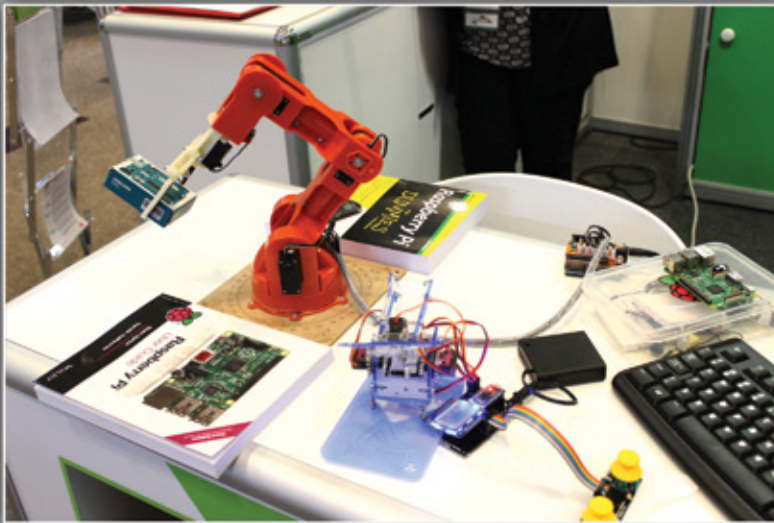


Vol. 5 No. 9 September 2019



Magazine EDUCATION

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**EduTech Africa 2019
Special Edition**

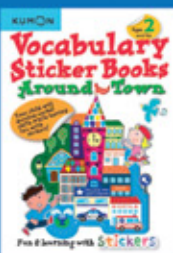
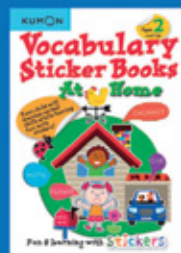


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Editor's column

Learners are not products: How we think about education

Now almost two decades into the 21st-century, we should have a look around. What you see is 21st-century teaching and learning.

So where are we? In a bit of a funk, mainly in how we see ourselves and what we 'do.' Learners, Parents, Teachers, Administrators, Vendors (of everything from curriculum to tech and supplies), School Governing Board members, other certified employees, classified employees, community leaders, local business leaders, healthcare providers, local libraries and bookstores – and on and on – all directly and indirectly shape the learning path each child takes.

Identifying other less visible contributors to education would be interesting, but for now it is enough to agree that countless forces shape what, how, and why a child learns. Each of those contributing forces is a living, breathing person, or has living, breathing people behind it. Each of these living, breathing people possesses a unique set of experiences and biases, insights and failings, and so when these people encounter one another, there is natural resistance, friction, or some other result of their differences.

Of course, that is not to say these products have to be negative. Difference has been a force behind social progress through history, and so after identifying these 'cogs' of the 'machine' that educates children, and then admitting each cog possesses a belief system, we're at least beginning to see a fundamental pattern of cause and effect – of affecters and effected (learners).

And this leads us to another flaw in our perspective: learners are not products, educators don't produce, and education isn't a possession, nor a product or service. It's all a matter of membership. And we have to guard against seeing it as one – a machine with cogs that produces learners like little widgets – that wheezes and chuffs and spits out educated things. Rather, we have to try to see the entire machine itself as society itself, where the learner has a role that is interdependent with the teacher, the teacher with curriculum vendors, and so on.

If that happens, we might be able to get our bearings again – find out which way is up, what we are, and where all of this is headed. Until this is the perspective we take, rather than the aforementioned 'widget-view' where students are 'products' of some non-descript and nebulous, failing system, change will only be serendipitous; keep changing things and monitoring results, and we'll eventually get something right. The thinking here is that the machine is broken because the widgets are broken, but it's our thinking that's broken.

Somehow we've settled into a damaging, selfish pattern that is characterised by a lack of self-awareness, a dramatised mythology of ed reform (No Child Left Behind, Assessment, Whole Child, Value Added, Schools-as-Businesses, Good Teacher/Bad Teacher) and, perhaps worst of all, a fundamental misunderstanding that public education 'produces' a product.

Yours in education

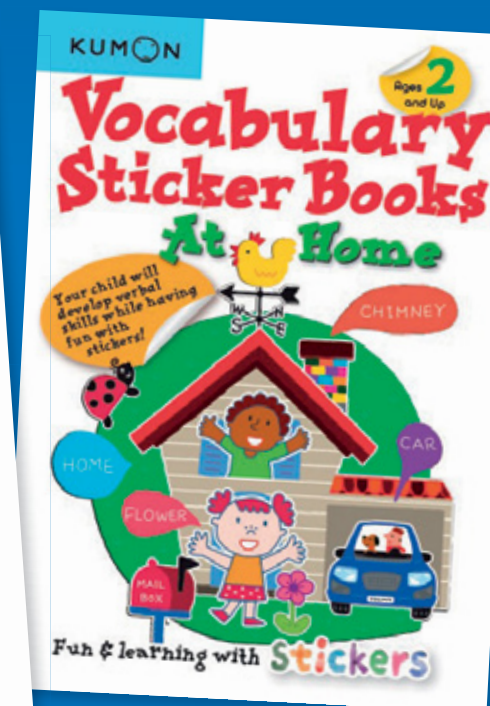
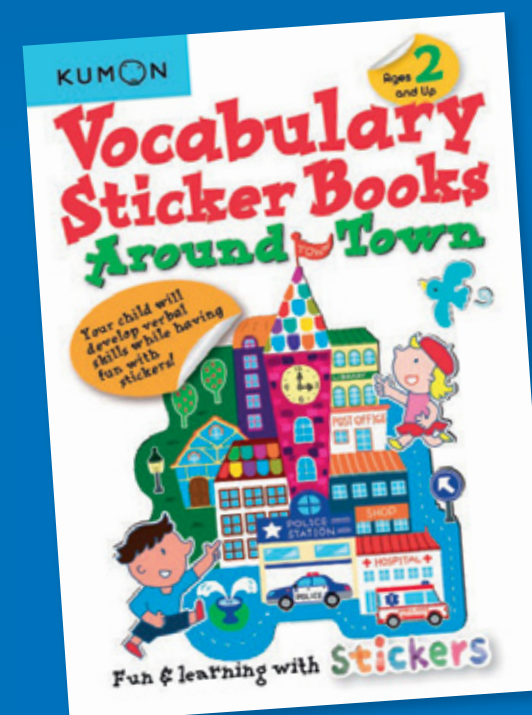
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Are you preparing your learners to live successfully in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)? Available January 2020.

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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Snapplify given exclusive distribution rights to Oxford University Press South Africa innovative digital study series, Zoom In



An exclusive partnership between leading local educational publisher, Oxford University Press South Africa, and global edtech company, Snapplify, has made the publisher's interactive content series, Zoom In, easily available to thousands of learners.

Covering the major South African subjects for Grades 10 to 12, in both English and Afrikaans, the Zoom In interactive products are designed to help learners tackle tough exam concepts, giving them the confidence to conquer all their exam questions. Interactive resources are integrated throughout, providing opportunities for self-assessment, as well as increased engagement, leading to deeper understanding of the subject matter.

For those signed up to Snapplify's e-learning platform, Engage, free samples are downloadable, with all additional content available to check out via the digital library. The full series is also available to purchase by individual learners (through Engage or Snapplify's online store), or in bulk via a school-wide licence.

'Snapplify is committed to improving access to quality digital educational content, so we're especially pleased to be distributing the Zoom In series, which really takes digital study to the next level. Using a range of interactive features, such as simulations, animations, games and activities with immediate feedback, videos, and more, Zoom In truly provides learners with the opportunity to get to grips with key concepts in the curriculum,' said Snapplify's Operations Director, Mark Seabrook.

The launch of the series comes at an exciting time, following President Cyril Ramaphosa's announcement that all public schools will adopt digital education over the next six years – a project in which Snapplify and other stakeholders have been actively involved. While Snapplify's suite of digital education solutions already aids independent study and provides parents and educators with the reassurance that learners are accessing curated, quality information, content like Zoom In provides additional features to facilitate learning and engagement.

To date, Snapplify has worked with over 1 000 schools across the African continent, providing award-winning e-learning solutions and access to a catalogue of over 280 000 titles from leading local and international publishers.

Snapplify has been internationally recognised by prestigious third parties – like the Reimagine Education Awards and the London Stock Exchange's 'Companies to Inspire Africa' reports (2017 and 2019) – for their unique and diverse innovations in education.

Email education@snapplify.com to chat about your specific needs and how we can work together.

Find out more

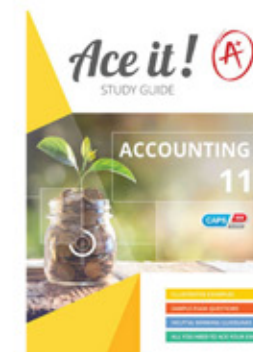
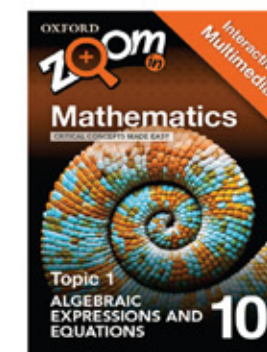
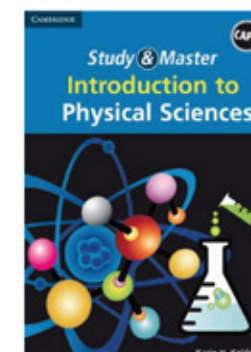
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About Snapplify

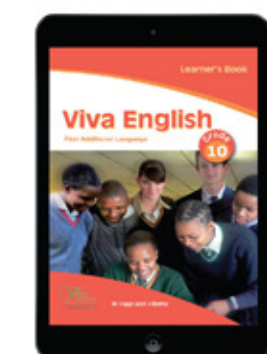
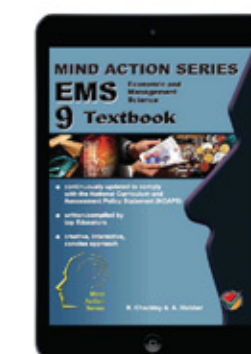
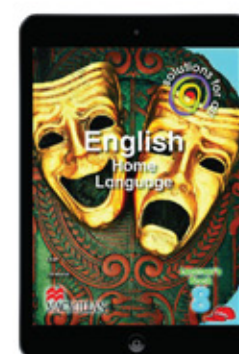
Snapplify is at the forefront of edtech solutions in Africa, and specialises in enabling digital learning for individuals and institutions by establishing a marketplace for digital education content, related educational services, and devices. As a pan-African edtech company, Snapplify strives for radical inclusion to level the playing field and equip individuals across emerging markets with the world-class tools they need to collaborate, innovate and thrive. Since its establishment in 2012, the company has grown and expanded into new markets in Africa and the United States, with offices across South Africa, as well as in Nairobi, Amsterdam and New Jersey. ▲



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Laying the multilingual groundwork:

why mother-tongue learning matters

By Dennis Lamberti, development director at Media Works

Imagine moving to the Democratic Republic of the Congo as a first language English speaker and trying to learn French. The experience might be overwhelming at first, the words difficult to pronounce and the grammatical rules impossible to remember. But gradually, you'll start to find your way. The alphabet, barring the odd accent, is the same, and even if you struggle to speak French, you'll likely quickly start to recognise written words and phrases.

Now imagine attempting to learn a foreign language without being literate in your own. Imagine having no foundation to fall back on: no grasp of basic spelling, tenses, or parts of speech and how they work. With no one to communicate to you verbally in a language you understand, you're absolutely in the dark: the sounds around you incomprehensible and the letters meaningless.

September marks International Literacy Month. Held for the first time in 1967, International Literacy Day represents "an opportunity for governments, civil society and stakeholders to highlight improvements in world literacy rates and reflect on the world's remaining literacy challenges," says the United Nations. This year's theme, "Literacy and Multilingualism", has particular relevance in South Africa, a country known for its progressive Constitution and, famously, its 11 official languages. But what does multilingualism mean in practice in this context? And what are the benefits and challenges of prioritising it, especially in the adult education and training (AET) space?

Where language and literacy intersect

Whether learners – both children and adults – should be educated in their mother tongue or English first is a contested topic, with champions and opponents on both ends of the spectrum. South Africa's educational policy recommends mother-tongue instruction until Grade 3, after which most schools switch to English. Generally, AET institutions adopt a similar approach.

The reasons for this have been well researched. If you don't have enough of a foundation in your own language, many local and international studies suggest, you're unlikely to grasp concepts in another. Mother-tongue instruction has also been shown to make people more confident learners, and better able to absorb another language – such as English – as they progress through their studies. Adopting a multilingual approach, in other words, largely improves levels of literacy.

In AET, it's also important not to dissuade learners who may already feel insecure about their academic knowledge or abilities. Perhaps even more than children, adult learners need to feel comfortable with the content before them. One of the most important ways to achieve this is to provide educational material to adults in languages they understand.

Shortcomings and solutions

In her article on South Africa's multilingual education policy, Kathleen Heugh suggests that the quality of the lessons and materials that children in South Africa receive complicates the language-literacy debate. "What makes it worse for children who have received poor reading and writing instruction and inadequate

provision of reading materials in their home language is that they are expected to switch over," she says, "and to read, write, and navigate their way, from the fourth grade on, through a curriculum in English that they barely understand."

The AET space can be problematic in much the same way. Fortunately, some of the technological advances developed by Media Works, one of South Africa's leading AET providers, have helped to deal with these issues. Media Works understands that adult learners need to work with high-quality and easy-to-understand content. Digital education has therefore been a teaching method for decades and, more recently, the Media Works team has introduced multilingual "bubbles" into its Accelerate Pro programme.

Bubbles are QR codes that are built into Accelerate Pro's material. They provide learners with immediate access to multimedia lessons that explain complicated concepts in easy and accessible ways. For the first time, these bubbles are now available in isiZulu, Sesotho, Setswana, as well as English and Afrikaans. Having this information available at the literal touch of a button enables people to learn at their own pace and in a language they are comfortable in, which fuels literacy.

When it comes to AET, multilingual instruction and material should always be an option. While the transition to English, still the language of further learning and business in South Africa, is important, this move is only going to be possible if the groundwork is laid first. ▲

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STEP 2

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Username

Password







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Create User

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Click on the **Create User** button.

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Hoërskool Jan van Riebeeck, Cape Town	✓		✓		✓			✓
Kingsway High School, Amansimtoti			✓		✓			✓
Lady Gray Arts Academy, Eastern Cape				✓	✓			
Florida Vaardigheidskool (ELSEN), Cape Town					✓	✓	✓	✓
Orban School, Melville, Johannesburg	✓	✓			✓			
Meredale Primary School, Johannesburg		✓			✓			✓

LEARNERS WHO BENEFITED FROM THE ALATEEN PROGRAMME

Below are some comments from South African school children in the Alateen programme

(Names are changed to protect members' anonymity)

Feedback

Teacher

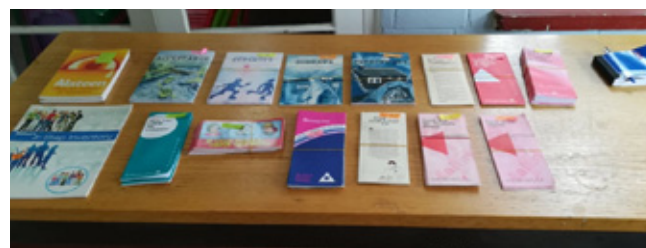
In February this year Alateen visited Sunward Park High School in Boksburg and spoke with 1 800 learners. The coordinating teacher, Ms Juanita Engelbrecht, said that for days after the talk by Alateen learners were going on the website and asking questions. "This service is a blessing and affects many of our children," said Ms Engelbrecht. "We should have this in every school."



Patience

Ally

I was constantly angry with my mother. We always fought and never talked. Two years after my mother joined Al-Anon, I finally decided to come to Alateen. I didn't realize what I was doing. After eight meetings I realized how easily I could talk to my mother. Although it is hard to admit, I also see how much we are alike. I have learned about patience in Alateen and how important it is in communication, because I must wait and think about what I want to say. Now I can let my anger simmer down. My sister, who is the alcoholic at home, told me the importance of asking questions. Whenever I need an answer, I ask. Communication has definitely made an impact on my life. I couldn't have done it without Alateen.



Communication

Kirsten

My communication skills have improved since Alateen. I used to play the role of the shy girl who waited for people to talk to her. If there was something I wanted to say, I held it in. Now I have the courage to introduce myself to others. Because I am working the program and going to meetings, I know how to establish limits. I can confront someone if I need to without getting uncomfortable feelings. Thanks to Alateen and the tools I have gained, my relationships with my family and friends are strong, healthy, and happy. I am so grateful to Alateen for all the positive things I have received in my short life. Without this program, I wouldn't be the person I am.

Forgiveness

Anonymous

I've learned to communicate much better with my parents. Before I joined Alateen, my mom and I fought a lot because I felt we didn't understand each other. Alateen showed me we are similar in more ways than I could have ever realized. Alateen also gave me the tools I needed to forgive my dad and remake my relationship with him.



FOR EDUCATORS & PRINCIPALS

What is Alateen?

Alateen is:

...a fellowship of young Al-Anon members, usually teenagers, whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking.

Purposes of Alateen

Young People Come Together to:

- share experience, strength, and hope with each other
- discuss their difficulties
- learn effective ways to cope with their problems
- encourage one another
- help each other understand the principles of the Al-Anon program

Alateen Members Learn

- compulsive drinking is a disease
- they can detach themselves emotionally from the drinker's problems while continuing to love the person
- they are not the cause of anyone else's drinking or behaviour
- they cannot change or control anyone but themselves
- they have spiritual and intellectual resources with which to develop their own potentials, no matter what happens at home
- they can build satisfying and rewarding life experiences for themselves

Sponsorship & Supervision

In order to be registered as an Alateen group, there must be TWO Alateen Group Sponsors at each meeting. These sponsors – Al-Anon Members in Alateen Service (AMIAS) – are experienced Al-Anon members, certified through the Alateen Service certification process, prior to serving, and are in possession of a SAPS Police Clearance Certificate, renewed annually.

2019 UPDATE

During 2018 we operated 2 Alateen Groups in Gauteng & 2 in KZN. Supported by our friends in AA, they brought their children to us and have reported amazing results both at home and in school through regular attendance at Alateen meetings.

For 2019 we are focusing on bringing our message to schools – to both learners & educators. We KNOW there's a need. We know families are in pain. If you'd like an information session at your school, call our helpline 0861 252 666

We believe alcoholism is a family disease because it affects all the members emotionally and sometimes physically. Although we cannot change or control our parents, we can detach from their problems while continuing to love them.



We do not discuss religion or become involved with any outside organisations. Al-Anon has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics.



UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECT OF ALCOHOLISM ON CHILDREN

For nearly 70 years, Al-Anon Family Groups, globally, has helped the families who live with the disease of alcoholism.

The disease of alcoholism in a family member or friend affects children and teenagers in many ways that impact on their behaviour and ultimately, their school work.

Frequently, students and educators do not realise that a relationship with an alcoholic could be a factor in poor performance, disruptive behaviour and other problems.

Alateen helps young people understand how alcoholism affects the lives of all who are associated with a problem drinker.

Alateen in South Africa

We have learned that learners are very cautious about attending Alateen meetings at their schools.

In some areas Alateen meetings are held in the evenings in a nearby church hall, community centre or somewhere secure.

Parents/guardians must give written permission for Alateen attendance.

Alateen South Africa has groups across the country.

A list of Alateen meetings may be found on our websites:

<http://www.alanon.org.za/meetings/>
<http://www.alanongauteng.co.za/>
<https://al-anon.org/newcomers/teen-corner-alateen/>

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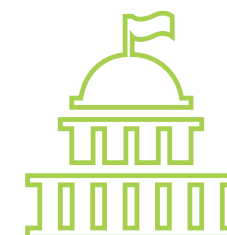
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Degrees of success: why you need to consider studying further

Getting a foot in the door of an agency, business or organisation you'd really love to work for is not always as easy as putting on your Sunday best and flashing the interviewer your brightest, most charming smile. Often, what they're looking for is actually just a tertiary qualification, which is why many young people place more emphasis on obtaining an undergraduate degree.

However, the mistake so many people make is believing that an undergrad qualification is all they need to build a successful and fulfilling career. Most don't even consider the possibility of taking their studies further, and pursuing honours and post-graduate studies.

"The reality is that, while an undergraduate degree might make you stand out more among other less qualified candidates applying for a job, opting against honours or post-graduate studies robs you of bigger career opportunities, and limits your ability to make a real difference within your industry and the world at large," says Dr Carla Enslin, Head of Strategy & New Business Development at Vega.

"Because you're focused on a specific area of study, you'll also have the opportunity to collaborate with like-minded people in pursuit of the same or a similar career goal – perhaps you'll join forces to turn an innovative idea into a meaningful, award-winning reality? The possibilities at this stage are endless," she continues.

Post-graduate studies allow students to delve deeper into their chosen field and gather more in-depth knowledge, where undergraduate studies are designed to introduce you to concepts and new ways of thinking. The learning gained during post-graduate studies is therefore invaluable, as students develop the mental agility and capacity to make compelling arguments, as well as analyse and conceive meaningful solutions to challenges.

Resourcefulness, interpersonal skills, and practical and logical thinking are just some of the important skills that are honed during honours and postgraduate studies, contributing toward a wider, more all-encompassing view for personal as well as professional improvement.

Are honours or post-graduate studies the right road for me?

The deeper, more meaningful learning and engagement that happens during honours and post-graduate study is rewarding – but only if your interest (and perhaps even passion) for your field of work is genuine. There's no sense choosing to study further because someone told you to – this is when



the work can become laborious and demotivating.

Enrol for the post-graduate programme of your choice when you have no doubts that you are genuinely compelled by the complexities and challenges of the field and its relation to the world around you.

For example, you may find that you're naturally inclined towards themes and issues that are relevant to your field, whether it's in current affairs and industry news or even the plot of a new TV series. The ideal post-graduate programme should then enable you to involve yourself in your field of choice to the fullest extent while honing your abilities and skills. It should also expose you to unique opportunities to apply advanced thinking into practice, to work on real-life briefs and projects, ideally participating in trans-disciplinary teams.

Pursuing an honours or post-graduate qualification is about so much more than boosting employability – it enables students to delve deeper than what they were able to do during undergraduate studies, thereby gaining vital skills and perspectives that not only boost their chances of getting that seat at the table, but also contributing something meaningful to their field. ▲



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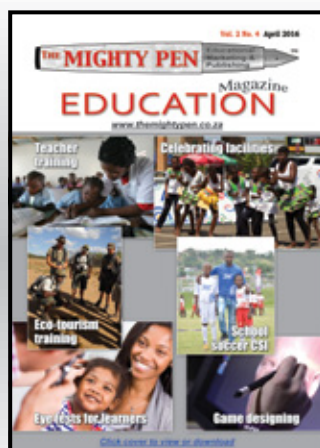
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