

## Read with Me Participation Guide

**Read with Me** is a reading campaign designed to promote the love and habit of reading among African, Caribbean, and Canadian First Nations, Inuit and Métis (FNIM) youth by providing encouragement and inspiration by example. The campaign features Reading Champions who are inspirational figures and celebrities from each region, along with teachers, librarians, students, writers, literacy organizations, and others committed to promoting literacy.

This is primarily a social media campaign, with the support of in-person and public events.

### Read with Me

This is an active engaging theme with an embedded call to action. It invites the audience as individuals, as small groups (reading clubs, classrooms, youth groups), and as large groups (communities and general population). It can be used for a wide range of audiences from small children (who say ‘read with me’ to their parents or caregivers), to teens (who can be attracted by celebrities they admire or want to encourage friends), to adults (teachers, educators, and other professionals).

### Rationale

One of CODE’s major strategic goal for the African Burt Award program is the development of a reading promotion campaign. Aside from the sheer joy of exercising the imagination, research shows reading for pleasure improves literacy, social skills, health, and learning outcomes. However, the promotion of reading for pleasure among youth remains a challenge. Over the years, CODE has invested in reading promotion activities, enlisting the winning authors to visit schools and conduct workshops. Although youth have enjoyed these activities, there is still an urgent need to bolster our efforts. We want to ensure that our reading promotion activities are scalable, adaptable, and most importantly, relevant to contemporary youth.

### Aim

The Reading with Me Campaign is intended to:

- Promote reading for pleasure among CODE’s youth audiences.
- Increase the profile of the Burt Awards and Burt Award titles.
- Support Reading CODE’s program objective: To improve literacy through increased access of high quality, culturally relevant reading materials for K-12 students.

- Increase the profile and brand awareness of CODE as an international literacy organization.
- Encourage partnerships and alliances with CODE's local partners.
- While the focus of the campaign is reading in general, wherever possible CODE will promote local reading materials, including Burt Award winners, with a primary focus on youth ages 12 to 18.

### **Target audience**

We want to reach out to and include:

- Youth aged 12 to 18 in the four Burt Award African countries, the Caribbean, and FNIM in Canada.
- Young readers in CODE's Reading CODE programs.
- Librarians and teachers.
- Existing and new partner organizations.
- Those interested in writing, publishing, young adult literature, literacy.
- Publishers, editors.
- Literacy organizations.
- Government, civil society organizations, and NGO's.

### **How to Become a Reading Champion**

A Reading Champion is anyone interested in promoting and supporting literacy among youth, including celebrities, authors, teachers, librarians, students, civil servants, NGOs, and CSOs.

#### **Teachers, librarians, community workers, and any others**

- Modeling reading is an effective way to motivate your students to read books.
- Find out what kinds of books your students like to read and find ways to make those books available.
- Burt Award books are a resource for you.
- When you talk about reading, make it fun and inspirational.
- Encourage youth to talk about and share the books they are reading.

Here are more ways for how you and your students/youth to get involved in the Read with Me campaign.

#### **To become a Reading Champion:**

- Take a few minutes to promote literacy and a love of reading among youth through your social media network.
- Tag us **@CODEBurtAwards #ReadWithMe** when posting to your personal Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts.
- Become friends and follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. We'll in turn follow you and repost your messages and photos on our social media accounts, when appropriate.
- CODE's Burt Award social media accounts:
  - Facebook: [@CODEBurtAwards](#) #ReadWithMe
  - Twitter: [@CODEBurtAwards](#) #ReadWithMe
  - Instagram: [@CODEBurtAwards](#) #ReadWithMe
- Note that all posts should be in English, although it would be okay to have an English version and a version in your mother tongue.

**Level A** – Take a photo holding a book and tag your post **@CODEBurtAwards** with **#ReadWithMe**. We'll repost and share your content. Follow **@CODEBurtAwards** on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, and share our content.

You can take individual photos or group photos. **Be sure to have a media release form for youth under the age of 18.**

**Level B** – Do the same as Level A, and write a few sentences explaining why the you are a reader and why reading is important to you. See sample messages in Appendix 1.

**Level C** - Create a short video (using phone or a camera). Use these questions to guide the content of your video.

- Why are you a reader?
- Why is reading important to you?
- What book do you want people to “Read with You”?
- What is your favorite book and why?
- Why do you read for pleasure?
- Where do you find good books to read?

**Level D** – In-person events

Promote literacy and a love of reading by gathering youth together to share the reading experience.

- Set up a reading club and have them read the same book and come together to discuss. Or have youth read a book of their choice (each a different book) and come together to discuss.
- Set up a book fair.
- Organize an author visit.
- Invite a reading champion to your school or library and host a reading event.
- Work with one of our partner organizations to set up a reading tent, a book club, or public event.
- Post photos and messages through your social media network
- When posting to Facebook, Twitter or Instagram accounts, tag **@CODEBurtAwards** with **#ReadWithMe**.
- Become friends, follow us, and post on our Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts. We'll in turn follow you and repost your messages and photos on our social media accounts when appropriate.
- Be sure to tell us about your activities, before, during and after, and we'll repost and share you activities to inspire others.
- Share with CODE your photos, stories, videos, tweets, Facebook posts, blogs, activities, events and we will post on our social media accounts, and in turn, our celebrity reading champions will share with their networks. CODE is developing an incentive program that will include prizes, support for author visits, support for celebrity reading champion visits, free books, gift certificates, etc.
- CODE will also highlight key contributors as part of CODE's broader based marketing communication efforts (i.e. newsletter, website profile/story, e-blasts and possible direct mail appeals). These initiatives will also be shared with our in-country partners where further promotion can happen.
- CODE can provide promotional material including: books, bookmarks, book bags, t-shirts, wrist bands, posters and a Read with Me sign that you can hold for profile photos.
- Join CODE's local Burt Award book distribution program. (See Appendix 2 for contact information for CODE's partner organization in your country.)

### **Photo and Video Instructions**

Be sure to have the appropriate individual sign a media consent form for youth under the age of 18. Where CODE or its local partners are hosting an event where photos/videos will be taken, we will be responsible for collecting signed media consent forms.

Photos and videos do not need to be professional except where CODE/CODE partner has hired a professional to collect this content. Selfies and homemade videos are our preference when you are doing it on your own.

Photos should be taken close up so your face is clear and recognizable. If you do not have a 'Read with Me' t-shirt you can use a sign that says Read with Me, or use a Facebook frame. You can download a Read with Me sign from our website.

Videos can be a little farther away, but please ensure viewers can see your face clearly.

Ideally, please hold a favorite book in the photo. Alternatively, a magazine, graphic novel, newspaper, Kindle or another e-reading device would be acceptable.

Although it is possible to read a variety of materials on a laptop or smartphone, we'd prefer you did not use these as your reading device in the photo or video because they are strongly associated with the internet and we want to encourage kids to read beyond the web. Additionally, the vast majority of youth will lack access to such technology and therefore want to ensure that the campaign is inclusive.

Please avoid reading materials that are overtly controversial or inappropriate for young adults as this will distract from our message.

We'd be thrilled if you chose to be photographed with a Burt Award winning title. We can provide a list of local Burt Award winners and supply you with a copy of the book of your choice.

## Read with Me Messages

### Twitter

#### Read with Me...

- Read with Me because reading a book is fun.
- The more you read the more your appetite for learning grows.
- The more you know the more you can do.
- Reading books helps you imagine new possibilities and set goals, the whole world opens up to you
- Reading introduces you to new ideas and can help you think more creatively
- Reading books can help you improve your ability to learn new skills
- Reading books is fun and a good way to spend your free time
- Reading books changes the way you see the world
- Successful people read lots of different kinds of books
- Reading helps you become a life-long learner

### Facebook

#### Read with Me...

- Read. You can find the answers to so many questions, and help you achieve your life goals
- Reading with Me because reading together is fun.
- empowers you to become an active citizen.
- You can “travel” the world by reading a book.
- Reading for pleasure can help reduce stress, just like going for a walk, listening to music, or watching movies.
- Reading is a skill and habit you will need to help you navigate life’s challenges.
- Reading gives you access to culture and heritage – both yours and others.
- Reading helps you to understand others, to be open to those who don't look, think, or talk like you.
- Reading to the brain is like exercise for the body. If you do it frequently, and make it a habit, you will have a strong and healthy brain.
- The book that opened my world is (name the book and say why)
- I read for pleasure because (in three – four sentences say why you read for pleasure)
- Reading for pleasure has contributed to my success (in three to four sentences describe how)

**Video**

**Read with Me...**

- Read with Me... (read this book with me, tell me what you think, write a review and send it to me).
- Aside from the sheer joy of using my imagination, reading for pleasure has improved my reading, writing and thinking skills, and my knowledge of the world.
- The book that opened my world is (name the book and say why)
- I read for pleasure because (in three – four sentences say why you read for pleasure)
- Reading for pleasure has contributed to my success