Playing with books

Helping young children to develop the ability to read and write is a serious business because being literate is extremely important in our daily lives. But we also need to remember that we don’t have to actively teach or tell children about books and reading. Instead, we need to allow our children to learn about books by exploring them. One of the ways we can do this is by giving them opportunities to play with books. Being allowed to be playful with books helps children to become literate.

Here are some of the ways that children at different stages of development may “play” with books.

Babies like to try out books by touching, patting, shaking and even chewing them! They are also great listeners and imitators. Often they make sounds and clap their hands to show how much they are enjoying us reading to them. Try giving babies board and cloth books when you want to allow them to handle books on their own, like during nappy changes. These kinds of books are tough and don’t break easily.

Older babies enjoy books with flaps, pop-ups and buttons that they can press to make sounds. They also like to point to things on the page, or to try turning the page.

Many toddlers like to pretend to read aloud and older children often like to pretend to be “the teacher” and read to the class. They can be found turning the pages of a storybook telling their own story as they go, or retelling a story they have heard often – sometimes even with the book upside down! They’re practising to read and showing you that they understand what books are about! Encourage them by making sure there are always some books around for them to pick up and “read” when they want to.

Young children often act out stories they know, or create their own, using familiar story characters. In these imaginary play times, children learn about symbols – when they use a stick as a fairy’s magic wand or a box as a car, it means that they understand how one thing can “stand for” another. This is important for literacy learning. Encourage your children’s imaginary play by reading lots of different kinds of stories to them.

Playing with books offers children opportunities to learn important literacy lessons and – best of all – it’s what children do naturally when we read to them and when they have books to choose from in their environment.

Join us. Share stories in your language every day.

Eba le rona. Bala le ho phetela bana ba hao dipale ka puo ya lapeng kamehla.
The reader’s bill of rights ...

1. The right to choose what I read
2. The right to choose in what language/s I read
3. The right to not finish a book
4. The right to skip pages
5. The right to reread a book
6. The right to read on my own
7. The right to enjoy a book with others
8. The right to read anywhere

Bili ya ditokelo tsa mmadi ...

1. Tokelo ya ho kgetha seo ke se balang
2. Tokelo ya ho kgetha puo/dipuo tseo ke balang ka tsona
3. Tokelo ya ho se qete buka
4. Tokelo ya ho tlola magephe
5. Tokelo ya ho bala buka hape
6. Tokelo ya ho ipalla ka bona
7. Tokelo ya ho natefelwa ke buka mmoho le ba bang
8. Tokelo ya ho balla kae kapa kae
Make stories part of your language lessons

Did you know that you can use stories to teach language? Here are some ideas of how to do this.

- Create a story-centred classroom by starting and ending each day with a story.

- Poems tell stories too. Let the children read a poem and then act it out, or they can draw pictures that are inspired by the poem, or add their own verses to it.

- Help the children explore how to create different kinds of texts. They could work in groups to create a TV news report about one of the events in a story. Or they could write a list of interview questions and then interview a classmate who pretends to be a character from the story.

- Create a multilingual word wall. Encourage the children to write down interesting words that they’ve read in stories and add them to the wall.

- Encourage the children to imagine that they are going on a journey with one or more of the characters in a story. They can draw pictures and write lists of the things they will need to take with them on the journey. If necessary, let younger children tell you what they want you to write for them on their lists.

- Invite the children to write a description of the appearance and personality of their favourite character from a story you have read together. Or, let them draw a picture of their favourite characters and then discuss each one with some classmates.

- Are there things that happen in the story that the children are curious about? For example, why a character made certain choices. Suggest that they write a letter to this character asking for more information – and then they can write the character’s response to this letter!

- After reading a story, invite the children to write a different beginning or ending for it. Or, they could write the first few paragraphs of a chapter that follows on from the end of a novel.

- Collect lots of small, easy-to-find objects, like a feather, hairclip, rubber band, pencil, addressed envelope, stone, sock and spoon. Let each child choose one of the objects and then imagine and write it’s “life story”, for example, who it belonged to, how this person used it, how they came to own it and where it came from before they owned it.

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Get story active!

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Lindiwe, our hero!

Lindiwe, our hero! Lindiwe’s granny runs Makhulu’s Bed and Breakfast. Tomas and Annette come to stay and everything is going well until Tomas loses his wallet. Before you start reading, read the title on the cover and ask your children questions that help them to use the clues on the cover to predict what the story might be about. For example:

- Do you think one of these children could be Lindiwe?
- Point to the younger child! What is she holding? What do you think she is doing with it?
- What do you think Makhulu’s Bed and Breakfast is?

The pictures in this story are a mixture of painting and paper collage. Give your children large sheets of white paper, paint, scissors, glue and sheets of different coloured paper. (If you don’t have coloured paper, use pictures torn out of old magazines.) Let them have fun creating their own paint-and-collage pictures.

The lion who wouldn’t try

The animals in the jungle invite Lion to join in their games, but he won’t. After you have finished reading the story, discuss what life lessons you and your children think Mamanthwane and Legotlo might have learnt.

Why the bat flies at night

Once upon a time, Legafio, the bush rat, was very good friends with Mamanthwane, the bat. But Mamanthwane was jealous because everyone liked Legafio more than they liked him, and so he did a terrible thing that changed both their lives forever. Ask your children to list the things they think Legafio did that were wrong.

Before you finish reading the story, discuss what life lessons you and your children think Mamanthwane and Legafio might have learnt.

Books

1. Take out pages 5 to 12 of this supplement.
2. The sheet with pages 5, 6, 11 and 12 on it makes up one book. The sheet with pages 7, 8, 9 and 10 on it makes up the other book.
3. Use each of the sheets to make a book. Follow the instructions below to make each book.
   a) Fold the sheet in half along the black dotted line.
   b) Fold it in half again along the green dotted line.
   c) Cut along the red dotted lines.

You can make as many books as you like. You can also tear out the instructions.

Here are some examples of instructions: “back to back”, “elbow to elbow”, “elbow to knee”, “finger to finger”, “nose to nose”. While the others work in pairs, they carry out the instructions which require them to “connect” different parts of their bodies to each other.

Write a review of this story and stand a chance of winning a book! See page 3 for details.

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Nal’ibali is a national reading-for-enjoyment campaign to spark and embed a culture of reading across South Africa. For more information, visit www.nalibali.org or www.nalibali.mobi
First Lindiwe's granny brought home a new stand for the TV. Then Makhulu painted the house bright pink. Themba and Lindiwe helped her. After that she put up a big sign – “Makhulu’s Bed and Breakfast”. Now people could come from all over the world and stay in their house, and Makhulu would cook them her wonderful food.

… and pulled out Tomas's wallet!
"Lindiwe, you’re our hero!" shouted Tomas as he lifted her up into the air.
Makhulu threw back her head and laughed. Then everyone danced around and around the table. At last they were ready to eat Makhulu’s delicious breakfast.

… mme a hula wa lelapano ya Tomas ka yona!
“Lindiwe, o mohale wa rona!” ha howa Tomas a bile a mo kuka a mo akgela hodimo.
Makhulu a akgela hlooho morao mme a keketeha.
Yaba bolele ba pota-pota tafole ba ntse ha tantsha.
Qetellong bolele ba ne ba kgona ho ka ja dijo tse hlabosang tsa hoseng, tse phehilewe ke Makhulu.
All the animals in the jungle are playing, except Lion. Why won’t Lion join in?

Lion sat sadly by himself, watching Crocodile and Elephant swim.

"Why are you sad, Lion?" asked Mouse.

"Because I don't want to play,” said Lion. “I'll lose.”

The lion who wouldn’t try

Liza Esterhuysen
Andre Kieswetter
Nick Mulgrew
Elephant and Crocodile had the swimming competition without Lion. Crocodile was quicker than Elephant, but each time Crocodile got ahead, Elephant tickled him! TEE-HEE-HEE! went Elephant and Crocodile.

Lion played, and he was happy.

It was a sunny day in the jungle. All the animals were out playing.

“Come play with me, Lion,” said Cheetah.

“Catch me if you can!” ZOOM-ZOOM! went Cheetah.

“I don’t want to play,” said Lion. “I’ll lose.”

E ne e le letsatsi le hlakilela morung. Diphoofolo tsohle di ne di tswile ho ya bapala.


“Ha ke batle ho bapala,” ha rialo Tau. “Ke tla hloa.”

Tau a bapala mme jwale a se a thabile.
All the animals in the jungle are playing, except Lion. Why won't Lion join in?

“Come play with me, Lion,” said Elephant. “We can throw rocks!” KA-POW! KA-POW! went Elephant. “I don’t want to play,” said Lion. “I’ll lose.”

“Come play with us, Lion!” said the monkeys. “Who can eat the most bananas?” POP! POP! POP! went the monkeys. “I don’t want to play,” said Lion. “I’ll lose.”

Tomas was a very organised man. Before he went to bed, he put everything out neatly, so he'd find it easily in the morning.

Except in the morning, when he got dressed, he couldn't find his wallet!

Anneke unpacked their cases and looked carefully through all her and Tomas's things. Lindiwe looked under the big chair that Anneke was sitting on.

"Mind, Lindiwe," said Anneke, not too unkindly, as she packed their things back into the cases. "You're too young to help, you're just getting in the way."

Lindiwe a itholela.
A tsamaya a ilo lata thupa e telele.Yaba o sunya thupa co ka morao ho lekase …

Nkgono wa Lindiwe o qadile pele ka ho tisa lekase le letšhwa la ho beha TV lapeng. Yaba Makhulu o penta ntlo ka mmala o pinki bo kganyang. Themba le Lindiwe ba ile ba mo thusa. Ka morao ho moo, o ile a beha letšhwa le leholo le ngotsweng “Makhulu’s Bed and Breakfast”.

Jwale batho ba ne ba ka itlela ho tswa ho le tlie, letšhwe ka bophara, ba do dula tshing ya bona, mme Makhulu a ba phehele dijo ts’a hae tse hlabosang.
The first guests came. Their names were Anneke and Tomas. That night everyone had a lovely time.

But, ai, the next morning there was trouble, lots of it. Luckily Lindiwe was there to help.

Makhulu took all the things off the shelf where Tomas had left his wallet. Lindiwe looked under the shelf.

“Mind, Lindiwe,” said Makhulu, not too unkindly, as she put the things back on the shelf. “You’re too young to help, you’re just getting in the way.”

Makhulu a tlosa dintho tse lodini lekase leo
Tomas a neng a behele wale ya hae ho lona. Lindiwe a sheba ka dina lekase leo.

When you meet someone for the first time, is the colour of their skin one of the first things you notice about them? But what can someone’s skin colour tell us about them? Despite what some people say, your skin colour means very little! Inside we’re all the same.

Skin we are in follows five friends – Njabulo, Aisha, Tim, Chris and Roshni – as they explore and discuss the skin they are in. They discover why humans have different skin colours, and how people’s thinking about skin colour has changed throughout history. The scientific text is written by Jablonski and it expands and supports the conversation topics that are part of the children’s adventure.

“We’d like this book to help change the conversation around some difficult topics … to get children to think about something that is beautiful, natural and badly misunderstood,” explains Sindiwe Magona. “We want children to grow up with healthy attitudes about skin colour. This is a storybook, and the story is about the meaning of skin. First, why we all have different skin colours, and how people’s thinking about skin colour has changed throughout history. The scientific text is written by Jablonski and it expands and supports the conversation topics that are part of the children’s adventure.

Skin we are in is a beautiful book that has already got lots of positive reviews. It is aimed at children between the ages of 8 and 12 and is already available in English, Sepedi, isiXhosa, isiZulu and Afrikaans. It will be available in Sesotho, Setswana, Xitsonga, Tshivenda, isiNdebele and Siswati during 2018.

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Once upon a time, many, many moons ago, there was a bush rat called Legotlo. Legotlo was a close friend of Mamanthwane – the bat. The two of them were always together.

But Mamanthwane was jealous of Legotlo. Legotlo had many friends and everyone liked him more than the bat. Legotlo also had a wife who loved him very much. The bat was jealous of all these things that Legotlo had.

Legotlo and Mamanthwane always ate together. When the bat cooked, the food was always very good.

“How is it that when you make the soup it is so tasty?” asked the bush rat.

“I always boil myself in the water, and my flesh is sweet. That’s what makes the soup so good,” explained the bat. But he was lying.

Mamanthwane offered to show the bush rat how it was done. He got a pot of warm water that was not hot enough to burn anyone, but he told Legotlo that the water was boiling hot. Then Mamanthwane jumped into the pot and quickly got out again. When Mamanthwane served the soup, it tasted as good as usual. Legotlo was amazed. The bat’s trick really does work, he thought.

After they had finished eating, the bush rat went home and told his wife that he was going to make good soup just like the bat’s. His wife asked how he was going to do that. “It’s a secret!” said Legotlo.

Legotlo asked his wife to boil some water, which she did. When his wife was not looking, Legotlo jumped into the pot. Soon he was boiling in the water!

“Help me! Help me!” he screamed. “I am burning!”

The bush rat’s wife rushed to pull him out, but the damage had already been done. Legotlo was so badly burned that he had lost all his fur. His skin was red and pink from the hot water.

“Why would you get into a pot of boiling water?” his wife asked.

“Because Mamanthwane told me that’s what makes his soup taste really good,” said Legotlo.

When Legotlo’s wife heard this sad news, she was very angry! She reported the matter to the king and queen. They ordered all the people of the village to find the bat so that he could be punished.

Everyone turned up to search for the bat. But Mamanthwane had already heard about what was going to happen so he had flown away into the bush and hidden himself. The people of the village looked and looked, but they couldn’t find him anywhere.

The next day, the people of the village made their way into the bush to see if they could find Mamanthwane there. They were right – they found Mamanthwane hiding there in a tree. They waited until he was asleep, then they caught him and took him straight to the king and queen.

When they arrived at the royal house, Legotlo and his wife were already there. Mamanthwane was ashamed to look his friend, Legotlo, in the eye.

“Why would you do this to me? We were best friends!” Legotlo said to the bat.

“Because I was jealous of you,” answered Mamanthwane. “You have everything that I don’t have and everyone loves you and hates me.”

The people of the village were shocked at Mamanthwane’s response. They wondered why Mamanthwane hadn’t just asked his friend how he had managed to get everyone to love him.

Then the king said, “Well, you have just given everyone a reason to hate you even more.”

The king and queen ordered the guards to take Mamanthwane to jail. The queen said, “Today we will lock you up! Tomorrow we will decide how to punish you!”

The next morning when the guards came to fetch Mamanthwane from his jail cell, he was not there. He had escaped and no one knew how. Legotlo and his wife were furious when they heard the news. The king and queen were also very angry. They ordered the people in the village to search for the bat again.

All day long the people tried to find and catch Mamanthwane, but they failed. Mamanthwane had found a cave far away from the village that no one knew about. The cave was hard to find. Mamanthwane also decided to change one of his habits – from that day, he only came out to feed when it was dark.

And so, that is why even today, you will never see Mamanthwane, the bat, during the day. Only at night will you see him flying around.
Mehleng ya kgalegake, dilemolemle tse ngata tse fettileng, ho ne ho ena le tadi ya morung e bitswang Legotlo. Legotlo e ne e le motswalle wa hlooho ya kgomo wa Mamanthwane – mankgane. Ba ne ba dula ba le mmoho ka dinakoi tshile.

Empa Mamanthwane o ne a monela Legotlo. Legotlo o ne e ena le motswalle e mangata mme bohle ba ne ba ma rota ho feta mankgane. Legotlo hope o ne a ena le mosadi ya neng a mo rota haholo. Mankgane o ne a ena le lefufa baleng sa dintsho tshile tseo Legotlo a neng e ena le tsona.

Legotlo le Mamanthwane ba ne ba dula ba eja mmoho. Ha mankgane a ne a phehile, djoj kamehla di ne di eba monate.

“Ke hobaneng ha wena o phehile sopho e eba monate hakana?” ha botsa tadi ya morung.

“Kamehla ke kena ka pitseng ke belele le metsi, mme letlalo la ka le monate. Ke kahoo sopho e ebang monate tjena,” ha hialosa mankgane. Empa o ne a bua leshano.

Mamanthwane a ithaopa ho bontsha tadi ya morung horo ho etsuwa jwang. A nka pitsa ya metsi a futhumetseng a neng a sa tjhese a ka tjhesang mang kapa mang, empaa a boella Legotlo hore metsi ao a betse. Yaba Mamanthwane o tlolela ka hara pitsa mme a ba a tswa ka potlako. Ha Mamanthwane a tshola sopho, ya latsweha ho monate jwaloko tsaelo. Legotlo o ne a maketsa. Leqheka la mankgane le hilile le a sebetsa, a nahana jwalolo.

Ha ba qeta ho ja, tadi ya morung a leba lapeng mme a boella mosadi wa hae hore o tillo pheha sopho e monate jwaloko ya mankgane. Mosadi wa hae a mmotsa hore o tilo e pheha jwang. “Ke lekunutu!” ha rialo Legotlo.

Legotlo a kopa mosadi wa hae hore a bedise metsi, mme eo a etsa jwalolo. Ha mosadi wa hae a sa sheba, Legotlo a tlolela ka hara pitsa. Mme hanghang a boella le metsi ka pitseng!

“Nthuseng! Nthuseng!” a hlela lehla ka hala. Ha mosadi wa hae a leba lehla ka hala le dithelang ka hla le lailo. Ha mosadi wa hae a leba lehla ka hala ke keke ka sa tšeho. Ha mosadi wa hae a leba lehla ka hala le ba keke ka sa tšeho.

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Mme he, ke kahoo le kajeno, o kekeng wa bona Mamanthwane, mankgane, motsheare. O tla mmona bosiyu feela e ntle a fofa hohlo.
1. Whose book?

Follow the string that each Nal‘ibali character is holding to find out who the book in the middle belongs to!

Buka ya mang?

Latele kgwele eo mophethwa ka mong wa Nal‘ibali a e tšhwereng ho fumana hore buka e bohareng la ya mang!

2. Design an advert!

Can you help Lindiwe’s granny to get more guests? Use the space alongside to design an advertisement for Makhulu’s Bed and Breakfast that will make everyone want to come and stay there.

Rala papatsa!

Ho o ka tšhu sa nkgona wa Lindiwe ho fumana baeti bo bang hope? Sebedisa sebaka se ka thoko maha ho rala papatsa bakang sa Makhulu’s Bed and Breakfast e tšang ho estra hore bota bohla ba la’ate ho tla rebalu moo.