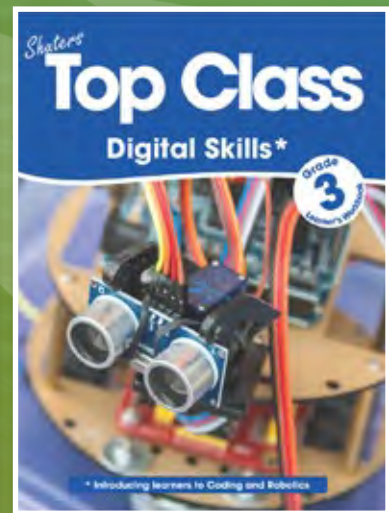
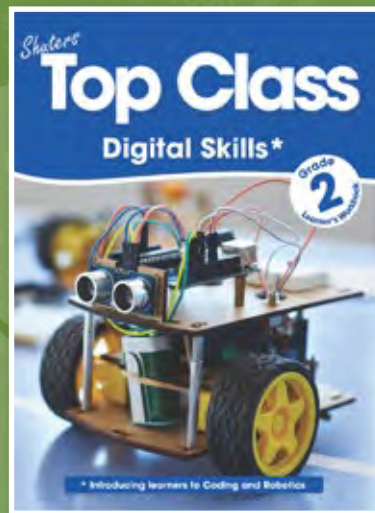
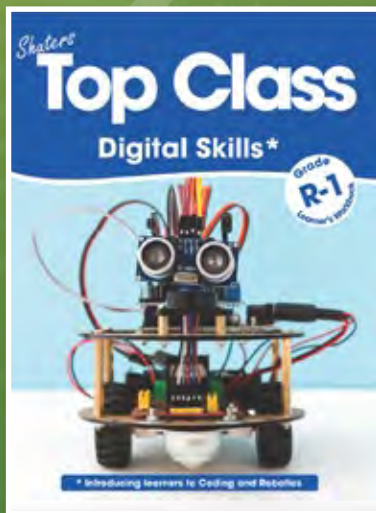


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As we expand access to early childhood development, there needs to be an intensive focus on early reading, which determines a child's educational progress through school, through higher education and into the workplace

President Ramaphosa, 2020


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Bookmark

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SA Booksellers
ASSOCIATION

ABOUT THE SA BOOKSELLERS' ASSOCIATION

The SA Booksellers Association represents a united front for booksellers. Through strategic liaison with the different sectors of the industry and provinces, SA Booksellers strives to regulate the book-trade, reminding publishers to act as wholesalers and booksellers as retailers. The annual SA Booksellers AGM has historically been co-located with the Publishers Association of South Africa (PASA) AGM. The AGM is open to all members of SA Booksellers and is a conference full of information, energetic discussions, pertinent topics and eloquent speakers. This is an opportunity for education for all, keeping members at the cutting edge of developments in our ever changing industry.

SA Booksellers works closely with government departments, educational authorities, and the state tender boards concerning matters that affect the trade.

More than 50% of SA Booksellers members are previously disadvantaged and SA Booksellers is well positioned to lobby government on all issues pertinent to the book trade. SA Booksellers provides access to information for all its members, through the commissioning of research papers and the gathering of news, to the effective dissemination of this information via the industry magazine Bookmark and through www.sabooksellers.com.

Bookmark, the official magazine of SA Booksellers, is distributed free of charge to all members as well as to all influential people in the book trade from publishers to government departments. The digital edition is sent to an ever increasing subscriber database. This magazine is a mouthpiece for SA Booksellers members as much as it is a source of information. Send a letter to the editors at bookmark@sabooksellers.com or bookmark2@sabooksellers.com to have your views published.

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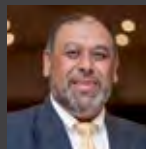
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The Executive Committee of SA Booksellers and the Editors thank all those who contributed to this issue of Bookmark through articles and/or advertising.

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REGULARS

Letter from the President

Dear members and beloved readers, Thank you for your support in what has proved to be quite challenging times for the industry.

The year 2019 proved difficult on many fronts, from NSFAS to load shedding. The latter blew December budgets out of the water for most bookshops.

In the last quarter of 2019 SABA has had to face several matters critical to the future of the book sector in Southern Africa. The impact of NSFAS cash disbursement to students was expected, however the scale of contraction was unprecedented. Textbook sales dropped up to 70% in some of our member locations. We have met the disruption to academic books sales with a bold plan of engagement. Broadcasting a sensible counter-narrative has had some traction in the media. Although the drone of student populism frequently aided by surging beverage sales around the nation's campuses is still strident.

Concurrently, campus library patronage has declined. It is only correct that we express our concerns regarding the decimation of the nation's potential for development where students are not well read. We were tasked to provide strategic input to the Department of Trade and Industry for the purpose of growing the creative industries' contribution to GDP. Together with our contemporaries in music, film, publishing and printing, we presented suggestions for unblocking the

bottle-necks we encounter in providing an effective and efficient book selling service to the nation. These are likely to result in policy interventions that will support all our members based on a reading of the current government's business-friendly administration and stated aim to grow the capacity for small business, employment and trans-African trade.

On the positive side, the SA Book Fair held in September highlighted the best in local content – from books, to publishing, story-telling, live performances, cooking and much more. Organised by the SABDC the fair was curated by our magazine editor, Olinka Nell, and omnipresent book ambassador Lorraine Sithole. Based on record attendance numbers, international participation and making it a trending topic for a family-friendly outing on social media, I'm giving major kudos to everyone for a job well done. In the same way that a diverse group of people managed to pull off a spectacular World Cup of Rugby championship win, this SA Book Fair was worthy of a world-class benchmark.

I was privileged to attend some really good launches of fiction last year. Over the holidays I enjoyed diving into Pikoli's *Born Free Loaders*, Fred Khumalo's *The Longest March*, Deon Meyer's latest *The Last Hunt*, Sally Andrew's *Recipe* and Kuli Roberts' *Siren* just to spice up the smorgasbord. Diversity amongst the new crop of authors offers something for everyone.



However, the broader obstacles around the public's understanding of copyright and an author's intellectual property have become increasingly clear in light of the Copyright Amendment Bill's referral back to Parliament. As an industry and lovers of books, it remains up to us to spread the message against piracy. For the sake of our children's literary heritage, more protection is needed for our African creatives before a new wave of colonisation spreads. From Afrikaans to Zulu, it is imperative that our unique contribution to the world of an ethnic, naturally pH-balanced and vibrant creative output is safe-guarded.

One major start that budding authors and established publishers can do is to ensure they obtain a South African ISBN via legal deposit at the National Library. It is a free service, no one need pay for an ISBN!

Enjoy the magazine with best wishes from all of us at SABA as we head bravely into an exciting New Year of business. Remember, we are world champs!

Melvin Kaabwe ▼



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FEATURES

Crossing the “T”s and dotting the “I”s

Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) has been included, since 2000, in the school’s Life Orientation (LO) Curriculum – 20 years of CSE. The rationale was, from the outset, to ensure that learners do not get confusing and misleading messages on sex, sexuality, gender and relationships. And for 20 years there has been resistance to implementing this curriculum.

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) decided to review the LO curriculum. This included an evaluation of the learning material available for LO and CSE, a review of teacher training for LO and CSE and a review of whether the curriculum was being successfully implemented.

The DBE said that ‘it is only the implementation fidelity that has however necessitated a review of the LO curriculum’. Clearly, resistance to the existing curriculum has meant that it has not been properly implemented.

The outcome of the review has been to find better ways to implement the curriculum and the DBE developed the following in order to realise the objectives of the CSE:

- ▶ In 2015 the DBE developed Scripted Lesson Plans (SLPs) for teachers which [were] being tested in five provinces in order to strengthen the teaching of CSE in schools
- ▶ Creating Educational Posters for learners about HIV/Aids
- ▶ Training materials for education officials
- ▶ Orientation materials for Student Governing Bodies (SGBs) and parents
- ▶ Young Women and Girls (YW&G) Programme: A comprehensive package of services including health sessions, homework assistance, home visits, career guidance and peer education sessions
- ▶ Breaking the silence: A reality television show on Sexuality Education with a total of 13 episodes produced and reviewed for broadcast
- ▶ Determined Resilient Empowered AIDS-free Mentored Safe (DREAMS): A programme providing SLPs and linkages to Health and Social services in selected Primary and Secondary Schools in GP and KZN
- ▶ LET’S TALK Prevention of Early and Unintended Pregnancies (EUP) Campaign: A multi-media social behaviour change campaign aimed at increasing efforts to address EUP among teenagers to realise the ESA Target on reducing teenage pregnancy by 75% in 2020

Angie Motshekga, Minister of Basic Education, has indicated that parents have the right to pull their children from the CSE programmes. However, they have to produce an alternative curriculum that meets the required competencies of CSE.

Despite several misleading media and social media reports, no new content has been added.

The Freedom of Religion South Africa’s (FOR SA) Legal Counsel, Adv Nadene Badenhorst, said CSE across the world has sinister agendas, namely the ‘radical sexualisation of our children’. She referred to a statement by the American College of Pediatricians: ‘Comprehensive Sexuality

Education (CSE) goes far beyond sex ed, and is a dangerous assault on the health and innocence of children.’ She further said that there is inadequate evidence of programme effectiveness for most CSE programmes and that these programmes are ‘policy-based’ or ‘ideology-based’ rather than ‘evidence-based’.

FOR SA claims many LO teachers feel ‘very uncomfortable delivering the content’ and ‘many parents’ say that the type of ‘graphic and ideologically-laden content’ use is ‘completely inappropriate’.

Chris Klopper, President of the SA Teacher Union (SAOU) has called the content ‘grossly insensitive’ and called for

Most importantly, the content of the LO CSE curriculum was untouched!



Yet loud and angry resistance and concerns have been expressed by parents, religious organisations, the public and school unions amongst others.

a boycott by teachers who object to the new SLPs. They are advising teachers who do not agree with the content to boycott it.

Angelica Pino, Director of Programmes at Sonke Gender Justice argued in the Daily Maverick that ‘this dissenting narrative and opposition against CSE is unfortunate. Talking to young people about sex and sexuality does not increase their sexual activity. Rather, it provides them with the knowledge, understanding and skills to make informed decisions about all aspects of their lives. CSE enables young people to adopt positive sexual behaviours, such as delaying the age of sexual debut, reducing

the frequency of sex and number of sexual partners, and increasing use of contraception, especially condoms.'

This view is in line with much international opinion, as evidenced in a revised and updated *International technical guidance on sexuality education: an evidence-informed approach* in 2018 published by UNESCO which is supported by UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNWOMEN and the World Health Organization. According to this scientific report CSE does not sexualise children. Further:

- Sexuality education does not increase sexual activity, sexual risk-taking behaviour or STI/HIV infection rates.
- CSE delays sexual debut and promotes safe sexual behaviour.
- Increases knowledge of different aspects of sexuality and the risks of early and unintended pregnancy, HIV and other STIs.

- Decreases the number of sexual partners.
- Reduces sexual risk taking.
- Increases use of condoms and other forms of contraception.



After a supposedly 'leaked' copy of the 'NEW' curriculum, complaints on social media have reached a crescendo. So-called extracts include reference to 'graphically explicit' scenarios, examples of sexual assault, group discussions on the topic of 'private parts', masturbation and more.

All material – including images – used in the curriculum are based on protocols and standards set by the DBE that ensures protection of human dignity and rights and does not expose learners to offensive content.

The Deputy Director-General for Educational Enrichment Services, Dr Granville Whittle, said the Department

has had to step up the implementation of the LO curriculum because the number of adolescent girls who have sexual relationships with older sexual partners continues to

increase. HIV prevention knowledge has declined amongst learners, lower sexual debut and increasing risky sexual behaviour amongst adolescents has been observed and that early sexual debut leads to mental health issues such as depression, vulnerability to violence and poor educational outcomes.

CSE complements the parental role in educating children by providing holistic education in a safe and supportive environment.

It is important to stress that the LO Curriculum is not imported, but based on the SA context for the health and safety of all children.

Heleen Liebenberg ▼

FEATURES

To school or not to [go to] school?

Many parents are unhappy with the current public school system in South Africa. For parents who can afford ±R60 000 to R190 000 per year (boarding excluded), private schools are the answer. For parents who can't afford those kind of fees, homeschooling is becoming a cost-effective alternative. In some instances one parent might have to stay home to supervise homeschooling, nevertheless, many households still find it more affordable – even on a one salary income.

Homeschooling or home education was only legalised after 1996 and an estimated 100 000 children from Gr R to 12 are being home schooled in South Africa. Parents have to register their children for homeschooling but there is still confusion about homeschooling at the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and some provinces don't have the capacity to register learners. In other cases DBE officials don't have enough knowledge of the legalities and processes of homeschooling which has caused many parents to not register their children for homeschooling.

Despite the difficulties and enormous responsibility on parents, homeschooling

is on the increase – approximately 20 % per annum. There are many reasons, but some most frequently given include:

- Falling academic standards in public schools: South African learners are failing against the rankings in international benchmarking tests which many believe is a symptom of a low academic standard in schools. Further more, many parents are concerned about the standard of CAPS and teachers' poor subject knowledge.
- Safety: Explicit gender-based violence, which includes sexual harassment, intimidation, abuse, assault and rape, and implicit gender-based violence, which includes bullying, verbal and psychological abuse, and other forms of aggressive behaviour' is on the rise in South African schools, says Siphokuhle Mkancu, communications officer of Shine Literacy. It appears that schools aren't able to cope with these kinds of abuse.
- Children with learning disabilities: There is a greater awareness of children with learning disabilities such as ADD, ADHD, autism, Asperger's and others.



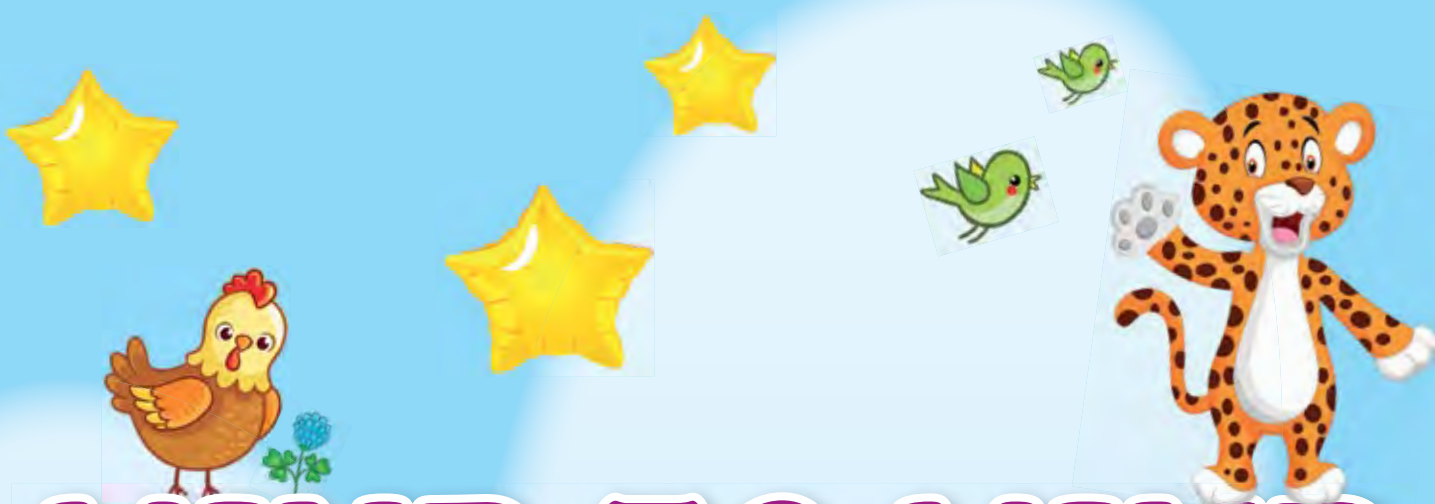
Photo by Annie Spratt/Unsplash

According to Karin van Oostrum of the Pestalozzi Trust, schools are generally not equipped to deal with this and stigmatisation is rife.

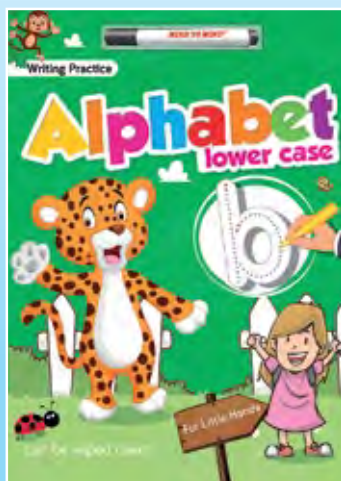
Several curricula – both local and international – are available for homeschoolers, including:

- The South African curriculum or CAPS, Gr R – 12 which means the child can write the National Senior Certificate (NCS)
- The British curricula:
 - ⦿ International General Certificate of Secondary Education and
 - ⦿ Cambridge from primary age through to Secondary, (General Certificate of Secondary Education) IGCSE, AS and A levels.
- Curricula from America, Canada and Singapore are also readily available.

Heleen Liebenberg ▼

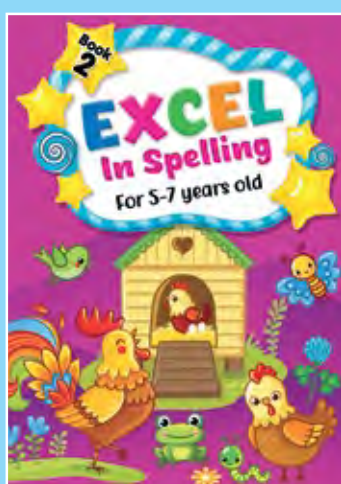
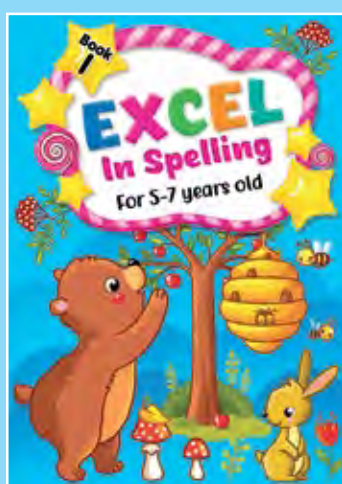


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FEATURES

Pocket guide to acronyms in Schools, Higher and Further Education

ABET/AET	Adult (Basic) Education and Training
AFET	Adult Further Education and Training
ANA	Annual National Assessments
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Curriculum Statement
CEM	Council of Education Ministers
CHE	Council for Higher Education
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DHET	The Department of Higher Education and Training
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFAL	English First Additional Language
ELSEN	Education for Learners with Special Educational Needs
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FAL	First Additional language
FET	Further Education and Training (Grade 10 – 12) Band
FP	Foundation Phase (Grade 1 – 3) Band
GET	General Education and Training (Grade R – 9) Band
HET	Higher Education and Training
IEB	Independent Examination Board
IP	Intermediate Phase (Grade 4 – 6) Band
ISASA	Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa
LO	Life orientation
LoLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
LTSM	Learning and Teaching Support Materials
Naptosa	National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
Nated	National Accredited Technical Education Diploma
NC(V)	National Certificate (Vocational)
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSC	National Senior Certificate
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
SACAI	The South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute
SACE	South African Council for Educators
Sadtu	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SAOU	South African Teacher Union
SAQA	South African Qualifications Association
SASA	South African Schools Act
SASL	South African Sign Language
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SP	Senior Phase (Grade 7 – 9) Band
TIMMS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
Umalusi	Council for General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance

Schools, Higher and Further Education *(Continued)*

A quick recap of the South African school curriculum(s)

1990s	Outcomes-based Education (OBE) introduced
1998 – 2005	Curriculum 2005 (C2005)
2004	The Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) was introduced
2006	C2005 shelved
2007	RNCS was reviewed and renamed the National Curriculum Statement (NCS)
2012	Introduced the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) – a revision of the NCS

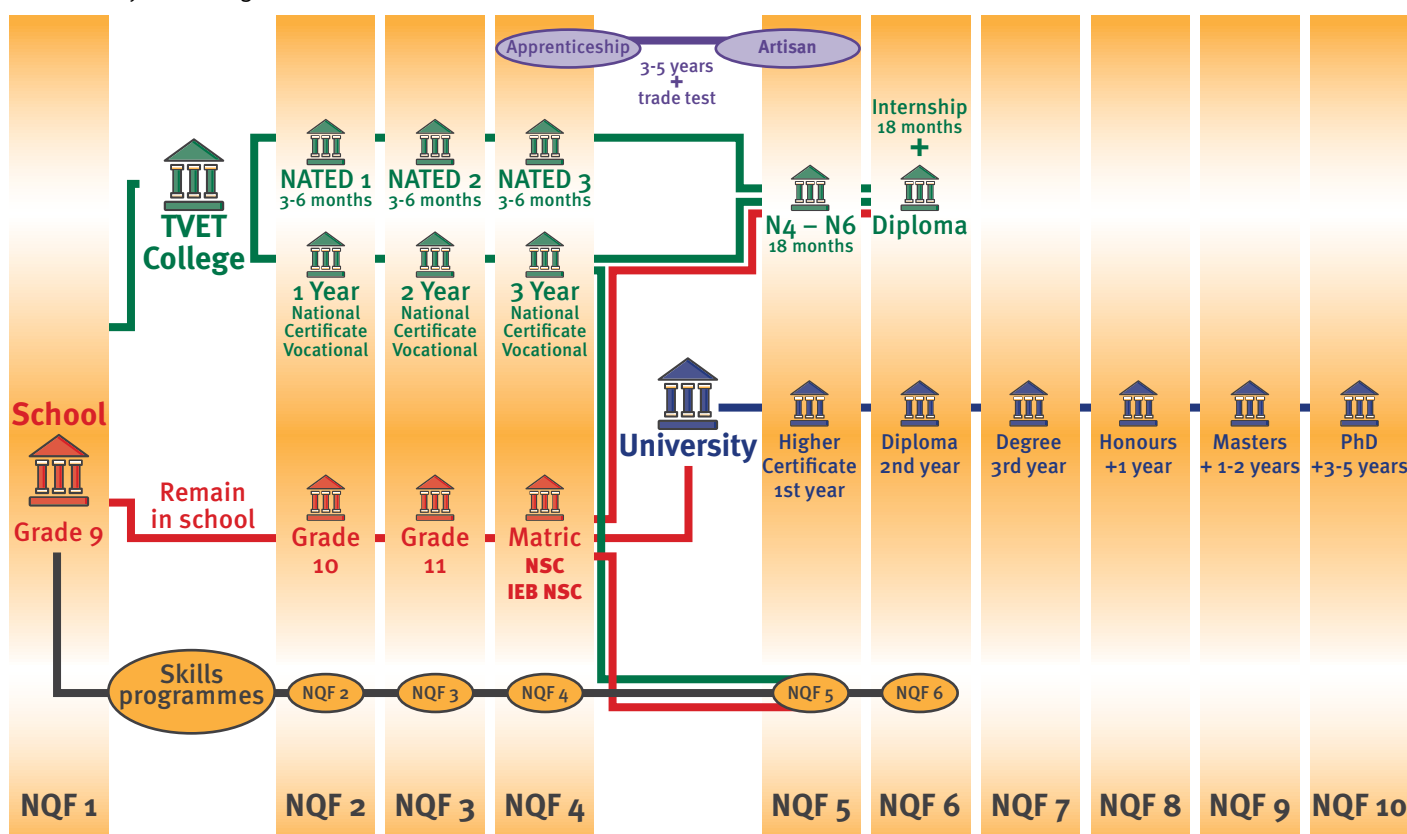
Public vs Private Schools

Public schools have to adhere to CAPS and final Grade 12 examinations are set and marked by the Department of Basic Education (DBE).

Private schools must also adhere to CAPS but the Independent Examinations Board (IEB), a South African independent assessment agency, sets and offers

examinations to mostly private schools. These schools are loosely called IEB schools. The IEB exams are considered by many (parents, teachers, learners and universities, both within South Africa and abroad) as a more challenging and comprehensive assessment than the State's assessment/examination offerings.

Reference: Wikipedia
Recreated by élan Design



The National Senior Certificate (NSC)

The NSC is a curriculum-based qualification offered by government schools which is called National Education NSC. The IEB NSC is the private schools qualification.

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

The NQF is the system that formally records the credits assigned to each level of learning achievement to ensure that the skills and knowledge that have been learnt are recognised throughout the country.

FET vs TVET

Further Education and Training (FET) is a term that was established by the former South African Department of Higher Education and Training, while Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is an international term and replaced FET in 2014. FET is however still used when referring to Grades 10 – 12.

Heleen Liebenberg ▼

PROFILE Indigenous language projects



The case for multilingual education

Prolific isiXhosa children's book author and translator Xolisa Guzula is currently working on her doctoral thesis on multilingualism as an alternative to current approaches in education in South Africa.

Experts in the field rarely come more qualified: her CV includes research in the *Learner Progress and Achievement Project (1998-1999)* at UCT, which focused on over-aged learners in Khayelitsha; participation in the collaborative UCT-WITS project *Children's Early Literacy Learning (2000 – 2001)*, which entailed observing learners' language and literacy experiences at home and school; in-service teacher training and mentorship as part of the Early Literacy Unit at the *Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA, 2001-2012)*, where she led the *Free Reading in Schools*

Project (FRISC) and started the *Vulindlela Reading Club* with the Zisukhanyo Youth Empowerment (ZYE) activist group in Langa; the founding, with colleagues, of the *National Reading for Enjoyment Initiative*, named "*Nal'ibali (Here's the Story)*" (2012); teacher development work at the *Nelson Mandela Institute for Education and Rural Development (NMI)* in the Eastern Cape (2013).

Xolisa is currently a member of the *Bua-Li Language and Literacy Collective*. Their work includes teacher training, multilingual teaching and learning, development of multilingual materials and resources, influencing language policy in education and research in multilingualism. She has written, edited and translated numerous children's books, and lectures in Language and Literacy Studies at the University of Cape Town.

Xolisa's work is inspired by her own formative years and her experiences in the educational field. She shared some of her history and views with Bookmark:

As a rural child growing up in the Eastern Cape, I knew no other language before school, except for isiXhosa. But my isiXhosa borrowed a lot from Afrikaans: it was common for us for example to refer to a big house as a *ihesi* from Afrikaans huis; flat house as *iplati* from Afrikaans plat, fence *idrati* from Afrikaans draad, and many more. The schoolbook isiXhosa used *uxande* for *ihesi* (big house) and *ucingo* for *idrati* (fence).

In my home, there were no children's books to read for pleasure except the big yellow *Bible Stories for Children*. There were a few prescribed books, such as *uDike noCikizwa (Dike and Cikizwa)*; *uNqaba noNqabayakhe (Nqaba and Nqabayakhe)*; *Inqumbo yeminyanya (The Wrath of the Ancestors)* and the great plays like *Ityala lamawele*. They are the books I devoured before Grade 7.

For Grade 10 – 12, I left to study at a catholic boarding school in Cofimvaba. There I consciously started to notice differences between my isiXhosa and that spoken by other learners. They used more of the standard variety, and they tended to borrow more from English. I decided to learn their variety and that of standard isiXhosa used in class and kept my variety for use at home during the holidays.

My reading was happening more in English than isiXhosa as I grew. I can only think of three reasons

for this. The first, was the fact that there were no isiXhosa books in the bookstores. Secondly, the nuns at the school were forcing us to speak English, and the trolley library only had English books. Lastly most students, like myself, were aspiring to go to English universities.

At the University of Cape Town, I chose to study both English 1 and isiXhosa 1, despite the latter's limited range of literature and relatives asking me what I was doing with isiXhosa at such a prestigious university. However, my teacher training education was in English with no reference to isiXhosa, with the assumption that I was going to fit in well within the Anglo-normative education system. My graduation certificate stated that I could teach through both the mediums. This fascinated me: I was trusted to teach in isiXhosa just by virtue of speaking it, and by having studied Xhosa 1, with no pedagogy in the language or supervision and practice in schooling.

It was during the study in Khayelitsha that I became drawn to the language issue. When I interviewed over-age learners, they cited migration from the Eastern Cape to the Western Cape and the expectation for them to speak, read, write and learn in English as some of the reasons that caused them to fail. They reported difficulties with understanding teachers, textbooks and with self-expression in English.

At PRAESA, I worked with teachers on alternatives to language and literacy learning,

Bi/multilingual people cannot be pulled into any essentialist positions where they are English only or isiXhosa only

Indigenous language projects *(Continued)*

including exploring biliteracy development and 'unconventional' teaching strategies which included emergent literacy, reading for enjoyment, interactive writing (dialogue journal writing, letters and message boards), play and storytelling to inspire and motivate children to read. We found that teachers tended to put aside reading for enjoyment, free writing and art when pressurised by systemic evaluations and annual national assessments.

At Vulindlela Reading Club, we initially planned to work with isiXhosa and English alternately as a way of immersing children in both languages. However, our volunteers were not always bilingual. We also had children from English medium schools. There were more books in English than in isiXhosa. Eventually, we decided to use both languages simultaneously in every session. After six years of

success with this model, we were ready to scale the work in a small way across the country, which led to the founding of *Nal'ibali*.

Multilingualism is more than just having 11 official languages used in parallel to each other. It is about using them trans-lingually, because multilingual people use all their linguistic resources to communicate, instead of sticking to one named language at a time. It is about people speaking to each other in different languages yet still understanding and keeping the communication going. Bi/multilingual people cannot be pulled into any essentialist positions where they are English only or isiXhosa only. It is not about knowing all your languages in a balanced way, but about a linguistic repertoire which becomes useful anytime when it is needed in the situation you find yourself in.

My PhD study aims to show how the dominant views have delivered us to the current crisis, and how disrupting them helps us to imagine new ways of thinking about language and literacy education.

Xolisa Guzula ▼

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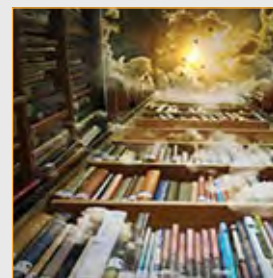


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PROFILE Indigenous language projects *(Continued)*

The Repatriation of Letters: *an interview with Phehello Mofokeng*

Language warrior and publisher Phehello Mofokeng pops up everywhere on the literary circuit – universally loved, even when in sombre mood. His service to readers is focused and prolific, ranging from the curation of festivals to translation projects to reprinting African classics. Bookmark spoke to him about his publishing house, Geko, and his plans for the near future.



Geko Publishing

Photo: Thabiso Bale



Tell us more about Geko, and where it all started?

We're a proudly black African independent publisher with over 20 titles published. Established in 2004, our first book was the memoir of Mario d'Offizzi, *Bless Me Father*, about his abuse at the hands of a Catholic bishop at Boys' Town. Geko has not looked back since.

Where does your passion for indigenous languages come from?

As an African languages and African literature graduate, my studies had a strong emphasis on Thomas Mofolo, the pioneer Mosotho author who wrote his first novel in 1907. My love for work in natural languages comes from an early encounter with his writing and that of other canonical writers of the turn of the twentieth century.

Do you feel positive about the future of African publishing?

Geko is part of the bigger new pantheon of black independent publishers who are producing incredible work. In fact, there has not been a time like this in African literature – a time where so many Africans are active participants in their own literature – as independent publishers, authors, independent booksellers, readers and other active role players in the industry. There has not been such a time of high production and consumption of literature by Africans on this continent. Every other day in Johannesburg alone, there are many book launches, book events and readings, and a large

contingent of book clubs. This is the spirit that drives Geko today and into the future.

What is next for Geko?

For 2020, we are focused on Repatriation of Letters – a project of transcreation (not mere translation) of English work back into Setswana. It is led by the all-important and pioneering author of Setswana in the post-apartheid era, Sabata-mpho Mokae (Sol Plaatje University) and intellectually supervised by professor extraordinaire Shole Shole (NWU). Repatriation authors include Lorato Trok (*Against All Odds*, Geko, 2019), Shole Shole, Wame Molefhe (*Go Tell the Sun*, Modjaji, 2011), Tuelo Gabonewe (*Planet Savage*, Jacana, 2011, *Sarcophagus*, Geko 2014) and other authors to be confirmed. The titles they are working on are: *Maru* (Bessie Head), *This Book Betrays My Brother* (Kagiso Lesego Molope), *Mine Boy* (Peter Abrahams) and Gabonewe is transcreating his own book, *Sarcophagus*.

Geko is also publishing my own Sesotho novel, *Di Ya Thoteng* – an intense love story mired in politics, superstition and elements of witchcraft. This emphasis on Sesotho is only coincidental, because Geko intends to publish in all natural languages of South Africa and eventually of the continent.

This year, Geko will pay homage to Sol Plaatje by releasing the first set of Repatriation titles. Sol Plaatje was the most important of Batswana writers involved in canon-creation at the beginning of the 1900s. Further to Plaatje, Geko also pays homage to Mofolo

by concentrating on Sesotho work and re-releasing Mofolo's classic works – *Pitseng*, *Moeti wa Bochabela* and *Chaka*. In his honour, Geko has announced the Geko Mofolo Prize for Outstanding Fiction in Sesotho – aimed at encouraging the next generation of Sesotho fiction writers of outstanding quality.

Will you ever consider bringing back BKO literary magazine?

I am happy to confirm that BKO (a play on 'Biko'), which we published between 2004 and 2008, will be making a comeback this year – with the usual mix of poetry, short stories, flash fiction and author profiles. It will be sexier, brighter and more daring ... It aims to reposition literature front centre for as many readers as possible and to find new ones. BKO will be available online (www.bkomagazine.co.za) and as a limited issue print publication.

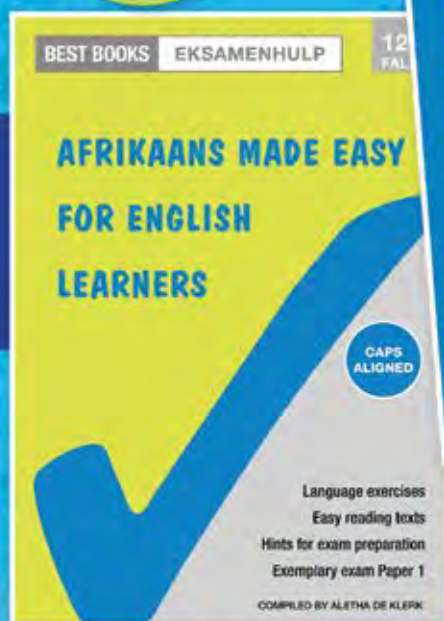
What is your publishing philosophy?

There are many reasons why African languages matter to Geko. One of them is that publishing is a political, revolutionary and intellectual act. We cannot leave the progress of our languages to other people. Our stern focus on indigenous literature is not an act of vanity, but that of self-preservation; it is the next frontier of creative expression.

Africa is becoming – it has to become – the new centre, and the black independent African publisher is the catalyst to this re-centering. Geko aims to be part of this interesting march into the future. ▼

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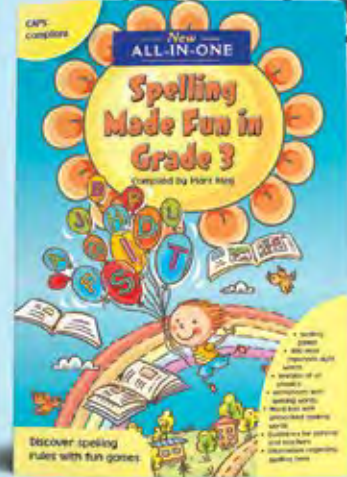
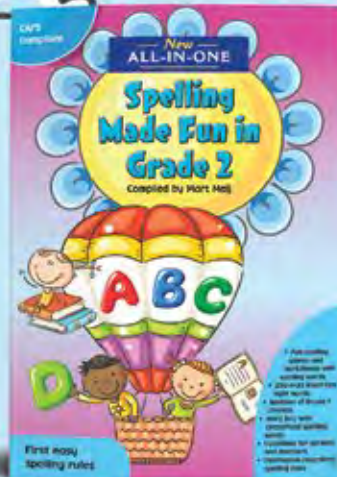
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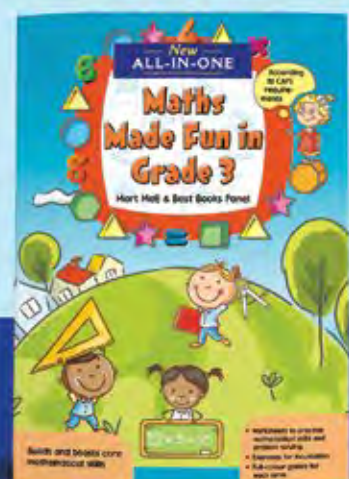
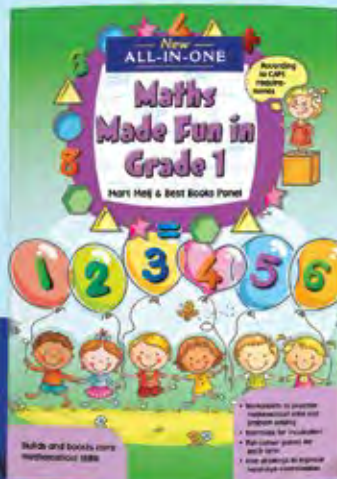


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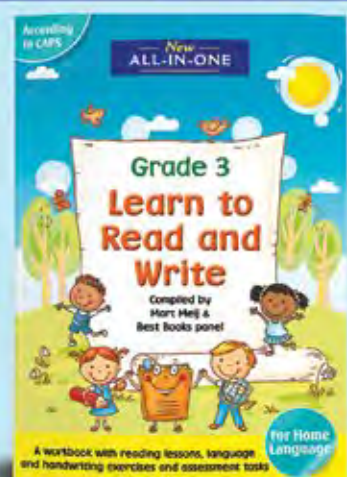
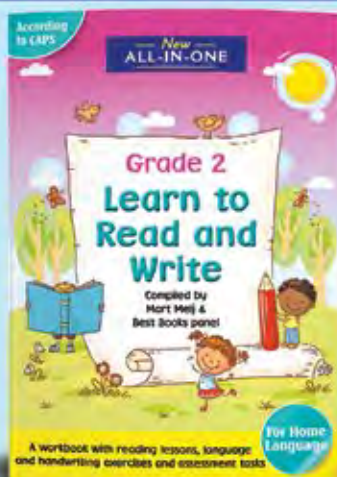
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EVENTS

Frankfurt 2019: *Trade secrets and trends*

The Frankfurt Book Fair took place 16-20 October last year. Annie Olivier, publisher at Jonathan Ball, attended the fair as part of a fellowship programme.

With over 302 000 visitors, 7 450 exhibitors from 104 countries and more than 4 000 events the Frankfurt Book Fair is the biggest trade book fair in the world. The fair's six halls, each of which has two to three floors, could easily swallow up a few Cape Town Convention Centers or Gallagher Estates'.

Jaw-dropping though these statistics are, they don't convey the sheer sense of wonderment of being there. Think kid in a candy store.

At one hall entrance Herder Verlag's slogan stops me in my tracks, *Lesen ist Leben* – to read is to live. In the German halls books are turned into objects of art and colourful stands of several metres high take your breath away. Exhibitor stands differ from humble two metre wide spaces to the stands for major houses like Hachette and Penguin that take up an eighth of an entire hall and even have reception desks.

But the real magic lies in the connections made. Imagine 'talking book' with peers from around the globe for four whole days, sharing news about great books, exciting developments in your individual markets or often just some gossip about author antics. Because to a great extent this is what the Frankfurt Book Fair is all about – building personal relationships.

A big talking point at this year's fair was audio books. Colleague Ceri Prenter, production manager at Jonathan Ball Publishers, attended an audio summit where she heard that many countries are currently seeing double or even triple digit growth in audio books. Of course this dramatic growth will eventually plateau.

People are increasingly turning to audio because they are visually overstimulated and want time away from their screens.



It is also expected that millennials, who are avid podcast listeners, will migrate naturally to audio books. There is also a big market for audio books in Africa due to increased access to smartphones and the lack of print books, but getting local accents and data subscription packages right will be vital going forward.

Another interesting trend is an increase in the popularity and sales of non-fiction. According to an article in *Publishing Perspectives*, non-fiction books in Germany saw a boost in sales of 9,6% this past year, while an article in *Livres Hebdo*, the French trade journal, mentions that narrative non-fiction is 'still trending'.

This was also reflected in rights sales at the fair. 'Non-fiction reigned supreme,' wrote *The Bookseller*, 'with agents reporting a surge of interest in titles on wellbeing and personal development. So-called up-lit, climate titles and biographies have also sold well.'

Everyone seems to agree that it is highly unlikely that the industry will see sales similar to that of eight to ten years ago any time soon. In the digital era, the biggest

threat is the onslaught on readers' time. Books have to compete for people's attention with social media and streaming services like Netflix.

However, it shouldn't come as a surprise that Netflix relies heavily on books to find new content and that its representatives regularly attend book fairs. 'Is Netflix a friend or foe to the book business?' was the title of a talk with the vice-president of international originals at Netflix, Kelly Luegenbiehl. She was quoted in *Publishers Weekly* as saying, 'we look at the publishers and editors as partners . . . For us, the more collaboration the better.'

She emphasised that their decisions about content were based on classic





storytelling, and not data or analytics. ‘There are universals to storytelling that supersede any genre: great stories with great characters.’ At the fair, Netflix also announced that it had signed three book deals to produce Netflix original series.

This reinforces the point made by a number of German and Swiss publishers I visited as part of the Frankfurt Fellowship that took place in the week before the fair. Their message was that publishers should exploit *all* their rights, especially film rights. Major Swiss publisher Diogenes went so far as to say that if an author or agent wasn’t willing to give them audio rights, it would be a deal breaker.

The Diogenes team shared another note-worthy trade secret with the Frankfurt fellows. While the majority of Swiss and German publishers employ freelance or third-party sales representatives as a cost-saving measure, Diogenes still has their own permanent team. They have excellent relationships with booksellers and manage to read all the titles on the Diogenes list. Even other role-players in the German publishing industry made unsolicited remarks about how successful the Diogenes team is.

After the fair I certainly have newfound respect for our sales team. As someone who usually only has to worry about spelling mistakes and structure in manuscripts, it is quite something to

have to go into sales mode. But while it definitely isn’t easy, I enjoy the challenge of trying to sell South African titles into overseas markets.

As publishers we are so passionate about all the books we publish, but only two, maybe three, books on an entire year’s list may have some international appeal. In terms of non-fiction, South African history, especially books about apartheid and the South African War, draw attention, as well as military books and some biographies.

For Jonathan Ball the most successful titles in terms of rights sales the past two years have been Sam Beckbessinger’s *Manage Your Money Like a F*cking Grown-up* and Gail Nattrass’s *A Short History of South Africa*.

Most people leave the Frankfurt Book Fair inspired, a little overstimulated and mostly dog tired after the non-stop talking and partying. But year after year they are back, because Frankfurt always gives so much more than it takes.

Annie Olivier ▼



EVENTS

7th Ake Festival:

Bigger, better, more thought-provoking

When Ake Festival moved from the home of Wole Soyinka and the capital of Ogun State, Abeokuta, to the sprawling metropole that is Lagos, I was not sure of the wisdom of this move. I mean, Festival Director Lola Shoneyin obviously knows her country better than I ever could, but was Ake not in danger of losing the intimacy that one got in Abeokuta? And being just one of many festivals not therefore at risk of losing an audience?

I am ready to swallow that humble pie, however she would like to serve it to me even if frozen. And the 7th Ake Festival under the theme *Black Bodies, Grey Matter* held at Mike Adenuga Centre in Ikoyi, is the reason for this. Sponsored by long-term sponsor Sterling Bank (South African corporates could learn from Nigerian corporates about sponsoring other things beyond sports) and with Tsitsi Dangaremba as headliner, it already appeared like it was going to be a *lit* festival even before we landed. Perhaps this is the reason why even more South Africans this year made their way to Lagos for the festival, than in previous years.

On the first day of the festival, I joined some writers to take part in the school visits. This is a small but very key part of Ake Festival and has been since its beginning. In this section, writers go in different groups and talk to students, akin to the school visits that *Time of the Writer* has been doing for years now. The importance of this, which begins before the festival begins properly, is that it gives students a chance to see living, breathing writers and help them believe literature did not end with the men and women who wrote narratives for the African Writers' Series. In so doing, it not only breeds the next generation of readers but equally important, writers. If the ordinary-looking person who talked to them could write a book, surely they too can do it?

I ended up in a group with Cameroonian writer, Howard Meh-Buh Maximus,



Photo: Brian Otieno

Nigerian writer, Leye Adenle, my compatriot and younger sister, Mohale Mashigo and British writer, Gavin Evans. Mohale and I gave the students we worked with a writing exercise and then surprised the one with the best story with an invitation to the launch of the very first African Young Adult anthology *Water Birds on the Lake Shore* that would happen the next day.

After the school visits, we waited for the opening ceremony, which as usual did not disappoint. Ably emceed by Wana Udobang, it had performances by musicians and poets and a speech by Ms Shoneyin which not only reminded those who had previously attended where the festival had come from, but helped new guests understand what the festival stood for. As has become the norm, founder of the Mud Art Company and dancer, Ochai Ogaba charmingly did a dance routine before presenting the publication *Ake Review* to the festival headliner who, until then, was not aware that she was on the cover.

The schedule for Friday was to kick off with a book chat with Angolan writer, Jose Eduardo Agualusa and Nigerian writer, Jumoke Verissimo. Although Mr Agualusa failed to make it, Ms Verissimo, author of debut novel *A Small Silence* carried the day like a pro and one would not have known that this was her first book (neither will one know this on reading it). The book chats on the first full day of the festival included Djibouti writer, Abdourahman

The Ake Festival took place in Lagos from 24 to 27 October 2019. South African author

Zukiswa was there.

Waberi, Sudanese writer, Leila Aboulela, Nigerian writers, Temi Oh and Wole Talabi and South Africa's own Fred Khumalo.

These book chats, more than anything else, were a highlight of the range of writing on this continent,

bringing stories and writers of everything from social realism, historical fiction to speculative fiction. On this day too, Ake Festival created more literary history. They hosted the launch of the Goethe-Institut funded *Water Birds on the Lake Shore* in English, Kiswahili and French with all writers in the anthology.

Saturday will probably remain the most talked about day of this year's Ake Festival because of a book chat hosted by Ghanaian literati, Kinna Likimani with Thando Mgqolozana and Uzodinma Iweala. During the audience's Q&A, a South African wanted to know why he was not allowed to attend the Mgqolozana-founded Abantu Book Festival in Soweto. Mr Mgqolozana declined to comment. Ms Likimani, however, took it on and perhaps centred the theme of the festival more than any previous conversations. She highlighted how people should not feel entitled to every space because sometimes the oppressed need space to discuss their oppression alone – even if one considers themselves an ally.

The 7th Ake Festival happened in October – festival season for Lagos which included photo workshops, theatre performances and art exhibitions. But rather than this bringing less people to the festival, it only enhanced it and gave guests other arts events to attend during the four days they were there. And I, for one, would not consider taking it back to Abeokuta.

Zukiswa Wanner ▼

NSFAS 2020

The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) has received a record number of 543 268 first-time applications, compared to 428 929 last year, which reflects a growth of more than 26% for the 2020 academic year. Just under 50% of all applicants are from social grant beneficiaries – the status of all applicants has been validated with the Department of Home Affairs and the Department of Social Development. The highest number of applications received were from KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Gauteng. Students previously funded by NSFAS and who were continuing their studies will be funded based on progression results from the institutions.

As expected a significant number of students have applied after they had registered at Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges although 80% of applicants have indicated that universities are their first choice of study. (Sizwe Dlamini, <https://www.iol.co.za/business-report/economy/listen-nsfas-dismisses-reports-of-lost->



Susan Yin/Unsplash

documents-realises-26-growth-in-first-time-applications-40194000).

The NSFAS allowance covers accommodation, transport (R10 000 p/a), living allowance (R14 400 p/a), book allowance (R5 000 p/a) which only applies to universities, personal care – toiletries and sanitary needs – (R2 750 p/a). The latter is a new addition.

As from 2019, NSFAS no longer provides book vouchers. Students are paid in cash

and have to purchase relevant learning materials.

NSFAS has no means of monitoring students spending but feel that students need to spend their allowances responsibly and use this opportunity to learn how to manage their finances. (<https://www.careersportal.co.za/finance/everything-you-need-to-know-about-your-nsfas-allowance>). ▼

AWARDS

Winners of the Bi-Annual Exclusive Books IBBY awards

National bookseller Exclusive Books has announced the winners for the bi-annual Exclusive Books IBBY SA Award, a competition aimed at recognising the best South African children's book writers and illustrators, and for the first time this year, best translator.

The Exclusive Books IBBY SA Award is endorsed by the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY), a non-profit organisation which represents an international network of people from all over the world who are committed to bringing books and children together.

To be considered for the award, the writer, illustrator and translator must be South African and the book must be an original work written in any of the official South African languages. The book must also have been published in South Africa. The winners each receive a R10 000 cash prize.

Exclusive Books believes in nurturing a love of reading in children from an early age. The primary objective of the Exclusive Books IBBY SA Awards is to recognise talent, to encourage more South African authors and publishers to make story books available for children and to develop this genre of literature in South Africa.

Colleen Whitfield, Exclusive Books Children's Book Manager

IBBY contact person:

Dusanka Stojakovic,
Chairperson for IBBY SA
Dusankas@mweb.co.za

Exclusive Books contact person:

Colleen Whitfield, Exclusive Books
Children's Books & CSI Manager
colleenw@exclusivebooks.co.za

Winners overleaf ►

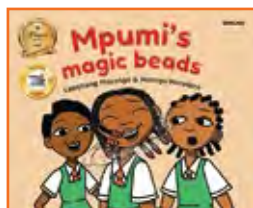
AWARDS

IBBY AWARDS *(Continued)*



Best Story

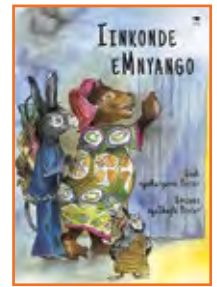
Lebohang Masango's children's title, *Mpumi's Magic Beads*, took the award for Best Writer. *Mpumi's Magic Beads* (978-1-4856-2670-1, New Africa) is a delightful story about friendship, self-esteem, discovery and beautiful hair in the big city of Joburg. It follows the sudden adventures of Mpumi, Asante and Tshiamo as they see the world around them from new heights and realise all of the fun waiting to be discovered outside of their classroom. This story is a great read for the whole family, especially children aged between 5 – 10 years old.



About Lebohang Masango

Lebohang Masango is a PhD student and holds a Master of Social Anthropology degree from the University of Witwatersrand, South Africa. She is a UNICEF Volunteer Program Ambassador and an inaugural Zanele Mbeki Fellow in feminist leadership. She has also been identified by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation as a #Goalkeeper, one of the young people working to realise the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). She is a poet and a writer working in service of her feminist politics. As an Anthropologist, she has lectured first years at North West University. She regularly hosts storytelling sessions for children in schools, bookshops and community libraries. She currently hosts the Word 'N Sound Poetry League, a monthly open mic challenge aimed at developing young poets in Johannesburg. Lebohang has been published in Mike Alfred's *Twelve + One* (Botsotso, 2014) an anthology of Johannesburg poets and *To*

Breathe Into Another Voice (Real African Publishers, 2017) and a Jazz poetry anthology edited by Myesha Jenkins. She has read her poetry in South Africa, Zimbabwe and the UK.



Best Translation

The superb translation of Maryanne and Shayle Bester's *Elders at the Door* by Xolisa Guzula won her the prize for Best Translation. *linkonde eMnyango* (978-1-4314-2531-0, Jacana), the isiXhosa translation, is a fable which is told across the continent and belongs to all of Africa and its people. Although the setting and characters are quintessentially African – from the rhythms of their speech to the patterns on their clothes – the message is universal.

About Xolisa Guzula

Xolisa Guzula is a lecturer in multilingual and multiliteracies education at the University of Cape Town. She has an interest in language and literacy as social practice, biliteracy development, emergent literacy, critical literacies, multimodality, third spaces and bilingual children's literature. She is a doctoral student researching third spaces as a way of disrupting monoglossia and monomodal education and is one of the founders of Molo Mhlaba School.

Best Illustrations

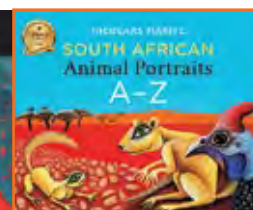
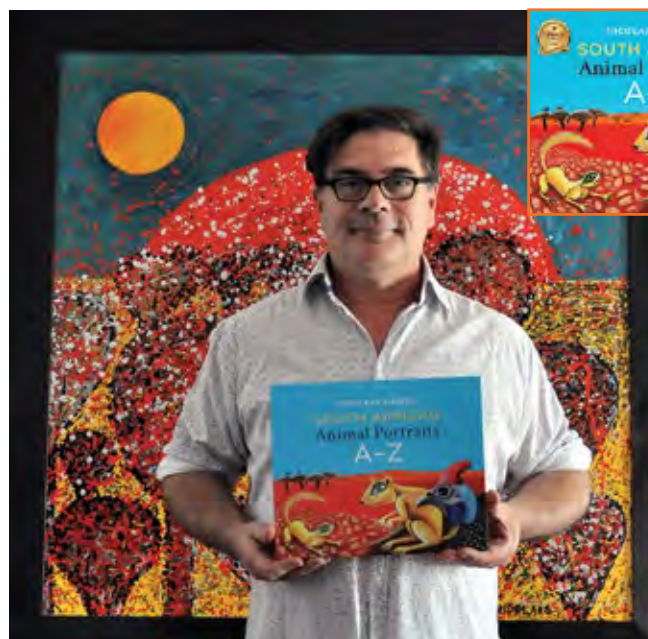
The stunning picture book, *South African Animal Portraits A-Z* (978-1-4856-2960-3, New Africa), saw Nicolaas Maritz win the prize for Best Illustrations.

The vivid and charming illustrations allow you to meet the mammals, reptiles, insects and birds who populate the veld, desert, forests and ponds of South Africa. From the ant-eating aardvark to the zebra, spitting cobra, there is a new friend on every page.

About Nicolaas Maritz

Nicolaas Maritz was born in Pretoria in 1959. The son of two architects, he was exposed to art and design at an early age. After Fine Art studies at the University of Cape Town he worked briefly as a graphic designer. He lived in London between 1983 and 1985, but returned to South

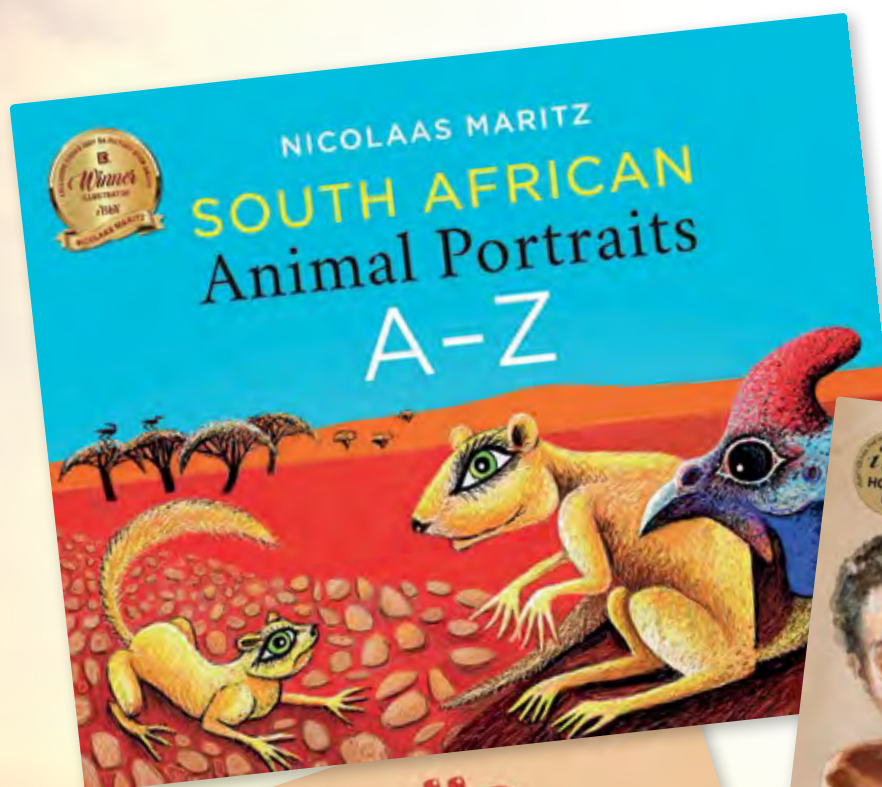
Africa permanently in 1986. He has lectured at the universities of Cape Town and Stellenbosch and illustrated a number of award winning children's books.



Nicolaas held his first one-man exhibition in 1976 at the Eastern Province Society of Fine Arts Gallery in Port Elizabeth. Since then he has exhibited all

over South Africa and in London. His most recent show was a one-man exhibition of new paintings at the Irma Stern Museum in Cape Town. Although Nicolaas is primarily known as a painter, he also works in many other media including print-making, ceramics and sculpture. His mysterious art works have been described as 'ethno-centric punk', zippy and zesty.

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AWARDS

SALA awards



The South African Literary Awards (SALA) have become the most prestigious and respected literary accolades in South African literature.

SALA was founded in 2005 by the wWrite Associates in partnership with the South Africa's National Department of Arts and Culture. The aim of SALA is to celebrate the literary excellence of South Africa in all of the nation's languages. Established to pay tribute to South African writers who have distinguished themselves as groundbreaking producers and creators of literature, the awards celebrate literary excellence in the depiction and sharing of South Africa's histories, value systems, philosophies and art as inscribed and preserved in all 11 official languages of South Africa.

Work from published authors whose primary input is in imaginative writing – both fiction as well as creative non-fiction is considered for selection. The work must demonstrate good linguistic presentation, the nation's identity, societal values, universal truths, and cultural aesthetics. It must also contribute to social cohesion, nation building and transcendence of time.

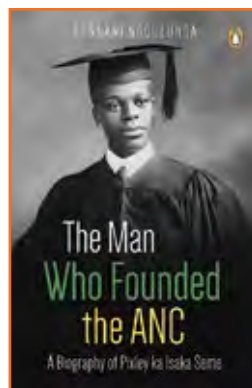
Since 2005 more than 170 authors were honoured with a SALA award. The 2019 winners were announced on 7 November 2019 at a ceremony in Johannesburg.

*Congratulations
to all winners!*

Categories

1. First-time Published Author Award

Bongani Ngqulunga, *The Man Who Founded the ANC: A Biography of Pixley Ka Isaka Seme* (English)

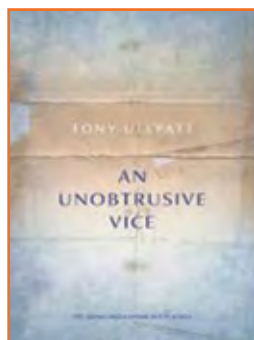


2. K Sello Duiker Memorial Literary Award

Chase Rhys, *Kinnes* (Afrikaans)

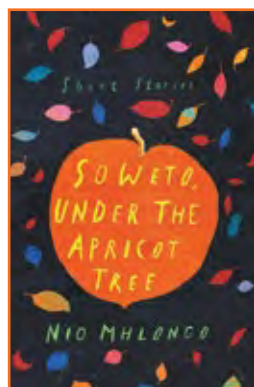
3. Poetry Award

Ayanda Billie, *Umhlaba Umanzi* (isiXhosa); Nathan Trantraal, *Alles het niet kom wôd* (Afrikaans); Tony Ulyatt, *An Unobtrusive Vice* (English)



4. Nadine Gordimer Short Story Award

Niq Mhlongo, *Soweto, Under the Apricot Tree* (English)



5. Creative Non-fiction Literary Award

Jonathan Jansen, *As by Fire: The End of the South African University* (English)



6. Literary Translators Award

Michiel Heyns, *Buys and Red Dog* (Afrikaans to English)

7. Literary Journalism Award
Jennifer Malec, *Body of work* English;
Wamuwi Mbao, *Body of work* English

8. Posthumous Literary Award

Cyril Lincoln Sibusiso Nyembezi

9. Lifetime Achievement Literary Award

Cornelius Tennyson Daniel (CTD) Marivate, *Body of work* Xitsonga;
Louise Smit, *Body of work* Afrikaans

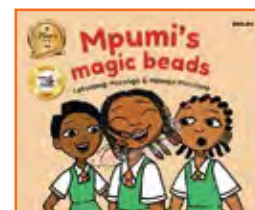
10. Novel Award

Charl-Pierre Naudé, *Die ongelooflike onskuld van Dirkie Verwey* (Afrikaans); Sabata-mpho Mokae, *Moletlo wa Manong* (Setswana)



11. Children's Literature Award

Lebohang Masango, *Mpumi's Magic Beads* (English)



12. Youth Literature Award

Sally Partridge, *Mine* (English)



TRIBUTE

Saying goodbye to a publishing legend

It is with great sadness that LAPA's personnel learned of the death of Cecilia Britz. She passed away on 12 December 2019.

Cecilia Britz was known for her enormous contribution to recreational fiction in Afrikaans.

Britz was once married to a diplomat, but eventually began working as a publisher. While at Perskor, under the influence of Franz Marx, she began to win back Afrikaans readers. There was significant support for the more taxing literary works in Afrikaans, but Afrikaans speakers read English when they wanted to relax. She set out to change that.

Marx made her understand that books had to be marketed as entertainment, and Britz began an in-depth study of how the market for American fiction works.

After Perskor was bought by the then Maskew Miller Longman, Britz worked as Huisgenoot's story editor.

LAPA Publishers approached her and she worked for the company on a

freelance basis. On December 1, 2004, she joined LAPA full-time.

One of her biggest success stories was LAPA's Romanza series.

Britz worked at LAPA until her retirement in 2018, but she told everyone she would 'go crazy' should she have to sit at home, so she continued with LAPA on a contract basis. Behind the scenes, however, Britz was also training a next generation of publishers.

She was immensely proud of her contribution to the tremendous growth in quality Afrikaans commercial fiction. As she approached her retirement, she would often display her wry sense of humour by declaring that she would be content with nothing but a statue in her honour. So, when the ATKV awarded her a special Woordveertjie for her contribution to the publishing industry in 2018, she used the stage to say that she was grateful to 'finally' be given her statue.



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PROFILE

Lunch with Thabiso Mahlape

The first time I met Thabiso was in an Exclusive Books boardroom in 2015, where she presented her forthcoming Blackbird titles to us as part of Jacana's preview. It was an exciting time, right at the cusp of change in the local book industry. Thabiso was a rare bird (pun intended), a black female pioneer in a sector eager for, yet bad at transformation. She had just launched her imprint and was beaming and ebullient with pride.

Fast forward to the tail-end of 2019, and we are both older and more cynical. At the crest of Thabiso's wave in 2017, Bonang happened. What should have been a celebratory time turned into a publisher's worst nightmare when the celebrity's memoir was picked apart for editing mistakes and promptly returned by bookshops. Thabiso moved back to Polokwane for a year, seeking solace and time away from the scathing business of bookselling.

We meet at Life Grand Café in Mall of Africa in Midrand, Thabiso's local haunt. She orders the chicken livers, lifting an eyebrow at the waiter: 'They were too salty last time. Please tell them not to make it so salty.' She opts for a small bottle of Graham Beck Brut, reigning in the urge to order her usual full bottle.

I ask her how she feels about the whole Bonang debacle now. 'A slight irritation.' Was it traumatic at the time? 'Very. I wasn't really perturbed by public opinion, but what hurt was the reaction of the bookshops. I wasn't ready for that.'

Thabiso wrote the first line of the book, which got Bonang's birthday wrong. 'Yes, I was the one who made that mistake. It was supposed to be checked and it wasn't. There was no way of coming back from that.' Was it a learning curve? 'I learned that you should always be on the same page as your authors. The vision you have for the book can't be different from the author's.'

Thabiso is still haunted by the aftermath, with some potential clients choosing to go with other publishers despite references from the likes of



Illustration by Nathi Ngubane – Think Ahead Comix

Redi Tlhabi. 'It saddens me. Sometimes I look at a book and think how much more I could've done with it than a mainstream publisher. What could've been the next *Endings and Beginnings* ends up as just another memoir.'

Still, 2019 was a sterling year for Blackbird as Thabiso blazes her way on the comeback trail. Debuts by Remy Ngamije, Keletso Mopai and Makanaka Mavengere-Munsaka met with critical and popular acclaim, cementing her reputation as the most gutsy and intuitive finder of new talent out there. The imprint featured at the Frankfurt Book Fair as part of a fellowship programme, where Thabiso negotiated potential rights deals too. 'Watch this space!' she winks.

We talk about the changing landscape, the sudden demand for African content. 'I find it disgusting to watch, this whole international drive towards superficial diversity. Big publishing houses with huge budgets end up publishing inferior books because they don't bother to invest in proper editing. You can still understand if a small publisher like Blackbird is guilty

of that, but they have no excuse. They do it simply to suit their own narrative.'

Born and schooled in Polokwane, Thabiso first braved the big city to study engineering at Wits on an Eskom programme, but eventually followed her passion to study publishing under Margaret Labuschagne at Tuks. She was chosen for a PASA internship after graduation, ultimately ending up at Jacana. 'Maggie and Bridget are true book people. I couldn't have worked anywhere else.'

Blackbird was born when Thabiso started working flexitime at Jacana after the birth of her daughter. Bridget Impey first suggested the name, but Thabiso only agreed after she was reminded of the Nina Simone song by a friend. 'I didn't know what the f*ck I was doing. I learned so much from this process.'

Success first came with Nakhane Toure's *Piggy Boy's Blues*, in total selling more than

2 000 copies. Panashe Chigumadzi's *Sweet Medicine* is Blackbird's bestselling publication to date, with more than 6 000 sold locally. These two books really set the tone for the imprint. After 30 titles and some dabbling with non-fiction, Thabiso is bent on returning to the formula: 'At first I published too broadly. Now I see Blackbird purely as a literary fiction beast.'

How does she find her writers? 'They find me,' she laughs. 'Fiction is not like memoir or other non-fiction where you can go out and find it. Someone has to come with it.' Inundated with slush, what does she look for in a manuscript? 'I can tell from the email if I should bother going to the attachment.'

Thabiso's main inspiration is to see her authors flourish. 'I want Blackbird to be the place where black authors find themselves. To gather their confidence, believe in themselves, know that they can make it and then go out into the world as a published author. That's the work I want to do.'

Olinka Nell ▼

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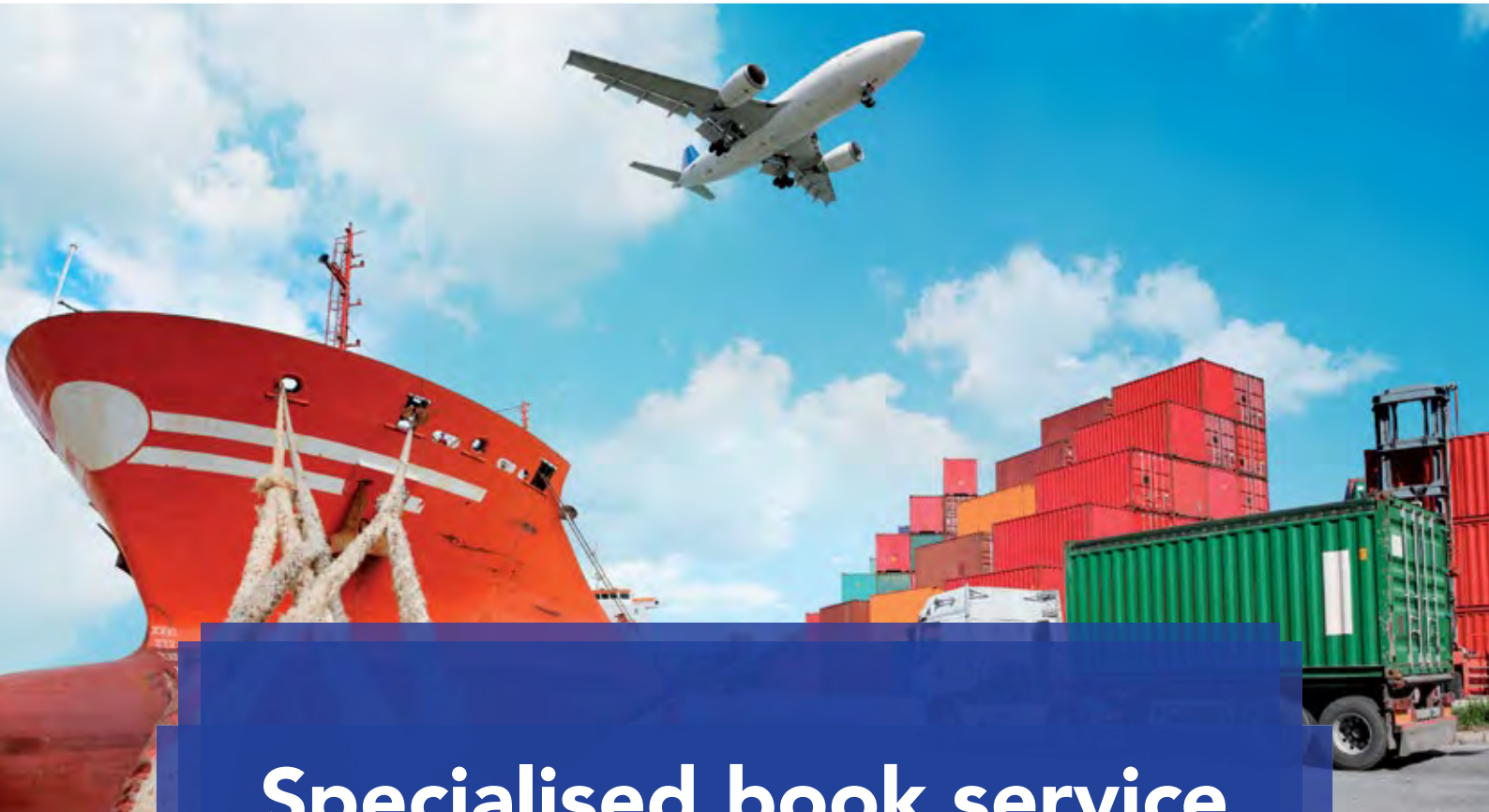
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