



TI LEKÒL LAKAY

“LITTLE HOME SCHOOL”

Audio-Based Distance Learning for
Haitian Children during COVID-19
School Closures

LESSONS LEARNED



BlueButterfly 

TI LEKÒL LAKAY

“LITTLE HOME SCHOOL”



Beginning in March 2020, in response to the coronavirus pandemic and resulting school closures, Blue Butterfly (the producers of a successful video series for young Haitian children called Lakou Kajou) designed, produced, and distributed *Ti Lekòl Lakay* (“The Little Home School”), an audio-based, Creole-language distance learning program for Haitian children. Blue Butterfly developed the program using its signature approach, which brings together educators and producers in a collaborative process that results in content that engages children as they learn.

The team distributed daily lessons to over 1,000 WhatsApp subscribers, including individual families as well as educators who forwarded the lessons to families in their schools.

This report describes lessons learned from the pilot along with feedback received from an informal research study.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NAME: Ti Lekòl Lakay (“Little Home School”)

PRODUCER: Blue Butterfly <butterfly.org> with Haitian partners

FORMAT: 10-week daily audio-based distance learning series with supplemental graphics

DISTRIBUTION: WhatsApp

TARGET: Primary-school-age children in Haiti

LANGUAGE: Haitian Creole

SUCCESS FACTORS: Engaging stories and characters, high curricular standard

KEY LESSONS LEARNED:

- Audio-based literacy learning can be successful, especially when paired with graphics
- Internet connectivity is a problem for some families. Radio would reach more families but introduces other challenges (rigid schedule, lack of listener control of playback, lack of supplemental graphics).





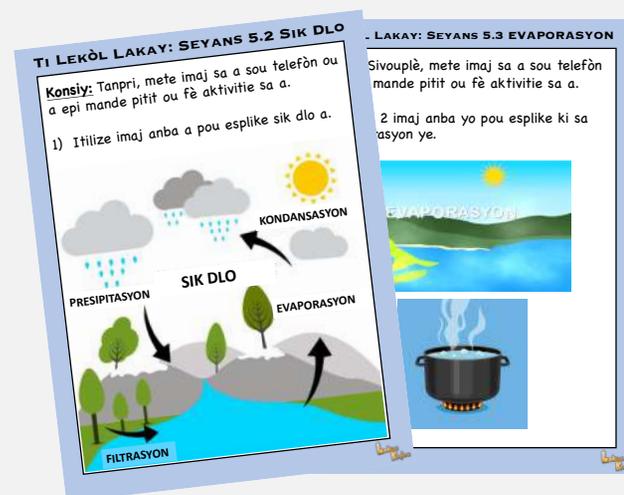
TI LEKÒL LAKAY

[sample lesson](#)

[accompanying graphic](#)

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- ❖ Whole-child curriculum linked to curriculum of the Haitian Ministry of Education
 - ❖ Targeted to primary grade level
 - ❖ Delivered to over 1,000 families, teachers and school directors via WhatsApp
- 10-week audio series included:
- ❖ Daily audio lessons (5 per week)
 - ❖ 5-7 minutes each lesson
 - ❖ Supplemental graphics and “checks for understanding” (PDF) to support audio learning
 - ❖ WhatsApp group announcements and reminders to encourage parents and caregivers to use the program





RESEARCH DESIGN

I. Participant Survey

- All listeners were asked to respond to a simple questionnaire
- Sent mid-way through the 10-week series to gauge participant satisfaction
- 24 listeners responded

II. Interviews with Families

- One-on-one phone interviews with parents/caregivers
- Five respondents representing a total of 11 children ranging in age from 3 to 10 years, plus an older teenager

III. Group Observation

- Researcher observed 6 children listening to an episode as a group
- Short interview after listening session
- Children ranged in age from 7 to 10 years

GENDER AND AGES OF CHILDREN IN INTERVIEW AND OBSERVATION SAMPLES

GENDER	Interview Sample	Observation Sample
Girls	6	5
Boys	6	1
TOTAL	12	6

AGE	Interview Sample	Observation Sample
3 years	1	0
5 years	2	0
6 years	3	1
7 years	1	1
8 years	2	1
9 years	2	1
10 years	1	2
TOTAL	12	6





FEEDBACK FROM
LISTENERS:
SUGGESTIONS
FOR
IMPROVEMENT

- ❖ Use video (in addition to audio).
- ❖ More activities, especially more activities for older children.
- ❖ Ask the children to answer questions and work individually on the lesson topic.
- ❖ Include graphics to supplement the audio. [Producers began including graphics based on this feedback.]
- ❖ Send WhatsApp messages to parents/caregivers on a specific schedule to create routine.
- ❖ Include questions for parents to pose to children at the end of the lesson.

FEEDBACK FROM LISTENERS PRAISE FOR TI LEKÒL LAKAY

My children are eager to receive each day's lesson. They break up the routine of the day and are a special message just for kids.

Kids are eager to listen all the way through.

Children listen without supervision

These audios not only will educate the children, their families and teachers but the audios are providing professional development for the teachers. [They] are good examples of alternative ways to teach the students. Thank you for making a huge difference in Haiti.

TLL is one of the best ways I have used my Internet data package [which is expensive].

Sisters would turn to each other while listening to remark on what they heard. At the end of the lesson, the immediately started talking about it.

My children really learn from this project and I hope it will continue.

Nice mix of themes

[TLL] allows me to do [lessons] with the kids in my neighborhood

Deep gratitude to the producers for sending these lessons when school abruptly stopped

I expected my children to stop listening because other radio programs have never captured their interest. But TLL engaged them.

The whole family, including a teenage daughter, listened together. Can't believe it stopped after 10 weeks. It should go all year!



LESSONS LEARNED: FORMAT

Audio Format: Advantages

- Quicker production timeline and less expensive, compared to video
- Easier to distribute, compared to video
- Less dependent on Internet connectivity than video
- Opportunity for engaging production elements (sound effects, voice characters) that draw listeners into the educational material

Audio Format: Disadvantages

- Less engaging than video
- Harder to follow than video or graphic materials
- Larger files to distribute than graphic materials

Audio Format: Lessons Learned

- Supplement audio with graphics if possible
- Use repetition for clarity
- Works best when listener can control playback
- Include questions for parents to pose to children at the end of each lesson if possible



LESSONS LEARNED: DISTRIBUTION

- ❖ WhatsApp is an inexpensive delivery mechanism and works well for many families.
- ❖ But it doesn't reach families without an Internet connection.
- ❖ Some families could access the lessons one day but not the next (due to Internet connectivity). Need to keep that in mind when writing the lessons.
- ❖ Radio reaches more families than WhatsApp but introduces other challenges:
 - lacks the ability of the listener to control playback;
 - supplementing with graphics is impossible or very difficult
 - schedule is rigid.
- ❖ Some families joined the series in the middle. Repeating the series helps to catch those families up as well as reinforce learning for others.
- ❖ Send messages on a specific schedule if possible.
- ❖ Consider delivering content via tape recorders to improve access and keep costs low.



LESSONS
LEARNED:
CURRICULAR
ISSUES

- ❖ When educational opportunities are limited, all children in the family are likely to participate. Careful writing is needed to engage viewers across age groups.
- ❖ Literacy learning via audio is a challenge but can be done if well-crafted. Supplemental graphics help support the literacy learning objectives.
- ❖ Audio-based stories can teach children how to follow a narrative, an important element of literacy learning.



For More Information, contact:

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