

## ***Bookish*: The story of the Guinness World Record for reading out loud**

*Bookish* is a podcast that tells the story of a young Nigerian who broke the Guinness World Record for reading out loud.



Image supplied. John Obot's attempt to shatter the 124-hour reading marathon record by reading for 145 hours.

"Sleep deprivation, hallucinations, and a pesky clock - that's what Nigerian teacher John Obot has to deal with during his Guinness World Record attempt. But with nearly five million online viewers and over 20,000 in-person spectators, he will push himself to his limits... and beyond," says the podcast *Bookish* description.

Obot had to read out loud for six days non-stop or read for 145 hours. His journey was captured by Radio Workshop youth reporter Mo Isu who made his way to Obot's hometown of Uyo to capture the record attempt live. Isu worked with Obot for three months to capture his journey.

What unfolded was a high-stakes drama with unexpected twists and turns. Senior producer Dhashen Moodley and BBC journalist Nduka Orjinmo mentored Isu as he followed the story over three months, supporting him every step of the way.

Obot's feat required seven health professionals to monitor him around the clock and test him physically and psychologically.

[Premium Times](#) says Obot, a professional teacher, read from a variety of books – mostly Nigerian literature – in a small hall in a hotel in Uyo where several people stopped by to show solidarity.

Obot started on 9 September and read for six days. "He is hoping to reach 145 hours on 17 September to beat a previous record of 124 hours set in September 2022 by a Kyrgyzstan, Rysbai Isakov, in Bursa, Turkey," reported the newspaper.

He achieved his goal on Monday, 18 September.

He is also quoted by the newspaper as saying that the exercise was meant "to draw attention to the fast declining reading culture, especially among Nigerian youths, and as a way of encouraging authors to continue their art of writing".



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13 Dec 2023



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Obot is one of a recent wave of Nigerians trying to break a Guinness World Record. This year alone, Guinness received over 2,000 record applications from Nigeria- nearly four times more than the rest of Africa combined.

"When you're young and you're looking out at the world, it's a huge, big, scary place. But having the opportunity to build a legacy? It's acknowledgment, it's approval. It's being able to say I was there and I did this," says Mark McKinley, director of central records at Guinness World Records.

Listen to [Bookish](#) to find out how it all plays out.

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