

## Readers Cup 2025: Igniting a Nation of Readers, Thinkers, and Dreamers



*700 educators unite for literacy and learning; Scholastic celebrates 10 years of PRIME Mathematics and 18 years of PRIME English as the “PRIME Express” keeps moving forward.*

**Manila, Philippines — October 2025.** Over 700 educators, school leaders, and advocates of literacy from across the Philippines gathered in a powerful celebration of learning and leadership at the **Scholastic Readers Cup 2025** on October 15 at the Crowne Plaza Manila Galleria, an annual event recognizing schools and educators who have excelled in nurturing a culture of reading and critical thinking among Filipino learners.

This year’s celebration carried the inspiring theme, *“Hop On! All Aboard the PRIME Express,”* symbolizing Scholastic’s continuing mission to bring every Filipino child aboard a nationwide movement for literacy, numeracy, and lifelong learning.

### ***The PRIME Express: A Journey of Shared Hope***

In her stirring welcome remarks, Ms. Jane Tiongco-Aguirre, General Manager of Scholastic Philippines, invited the audience to envision a bus — bright yellow and red, filled with teachers and learners, ready to move forward together. She called it the **PRIME Express**, a symbol of the ongoing journey that educators and Scholastic have taken together over nearly two decades.

*“This bus, our PRIME Express, is not just a vehicle — it is a symbol of our shared journey,”* Aguirre said. *“It makes stops, picks up new passengers, and keeps moving forward. It adjusts to bumps and turns, but it never leaves anyone behind.”*

She emphasized that the theme “*Hop On! All Aboard the PRIME Express*” is both an **invitation and a promise** — a call for every Filipino child, teacher, and school to take part in this collective mission to raise a nation of readers and thinkers.

“When schools and Scholastic work hand in hand, we don’t just produce higher scores,” Aguirre said. “We produce stronger values, sharper minds, and bigger dreams.”

She also labelled all Pr1me program users as the **Pr1me generation** – a generation who are not afraid to think, to lead, and to dream beyond limits. A generation that will uplift the Philippine society when it is time for them to lead.

## *Celebrating the Champions of Reading*

The **Scholastic Readers Cup 2025** shone a spotlight on schools that demonstrated exceptional excellence in reading and literacy.

Taking center stage as this year's **Best Reading School Awardees** were:

- **Casa del Niño Montessori School – Ciudad de Calamba**, recognized for its sustained reading engagement and school-wide literacy initiatives; and
- **St. Therese Private School**, honored for its outstanding reading performance and innovation in literacy instruction.

**Dr. Farah G. Acierto, School Administrator of Casa del Niño Montessori School – Ciudad de Calamba**, shared heartfelt gratitude as she accepted their award:

*“We are very grateful that for almost two decades now, we’ve had Scholastic Philippines walking beside us in this journey. The partnership is not just about books or reading programs — it has been about encouragement, empowerment, and transformation.”*

Meanwhile, **Ms. Thelma Go, School Administrator of St. Therese Private School**, reflected on the deeper impact of reading on their students’ lives:

*“Let us remember that reading is not only a subject — it is a lifeline.”*

Both administrators’ words echoed the spirit of the Readers Cup — that true literacy is not measured merely by scores, but by how reading shapes character, confidence, and compassion.

This year also introduced the **Rookie of the Year Award**, presented to **Casa del Niño Montessori School – Biñan**, for demonstrating exceptional commitment and remarkable progress as a new partner school in the Scholastic literacy program.

Their early success serves as an inspiring model for other schools beginning their own literacy journeys — proving that with vision, teamwork, and strong support, excellence in reading can be achieved in just a short time.

In addition to the top reading distinctions, several schools were also recognized for their outstanding performance across multiple categories celebrating measurable literacy growth and school-wide engagement:

- **BASAnihan Award** – Presented to schools that built strong, community-driven reading programs, inspiring collaboration among teachers, parents, and students to make reading a shared endeavor.
- **Highest Lexile Growth Award** – Given to schools whose students showed the most significant improvement in reading comprehension levels, demonstrating the transformative effect of sustained reading practice.

- **Highest Reading Proficiency Award** – Awarded to schools that achieved outstanding overall reading proficiency rates across grade levels, proving that structured reading programs can elevate comprehension nationwide.

Each of these awards embodies Scholastic’s vision of building the **PRIME Generation** — learners who read deeply, think critically, and lead confidently.

### *Reading is a National Mission*

Delivering a thought-provoking keynote, **Department of Education OIC Director for Curriculum Development, Mr. Ebnezer Beloy**, called attention to the urgent state of literacy in the Philippines:

“Reading is a national mission,” Beloy declared. “With **91% of Filipino children struggling to read with comprehension by age 10**, the call to action is clear. If we want a nation that thinks critically and leads with compassion, it begins with the ability to read — and to understand what we read.”

His message set the tone for a day that blended celebration with purpose — an affirmation that improving literacy is not just an academic goal, but a **national responsibility** shared by teachers, parents, and institutions alike.

**Senator Bam Aquino**, a long-time education advocate and author of key reforms in youth and entrepreneurship, also joined the event through a recorded message. In his address, he delivered heartfelt words of gratitude and encouragement to the country’s educators.

*“Hindi po matatawaran ang inyong sakripisyo at dedikasyon sa pagtuturo at paggabay sa ating kabataan sa pagbasa. Kayo po ang patuloy na nagbibigay ng kaalaman, inspirasyon, at pag-asa para sa mas maliwanag na kinabukasan ng ating bansa. Asahan po ninyo na may kaalyado kayo sa Senado na ipaglalaman ang literasiya at dekalidad na edukasyon para sa lahat ng kabataang Pilipino.”*

(“Your sacrifice and dedication to teaching and guiding our youth in reading are beyond measure. You continue to provide knowledge, inspiration, and hope for a brighter future for our country. You can count on an ally in the Senate who will continue to fight for literacy and quality education for all Filipino youth.”)

His message drew warm applause from the audience — a reminder that the fight for literacy is shared not just by schools, but also by policymakers and leaders who believe that education is the foundation of national progress.

### *A Decade of PRIME Mathematics and 18 Years of PRIME English*

A major highlight of the Readers Cup 2025 was the celebration of **10 years of PR1ME Mathematics** and **18 years of PR1ME English**, two flagship programs that have empowered thousands of Filipino learners to master reading and mathematics through research-based, globally benchmarked approaches.

Through these programs, Scholastic Philippines continues to equip students not only with academic proficiency but also with **confidence, curiosity, and character** — the essential ingredients of lifelong success.

“Every time a student reads with understanding, every time a teacher turns a challenge into curiosity, and every time a school community commits to progress, we move closer to our dream of a nation that reads, reasons, and leads with heart,” Aguirre said.

### *Ignite. Wave. Rise Up.*

Closing her speech, Aguirre rallied the educators with three simple yet powerful words: **Ignite. Wave. Rise Up.**

“Let us ignite curiosity — awaken every classroom with wonder and imagination. Let us wave together — united in purpose and hope. And let us rise up — beyond challenges, toward a future where every Filipino child can read, think, and lead.”

The Readers Cup 2025 wasn’t just a celebration — it was a **renewed call to action**. A reminder that the road ahead remains long, but the journey is worth every mile.

As the PR1ME Express continues to roll forward, one truth remains clear: **When educators lead with passion, and when students learn with purpose, no destination is too far.**

---

### **About Scholastic Philippines**

**Scholastic Philippines**, a subsidiary of **Scholastic Inc.**, has been a trusted education partner for over two decades, supporting hundreds of schools across the country through its **PR1ME English** and **PR1ME Mathematics** programs. Guided by its mission to **“Open a World of Possible,”** Scholastic continues to empower educators and learners alike to build a literate, thoughtful, and compassionate Philippines — one reader, one thinker, and one dreamer at a time.

###



## **Scholastic Readers Cup 2025 Rallies Educators for a National Literacy Mission**

**MANILA, Philippines** – The spirit of a nation's educational journey was **clearly evident** as **Scholastic Philippines** brought together over 700 educators, school leaders, and literacy advocates for the **Scholastic Readers Cup 2025** on October 15 at the Crowne Plaza Manila Galleria.

More than an awards ceremony, the annual gathering served as a powerful declaration of commitment to nurturing a culture of reading and critical thinking among Filipino learners. The event, held under the inspiring banner, **“Hop On! All Aboard the PR1ME Express,”** celebrated not just past successes, but a continuing mission to drive national progress through education.

### **Scholastic's Vision: The "PR1ME Express" of Shared Hope**

The event coincided with significant milestones for Scholastic: the celebration of **10 years of PR1ME Mathematics** and **18 years of PR1ME English**. These two flagship programs have anchored the company's efforts to equip students with globally benchmarked, research-based tools for academic mastery.

In her stirring welcome, **Ms. Jane Tiongco-Aguirre, General Manager of Scholastic Philippines**, introduced the concept of the "PR1ME Express," inviting the audience to see themselves as vital passengers on this collective journey.

"This bus, our PR1ME Express, is not just a vehicle—it is a symbol of our shared journey," Aguirre said, emphasizing resilience and unity. "It makes stops, picks up new passengers, and keeps moving forward. It adjusts to bumps and turns, but it never leaves anyone behind."

She underscored that the partnership between schools and the company is transformative, not just transactional. "When schools and Scholastic work hand in hand, we don't just produce higher scores," she affirmed. "We produce stronger values, sharper minds, and bigger dreams."

### **Readers Cup: Honoring the Builders of Literacy**

The **Readers Cup 2025** shone a spotlight on the schools that have been the most effective builders of literacy, demonstrating that reading is indeed a "lifeline" for students.

The **Best Reading School Award** recognized two institutions for their exceptional excellence:

- **Casa del Niño Montessori School – Ciudad de Calamba**, honored for its sustained, school-wide reading engagement. Dr. Farah G. Acierto, the School Administrator, shared heartfelt gratitude, noting the almost two-decade partnership has been about "encouragement, empowerment, and transformation."

- **St. Therese Private School**, celebrated for outstanding reading performance and innovation. Ms. Thelma Go, the School Administrator, captured the essence of the mission: "Let us remember that reading is not only a subject, it is a lifeline."

A notable new addition was the **Rookie of the Year Award**, presented to **Casa del Niño Montessori School – Biñan**. Their rapid success as a new partner serves as an inspiring example, proving that excellence in reading can be achieved in a short time with strong vision and support.

Other awards celebrated growth and community, including the **Highest Lexile Growth Award**, given to schools whose students showed the most significant improvement in comprehension, and the **BASAnihan Award**, recognizing schools that built strong, community-driven reading programs.

### **Literacy: A National Mission Shared by All**

The celebrations were anchored by a serious call to action. **Mr. Ebenezer Beloy, Department of Education OIC Director for Curriculum Development**, addressed the audience on the urgent state of literacy in the Philippines.

**“Reading is a national mission,”** Beloy declared. "If we want a nation that thinks critically and leads with compassion, it begins with the ability to read—and to understand what we read." His message blended celebration with a clear sense of national responsibility.

Joining the collective voice was education advocate and former senator **Bam Aquino**. In a recorded message, he delivered heartfelt gratitude to the country’s educators, reminding them they have allies in the policymaking arena.

The event closed with Ms. Aguirre's powerful three-word rally cry to the assembled educators: **Ignite. Wave. Rise Up.**

“Let us **ignite** curiosity—awaken every classroom with wonder and imagination. Let us **wave** together—united in purpose and hope. And let us **rise up**—beyond challenges, toward a future where every Filipino child can read, think, and lead.”

The Scholastic Readers Cup 2025 affirmed a vital truth: the road to a more thoughtful, critical, and compassionate Philippines is being paved by dedicated educators and institutions committed to the lifelong journey of learning.

---

## About Scholastic Philippines

**Scholastic Philippines**, a subsidiary of **Scholastic Inc.**, has been a trusted education partner for over two decades, supporting hundreds of schools across the country through its **PRIME English** and **PRIME Mathematics** programs. Guided by its mission to “**Open a World of Possible,**” Scholastic continues to empower educators and learners alike to build a literate, thoughtful, and compassionate Philippines — one reader, one thinker, and one dreamer at a time.

###