

Google's app for helping kids improve reading skills is now available in 180 countries

Google's Read Along Android app, which helps teach reading skills to elementary school students, is now available in early access in 180 countries, the company announced today. Read Along uses Google's text-to-speech and speech recognition technology to provide feedback as kids work through the app's reading prompts and games. The app supports nine languages, including English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Hindi. Read Along first launched as an app called Bolo in India in March 2019.

Kids are guided through Read Along with the help of an "in-app reading buddy" named Diya. "She gives [kids] positive and reinforcing feedback along the way, just as a parent or teacher would," according to Google. "Children can also tap Diya at any time for help pronouncing a word or a sentence."

Here are a few screenshots of Read Along from the app's Play Store page:

Grid View

The Ver

Google says voice data captured by Read Along is analyzed on-device and isn't sent to Google's servers. The app will also work entirely offline, though you will need to connect to Wi-Fi if you want to download new stories for your kid to work through. Read Along also won't require a sign-in and doesn't have ads or in-app purchases, according to Google.

As the COVID-19 pandemic has forced students to stay home from school, Google has also extended free access to some advanced Google Meet features to G Suite and G Suite for Education customers until September 30th, donated 4,000 Chromebooks to

rural students in California, and launched resource pages to help teachers and families educate students using Google products.

<https://www.theverge.com/2020/5/7/21251091/google-android-read-along-app-reading-skills-early-access-bolo>