

SEVEN YEAR OLD CROWNED SA'S FIRST 'STORY BOSSO'

Monday, 30 November

Seven-year-old Athandiwe Sikade of Khayelitsha in Cape Town has been announced the winner of Nal'ibali's storytelling competition, *Story Bosso*.

The competition, designed as a nationwide talent search to get people of all ages excited about reading and telling stories, invited members of the public to send in audio or video clips of themselves reading or telling their favourite stories.

"We collected more than 2 000 submissions from across the country. Stories came in from all age groups and in all languages. They ranged from those that made us laugh, to those that made us cry, but best of all, they showed us that a spirit of storytelling – oral, written and in many languages is alive and well, which we can use to inspire children to want to read and write" says Jade Jacobsohn, Managing Director of the Nal'ibali reading-for-enjoyment campaign.

Competing against 14 other finalists for the title of South Africa's first Story Bosso, Sikade was chosen for her spirited storytelling style and skill relative to her young age. Her entry was an animated retelling of *uMboleki*, a humorous children's story with a deeper message about how to behave appropriately in society.

Sikade entered the competition at her school, Chumisa Primary, where Nal'ibali hosted one of 30 Story Bosso pop-up auditions held to source stories directly from the campaign's network of reading clubs and communities across the country. Partners such as Times Media, National Book Week, Jozi Book Fair, Soweto Theatre, Vodacom Teacher Centers, Mad About Art and Africa Unite also held auditions which served as an opportunity for Nal'ibali to provide caregivers and children across the country with books and literacy materials in their home languages. Over 13 000 books and 26 500 story cards in a range of South African languages were distributed over the duration of the competition.

"While we are delighted to have discovered so many promising storytellers, Story Bosso is ultimately about helping to root a culture of reading in South Africa," explains Jacobsohn. "Sharing stories builds children's knowledge, concepts, language ability and imagination. So, growing the storytelling and reading habit at home, is a perfect way to help children become motivated and curious learners with greater capacity to succeed at school."

To announce her win, Sikade received a surprise visit from renowned local author and Story Bosso celebrity judge, Sindiwe Magona, who treated Sikade and her class to a special storytelling of her own. Magona addressed the class saying: "In books and stories you will find all the dreams you will ever need. You will find all the truth the world can give and all the fun there is for each and every boy or girl, little, or big, or somewhere in between!"

Sikade is joined by two runners-up: 12-year-old Atang Makgata, who was selected for her original story, *A Dream About the Enchanted Forest*, and Kerrin Kokot and Jayne Batzofin who entered their bilingual story, *The Lonely Frog*, in English and Sign Language.

The finalists will each be receiving cash prizes, Ackermans vouchers as well as a home library with books courtesy of Exclusive Books, Bargain Books, Cambridge University Press, Jacana Media and the Save Our Seas Foundation.

For more information about the Nal'ibali reading-for-enjoyment campaign as well as reading tips and stories in a range of South African languages, visit www.nalibali.org, www.nalibali.mobi or find them on Facebook and Twitter: nalibaliSA. Nal'ibali is driven by PRAESA, 2015 laureate of the Astrid Lindgren Memorial award for children's literature and reading promotion.

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