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THE MIGHTY PEN

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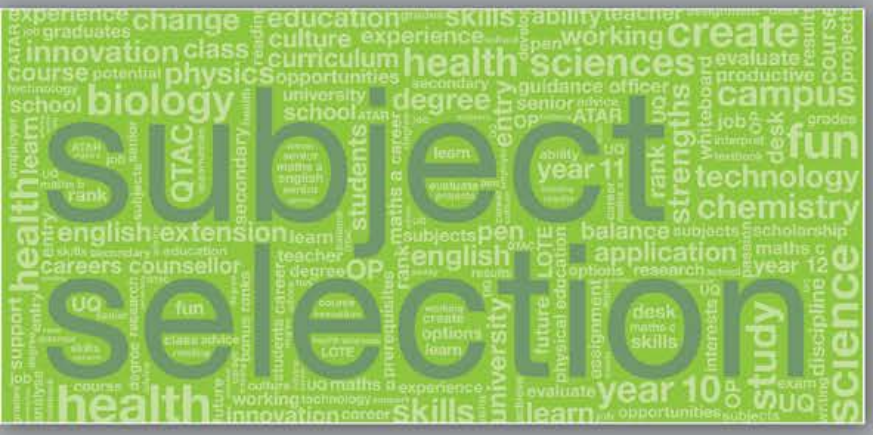

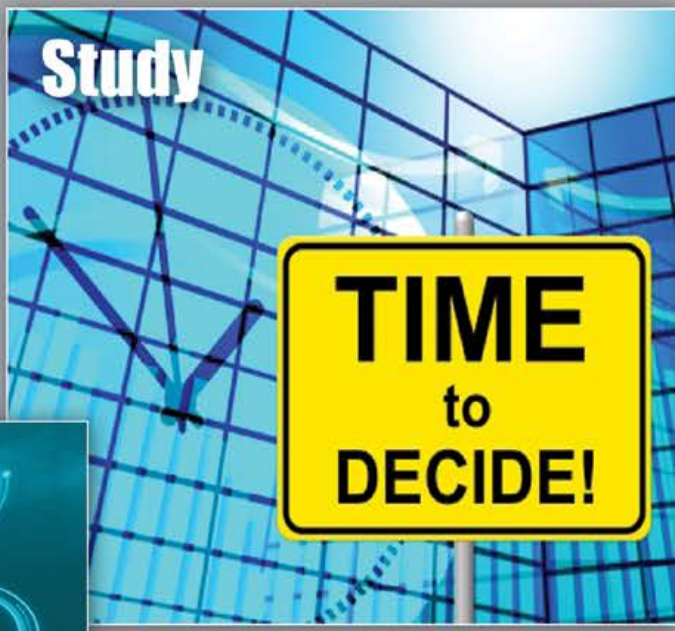

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Editor's column

Mother-tongue language education in our schools

Basic Education minister Angie Motshekga says incorporating mother-tongue language education in the country's schools is her department's priority.

According to an article published on *BusinessTech.co.za,* the Minister said her department values mother tongue education and thus encourages learners to learn through their Home Languages, wherever it is feasible and practicable.

This position is in alignment with the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Section 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa lists the official languages as IsiZulu, IsiXhosa, IsiNdebele, Siswati, Sesotho, Setswana, Sepedi, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, English and Afrikaans.

All these languages can be used as languages of learning and teaching or as subjects. Section 29(2) of the Bill of Rights provides that everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably feasible.

In its attempts to elevate the status of the previously marginalised languages, the Department of Basic Education developed the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) Grades 1 to 12, which makes provision for equal use of all 11 official languages and South African Sign Language in the schooling system.

The National Curriculum Statement Grades 1 to 12 encourages learners to learn through their home languages, particularly, though not limited, in the foundation phase.

The National Development Plan (NDP) recommends that learners' home language be used as a language of instruction for longer periods and English be introduced much earlier in the foundation phase.

She noted that the plan emphasises the need to develop African languages or mother tongues as integral to education, science and technology, to develop and preserve these languages.

However, the hegemony of English as a preferred medium of instruction and communication seems to prevail, which together with Afrikaans are still the dominant languages of learning and teaching in most South African schools.

The minister has previously acknowledged that there are issues with moving to a purely mother-tongue-based system, noting that it was likely impossible to have a pure class in Sotho or Xhosa in Gauteng the way similar classes have been held in the Eastern Cape.

Often teachers use different languages to help children learn and get their point across. However, when it comes to assessments – which are typically done in English – they are once again forced to grapple with a language they did not understand while learning.

The next step is to assess them in the language they are taught – so that we are able to assess performance and not language proficiency.

Government would also have to use technology and other systems to effectively translate complicated scientific and mathematical concepts into languages that do not necessarily have the same terminology.

The Eastern Cape was the first to initiate its Mother Tongue Based Bilingual Education pilot, wherein 2 015 schools are using IsiXhosa and Sesotho as the language of instruction up to Grade 9.

Yours in vernacular education

Janos Bozsik
Editor

Why technology can be SA education's great equaliser

By Stefan Botha, CEO of the Optimi Group

Freedom Day is typically a time when we reflect on all of the advances that we've made as a society since the advent of democracy.

One area of reflection may revolve around how far we've come in terms of education, especially as this is a basic human right enshrined in our constitution.

Since 1994, government has been working hard to ensure that this is the case, with the biggest share of the country's National Budget being spent on education every year.

Many of these efforts have paid off. Literacy rates have increased from 82.4% to 95% in 2019, according to data from UNESCO. In 1994, 58% of public-school learners in Grade 12 passed matric, while in 2021 that figure was 76.4%.

But while we have made progress, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has shone a light on where we can still improve – especially when it comes to digital education.

When the hard lockdown commenced on 26 March 2020, schools across the country temporarily closed, severely interrupting the learning of South Africa's 13 million school-going learners.

Amid a lack of resources, only 11.7% of schools in our country were able to offer remote learning options, according to a report from Stats SA.

Fast-forward to 2022, and learning seems to be returning to normal, with most schools going back to full-time schedules at the start of this year.

However, the easing of lockdown restrictions and return to normality doesn't mean we are out of the woods just yet. It is common knowledge that our country's education system is struggling, with the large inequality gap further exacerbated by the pandemic. Many learners will continue to struggle with their schoolwork and will likely never catch up to their peers in the better resourced schools.

It is here where I think technology can be deployed to help improve learning outcomes in our schools. Changes in the way we interact with information means that the classroom is just one place where our children will be educated in the 21st Century. If there's anything that we've learnt during the last two years, it's that technology, digital learning, and the access to information all have a key role to play in reducing inequalities in our education system. Therefore, we need to seek ways to embrace it more.

Closing the digital gap

In 2020, only 7% of households with individuals aged 5 to 24 had internet access at their homes, according to Stats SA. Moreover, approximately 67.8% of households in South Africa didn't have access to laptop or desktop computers when the pandemic hit.

When it comes to mobile internet access, the picture is different with up to 66% of households having access to this type of internet. However, mobile broadband has traditionally been expensive in South Africa and therefore limited.

What is encouraging is that government is currently on a drive to auction off spectrum for mobile broadband. Over time, this will hopefully drive down pricing and boost access to internet connectivity, presenting greater opportunities for access to information, including online learning.

It's clear that we also need to get more devices into the hands of families out there so that learning from anywhere can take place, and this could present opportunities for greater public-private partnerships.

We have experienced the benefits of online learning during the pandemic. It has opened up new possibilities in education, and – with the growth of connectivity and improved access to devices – online learning can become a great equaliser in our education system.

In the 21st Century, this aspect of our lives will only become more important, and there's no doubt that we as a country can go a long way by focusing more of our energies on improving digital learning.

In the end, this will benefit our society, help reduce inequalities and grow our economy. This is something that we all want as we reflect on Freedom Day this year.

About the author

Stefan Botha is the CEO of the Optimi Group. Optimi provides accessible learning solutions to over 200 000 learners every year through our four divisions: Home, Classroom, College, and Workplace.

If education is the gateway to freedom, digital literacy is the key

By Jackie Carroll and Phemelo Segoe

Quality education and digital learning aren't just closely connected. They're rapidly becoming one and the same thing. Without a thorough understanding of digital platforms, and the ability to engage with them easily and intuitively, learners – both young and adult – will continue to fall short of their full potential.

As South Africa celebrated Freedom Day on 27 April, the right to education is as important as it's ever been. It remains, in essence, one of the most critical enablers of our freedom. We all need quality education to secure employment, and to create lives and livelihoods that dismantle cycles of poverty and promote prosperity.

If education is the gateway to freedom, digital literacy is the key.

Phemelo Segoe

The lessons of Covid-19

The lockdowns experienced throughout the pandemic not only proved the necessity for digital learning, but also its efficacy. Sceptics of online learning found that it worked. There were challenges, yes, but gradually many academic institutions were able to build strong and rigorous curriculums that could be delivered online, and learners were able to succeed.

Promaths Online, a Kutlwanong, Investec and Tuta-Me programme that provides additional maths and science tuition to Grade 10 to 12 learners, is one such example. On an annual basis Promaths is responsible for approximately 5 – 7% of the country's maths and science distinctions. In the past, however, this success has largely been the result of in-person learning. Whether it could remain as successful online was unknown when Covid first hit. Would learners be able to maintain their grades?

The answer, 2020's results proved, was yes. Even when Covid's restrictions on learning were at their most severe, Promaths was responsible for one learner achieving 100% for maths, and another 100% for science. The programme also contributed 5% to the country's maths distinctions and 6% to its science distinctions, a small shift on its annual average.

Digital learning became an imperative during the pandemic. Fortunately, this is unlikely to shift as we increasingly emerge into a post-pandemic world.

Jackie Carroll

Why bridging the digital divide matters

Covid accelerated an existing trend, and as digital learning further entrenches itself in our academic culture, its benefits are becoming clear.

Perhaps most importantly, the rise in digital learning is shining a spotlight on the need for essential computer skills. Today, these skills are no longer optional. Day-to-day activities from healthcare to banking to starting and running businesses simply aren't possible without them. The digital divide has to be bridged.

Computer skills help young learners to engage with new technologies intuitively. Among adult learners, they improve access to quality education and employment. People who might never have had access to brick and mortar institutions now have the ability to improve their knowledge. The success of Media Works' Essential Computer Skills course, which teaches adult learners the skills they need to advance their education and careers, is testament to this.

The result is a levelling of the playing field. And an opening of our collective right to educational freedom.

Looking at a future defined by freedom

Quality education provides us with the knowledge and skills we need to take ownership of our lives, to think critically and to craft our own paths. It facilitates choice, and enables better living and working opportunities, transformation and growth.

Bridging the digital divide and putting digital learning first is already a priority – in theory. It's enshrined in almost every educational policy South Africa has produced in recent years. Now, it needs to be executed. At this point, 28 years into our freedom, it's long overdue that we, as government, the private sector and civil society, work together to deliver on the promises made to every South African.

We have the right to education, to quality education, and to digital education.

About the authors

Jackie Carroll is the co-founder of Media Works, South Africa's leading provider of adult education and training. Phemelo Segoe is the Client Manager of Tuta-Me.

Freedom to learn:

Why distance learning is changing the game

By Eloise Nolte, education expert and MD of a national Adult Training provider

South Africa celebrated 28 years of democracy on Freedom Day, 27 April.

Over the last few decades, our country has come a long way. Literacy rates have increased from 82.4% to 95%, according to data from UNESCO. In 1994, 58% of public-school learners in Grade 12 passed matric, while in 2021 that figure was 76.4%.

At the same time, we have huge challenges, including an unemployment rate that has accelerated to 35% amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

To address this, we need to do everything we can to upskill our citizens, using every means possible.

Fortunately, education and technology have come a long way in the last 28 years – and distance learning provides a meaningful way to help South Africans, of any age, get ahead with accredited qualifications and short courses. Here are 5 reasons why:

Learning from anywhere, at anytime

There are many education providers out there these days that work on a distance learning model where you can study anything from accounting to IT, software development, supply chain management and much more without ever needing to attend face-to-face classes.

Study material can be delivered straight to your door, and you can start studying immediately, at any point in the year.

With petrol prices increasing, this saves you money and travel time. If you have a full-time job, you don't have to plan your after-work time around classes or rushing to attend classes in the evenings.

Less restrictive entry requirements

Distance learning institutions typically have courses that suit many different people with different educational backgrounds.

There are courses that range from provider to accredited programmes, which offer entry level courses that only require a Grade 10 or 11.

If you're older than 21 and you'd like to complete your matric, you can do this by studying towards Adult Matric, or the Amended Senior Certificate (ASC). This qualification can help with getting into tertiary education as well, as long as you meet the requisite requirements.

More manageable

Many distance learning institutions allow you to study only a few subjects at a time. Apart from the financial benefit, colleges do this so that students don't feel overwhelmed by the workload.

Even if you have enrolled for a few subjects, the likes of College SA sends your course material in batches. This is done so that you can complete a module and its assignments before moving on to the next module. This further allows you the opportunity to focus on one thing at a time – making it easier to fully understand

your course material and attend to your other responsibilities.

Online study groups and forums

Many distance learning institutions will also have online study groups and discussion forums, where you can interact with fellow students and tutors, discuss course material, and ask for help.

Affordable payment options

By eliminating the extra costs that go along with studying, you only have to pay the tuition fees with a distance learning provider. You can pay your studies off in easy to manage monthly instalments, or study and pay for one subject at a time.

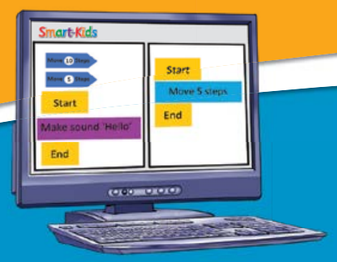
These costs can include your study material which means you don't have to spend money on buying textbooks. In addition, in today's world there are also many study financing providers who can help learners with funding their studies.

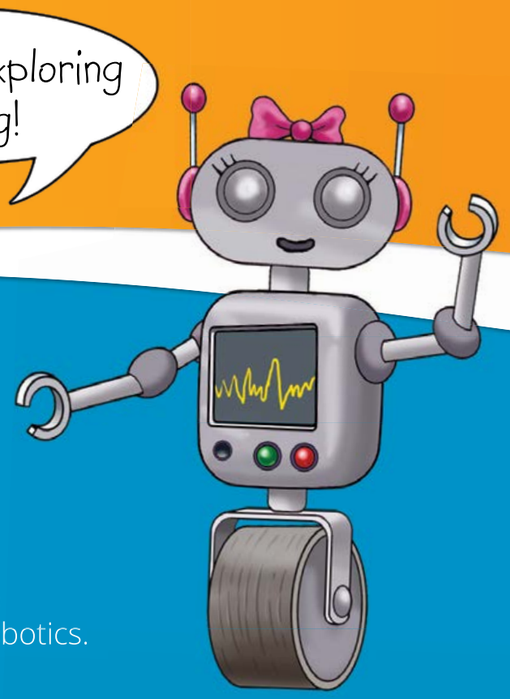
When taking all these benefits into consideration, it's clear that, more than ever, South Africans have the freedom to structure their own study time, schedule and pace of learning.

And with Freedom Day remembered, we have an opportunity to reflect on this and make sure that we seek ways to take greater advantage of all the education tools at our disposal.

Smart-Kids

Make the smart choice for a brilliant future!

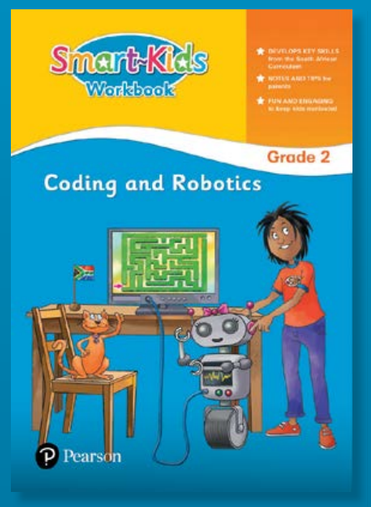




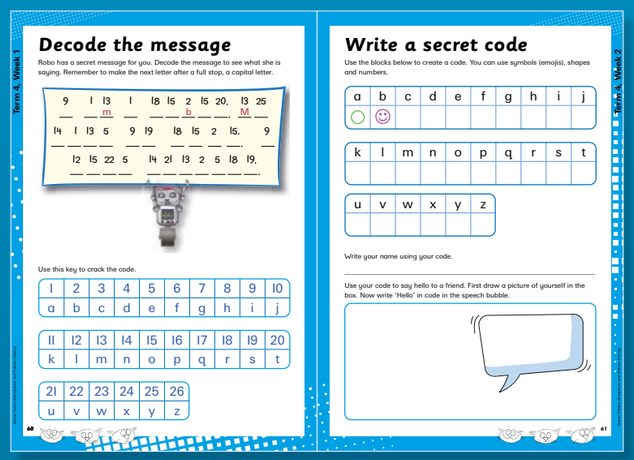
Meet Robo!

Robo is the new Smart-Kids character who will help teach children the basic principles of coding and robotics.

Aligned to the draft coding and robotics curriculum released by the Department of Basic Education, the Smart-Kids Coding & Robotics Workbook for Grade 2 consists of write-in worksheets that can be used by teachers to introduce the subject to young learners, or by parents who want their child to learn and practise the skills required for coding and robotics.



One activity per page with clear instructions



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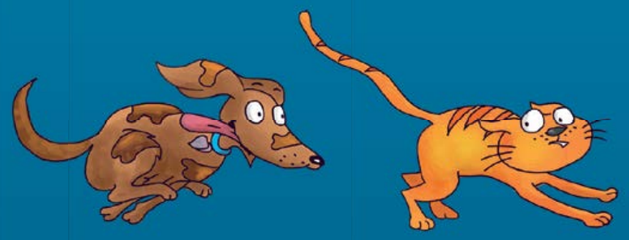
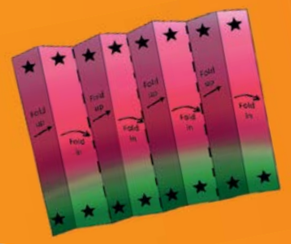
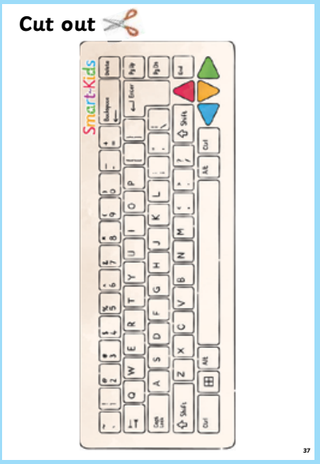


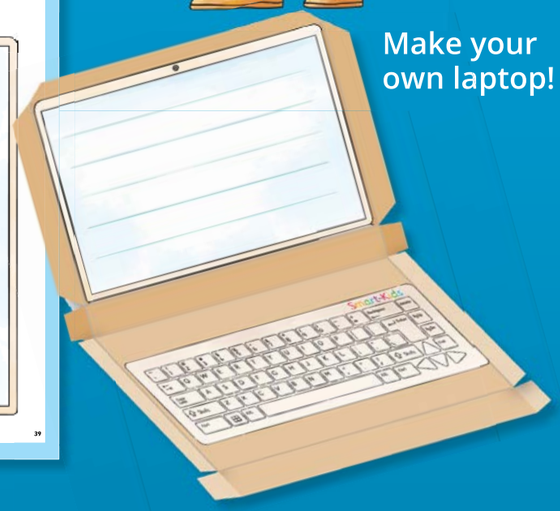


Cutout keyboard

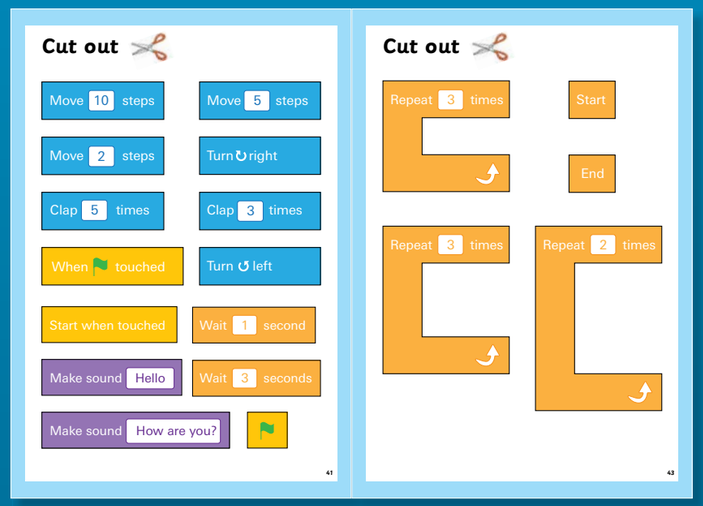


Cutout screen

Make your own laptop!



Cutout coding blocks for additional practice



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Key Findings

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Introduction

There are 1.3 million children in South Africa aged 4-5 years. Approximately 72% (±930,000) attend some kind of Early Learning Programme (ELP).

The Thrive by Five Index 2021 is the first (baseline) in a series of surveys that will monitor trends over time in the proportion of 4-5 year old children attending ELPs who are On Track for their age in key areas of development. This is the largest survey of preschool child outcomes ever undertaken in South Africa.

The Index was initiated by First National Bank and Innovation Edge, in collaboration with the Department of Basic Education (DBE), and supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and ECD Measure.

The Index provides population-level data on how well preschool children are doing in three key developmental domains: Early Learning, Physical Growth and Social-Emotional Functioning. These measures were selected because a child's performance in these domains at the point of entry into school is predictive of performance in the Foundation Phase of schooling, and beyond.

Data collection

Data for the Index was collected between September and November 2021 and included 5,139 children aged 50 to 59 months (48% boys and 52% girls) drawn from 1,247 Early Learning Programmes across the country.

Data on Early Learning was collected using the Early Learning Outcomes Measure (ELOM 4&5), a locally developed and standardised instrument that is aligned with the South African Early Learning Curriculum. Each child was assessed in their home language, by a trained and accredited ELOM assessor. Data was collected on five important learning domains: (i) Gross Motor Development, (ii) Fine Motor Coordination and Visual Motor Integration, (iii) Early Numeracy and Mathematics, (iv) Early Literacy and Language, and (v) Cognition and Executive Functioning.

For Physical Growth, the Index looks at one key measure - the child's height for age. This is important because it tells us whether the child is at risk of stunting. Growth stunting is usually associated with chronic malnutrition and is known to compromise neurological and cognitive development with significant loss of an individual's potential.

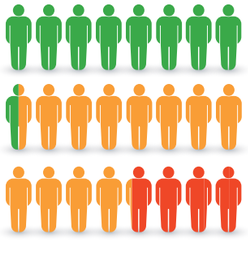
Social Relations with Peers and Adults and Emotional Readiness for School were assessed using the ELOM Social-Emotional rating scales, completed by the child's teacher.

The Index sample is nationally representative of children enrolled in ELPs, and data may be disaggregated to show the performance of children in different provinces, different household income groups (using school quintiles as a proxy for income) and for boys and girls.

This document summarises key national findings for each of the three important domains assessed. It also includes one combined Composite Indicator on the proportion of children who are thriving i.e. children who are on track for both physical and cognitive development by age 4-5 years.

Key findings (national)

1. Only 35% of children enrolled in ELPs in South Africa thrive by five



35% — Thrive by Five
These children are On Track in both growth and early learning

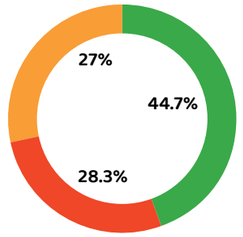
49% — Face Barriers to Thriving
These children are On Track for only one of either growth or early learning and are deemed to be at risk

16% — Face Significant Barriers to Thriving
These children are Not On Track for both growth and early learning domains and are deemed to be at high risk

Half of all 4-5 year olds attending ELPs face barriers to thriving. These children will start school struggling, either because of physical stunting or because they lack the basic learning foundations. Of great concern is the fact that a further 16% of children will start Grade R at a *significant* disadvantage. These children are both physically stunted and *Falling Behind* in their cognitive development. For these children, considerable efforts will need to be made to support them as they transition into school.

2. Less than half of children attending ELPs are On Track for early learning

Less than half of children enrolled in ELPs in South Africa are able to do the learning tasks expected of children their age. A staggering 28% of children are *Falling Far Behind* the expected standard. This means that more than one in four children starting Grade R will need intensive educational intervention in order to be able to cope in the Foundation Phase of school.



44.7% — On Track for early learning
These children meet the learning standard and are able to do the tasks expected of children their age

27% — Falling behind in early learning
These children are Falling Behind the standard and will need support in order to catch up with other children of their age

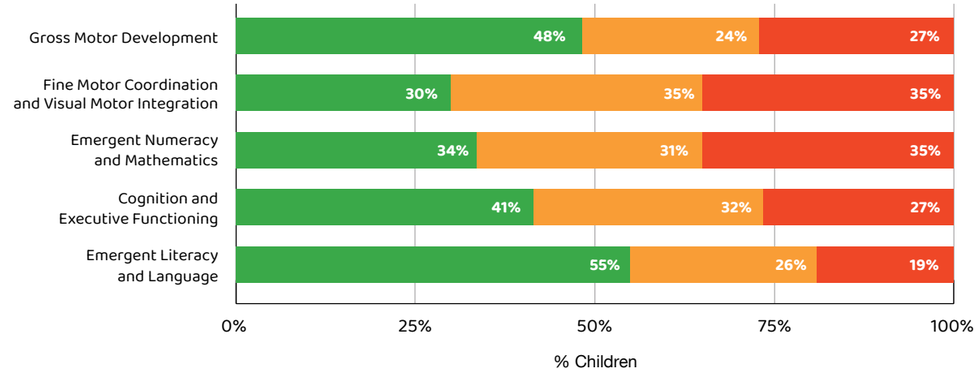
28.3% — Falling Far Behind in early learning
These children are Falling Far Behind the standard, need intensive intervention and are at risk of not catching up with their peers.

3. Poor performance in key learning domains is cause for concern

The figure below shows the percentage of children *On Track, Falling Behind* and *Falling Far Behind* for each of the five learning domains that were assessed. For all domains, except Gross Motor Development, boys performed on average worse than girls.

Very poor performance in three domains, particularly amongst the poorest children, is of great concern given how important these skills are for later school achievement.

- *Fine Motor Coordination and Visual Motor Integration (FMC-VMI)* are skills that are really important to have when learning to read and write - Only 3 out of 10 children overall are *On Track* in this area of development. For the poorest children, the situation is even worse, and boys especially performed very poorly in this domain.
- *Early Numeracy and Mathematics skills* are strongly predictive of later school success - Only 3 out of 10 children overall can do the basic numeracy tasks expected of a child their age.
- *Cognitive and Executive Functioning (CEF)* are the skills that a child needs to pay attention, plan, think creatively, problem solve, and use self-control. Only 4 out of 10 children are *On Track* in this important area of development.



4. One in four children attending ELPs show signs of long-term malnutrition

One in four children attending ELPs are stunted, with 5.3% of children severely stunted. Rates of stunting in the Index were highest amongst the poorest children. Stunting is a (largely preventable) condition that arises from chronic malnutrition in pregnancy and the early years of life and impairs the physical and brain development of young children.

The Index found that children who were stunted performed worse on the early learning assessments than their non-stunted counterparts. They start out with lower scores at age 50 months, and these differences persist as children get older. The negative impact of stunting on the human capital of the country cannot be over-emphasised.

5. Social-Emotional functioning has a large effect on learning outcomes

The Index assessed children's levels of age- appropriate independence, social relations with peers and adults, and emotional readiness for school. For social relations with peers and adults, 27.5% of children who were assessed did not meet the standard. This number increases to 33.4% when it comes to emotional readiness for school. For both measures, boys were less likely to meet the standard than girls.

Children with better social and emotional functioning tend to transition more successfully into the school environment, and these skills influence the child's ability to play and work with their peers in a group setting, to ask for information or help from a teacher, to complete tasks independently, and to handle change. This was evidenced in the Index, where children who met the standard for social-emotional functioning performed better in terms of learning outcomes overall.

6. Children in poorer households have a far greater chance of falling behind

The Index found that a child's chances of starting school *On Track* is profoundly influenced by the income level of the household they are born into. Young children from more affluent backgrounds are starting school with a distinct advantage over their poorer peers. This advantage will increase as they get older because children who start school already falling behind, are likely to fall further and further behind over time.

The combination of risk factors faced by many young children in South Africa has serious implications for their health and development. By way of example, by the age of 4 years, a child in the lowest income group who is severely stunted is developmentally roughly *one whole year* behind a child of normal growth in the wealthiest income group, when it comes to early learning.

7. Considerable variation in performance within income groups highlights potential

The Index clearly illustrates how socio-economic status impacts child outcomes. However, data collected for the Thrive by Five Index also highlight considerable variation in performance between individuals *within the same income group*. In other words, poor outcomes for poor children are by no means inevitable. There are many poor children who have significantly better outcomes than their peers, despite their disadvantaged circumstances. By investigating variation in performance *within* income groups, we can gain insights into the kinds of interventions needed to close the gap *between* groups, and to shift the performance bell-curve overall.

Conclusion

For most poor children in South Africa, the experiences that they currently have in their first five years of life place them at a significant disadvantage at the point of entry into school, with long term implications for their education, employment and income prospects. Urgent action is needed to eliminate the significant barriers to thriving that South Africa's children face in their earliest years.

More detailed information on the Index methodology and findings is available in the accompanying Thrive by Five Report and Technical documents on the Thrive by Five website: www.thrivebyfive.co.za. The website also contains action briefs which provide practical guidance on steps to be taken by various stakeholders to address the challenges identified through the Index.

Ultimately, we must hold ourselves and each other accountable for closing the opportunity gap between young children in the richest and poorest households, and for increasing the proportion of all young children in South Africa who *Thrive by Five.*

By repeating the Index data collection exercise every three years, we will be able to track whether our collective efforts are paying off.

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www.thrivebyfive.co.za info@thrivebyfive.co.za

LEARNERS WHO BENEFITED FROM THE ALATEEN PROGRAMME

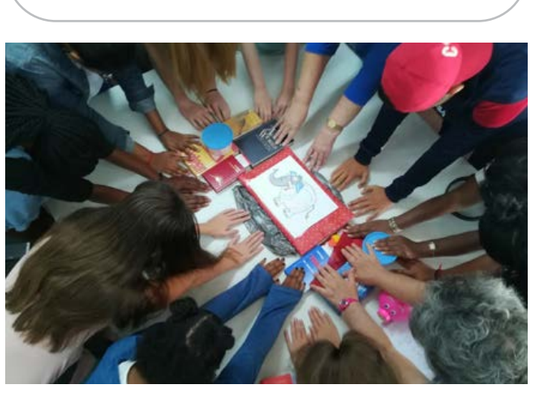
Below are some comments from school children in the Alateen programme

(Names are changed to protect members' anonymity)

My daughter has changed so much in the past year since attending Alateen. There's a new confidence, a renewed happiness, and more openness. She has the courage to share in AA meetings, and to engage with people outside of them. She's growing into an amazing person, and I couldn't be prouder of her. ***"Proud Mother".***

It's amazing how much honesty there can be in Alateen when alcohol is full of lies. ***"Maria" age 11.***

Alateen has helped me stop worrying about what might happen at home if my parents are drinking and fighting. ***"Ray" age 12.***



Alateen has helped me deal with the stress at home and my school marks have improved. I didn't want to go to meetings at first, but now I look forward to the weekend meeting and seeing my friends there. ***"Rebecca", age 15.***

Before Alateen I found it very difficult to talk to other people at school. Now I feel freer, am much more confident, and understand it's not only my family that has this problem. ***"Mark" age 14.***

Alateen has relieved me of the stress in my life. I have more focus on my schoolwork and I have stopped overthinking everything. I have serenity in my life for the first time as I have stopped worrying about my Dad's drinking and am more confident. ***"Jabulani", age 11.***

I used to bottle up my feelings about everything, until my anger would explode. At Alateen I learned a better, calmer way to share discuss any problems with my group. ***"Jay" age 16.***

I have been told by my friends & family I am much more relaxed, calmer and more mature. I have been going to Alateen for nearly three years and I don't worry so much about my Mom and am not so negative. ***"Lucy" now age 13.***

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Grade 10 subject choices:

what to consider

The transition from Grade 9 to Grade 10 marks an important and eventful time in a student's educational trajectory. One of the critical aspects of this transition is characterised by the selection of subject streams – coming up for all Grade 9's in the next few weeks – that essentially determine future study and career options, as well as a student's performance in Matric.

But unlike previous years, factors that influence this decision have evolved post-pandemic, says education expert Philip Hlatshwayo, Head of Programme at The Independent Institute of Education.

Think like a project manager

"Self-management is the one attribute or skill that has always been critical in a student's academic journey. However, the need for this attribute intensified during the Covid-19 pandemic, sparked by the sudden need for increased independence in academic work. The skills you gained during that time can now be harnessed when choosing subjects," Hlatshwayo says.

Similar to a company project, subject choice selection needs to be treated as a project, he notes.

"A project generally requires a project management plan to be drawn up in order to ensure the success of the project. The critical aspects considered in any project are skills required, the knowledge required and strategies/techniques.

"Subjects are no different and work in a similar model. That is, for each subject, a student needs to ask themself **what skills am I required to have for this subject?** The skills required for studying Physical Sciences will be different from the skills required for studying History. Self-introspection will therefore help you understand the skills you possess and can potentially develop."

What prior knowledge is critical for this subject?

"There have been instances where students choose a subject such as Mathematics for which they lack basic knowledge and understanding that were supposed to be developed in the earlier phases. This leads to frustrations because of the requirements cast on the students once they get to Grade 10.

"A critical reflection of the past grades and how you have handled the demands of a subject similar to the one you are choosing will save you a lot of time and stressful moments. But it should also be remembered that there is still time to

develop competency in a core subject – with focus and hard work – if you are determined."

What studying strategies and techniques are necessary for this subject and do these strategies complement my learning capabilities?

Hlatshwayo says students must consider the strategies and techniques needed to be successful in studying a particular subject.

"For one student, thinking about various algebraic strategies in a Mathematics subject may come easy, for another, reading large quantities of History material may be preferred. There are areas in which we can excel and unleash our full potential if we think carefully about it."

Answering the questions above will be the first step towards understanding your starting point in this project of choosing the right subjects to support your future dreams.

Academic support

Academic support involves various stakeholders such as your teacher, peers, family members, mentors and student support services at higher education institutions, who can help you in your journey.

"As much as your teacher may help you with critical subject-related issues, you may at times need your mentor to help you establish the value of pursuing certain things in your academic journey and seeing the big picture," says Hlatshwayo.

"Student advisors at higher education institutions can further help you match your prospective subject choices to fields of study and career prospects. They are also able to guide you in terms of how the world of work has changed, and which skills will be in high demand by the time you finish your qualification. Using that information, you can work your way back to see which subjects you have to select now."

High performance strategy

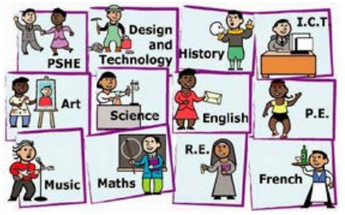
Armed with the information and approach as above, students should choose subjects that will both (1) leave them with a wide range of options and (2) allow them to perform to the best of their ability in their Matric exams.

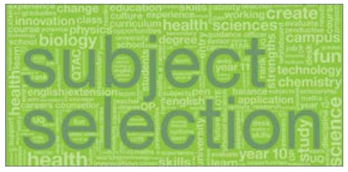
"Your subject choice should allow for gateway subjects such as core Maths and Science which will help you to keep your options open," says Hlatshwayo.

"If you struggle in these subjects, at least retain one of them and focus your efforts. Even if you are not yet confident, remember that you have three years to work hard and get a solid grounding – it's not too late to rise to the challenge."

Students should also consider what makes them happy, he says.

"Select one or two subjects which interest you and throw yourself into the pursuit of mastery. If you are able to find your feet and enjoyment in a particular area, that bodes well for your future career and self-actualisation."





And finally, students should choose some subjects that will help them boost their final results.

"Admission to higher education is performance-based, so having some subjects in the bag where you know you can shoot the lights out if you work hard, will very likely improve your chances of success when applying for further study after Matric."

List of Designated subjects

Teachers and grade 9's must be aware of the designated list of subjects. Everyone has to do 7 subjects, of which the compulsory ones are:

- a home language
- a first additional language
- Mathematics or Mathematics Literacy, and
- Life Orientation.

To study at a university or a university of technology, you must choose your other subjects off the designated list:

- Accounting
- Agricultural Sciences
- Business Studies
- Dramatic Arts
- Economics
- Engineering and Graphic Design
- Geography
- History
- Consumer Studies
- Information Technology
- Life Sciences
- Music
- Physical Sciences
- Religious Studies
- Visual Arts

Mathematics, Physical Science and Life Sciences

In terms of Mathematics vs. Mathematics Literacy: learners should always try to do Mathematics if they can. The tricky thing is that different institutions have different requirements and will sometimes differ in what they ask for. Some insist on Mathematics, like most Engineering Faculties, so if you are not sure of what you want, and you are able to do Mathematics, then choose Mathematics over Maths Literacy. Here, again, it is important for the learner to explore potential areas of interest and study, so as to make an informed decision about whether or not to take Mathematics or Mathematics Literacy.

There are subjects that are useful to have that will open doors to a number of options. We often see learners that have a study idea and then cannot apply for this because they do not have the correct subjects. The key subjects here are Mathematics, Physical Science and Life Sciences. These subjects are required for many options in Engineering, Science, Health Sciences and some business courses. However, if a learner is very weak at these subjects and hates them, they probably won't enjoy the higher education options and careers that those subjects lead to. One should exercise some wisdom here, aiming to find a balance between gateway subjects and a learner's interests. The danger is that one may overload a learner with the above subjects, and they do really badly thereby jeopardizing their chances of doing well academically, and bring their average down so much that they lessen their chance of studying at a tertiary institution.

Are you preparing your learners to live successfully in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)?

A lot is being said about the **Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)** and the need to be ready for it. While there are lots of frightening statistics and scary stories, there is not a great deal of understanding of what the Fourth Industrial Revolution is exactly, and what we need to do to be active participants in it. Education is meant to be the way to facilitate a positive future for our youth; but, what does that mean for you the Educator?

Via Afrika's online course, **Teaching for the Fourth Industrial Revolution**, has been written specifically for educators to help you prepare yourself, and your learners, for successful and effective lives as we continue deeper into the Fourth Industrial Revolution. As part of Via Afrika's Digital Education Academy, this course consists of **nine two-hour sessions** that you can do online in your own time.

The first session, Getting to the Fourth Industrial Revolution, provides a key understanding of what an industrial revolution is, and why we are talking so much about the Fourth Industrial Revolution right now. This session provides an insightful look into the key elements of the first three industrial revolutions to lay the foundations for a detailed look at what the 4IR is, how it has already had an impact on society and what this means for an educator. Finally, in this session, a very brief overview of the key technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution will give you insight into what the technological changes are for you as an individual, and you as an educator. This session is an excellent introduction to anyone who wants a firm grasp of the 4IR.

Each of the key 4IR technologies is covered in a session on its own. These technologies are:

These six sessions above develop the knowledge and skills needed to appreciate and evaluate the specific technology. You will learn more about its purpose, application and the opportunities it creates. You will also experience a basic introduction to using the technology within an educational context. Of course, as an Educator you will want to be able to apply these learnings in your classroom.

While each of the previous sessions gives insight into the application of the technology, the session GenReady for the 4IR will offer you various teaching and learning strategies, as well as personal and professional development concepts needed to bring 4IR into your classroom.

The final session in the course explores some of the other 4IR technologies, like 3D printing and cloud computing, for example, that have an impact on our lives in the 4IR.

You will receive a certificate issued by Via Afrika, as well as a digital badge (see examples below) for inclusion in your online profiles to show others just how you are developing your 4IR knowledge and skills.

Contact Maria de Witt by email: vatraining@viaafrika.com for more information.

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R1.94 billion philanthropic and SETA funding for 10 SA universities

Local and international philanthropists donated R1.55 billion to 10 South African universities in 2019 – and when income from Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) is added, total giving increased to more than R1.94 billion.

This funding represents a R30 million increase on the previous combined total of R1.91 billion received in 2018 and can be largely attributed to some universities investing in professional fundraising, alumni relations and support staff.

These findings are according to the latest Annual Survey of Philanthropy in Higher Education (ASPIHE), just released by Inyathelo: The South African Institute for Advancement.

More ASPIHE findings include:

- **Donor numbers:** The total number of donors grew from 10 856 in 2018 to 12 554 in 2019, an increase of 1 698 donors. This compares to 4 355 donors in 2013, when the first survey was conducted.
- **South African sources:** Local donors were responsible for over two-thirds of income. This is unchanged from the previous year, at 69%, but is 16% higher than in 2013.
- **International sources:** Foreign donors were responsible for nearly a third of income (31%) although they numbered only 10% of total donors.
- **Mean gift sizes:** Donation sizes were significantly higher among international donors, because the majority of them are organisations. The majority of South African givers are individual donors.
- **Growth in the size of grants and donations:** Growth by local trusts and foundations outstripped that of foreign trusts and foundations in 2019.
- **Fund distribution:** Nearly half (49%) of donations were intended for student funding, 17% for teaching and learning, 9% for community engagement, 3% for infrastructure and 7% other initiatives.
- **Traditional versus non-traditional universities:** Traditional universities (generally long-established and known for their research) comprised 70% of the sample. These attracted 96% of international philanthropic resources, or R1.48 billion. Non-traditional institutions attracted only 4% of total international resources.

"ASPIHE continues to provide a rigorous and in-depth overview of philanthropic support to universities in South Africa," says Nazeema Mohamed, Executive Director of Inyathelo. "This research reveals the commitment of global and South African philanthropy to the South African university sector, and also showcases the important role of Advancement offices in managing philanthropic support."

The 10 universities reported that they employed 174 full-time and part-time staff working in fundraising, development and alumni relations at end-December 2019.

"The numbers suggest that the more an institution spends on attracting philanthropic income, the higher the amount of such income," says Ms Mohamed.

SETA support

The report notes that SETA funding increases income for non-traditional universities, relative to traditional universities. While this boosts the total income, it obscures the fact that non-traditional universities are less favoured in philanthropy and giving, both domestically and internationally.

Nazeema Mohamed – Executive Director, Inyathelo

"We need to investigate the reasons for preferential support of the research universities, and whether there are specific concerns or risks associated with funding the non-traditional universities.

"The continuation of a skewed funding regime will continue to impact inequality in South Africa and limit the growth of the whole system. Universities of Technology and comprehensive universities are important contributors to skills development and research in South Africa, and we need to optimise their potential."

The research was undertaken on behalf of Inyathelo by Professor Beverley Thaver, Professor of Higher Education at the University of the Western Cape.

South Africa has 26 universities. The 10 that took part in this survey were the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT); University of Cape Town (UCT); Durban University of Technology (DUT); University of the Free State (UFS); University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN); University of Pretoria (UP); University of Stellenbosch (SU); Tshwane University of Technology (TUT); University of the Western Cape (UWC); and the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits).

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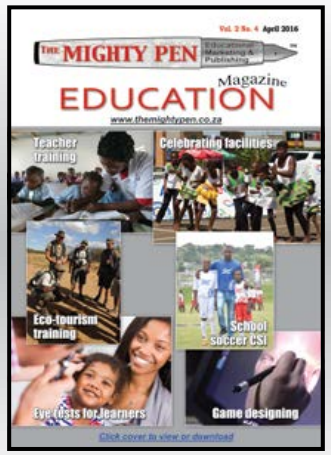

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