



Pratham Books Launches PhoneStories to Bring Joyful Reading Experiences to Children via Mobile Devices

Bangalore – November 13, 2017: [Pratham Books](#), a not-for-profit publisher, today announced that it has launched PhoneStories, an initiative that weaves together words, images and sounds to create a delightful reading experience for children. An innovative approach in publishing, PhoneStories have been designed to be mobile first and available at no cost so that children across the country can access them easily.

The underlying thought behind PhoneStories is to leverage the high penetration of mobile devices across India and develop a series of books that can be accessed, shared and enjoyed on them. It is also an attempt to provide an engaging platform for children that enhances reading accuracy, makes reading a source of pleasure and improves comprehension. Intended to elevate the joy of hearing stories beautifully told by engaging storytellers, four PhoneStories themed on nature will be released every week with an aim to provide young readers with engaging content and strengthen their relationship with the great outdoors.

The first of the four PhoneStories to be launched is titled, *Watch Out! The Tiger is Here!* The book, based on the wonderful world of Indian wildlife, is authored by wildlife and travel writer Sejal Mehta, illustrated by award-winning cartoonist Rohan Chakravarty, and narrated by stand-up comedian Rohan Joshi in English and Purnesh Kumar Tripathi in Hindi. The three other books of the series will be released in the following weeks, every Friday, and are titled, *Did You Hear?*, *Wild Cat! Wild Cat!*, and *Who Ate All that Up?* The books have been jointly edited by Bijal Vachharajani and Aparna Kapur of Pratham Books. The books will introduce children to fascinating Indian animals, birds, and insects, and their way of life, and will be available in English and Hindi in an audio-visual format. It will also be available in multiple languages on [StoryWeaver](#) to read, download, print and share for free.

The launch of the book is augmented by interesting on-ground activation events. In collaboration with Pratham Books' partner organisations, focused engagements are outlined to make the stories readily accessible to children of over 600 aanganwadis/preschools and 1000+ schools across India. The educators will be connected by a common group on WhatsApp to enable easy sharing of stories. The purpose of the approach is to reach the educator directly and facilitate them to bring wildlife to the classrooms through activity based learning and laughter. Contests around these books will be hosted on the group so that teachers get a chance to be creative and share it with other educators.

The first book, *Watch Out! The Tiger is Here!* will be launched by the author in one of Pratham Books' outreach partner schools in Bengaluru. The event will include a book reading, some fun activities followed by a Q&A session with the author.

Quotes:

Suzanne Singh, Chairperson, Pratham Books

“At Pratham Books, we are constantly looking at innovative avenues to encourage children to engage with books and reading. With the newly launched PhoneStories, our endeavor is to use easily available mobile phones to bring together the compelling power of visuals and audio to create an immersive experience, as well as promote curiosity and exploration in children. We are excited to launch this initiative, we hope to provide a captivating reading experience that inspires children to connect with nature.”

Sejal Mehta, Author

“When I was asked to do a set of wildlife books for the good folks at Pratham Books, I was delighted. I've been writing and editing stories about the environment, wildlife and conservation for a few years now, and this seemed like a super fit. The idea for the books was three-fold in my head - to endear children to the



wilderness, to shine the spotlight on lesser-known species, and showing animals for what they are, not what our perceptions would want them to be.”

Rohan Chakravarty, Illustrator

“The fact that the book is being published by Pratham Books is itself very special to me, because it holds a promise of not only being read in different regional languages, but also reaching children across the country. I feel that kids' literature on wildlife is much needed in today's times to bridge the growing gap between kids and nature, and there isn't a better way to address this than through technology, as AV books.”

Rohan Joshi, Narrator

“The ability to read, process and assimilate information for yourself is one of the most empowering things that can happen to a person. I understand how important reading and immersing myself in imaginary worlds contributed to my development as a person, and I'm glad to help in any opportunity that gives another kid that same chance.”

About Pratham Books:

Pratham Books (www.prathambooks.org) is a not-for-profit children's book publisher 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 2500 books in 20 Indian languages. The books cover a range of genres including early readers, fiction, nonfiction, and storybooks on science, history, mathematics and nature. They have had the distinction of working with many of the country's renowned authors and illustrators and their books have won several awards as well.

About StoryWeaver:

StoryWeaver (www.storyweaver.org.in) is an open source, digital platform of multilingual children's stories from Pratham Books. Launched on September 2015, on StoryWeaver users can read, create, translate, download and share stories for free! By creating a collaborative framework where the creators and consumers of children's content could interact with one another, StoryWeaver attempted to address the scarcity of multilingual, joyful reading material for children.

StoryWeaver was launched in 2015 with 800 stories in 24 languages. Today, the platform offers over 6300 stories in 103 languages of the world.

Contacts:

For media queries please write to sahana@prathambooks.org or purvi.shah@prathambooks.org. You can reach us at 97311 29852. Please note that the organisation name is Pratham Books.