

Proposal

To sponsor a children's book on the subject of engineering:

“Sibo Shapes her World”

Written by Ginny Stone

(published by Lets Look Publishers)



Summary – The ultimate aim of this book

The ultimate purpose of this book is to enlighten, enthuse and educate young children about engineering and the whole host of careers / opportunities that this field offers.

By sparking an interest in engineering in children of a young age, it is hoped that this interest will continue throughout their school lives, thereby encouraging them to take maths and science in high school which will in turn open up a wide study and career path linked to science and engineering.

At least – the children will be aware of the jobs that engineers do (or some of them).

At best it is envisaged that it could help produce a creative environment and mind-set that will eventually lead to inventive individuals devising innovative ways of helping to solve problems that are experienced in rural areas such as poverty, water supply, food security, housing, health etc.

Outline of proposed story

Sibo (a little urban girl who is trying to help save the world) is delighted when a new boy, Thando, joins their class. Thando is very cool and knows all sorts of stuff. He's also a bit secretive.

One night, Sibo is doing her homework (she's doing it a bit later than usual because she's been to science club) when the news comes on the TV. She is quite horrified and outraged to see that some children who live in a nearby rural area cannot get to their school because the river is overflowing. Sibo fails to understand why they can't just build a bridge quickly for the children to use. (Sibo loves learning and can't imagine anybody not being able to get to school.)

The next day at school Sibo is telling her teacher about this – ranting and raving about the fact that there is no bridge and the children are being deprived of learning. She's wondering if her teacher can get hold of “The Earthman” (a mythical character that appears in many of the titles and helps solve problems) to deal with this.

Thando is listening. He tells Sibo that it is not always as easy as it seems and explains briefly why. He tells her that his Mum is an engineer and they are actually working on exactly this problem, which is why he's moved to Sibo's school.

Sibo is thrilled and wants to know more about the solution to the bridge problem and engineering in general. She finds out that engineers do awesome stuff in many different fields. She's even more delighted when she realises that different types of engineers are responsible for making the world a better place. This links beautifully into her "green" ideas of saving the world.

She goes on a quest to find out more. (The 8 different engineering branches are briefly profiled in an easy to understand, interesting way).

In the end – Thando's mum and her team figure out a way to solve the problem so the children can all get safely to school each day.

(This story outline can obviously be changed in any way necessary)

Rationale behind the idea of a book

Such a book would introduce the concept of engineering in general to young learners. It would make the career look interesting and "cool" and perhaps they would want to find out more. It would offer interesting, exciting alternatives to the normal careers like doctors, lawyers, vets, policemen etc that small children usually latch onto.

These children would then automatically want to take maths and science when they reach high school because they are already interested in pursuing a career that requires these subjects.

I firmly believe that if you spark an interest in a child at a young age – you have got them for life.

The format of the books would follow the same as the existing 14 titles in the Sibos Series. It can either be written in rhyme (fun and easy for children to read), 3 chapters, 20 verses per chapter; or it can be written in prose, which then makes it easy to translate into different languages at a later stage, if necessary.

As is the case with all the other Sibos titles, there are delightful illustrations on each page, with speech bubbles that make it even easier for those who are challenged as far as reading goes. The book will consist of 36 pages with hints and tips as well as a simple activity (agreed upon by the sponsor) for children to build (in or out of the classroom—using easy-to-get materials) on the last page. Prominent links to any relevant websites would be included.

In addition, educators could be encouraged to provide feedback (via an appropriate website/email/mail) in order to provide extra curriculum-linked activities around topics that they could perhaps be having difficulties with and need some help that link into technology and ultimately engineering.

The sponsor would approve the story before it goes to illustration. Final illustrations and cover would also be approved by the sponsor. Relevant logos would be printed on the inside front cover of the book.

But engineering is hard...

Ideally, it would be good if many of these books could be distributed to rural schools and areas where career information is not so easily accessible. The idea is to spark an interest in the children

and the educators. Often “science or engineering” is perceived as “very difficult” and way out of reach of the average child.

The aim is to show that engineering is all around us. Both big and small. That they too can ultimately become engineers and help make a difference to their world. That being an engineer involves many different fields and there are plenty of career opportunities to choose from.

That YES – THEY can also become an engineer one day.

In the meantime – they can become mini-engineers and have great fun building models that work.

Why use the Sibos Series?

Due to the fact that existing books in the Sibos series are already in many schools and libraries around the country, as well as the fact that the “Sibos and Friends” a 13-part cartoon series, aired on eTV numerous times in previous years, many children already know and relate to the character Sibos and embrace what she stands for. Many of the Sibos titles have also been read on Ntunjambili—a children’s program on aired on SABC 1. Kids understand that Sibos wants to help save the earth (and needs their help), but also know that she loves finding out new things and embracing new challenges.

If Sibos wants to be an engineer—I’m sure many other little girls out there are going to want to be one too!

Literacy in South Africa is a huge problem, and providing books that children enjoy reading goes towards being part of the solution to the problem. *(If children can’t read, they can’t possibly study to be an engineer!)*

Having a dual purpose book that is nice to look at, fun to read and introduces interesting new concepts, careers and ideas would be the ultimate win-win situation.

It is well known that children are conduits to the community. One book can be read by many children. It can also be read and reread by the same child lots of times. Each time they might learn something new. Books are sustainable interventions. Books are friends. You don’t need electricity to read a book.

Having said that, it is also envisaged that this book could be freely available on Sibos’s Website (www.sibos.co.za), and any other relevant websites in digital format, so that it would be possible to download it and read it in hall to ~500 children at once, where they can all see the pictures and listen to the message (or read along together). However, it is well known that many schools do not have computers or digital equipment, so the book itself would equally suffice as a stand-alone intervention.

There are currently 14 titles in the Sibos series and the issues of water (Sibos Saves Water), food (Sibos and the Veggie Bed) and health (Sibos Thinks Positively and Sibos Fights Malaria) have already been tackled and are being used in schools around the country. Different Sibos titles have already been sponsored by SASTA/DST, BASF – the chemical company, Department of Arts and Culture, NASH NISSAN, SuperGroup, Department of Health, University of Pretoria’s Centre for Sustainable Malaria Control and a private individual. The 14th title in the series, Sibos on the Move, was sponsored by

Gautrain and 10,000 copies were distributed around the country. This book won a local Silver Quill Award and then went on to win an international Golden Quill award in 2018.

Sibo also “writes” a weekly blog in [The African Reporter](#) (a Caxton freesheet that has a large reach in the East Rand area) on a variety of topics—Ginny has free reign. Blog #200 has just been filed. These blogs are written pro bono. They also run as real blogs on both Sibó’s website and The African Reporter’s website.

Sibo also has a Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/SiboStories/>)



Cool Sibó facts:

- 14 titles in the series to date.
- Sibó Makes a Difference was the first storybook in SA about global warming in 2008.
- Sibó wrote the kids games page in the Kulula Air on-line magazine for four months in 2009.
- “Sibó and Friends” the song for the TV cartoon series was written by Karen Zoid.
- Sibó wrote nine articles for MiniMag in 2010.
- Sibó stories have been read on SABC 1.
- Sibó has been saving water since 2009.
- Sibó was on a billboard for the Roundabout Water Play pumps.
- Sibó is helping to fight the killer disease, malaria.
- Sibó on the Move won an international Golden Quill international award in 2018.

About Lets Look Publishers

The Sibó Series (written by Ginny Stone) is edited, illustrated and published by Lets Look Publishers who have a level 3 compliance BEE status. They have thousands of products such as wall charts, readers, science kits etc. and have been regularly supplying the South African Department of Education for many years. They are based locally in Pretoria. The usual retail price for a Sibó reader is R69.99.

This book “Sibó Shapes her World” would remain a part of the Sibó Series and would also be submitted to the Department of Education by Lets Look Publishers when submissions are called for. This would ensure that it would not be a one-off intervention, but would be available to schools for years to come.

Should you require more information about Lets Look Publishers, please do not hesitate to contact Mr Peter Sanderson:

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For more information visit Sibos Website (www.sibo.co.za run and maintained by author, Ginny Stone).

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Costs

This includes writing, editing, illustrating and printing.

Quantity of books	Cost per book Excl VAT	VAT (15%)	Total Incl. VAT	Grand Total
3000	R45.00	R6.75	R51.75	R155,250
5000	R42.50	R6.38	R48.88	R244,400
10,000	R35.00	R5.25	R40.25	R402,500

Ideally ~35 books should be given per school. This allows each learner in a class to read their own book and not have to share.

If 3000 copies were sponsored ~85 schools could be reached.

If 5000 copies were sponsored ~142 schools could be reached.

If 10,000 copies were sponsored ~285 schools could be reached.

Should you require a quote for a different quantity of books – please do not hesitate to ask.

<https://sibo.co.za/books> (click on the link in the description and you can read any of the books on-line).

The screenshot shows the website <https://sibo.co.za/books/>. The header includes the Sibos logo with the tagline "Empowering children one page at a time." and a navigation menu with links for "About", "Lets Look Publishers", "Books", "Cool stuff", "Press", "Ginny", and "Creative Writing". Below the header, the word "Books" is prominently displayed, followed by a search bar. A message states "There are currently 14 titles in the Sibos Series:". A grid of 14 book covers is shown, including titles like "Sibo Looks Right", "Sibo Fights Malaria", "Sibo Mixes Things Up", "Sibo Saves a Stray", "Sibo Likes Life", "Sibo Thinks Positively", "Sibo Tackles Trash", "Sibo and the Sea", "Sibo in Space", "Sibo Saves Water", "Sibo and the People Bed", and "Sibo Makes a Difference". To the right of the book grid are three buttons: "BUY BOOKS", a Facebook icon, and "SIBO'S BLOG".