



1,000 BOOKS — Liam, Ezekiel, and Ava, all from Wright City, are the first children to complete Scenic Regional Library District's "1,000 Books Before Kindergarten" challenge. The challenge encourages families to teach their children important reading skills at an early age and gives a color-your-own bag for books as a reward to kids who complete the challenge. Submitted photos.

## Three kids complete '1,000 books' challenge

Three children from Wright City are the first to complete Scenic Regional Library's "1,000 Books Before Kindergarten" challenge. Brothers Liam and Ezekiel completed the challenge on April 5, soon followed by another Wright City child, Ava, on April 9. The program encourages parents to read 1,000 books with their children before they start kindergarten.

Nearly two hundred children throughout the library's district have signed up for the challenge, which was launched in September 2020. Parents can either visit their local Scenic Regional Library branch and pick up a reading log, or go online to [scenicregional.org/1000-books-before-kindergarten](http://scenicregional.org/1000-books-before-kindergarten) and register online.

Each time 100 books are read, the parent and child can stop by their local branch to pick up a sticker for that page in their reading log. After reading 1,000 books, a child receives a "color-your-own" bookbag that they can decorate to carry their library books. Children who complete the challenge are featured in the library's newsletter and on its social media pages.

Scenic Regional launched the program due to all the benefits from a parent read-

ing with their child. Studies have shown that a parent reading with their child provides a great opportunity for bonding. Reading together is also fun and creates life-long memories, whether they are reading books they own, picking them out on a visit to the library, or downloading them onto an e-reader device. Experts agree that children who learn the necessary reading skills early do better in school and later in life. Participating in "1,000 Books Before Kindergarten" can help put a child on the right track.

While reading 1,000 books may sound like a daunting task, it's much easier than one may think. If a parent and child read just one book a night, they will read 365 books in a year. In two years, the number will grow to 730. In the third year, they will surpass the goal at 1,095 books. Considering that most children start kindergarten at age 5 or 6, they have more than enough time to complete the challenge.

"1,000 Books Before Kindergarten" ([1000booksbeforekindergarten.org](http://1000booksbeforekindergarten.org)) is a national non-profit organization that promotes the literacy program, which has been adopted by thousands of public libraries across the country.