

Book farm is drawing them in

Star 21/4/12 MS3.

Retired teacher's free library has 10,000 titles to choose from

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KUALA TERENGGANU: No library cards are required to become a member of the Dusun Buku set up by retired teacher Mokhtar Yusof here,

"All that is needed is a love for reading," said Mokhtar of the book farm located next to his house in Kampung Dusun here,

The 59-year-old wanted to create a relaxed environment for people to read and gain knowledge.

"My library is a place for people, especially youth, to read while hanging out with their friends.

"The only rule is that those who want to borrow a book, must bring a book to be exchanged," he told *The Star* yesterday.

There are over 10,000 books, most of which are in English. "The titles range from fiction to non-fiction such as autobiographies as well as academic books.

"I hope to improve the English proficiency level of the locals," said Mokhtar who opened his book farm in April 2010.

On average, Mokhtar gets about five visitors a day while the number increases during weekends.

The father of eight, who hails from Muar, Johor, said reading was the

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key to improving one's command of a language.

"The advice from my English teacher back in the 1970s still rings true, which is to read, read and read," he said.

The Dusun Buku is a dream 40 years in the making.

"My motto is '*Ilmu adalah mudah didapati tetapi tidak harus dipermudahkan*' (Knowledge is easy to obtain but must not be taken for granted)," he said, adding that the books were from his own collection and contributions from friends and family members.

"I am lucky that many people have supported my initiative by donating their books.

"Among them are former Terengganu Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh as well as Terengganu FA president Datuk Che Mat Jusoh," he said adding that publishers such as MPH also helped.

The book farm is open from 9am to 10pm daily.



Bookworms: Mokhtar reading a book with his wife Zaleha Tukirin, 56, and some young visitors at the Dusun Buku in Kuala Terengganu.