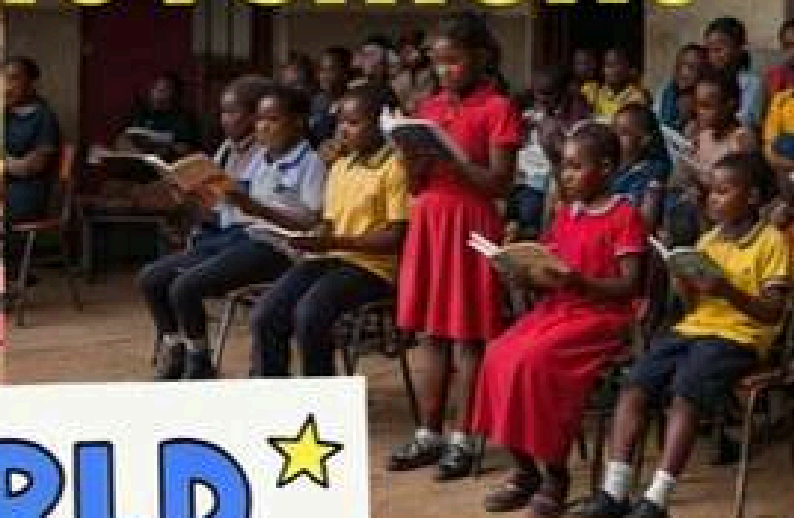




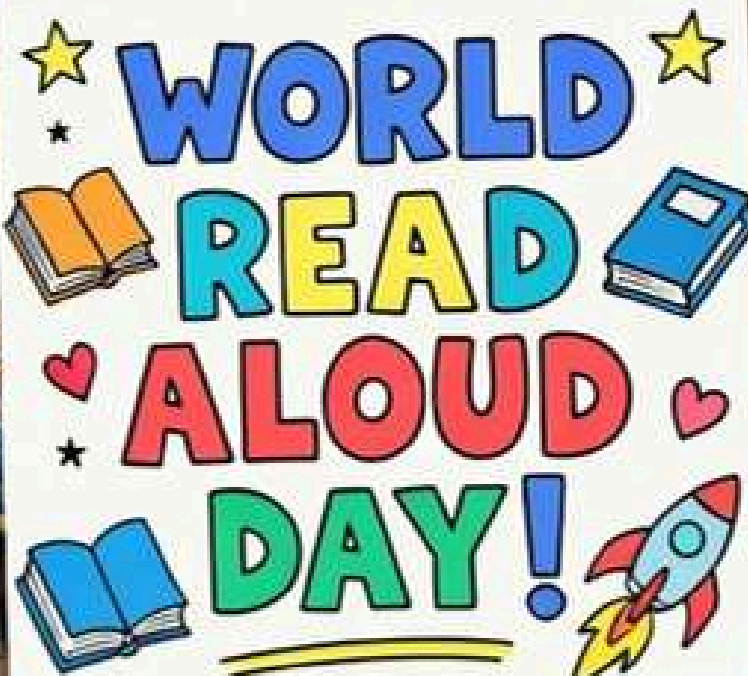
ISSUE: 12

MAR 2026

Soweto Reads: The Rise of a Literacy Movement



★ WORLD ★
★ READ ★
★ ALOUD ★
★ DAY! ★



**BOOK
REVIEW
ON PAGE
18**

SCHOOLS ACROSS SOWETO ARE LEADING A POWERFUL LITERACY MOVEMENT—
THROUGH READ ALOUD DAY, MOTHER TONGUE CELEBRATIONS, AND A RENEWED
FOCUS ON READING FOR UNDERSTANDING FROM AN EARLY AGE.



SOWETO'S READING REVOLUTION

Stories that are lighting up young minds

This month, our focus is on Read Aloud Day and the broader literacy movement taking shape in Soweto.

Schools are actively creating spaces where reading is not just a subject, but a daily habit.

This is especially important in a time where our Smartphone Free Childhood campaign continues to encourage parents to reduce screen time and bring children back to books.

Initiatives like Read Aloud Day and increased literacy activities in schools are a direct response to this challenge.

Another important conversation we are introducing in this edition is the development of Alumni Associations in Soweto schools.

Alumni programmes have the power to transform schools by reconnecting former learners with their roots.

These networks can provide mentorship, career guidance, financial support, and open doors for current learners.

Imagine a system where successful professionals who once walked the same school corridors come back to uplift the next generation.

That is the power of alumni. As Soweto Schools Magazine, we have taken the initiative to assist schools in setting up structured and sustainable alumni programmes, and we encourage school leadership to partner with us in building this legacy for future generations.

As always, we extend our sincere gratitude to the principals, teachers, parents, and the broader community for your continued support.

In this issue, you can also enjoy our regular features, including our inspiring Book Review, the reflective Faith & Values column by Pastor Nkosi, and practical financial lessons by Dr. Boniswa Siwundla CA(SA).

Together, let us continue to build a culture of reading, strengthen our schools, and uplift our community.

Let's keep Soweto reading – one beautiful story at a time!

**With gratitude,
Siphiwe Ngema
Editor**

Ipolokeng sparks a Love for reading on Read Aloud Day

IPOLOKENG PRIMARY SCHOOL



Ipolokeng Primary School in Diepkloof created a wonderful buzz of excitement when all grades gathered outside on their school grounds for a vibrant Read Aloud Day.

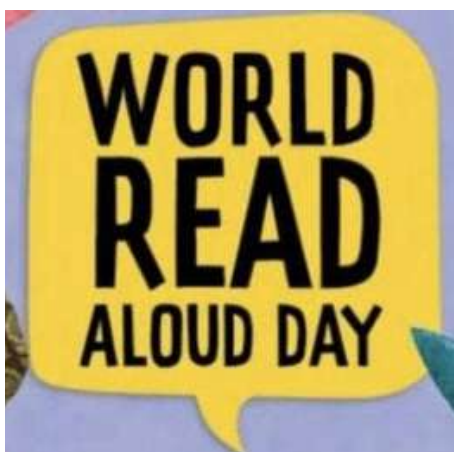


Each class was warmly guided by their language teachers and class teachers, turning the open space into a lively celebration of stories and literacy. Learners stood proudly and read aloud from their books, filling the air with confidence and joy.

The day was not just about practising reading skills – it also encouraged self-expression, sharpened listening skills, and helped build a strong reading culture throughout the school. Teachers and learners stood together in a supportive and inspiring atmosphere, showing once again how powerful shared stories can be.

Principal Mrs Buthelezi said: "It was truly inspiring to see our learners and teachers united in promoting the importance of literacy. Reading Aloud Day reminded us all how powerful stories can be in creating confident, expressive young readers who are passionate about books."

Well done to Ipolokeng Primary for growing young minds through the magic of reading!





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YEARS OF IMPACT

Our Future
Reimagined

AFTER THE GIFT: WHAT CHILDREN LEARN NEXT

When a child receives a new pair of school shoes, something shifts. They walk differently. They stand a little taller. They feel ready.

In many homes, school shoes are not just part of a uniform. They represent sacrifice. They carry the memory of what was stretched, delayed, or quietly set aside so a child could arrive at school with dignity.

So when a community steps in to provide school shoes, it matters. Confidence is restored. One barrier to learning is removed.

But there is a moment we rarely pause to reflect on. What happens after the shoes are given? At home, children learn about money through everyday objects.

How long something must last. How carefully it must be treated. Whether it can be easily replaced – or must be protected.

A donated pair of shoes can quietly teach different lessons.

It can teach that good things arrive unexpectedly.

Or it can teach that care is part of value. Cleaning shoes before school.

Keeping them safe at night.

Wanting them to last until the end of the year. These moments may seem small, but they are not.

They are early lessons about responsibility. About pride.

About understanding that dignity does not end with receiving – it continues in how we look after what we are given.

This is not about rules or pressure. It is simply about recognising that every act of giving also teaches

something, even when no words are spoken.

Because sometimes, a child learns about money not from what is bought, but from how carefully a single pair of shoes is cared for – long after the donation day has passed.



Takeaway: What this means for Parents & Students

- Children learn about value through how everyday items are treated at home.
- Care and maintenance are early financial lessons, even when no money is exchanged.
- Acts of giving shape children's financial mindsets long after the moment has passed.

About the author

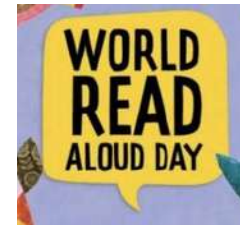
Dr Boniswa Siwundla CA(SA)

Boniswa is a financial literacy advocate, educator, and founder of FLIC_SA. As a Senior Lecturer at the University of Johannesburg, she brings over a decade of experience to her mission: helping families and communities understand how financial habits are passed down and how to shape them with intention.

[CLICK HERE TO READ BONISWA'S PROFILE](#)
OR SCAN THE QR CODE



Welizibuko celebrates the Read Aloud Day with Nali'wali



Welizibuko Primary School in Klipspruit celebrated World Read Aloud Day on the 4th February with a vibrant event hosted in partnership with visitors from the Johannesburg District, Klipspruit Library, and the Nali'wali Programme.



The school grounds came alive as learners, teachers, and special guests gathered for a full day of stories, drama, and reading excitement.

Throughout the day, groups of uniformed learners stood proudly and read their favourite books aloud, while the rest of the school listened attentively.

A colourful "World Read Aloud Day" banner hung above the stage, with a panel of honoured guests from the library and district seated under it, cheering the children on.

Books filled every corner – on display tables and in eager little hands – as the entire school joined in the fun.



Principal Miss Nomsa Scott said: "It was a fantastic initiative that brought so much energy and love for reading into our school.

Seeing our learners read with confidence, perform drama, and share stories in front of their friends and visitors reminded us all why reading is so powerful.

Both the children and teachers had an unforgettable day!"

This special Read Aloud Day perfectly captured the spirit of the Nali'wali movement and showed once again how Welizibuko Primary is raising confident young readers who are proud of their stories. Well done to everyone who made the day magical!

Hlakaniphani celebrates Read Aloud Day with Passion and Pride



Hlakaniphani Primary School in Dlamini turned World Read Aloud Day into a magical celebration of stories and imagination.

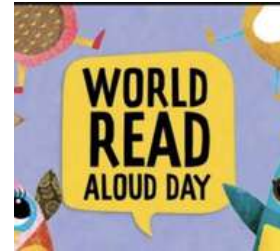
Learners from every grade gathered with excitement as they brought beloved books to life in both isiZulu and English.

The school grounds rang with lively voices as learners read aloud from the popular Nali'wali isiZulu stories, the heart-warming English tale "Nozincwadi – Mother of Books", and the inspiring "The Girl with Wings".

Teachers and learners laughed, cheered and clapped together, creating a warm and joyful atmosphere that reminded everyone how powerful stories can be.

The day was all about building confidence, improving listening skills and growing a strong reading culture at the school.

Teacher Mr Dlamini, said: "It was beautiful to watch our learners lose themselves in these stories.



Reading aloud not only improves literacy but also builds self-expression and love for books – this is exactly what we want for our learners."



ATHLETICS

At the inter-cluster rounds held at Hoërskool Die Fakkkel, Hlakaniphani learners collected an impressive 13 gold medals and 11 silver medals.

They then moved on to the District Level at UJ Stadium and Ruimsig Stadium, where they proudly added one gold, one silver and one bronze medal to their collection.

One outstanding gold medalist will now represent the school at Provincial Level Athletics.

Well done to all the athletes and the whole Hlakaniphani team for showing that this school excels both in reading and on the sports field!

Boepakitso transformed through community spirit

Boepakitso Primary School in Diepkloof welcomed over 100 interns from the Standard Bank CSI programme, who came together to give the school a much-needed facelift.

Their contribution brought visible change across the school, as they painted the Grade R jungle gym area palisade, refreshed both the Foundation Phase and main assembly areas, and created large motivational curriculum posters to inspire learners daily.



The team also revamped a dedicated language room by donating Sesotho, Setswana, and isiZulu sight words, while the staff room received a fresh coat of paint and a brand-new notice board.



INTERNATIONAL MOTHER TONGUE DAY

The school shifted from transformation to celebration as they proudly marked International Mother Tongue Day, a district-wide programme celebrated across Soweto schools.



From Grade 1 to Grade 7, all learners actively participated in various activities including traditional dance, drama performances in their home languages, and reading sessions that promoted literacy in mother tongue.

The event was not only educational but also deeply meaningful, reinforcing the importance of language in identity and learning.

The atmosphere was vibrant, with both learners and teachers fully engaged in the day's programme.

According to programme coordinator Miss Guliwe, "This day is very important for our learners because it allows them to express themselves in their own languages with confidence and pride.

We want them to understand that their language is powerful and should be celebrated."

Through partnerships like the Standard Bank initiative and cultural programmes such as Mother Tongue Day, the school is creating an environment where learners feel inspired, supported, and proud of who they are.

HENNOPSPRIDE LIFESTYLE RESORT



For corporate events/ family reunions or any other big gathering, Hennopspride also offers a Private Venue with swimming pools, slides, kloof, lapas, etc for enjoyment of everyone.

Hennopspride Lifestyle Resort, situated next to the Hennops river, gives you a feeling of being out in the country.

The park at present has 9 swimming pools, 20 water slides, huge shady picnic spots, off road scenic trail, volley ball, train rides, jungle gymss.

This trail is also suitable for mountain biking as well.

ACTIVITIES ON SITE

- Scenic drives
- Big chest board
- Volley ball
- Jungle gyms
- Accommodation available

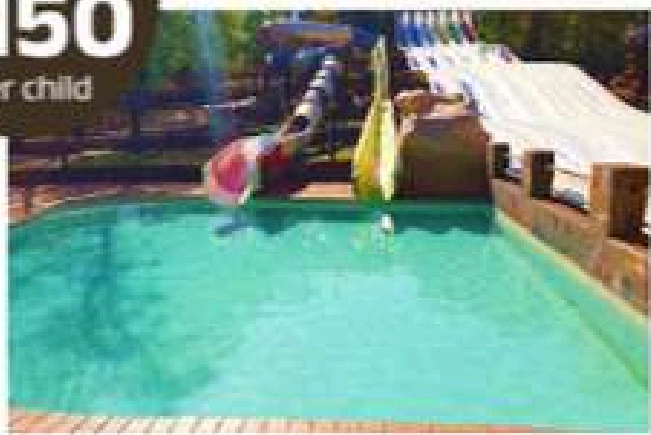
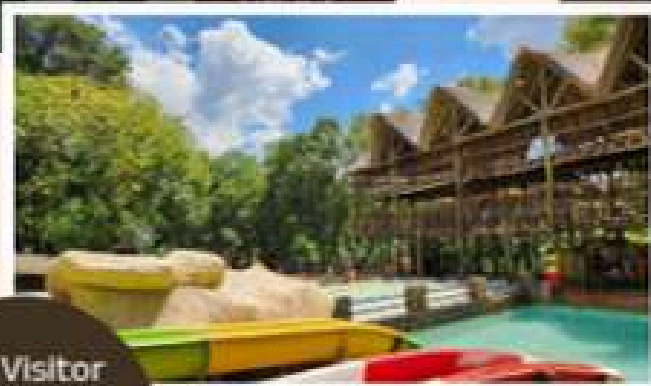
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Vulamazibuko receives heart-warming shoe donation



Vulamazibuko Combined Primary School in February received a generous shoe donation from Diepkloof Square Shopping Centre that brought smiles to many learners' faces. The shopping centre's thoughtful contribution helped ensure that children who needed proper school shoes could walk to class with confidence and dignity. The entire school community is deeply grateful for this kind act of giving back.

In the same spirit of growth and inclusion, the school is excited to announce that it is now offering additional languages: IsiXhosa, XiTsonga, and Sepedi.

This important expansion means the school can better serve the diverse families in its surrounding community.

Principal Mr Maths Henry Matemane said:

"We are truly thankful to Diepkloof Square Shopping Centre for their kindness and for investing in our learners' wellbeing.

At the same time, we are introducing IsiXhosa, XiTsonga, and Sepedi because we want to accommodate more learners from different backgrounds in our community and make every child feel at home at Vulamazibuko."

Well done to Vulamazibuko Combined Primary for showing that caring and progress go hand in hand!



Vulamazibuko is now offering the following subjects:

1. IsiXhosa
2. XiTsonga
3. Sepedi

Ditawana keeps the Love of reading alive with Read Aloud



Ditawana Primary School in Orlando East once again brought books to life when they celebrated their annual Read Aloud Day.

All grades from Foundation Phase to Grade 7 took part in a fun-filled morning of storytelling, picture reading, rhymes, and lively book discussions.

Learners read individually, in pairs and in groups, while big colourful books were proudly displayed for everyone to enjoy.

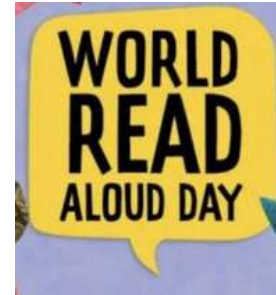
The day was a wonderful showcase of the school's active Book Clubs that run throughout the year in every class.

After each story, learners eagerly engaged by asking questions, debating themes and sharing their thoughts, making the event both educational and exciting.

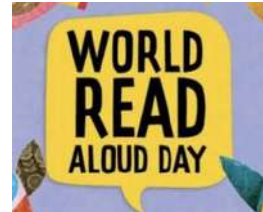
Miss Miranda Moloji, the coordinator of the day, said: "This annual Read Aloud Day is always special because it shows what our learners do every single day in their Book Clubs.

From storytelling and rhymes in Foundation Phase to deep discussions in the higher grades, we are building confident readers who truly love books."

Well done to Ditawana Primary for growing strong young readers year after year!



Thembalihle brings stories to life on World Read Aloud Day



Thembalihle Primary School in Orlando East filled their classrooms with the magic of stories when they celebrated World Read Aloud Day on 4 February 2026.

The blackboard proudly declared "READ World Read Aloud Day" in bright colours, while learners sat attentively at their desks, completely absorbed in their books.

The day was extra special because it also tied beautifully into their World Mother Tongue celebrations the following Friday, creating a powerful focus on both reading and cultural pride.

One of the highlights was the gripping isiZulu story "UMenziwa Akakhohlwa" shared by Sfundu Mazibuko. The kids were captivated, their eyes wide with excitement. They gasped at the thrilling parts and eagerly asked questions about the characters and setting, showing just how deeply they were connecting with the story.

Miss Nomusa Cele, who helped lead the activities, said: "It was wonderful to see our learners so engaged and excited by the stories.

When children read aloud and ask questions like this, we know they are not just reading words – they are understanding, imagining and growing in confidence every single day."

Well done to Thembalihle Primary for showing that when schools put stories first, young minds truly light up!

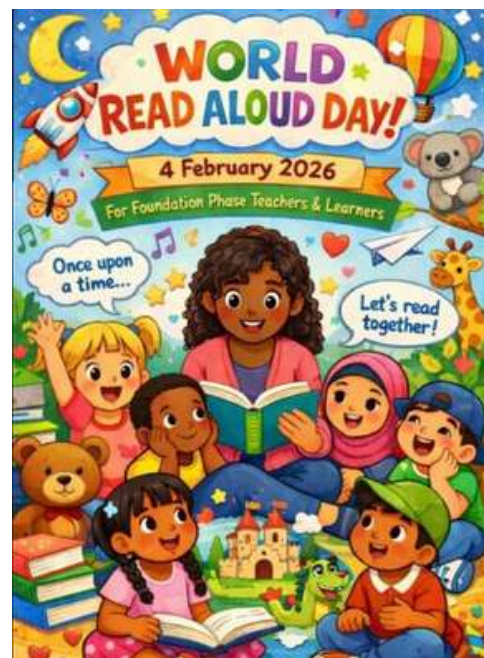


Raising Readers: How Soweto schools are changing the story

“81% of Grade 4 learners still struggle to read for meaning... but Soweto schools are changing that one loud, proud story at a time.”

Across Soweto, a quiet but powerful movement is taking shape—one that could change the future of thousands of children. Classrooms, assembly areas, and school halls are being transformed into spaces where reading is celebrated, encouraged, and practiced daily.

From Read Aloud Day to International Mother Tongue Day celebrations, schools are placing literacy at the centre of learning, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to read, understand, and succeed.



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Classrooms, assembly areas, and school halls are being transformed into spaces where reading is celebrated, encouraged, and practiced daily.

From Read Aloud Day to International Mother Tongue Day celebrations, schools are placing literacy at the centre of learning, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to read, understand, and succeed.

This growing reading culture also connects strongly with the Smartphone Free Childhood campaign, which continues to encourage parents to reduce screen time and bring children back to books.

In an age where children are increasingly exposed to digital distractions, schools are sending a clear message: the future of learning begins with focus, discipline, and strong reading habits.

Parents are encouraged to support this movement at home by creating reading time, reading with their children, and limiting unnecessary use of smartphones.



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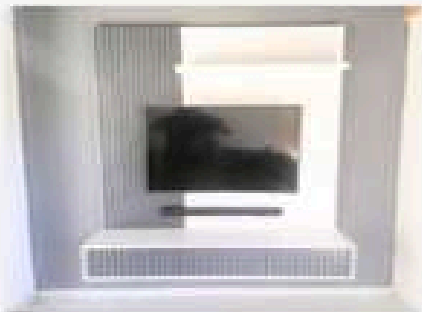
TABLE

R 900



TABLE

R 900



TV STAND

R4 000



TV STAND

R 2 800



TV STAND

R 1700

DRAWERS



DRAWER

R 800



DRAWER

R 800

Mangwele primary leads the way with coding, robotics and a Greener future

Mangwele Primary School in Diepkloof has been chosen as one of only a few schools in the district to pilot Coding and Robotics for young learners.

On a sunny morning, excited Foundation and Intermediate Phase learners gathered outside to build their very first robots using colourful construction kits.

With big smiles and busy hands, they worked in groups, snapping pieces together and proudly showing off their moving creations.

At the same time, the school launched a beautiful new garden project in partnership with City Parks. Learners planted bright flowers and vegetables in recycled tyre planters and freshly prepared beds.

One learner even took charge with a garden fork, carefully turning the soil while the whole group watched and cheered. The new garden now adds colour and life right next to the school building.

Well done to Mangwele Primary for embracing innovation and environmental care at the same time!

These exciting projects are preparing learners for the future while teaching them to love and care for their school environment. Keep shining, Mangwele!



Leresche primary shines with fresh new look after major renovation



Leresche Primary School in Orlando East is celebrating a beautiful transformation after the Gauteng Department of Education completed the first phase of renovations in February 2026.

The project, which began in the second week of January, brought 16 new white boards and 10 green boards to the school. Classrooms in Grade R and Grades 4–7 were freshly painted inside and out, while Grades 4–7 also received brand-new tiling. The entire school grounds were beautifully paved from the gate right through to the back classrooms, giving the whole campus a clean, modern, and welcoming feel.



Learners and teachers are already enjoying the brighter, more conducive learning spaces. The upgrades have made teaching and learning much more enjoyable, with clear boards and smart, tidy classrooms that learners are proud to walk into every day.

Principal Miss Ruth Mboweni said: “We are so grateful to the Department of Education for this wonderful renovation. Our new look is truly inspiring! A big thank you also goes to our SGB for fighting hard to get this done so that our children can learn in a proper and conducive environment. We are looking forward to the next phase, which will cover Grades 1–3 and the admin block.”

Well done to Leresche Primary – a shining example of what teamwork between the Department, SGB and school can achieve!



UKUQALA KWE-TERM YESIBILI: MASIHLALE SIBAMBENE

Pastor Nkosi

Bazali abathandekayo, njengoba amaholidi esedlulile futhi singena kwi-term yesibili, ngithanda ukunikhuthaza ukuthi siqhubeke nalowo moya wokubambisana esiwuthole ngesikhathi samaholidi.

Isikhathi enisichithe nezingane zenu besibalulekile kakhulu – manje ake singasibuyeli emuva. Izingane zethu zidinga ubukhona bethu nsuku zonke, hhayi ngezinto kuphela, kodwa ngokweseka, ukukhuluma nazo, nokuzikhuthaza ezifundweni zazo.

Ngiyaninxusa njengabazali ukuthi nihlale niseduze nezingane zenu uma kuziwa emsebenzini wesikole. Buzani ukuthi kwenzekani esikoleni, nikhuthaze ukufunda ekhaya, futhi nibenze bazizwe ukuthi imfundo ibalulekile empilweni yabo.

Mina ngiyakholwa ukuthi ukufunda izincwadi kungaguqula ikusasa lengane – ake sikhuthaze izingane zethu ukuthi zifunde nsuku zonke, noma kungaba imizuzu embalwa nje ngosuku.

Ngiyacela futhi, bazali, asiqaphele kakhulu ekusebenziseni ama-smartphone. Ngikhuluma kini ngithi, asingaphuthumi ukuthengela izingane ezingaphansi kweminyaka engu-16 amafoni.

Masinciphise isikhathi esichithwa ezikrinini, sikhuthaze ukufunda nokuxhumana njengemindeni. Uma sibambisana, singakhulisa izingane eziqondayo, ezinesimilo, nezilungele ikusasa elingcono.

Book: Indaba My Children

Author: Credo Vsamazulu Mutwa

In his debut book, Mutwa documented Black life and existence in pre-colonial and the early colonial era.

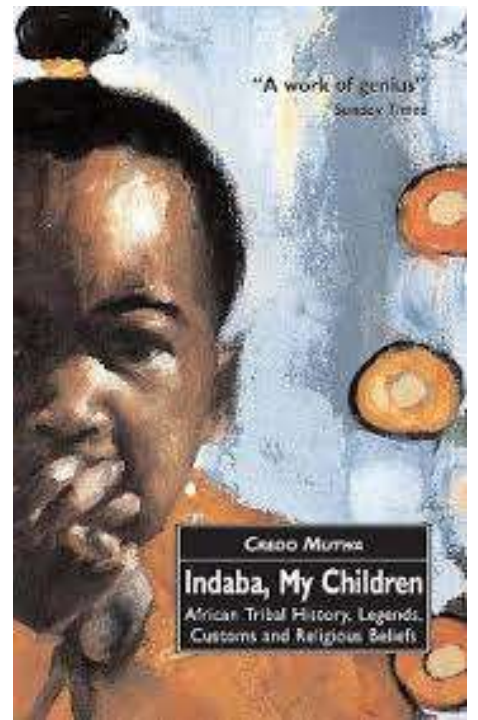
It is a lyrical, informative and well-penned offering of poems, legends, reflections, and documentation of actual historical events.

He covers abantu's childbearing and rearing, marriage, medicine, education, justice, land, food, animals and customs.

He helps contextualize the meaning of words like savage, civilization, heathen, witchcraft and primitive. A necessary body of work which affirms Black greatness, resourcefulness, wisdom and resilience.

A testimony that Black people were pathfinders in many fields before Africa was colonised, misrepresentation of the Black history by non-Black historians and, the African belief of keeping knowledge and information a secret, to be divulged only to the Chosen Ones, motivated Mutwa to write, and to reveal all, to educate and to prevent erasure.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

As a young man, Vusamazulu Credo Mutwa, was determined to follow in the footsteps of his grandfather and become a tribal historian in order to keep the rich oral tradition of his culture alive.

In this book, begun in response to the injustices against Africans and their culture, he sets these legends down in writing. He begins with the creation myth, when Ninavanhuma, the Great Mother, created the human race.

From there, an epic unfolds, an intricate and vivid cultural tapestry populated by gods and mortals, cattle herders and supreme kings, witch doctors, lovers, grave diggers, warriors, and handmaidens.

The story continues all the way up to the colonial era, when a Portuguese Kapitaneh and his crew arrive on the African shore.

Indaba, My Children is a classic and indispensable resource for anyone interested in the cultural life of Africa and the human experience as it is filtered into myth.



[CLICK HERE TO BUY THE BOOK](#)



Let's change the norm and protect childhood

Childhood, including adolescence should be a time of curiosity, play, connection and developing life skills.

Smartphones too often steal that space by replacing real-world exploration and exposes them to an adult world of sex, anger, violence and unrealistic expectations through social media



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Soweto Schools Magazine is an online monthly publication published by Zamantusi Communications.

We feature stories and events about local schools and education news.

Soweto Schools Magazine is now distributed to more than 50 000 parents & teachers in Soweto via WhatsApp & sms.



If you have stories or you want to feature your school, drop us an email or WhatsApp.

If you want to collaborate or write for us, feel free to contact us via email or WhatsApp

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