, "**One Day, One Story** is about the joy of reading, and books can open the door to important conversations – whether about the

pressure to conform, or about expectations related to gender. We hope these books encourage children to explore new ideas and ambitions for themselves.”

About Pratham Books

Pratham Books (www.prathambooks.org) is a not-for-profit children’s book publisher founded in 2004 with the mission to see ‘a book in every child's hand’. Its key objective is to publish good quality, affordable storybooks in multiple languages to support reading acquisition among children. Since inception, Pratham Books has published over 4000 books in 22 Indian languages. The books cover a range of genres including early readers, fiction, nonfiction, and storybooks on science, history, mathematics and nature. Pratham Books has had the distinction of working with many of the country's renowned authors and illustrators and their books have won several awards as well.

In recent years, Pratham Books has leveraged technology to further its mission:

StoryWeaver (www.storyweaver.org.in) is a first-of-its-kind digital platform providing open access to thousands of multilingual stories for free, and **Donate-a-Book**

(www.donateabook.org.in) is a unique crowdfunding platform that’s helping build libraries for the children who need them the most.

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