

NEWS

March 2012

Dorothy Dyer visits the metro, enthusing adults and learners about reading

Mxit and literacy?

At the end of 2011 Paterson and Bethelsdorp High Schools registered as *FunDza Literacy Trust* beneficiaries and so received ten copies of each of the three *Harmony High* series titles, which their learners have read voraciously. Knowing the story behind the series and the literacy trust as well as the enjoyment these learners were getting from the series, RASA, the Reading Association of South Africa, decided to bring Dorothy Dyer, author of the series and trust member, to Port Elizabeth.

During her visit, Dorothy attended an Education Faculty Literacy Hub meeting, addressed student teachers and was the key note speaker at the RASA Open Day. However, the highlight of her visit was visiting these two schools and engaging with the learners. For the Grades 8, 9 and 10 school pupils this was a day to be remembered! Dorothy spoke about how she went about writing the series with the input of her township learners to ensure it was authentic, the photo-shoots to choose a model for the cover and the whole process of drafting and refining a text. Learners were also treated to a snippet of the next story and could give suggestions as to further stories, which might include a cousin from the Eastern Cape visiting Harmony High. *Dorothy is pictured alongside, signing books for learners.*



Dorothy also shared FunDza's latest initiative - mobi books! Learners were taken aback when told to take out their cellphones as she talked them through how to find books on the FunDza site on Mxit. Knowing that many learners have limited access to paper books, but still want to read, FunDza have promised to upload a book a week. A new title starts every Friday at midnight with a new chapter available from midnight each night.

If the cellphones are the dominant literacy practice for young learners then we should use this modality to provide learners with opportunities to read books. For more information on schools becoming beneficiaries and receiving copies of *Harmony High*, or how to find mobi books, contact Dorothy Dyer at dorothy@fundza.co.za or Eileen Scheckle.

RASA Eastern Cape AGM

The Eastern Cape branch of RASA (Reading Association of South Africa) held its second open day and AGM in March. The programme included Rod Townsend (Applied Languages, NMMU), *Writing practices in grades 11 & 12: impact on academic writing in Higher education*; Berit Lundgren (Educational Researcher, Umea University, Sweden) *Reading development in Grade 8 through reading*; and Dorothy Dyer, (Author & Publisher of *Harmony High* & *FunDza* books) *Getting South African teens reading for pleasure*.

Exciting news was the move to an online journal for reading and writing as well as the National RASA Conference in Durban (for 12-14 October).

The RASA executive was confirmed with NMMU being well represented by Eileen Scheckle as chairperson, Margie Childs as secretary and Marcelle Harran as treasurer.

If you are concerned about literacy matters in general or want to share a literacy initiative, please contact Margie for membership forms.



George B Ed FET students supported an international anti-bullying campaign, even creating their own t-shirts to represent *STOP!* the violence in our schools. We are proud of this initiative!

From left to right: Dwain Samuels, Sian Gibbs, Constance Weber, Roelof Steyl and Juney du Preez, with Linden April in front

Farewell Vernon

CERTI Project Manager, Mr Vernon Naidoo, will be leaving the faculty at the end of this month to pursue new career ventures.

Vernon has been an integral part of the CERTI (Centre for Educational Research, Technology and Innovation) team for almost five years and instrumental in running its numerous funded projects.

These projects are all externally funded by corporate and other donors and each entail an intricate balance of liaison, logistics and administrative project management. All of which Vernon handled with aplomb; calm and always ready with a warm smile.



Vernon (centre) pictured with Prof Paul Webb (Director: CERTI) and Prof Denise Zinn (Dean, Faculty of Education)

Vernon, we will miss that smile and your equanimity the most!

All the best with your new ventures at VW Uitenhage – we know you will shine.

Generous book donations



Our Resource Centre recently received two boxes of teacher resource books from *Via Afrika Publishers*. Pictured with several Education students in the Resource Centre is our RC Administrator, Ms Angela Thomas (far left). Thank You, *Via Africa*, these will add value to the resources available for our student teachers.

briefs

2012 Research Seminar Series

Ms Priscilla Gitonga presented at the faculty research seminar series this month on *"It is possible through colour and rhyme" The value of Participatory Visual Research approaches and hip hop music in social and human science research.*

The presentation was based on her recently submitted doctoral study that set out to understand how hip hop contributes to the construction of personal identities of female late adolescents. Her research embraced participatory visual methodologies and hip hop music to elicit narratives from young women who strongly identify with hip hop music.

Nal'ibali ("here's the story") Workshops

Early literacy experts from PRAESA at UCT spent 2 days at NMMU conducting workshops on storytelling and reading clubs for different age groups. Attendees came from Fort Hare and from NGOs and schools in PE. Eileen Scheckle, Nokhanyo Mayaba and Laetitia Greyling attended from the faculty.

If you are interested in setting up reading clubs in any form, or just want to see the possibilities of getting children excited about reading, join us for the next Nal'ibali training day on Saturday, 12 May 2012. Contact Eileen for more details.

CAPS Training for 4th years

Foundation Phase final year students received CAPS training earlier this month, arranged by Dr Didi Geduld (Head of Programme), Ms Robin Notshulwana and Ms Basheera Brooks.



Nokhanyo Jack (left) and Sindiswa Dwala pictured at the CAPS training session

Working World Extravaganza!

This annual marketing event was held at the Feathermarket Hall in early March and afforded learners the opportunity to interact with the various options available to them post matric



Talking about teaching. B Ed FP student, Donna George (second left), chats with learners at the Education stand



The Faculty stall was organised and decorated by Mary-Anne (left), Basheera (centre) and Delene (right)

I Am

I am an effective and ever smiling teacher,
I wonder why am I in this field of sharing and spreading knowledge...

But, I hear God's voice saying "You're on the right path my boy."

I see in them teachers, presidents, engineers, doctors, accountants, nurses and more

I want *uMzantsi Afrika uthi, "Ewe, ngumsebenzi weetitshala zanamhlanje lo"*¹

I am a passionate and enthusiastic teacher,

I pretend that things are alright,

But if truth be told, I sometimes struggle with their brilliant minds.

I feel so honoured because I believe one day they will realise their potentials,

I touch their hearts and but feel myself reaching deep into their souls,

Into the soul of *Mzantsi Afrika* through them,

I worry because I can see that not all of them will succeed,

I cry *kuba umzi wesizwe esiMnyama uyatshabalala ngenxa yoswela ulwazi?*².

I am that positive difference that is needed in South Africa's education,

I understand I might not be everyone's favourite,

But, I say this is my calling, my passion and where my heart is.

I dream about the school, the space I will work in every day,

I hope I will never stop dreaming even when I've achieved my dreams,

For when they are on their true life's pathways,

I will truly be the effective and ever smiling teacher I was destined to be.

BY Lukanyo Stemele (B Ed IP 2nd year)

Presented as class exercise on his identity as a teacher in PGED201

¹ I want South Africa to say, "Yes, this is the wonderful work today teachers have done"

² I cry because the African tribe is perishing because of lack of knowledge

NMMU-Edu-Geographic... Books Preserve Geography, Boots make Geography

A learning experience for PGCE students. Lecturer, Ms Joy Turyagyenda, recently took a group of PGCE geography students out on a class excursion to various locations around our metro. Two of the more interesting sites were the Port of Port Elizabeth and Port of Ngqura. Ngqura's strategic position as the deepest port in Africa, strategically situated mid-way between Europe and the Far East, makes it economically advantageous as a "transhippers" container terminal, handling largest and heaviest container ships of international standards. "The future plans for the harbours are very exciting, giving us an appreciation of the developments of our country," remarked Joy. Not only did the students gain skills in how to organise an educational tour, they also learnt about the services rendered by our two harbours.

