**Growing literacy**

Each year on 8 September the world celebrates International Literacy Day. On this day, we recommit ourselves to working towards making literacy a thing of the past, in South Africa and across the world.

So, what progress have we made with literacy in South Africa? In 2017, the latest PIRLS results were released and it wasn’t good news! This research showed that 78% of South African Grade 4 children cannot read for meaning in any language. That’s 8 out of every 10 children! And the South African Book Development Council’s reading survey didn’t paint a bright picture either. It showed that only 4% of us read to our children and only 5% of us tell our children stories!

It is easy to feel hopeless in the face of this news, but we don’t have to. There is one very simple but powerful thing we can do to help change the picture: read aloud to children!

If all adults read to the children in their lives for 15 minutes every day, children would grow up being surrounded by stories at home and at school. They would grow up seeing reading as a satisfying and enjoyable activity and be motivated to read for themselves.

Join us in growing a nation of readers by committing to reading to the children in your life for 15 minutes every day!

**What we mean by reading aloud**

- adults read while children listen for enjoyment
- adults read to children so that they can enjoy stories and books
- adults choose books that interest children
- children also have opportunities to choose the books
- children are encouraged to ask questions
- adults ask questions that help children connect to stories
- ... and isn’t
- children read aloud so that adults can assess them
- children read aloud to practise their reading
- adults choose books that they think are “right” for children
- adults always decide which books children should read
- children only ever answer questions about stories
- adults ask questions that require children to remember “facts” from the story

**Ho hodisa tsebo ya ho bala le ho ngola**

Selema le selema ka la 8 Loetshe lefatshe le keteka Letsatsi la Mathabja la Tseo ya ho Bala le ho Ngola. Ka letsatsi lena, le ifilana botlhokgakgale sa ho sebelelela hore ho se tsebo ho bala le ho ngola e be dintho tse feletšeng, Afrika Botleng le ho potoloha lefatshe.

Jwale, le kgotlapelele lelo re re e entseng mabapi le tseo ya ho bala le ho ngola Afrika Botleng? Ka 2017, diphetsho tsa moraana tsa PIRLS di le tsa rihuvwa mme re ne e se dikata tse molale! Phuputso ena e bontshithse hore 78% ya bana ba Kaniri ya 4 Afrika Botleng ha ba tsebe ho bala kuthwaha ka pue e lelo efe. Lenane lena le le molele hore ke bana ba 8 Ho ba 101! Gaateka le patlisiso ya South African Book Development Council ya batho ba tsebeng ho bala ho a e a ya fana ka setshwamotsho se setle. E bontshithse hore ke batho ba etseho 6%. Felela ho rona ba baling bana ba rona le 5% felela ba phetela bana dipale!

Ho bobebe ho feltsho ke tsepsi ha re ulofo dikata tse, empa ha re a tshwamela. Ho na le nthe e le ngwe e bolonqo bolonqo empa e malo ja re ka e etseho ha thusa e feltshwamotsho sesa: ho bala hodimo re bala banang.

Ho batho ba baling bohle ka ba baling bana bao ba phetela le bana ka metsotsa e 15 Letsatsi le leng le le tse, bana bao ba ka ha bana ba potapotlwe le dipale lapeng le sekolong. Ba ka hola ho bana ho bala e le ketso e kgotshatsang le e mafelo lohlo re ho hlahisane ho phetela ho bana bao.

Eba le rona baling sa ho hodisa sebelela sa baba ka ho ifilana ho bala bana bao o phetela le bana metsotsa e 15 kamehla.

**Re bolelang ka ho bala hodimo**

**Seo ho bala hodimo ho leng sona**

- batho ba baling ba bala ha bana bana ba mamele ba tseiabodi
- batho ba baling ba baling bana ha bana ba tse tle ba natelele le dipale le dibuka
- batho ba baling ba kgotsha dibuka tse kgahang bana
- bana hike ba na le menyela ya ho kgotsha dibuka
- bana ba kgotshaletswe ho bota dipotsa
- batho ba baling ba bota dipotsa tse tshoang bana ho hakahana le dipale

**Le seo e seng sona**

- bana ba baling hadimo hare batho ba baling ba ba ketelele
- batho ba baling hadimo baling sa ho ikwetsitsa ho bala
- batho ba baling ba kgotsha dibuka tse mabapi le mabapi le dibuka dife tse tseho ba nahanang hare e "lokete" bana
- bana ba abasa bebele dipotsa tse mabapi le dipale
- batho ba baling ba bota dipotsa tse tshoang bana ho hakahana le dipale
5 tips for growing readers

1. Read, read and read to children. It’s the best way to help children become readers themselves.
2. Be a reader. Children need to see adults reading.
3. Fill your home or classroom with reading material.
4. Let children choose books they want to read.
5. Talk to children about the books they enjoy reading.

Dikeletso tse 5 bakeng sa babadi ba holang

1. Bala, o bale, o balle bana. Ke tsela e lokileng ya ho thusa bana hore le bona e be babadi.
2. E ba mobadi. Bana ba hloka ho bona batho ba baholo ba bala.
3. Tlatsa lelapa la hao kapa tlalese ya hao ka dingolwa tse balwang.
4. E re bana ba kgotse dibuka tseo ba batlang ho di bala.
5. Buisana le bana ka dibuka tseo ba natefelwang ke ho di bala.
Story ideas

Have you thought about how to use stories to strengthen children’s learning in different subjects? Here are some ideas for doing this in subjects other than languages.

- **Bring History to Life by reading stories about events that happened in the past.** Stories about great discoveries and the lives of scientists, doctors, leaders and inventors provide role models as well as information.
- **Traditional stories are a wonderful way to get to know how people from different places and a different time understood the world around them.**
- **Read a story that is set in another country and then let the children use the Internet and information books to find out more about this country.**
- **Let the children use maps and/or atlases to find the places they read about in stories or to trace the journey of a story character.**
- **Many children face challenging situations, like being on the receiving end of prejudice, or the death of a loved one, or divorce. Stories give us a great starting point to discuss things that form part of Life Skills and Life Orientation that are sometimes difficult to talk about. Asking open-ended questions about a story offers a safe way for children to think and talk about their personal concerns, emotions or ideas. Stories can help children to better understand a challenging situation, discover how to cope with it and explore what options are available to them.**
- **Stories offer lots of visual art opportunities. For example, children can draw and paint pictures inspired by the story to illustrate parts of the story, or make models of scenes from the story using day care or recycled waste materials.**
- **You can help develop children’s number concept by writing a summary of the events in a story, using a separate strip of paper for each event. Stick these on the chalkboard in random order and then ask the children to sequence the events in the order that they occurred in the story. Then talk about the events asking which one happened first, next and last.**
- **Let children learn about measurement by asking them to use the information in a story to work out how tall a character or creature might have been.**
- **Stories can be linked to concepts in Technology. Ask the children to create recipes to suit a story’s characters – a giant, a pirate or a king. Or ask them to build a model of a house made of straw or sticks, or a palace made of sweets!”

**Make reading for enjoyment part of your school!** For more information and guidance on how to do this, go to www.storypoweredschools.org.

**Putting stories at the heart of your school!** **Etsa hore dipale di be boholokho sekalong sa heno!**

**Will you be South Africa’s next Story Bosso?**

Story Bosso is Nal’ibali’s annual multilingual storytelling talent search. It takes place across the nation this September! To celebrate South Africa’s rich heritage of storytelling, Nal’ibali invites all South Africans - young and old – to have fun telling and sharing stories in any of the country’s 11 official languages.

Enter this exciting talent search and stand a chance of winning fantastic prizes as well as being crowned the Story Bosso of 2018! To find out more, visit www.nalibali.org or www.nalibali.mobi.

**Na o tla ba Story Bosso ya latelang wa Afrika Borwa?**


Get story active!

Here are some ideas for using the two cut-out-and-keep picture books, The missing ball (pages 5, 6, 7, 8, 11 and 12) and When it rains (pages 9 and 10), as well as the Story Corner story, Message in a bottle (page 14). Choose the ideas that best suit your children’s ages and interests.

The missing ball

Gaps and his cousin, Sugarbean, want to play a game of soccer before sundown, but they can’t find their soccer ball.

- As you read the story to your children, stop and ask questions or make comments that encourage them to look closely at the details in the story.
- **Page 4:** Can you see the ball? What do you think Gogo is doing?
- **Page 5:** What is Gogo doing now?
- **Page 7:** Look, I can see a bit of the ball there.
- **Pages 8 and 9:** Look at Sugarbean sitting on the bench. How do you think she feels? Why?

Discuss with your children what ball games they enjoy playing. Play some of them together. Then suggest that they draw a picture of themselves playing their favourite ball game in the moonlight – just like the calves in the story did.

When it rains

This book describes the joy of people and nature at the return of rain. It is written and illustrated by one of Africa’s well-known writers, Véronique Tadjo from Côte d’Ivoire.

- Before you read the story, ask your children if they enjoy the rain and why they think rain is important.
- After you have read the story, read page 3 again and invite your children to use their hands and/or feet to make the sound of a dark cloud bursting open and the rain beginning to fall. Can they make the sound of the rain getting heavier and heavier, and then gradually getting lighter until it stops?
- Ask your children to think about what they would say to the rain if it were a person. Suggest that they use their ideas to write a poem about rain or a letter to the rain.

Give your children large sheets of paper. Let them paint the paper with water before pasting a picture about the story.

Message in a bottle

Chiku and her brother, Jabali, put a message in a glass bottle and then toss it into the ocean at Mombasa in Kenya. The bottle and its message travel all the way down to Umgababa off the coast of KwaZulu-Natal where Sandile finds it. And that is how a friendship begins!

- After you have read the story, show your children a map of Africa and let them trace the bottle’s journey from Mombasa to Umgababa. Then let them color the map of Africa, Véronique Tadjo wa mane Côte d’Ivoire.

Ask your children to imagine that they are going to put a message in a bottle. What would their message say? Suggest that your children write their messages – and don’t forget to write one too!

Inketsese dibuka tse sehwang-le-ko-koipokela tse PEDI

Eba mahlahlahaha ka pale!

Ena ke mehopolo e itseng e mbapli le ho sebedisa dibuka tse pedi tsa ditshwantsho tse sehwang-le-ko-koipokela, Bolo e lalelheng (maqepe 9, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11 le 12) le Ha pulo e na (leqepe 9 le 10), esitana le pale ya Hukung ya Dipale, Molaetsa ka botlolog (leqepe 15). Kgetha mehopolo e tshwantseteng dileme le ditshhasela tsa tswana ba hao hantle.

Bolo e lalelheng

Thokwe le motsawale Thokwana ba bafila ho bapalala papadi ya bolo ya maolope leela. E mpolo mo ho pale ena, le tshwanetseng dileme le ditshhasela tse tswana ba hao hantle.

Ha pulo e na

Buka ena e hilala nylakalo ya balolo le Thaba ha pulo e kugila. E ngoytse le ho tshangwanthwa ke ena bangodi ba sebedisa Mombasa, Afrika, Véronique Tadjo wa mane Côte d’Ivoire.

- **Pele o bafa pale ena,** botso bana ba hao hore na na matelwa ke le bafa pale ke hlaho pengeng ha na hana hore hupa le bafilo. 'Ha hlaho pengeng ha na hana hore hupa le bafilo.'
- **Kamora ho bafa pale ena,** bota leQEpe 3 a leQEpe 9, leQEpe 5 a leQEpe 6. Ke bafa pale ke e bonolo wa bafa bana ba hao ho sebedisa matsho la le bafa pale ena. Ke bafa pale ena ke e leQEpe 9 leQEpe 10, leQEpe 11, leQEpe 12. Ke bafa pale ena, leQEpe 6 a leQEpe 8 a leQEpe 10 a leQEpe 12.
- **Kamora ho bafa pale ena, bota leQEpe 9 a leQEpe 10. Ke bafa pale ena, leQEpe 9 a leQEpe 10. Ke bafa pale ena, leQEpe 6 a leQEpe 8 a leQEpe 10 a leQEpe 12.**

Molaetsa ka botlolog

Chiku le kgathedi ya hae, Jabali, ba keny a molaetsa ka haa botlolog mole mbapli ba e a gelo ke kaa haa lo tswelele mane Mombasa, Kenya. Bafilo e le molaetsa wa yona e hla tlhalo tswelele ka ho theo ha Thala Umgababa lebogang ka KwaZulu-Natal moo Sandle a e fumangang teng. Mme ke lekaa setswatlwa se qalang!

- **Ha o qetile ho bafa pale ena,** bonolo bana ba hao rimpwa la Afrika mme o ba bafa pale ena. Ha o kopa deo la bafa pale ena. Ha o etsa ho na, hla tlhalo tswelele ka ho theo ha Thala Umgababa lebogang ka KwaZulu-Natal moo Sandle a e fumangang teng. Mme ke lekaa setswatlwa se qalang!

Ha o qetile ho bafa pale ena, bonolo bana ba hao rimpwa la Afrika mme o ba bafa pale ena. Ha o kopa deo la bafa pale ena. Ha o etsa ho na, hla tlhalo tswelele ka ho theo ha Thala Umgababa lebogang ka KwaZulu-Natal moo Sandle a e fumangang teng. Mme ke lekaa setswatlwa se qalang!

- **Ha o qetile ho bafa pale ena,** bonolo bana ba hao rimpwa la Afrika mme o ba bafa pale ena. Ha o kopa deo la bafa pale ena. Ha o etsa ho na, hla tlhalo tswelele ka ho theo ha Thala Umgababa lebogang ka KwaZulu-Natal moo Sandle a e fumangang teng. Mme ke lekaa setswatlwa se qalang!

- **Ha o qetile ho bafa pale ena,** bonolo bana ba hao rimpwa la Afrika mme o ba bafa pale ena. Ha o kopa deo la bafa pale ena. Ha o etsa ho na, hla tlhalo tswelele ka ho theo ha Thala Umgababa lebogang ka KwaZulu-Natal moo Sandle a e fumangang teng. Mme ke lekaa setswatlwa se qalang!

Kopa bana ba hao hore ha inahlane hore molaetsa ke bana ba keny a molaetsa ka haa botlolog. Molaetsa wa bafa pale ena ba kaa a Kaile? Hlaho hore bana ba haa ho ngola molaetsa ya bana – o se ka le ka bafilo la haa ho ngola la haa ho ngola!
Then she saw Gaps, still waiting under the tree.

"Yaba o bona Thokwa, a ntse a mo emetse tlasa sefate."

"Don't worry. I'll help you find your ball," he said. So the two calves went off together to find the ball.

Gaps the Nguni calf stood under a big tree. He was waiting for his cousin Sugarbean to find her new soccer ball.

Thokwa namane ya Nguni o eme tlasa se fate se sehola. O ne a emetsa motswalae Thokwana homogeneous bolo ya hae e njha.

But ... it wasn’t her missing ball! It was a baobab fruit! Close up to it, she could see that it looked very different.

Empa ... e ne e se bolo ya hae e lahlehileng! E ne e le tholwana ya baobab! Ha a e atamela o ile a lemoha hore ha e tshwane le yona hohang.

A little way off, they saw Mkhulu Nguni Bull playing marabaraba with his friends. What was he sitting on? He was sitting on Sugarbean’s missing ball!

Pelenyana mane, ba bona Ntatemoholo Nguni Poho a bapala morabaraba le metswalle ya hae. O ne a dutse hodima eng? O ne a dutse hodima bolo ya Thokwana e lahlehileng!

At last the calves could play their soccer game! They kicked the ball all the way home in the moonlight, happy now their search was over!

Qetellong dinamane tsa kgona ho bapala papadi ya bolo ya maoto! Ba naha bolo tseng e lebang hae kganyeng ya kgwedi, ba thabile jwale hobane ba e fumane!
But Sugarbean couldn’t find her ball anywhere inside the house. She really wanted to play at least one game of soccer before sunset! But where was that ball?

And then they saw it. You guessed it! The missing ball was in Sugarbean’s backpack! It had been in there all along! This time there was no mistake.

“Look. There’s your ball,” said Auntie, pointing up into a tree. Sugarbean looked. High in the branches of a baobab tree was the missing ball!

“Shaba. Bolo ya hao ke yane,” ha rialo Rakgadi, a supile hodimo sefateng. Thokwana a sheba. Hodimodimo makaleng a sefate sa baobab ho ne ho dutse bolo e lahlehileng!

But … it wasn’t Sugarbean’s missing ball! Mkhulu was sitting on a fat, white sack of mealie meal!

“Empa … e ne e se bolo ya Thokwana e lahlehileng! Ntatemoholo o ne a dutse hodima mokotla o motenya, o mosweu wa phofo!”

“Empa Thokwana! se se a fimana bolo ya hae bohale ka hara mle. O ne a nila a hata lo hapala kela e ka bo papedi le ringve ya bolo ya maoto pele kesi le dikhal! Empa bolo co e ne e le bokar!”

“Mme yaba ba e bona. O nepile! Bolo e lahlehileng ya Thokwana e ne e ke mopilo o famana wa haelo!”

“Witbang was sitting on a fat, white sack of mealie meal!”

“Empa, Bolo ya hau ka yane,” ha rialo Rakgadi, a supile hodimo sefateng. Thokwana a sheba. Hodimodimo makaleng a sefate sa baobab ho ne ho dutse bolo e lahlehileng! Kgetlong lena e ne e se phoso.

“Empa, Bolo ya hau ka yane,” ha rialo Rakgadi, a supile hodimo sefateng. Thokwana a sheba. Hodimodimo makaleng a sefate sa baobab ho ne ho dutse bolo e lahlehileng! Kgetlong lena e ne e se phoso.
Perhaps someone had left it outside. She went to look. Ah, there it was – in the melon patch! The top of it was peeping out of Gogo’s tin bath.


Suddenly they saw the cattle egret. He was flapping his wings and running towards them. “Sugarbean! I’ve been trying to tell you that your ball is right behind you!”

Hanghang ba bona leholosiane. Le ne le otlanya mapheo a lona mme le mathela ho bona. “Thokwana! Ke ne ke ntse ke leka ho o boella hore bolo ya hao e ka mora lona!”
When it rains

Ha pula e na

A group of children jump, swim and play in the stream. On the big river, the fishermen catch many silvery fish.

The fields look beautiful. Cows give plenty of rich and creamy milk. Hens lay big yellow eggs.

Trees are heavy with fruit.

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.
Lightning explodes in the sky. A huge dark cloud bursts open and drops of rain start to fall.

It is the dry season. Trees have no more leaves. People are thirsty, and so are the animals.

The rains have come back!

People fall asleep feeling satisfied.

Dipula di kgutlile!
But … it wasn’t her missing ball! It was a big, white melon! “Don’t worry. Your ball is somewhere,” said Gogo.

Ah yes! They could see a wet ball floating in the river! Aha! Ba ne ba bona bolo e phaphalletse ka hodima noka!

It was just the moon, rising in the sky. Sugarbean was sad. Where was that ball?

E ne e le kgwedi, e nyolohela marung. Thokwana o ne a hloname. Bolo eo e ne e le hokae?

But … it wasn’t her missing ball! It was a big, white melon! “Don’t worry. Your ball is somewhere,” said Gogo.

Empa … e ne e se bolo ya hae e lahilehileng! E ne e le lehupu le leholo, le lesweu! “Se kgathatshe. Bolo ya hao e teng kaekae,” ha rialo Nkgono.
But ... it wasn't Sugarbean's missing ball! It was a smooth, white river stone. Mama placed her washing on the stone and began to scrub. The calves were beginning to lose heart.

“Ke yane,” said Gaps looking up. But again ... it wasn't the missing ball at all!

“She cut a juicy slice of melon for Sugarbean.

A sehela Thokwana sekhutswana se monate sa lehapu.

“There it is,” said Gaps looking up. But again ... it wasn’t the missing ball at all!

“Ke yane,” ha rialo Thokwa a shebile hodimo. Empa hape ... bohang e ne e se bolo e laleleleng!”
Over the past six years, the annual Puku Story Festival held in Grahamstown has been an exciting event intended to spark children’s interest in storytelling and reading in isiXhosa. The festival has also provided an opportunity to showcase and celebrate the work of storytellers, writers and artists, especially in African languages.

This year the Puku Story Festival celebrated South African children’s author and storyteller, Gcina Mhlophe. Gcina’s play, “Have you seen Zandile?” was translated into isiXhosa by Dr Hleze Kunju and performed twice a day by local actors in a packed auditorium.

A highlight of the festival was an exhibition of children’s literature curated by the National English Literary Museum (NELM). There were 566 children from ten surrounding schools who visited the museum to view the exhibition, where they were also entertained by storytellers such as Basil Mills, Cebu Solomela, Mbulelo Bokwe, Madoda Ndlakuse and Babalwa Kona. Other attractions included book launches and readings, as well as open mic sessions where learners and other local artists performed praise poetry and songs.

At the nearby Fingo Library, children and parents enjoyed a comedy show, poetry, storytelling and readings, and face painting!

Nal’ibali was represented by Abongile Davani and Madoda Ndlakuse, our Literacy Mentors in the Eastern Cape. They gave a fun-filled presentation on reading clubs which highlighted the important role that storytelling and reading for enjoyment play in education and children’s development.

At the end of the three days, Puku announced that its new mission did not include another festival. But as Gcina Mhlophe tweeted: “Puku Story Festival 2018 may be over, but the stories never are.”

Selemong sena Puku Story Festival e ile ya keteka mongadi le mopheti wa dipale tsa bana wa Afrika Borwa, Gcina Mhlophe. Tshwantshiso ya Gcina, “Have you seen Zandile?” e ile ya fetelelo ho isiXhosa ke Ngaka Heze Kunju mme ya tshwantshiswa habedi ka le tetsatse di kaaopadi tsa kaiangeng tsa hae mona holong e filetseng babohedi ba bangata.

Sehlionhlo sa mokete e ne e le pontsha ya dingolwa tsa bana tsokakulweng ke National English Literary Museum (NELM). Ho ne ho ena le bana ba 566 ba tsowang dikakong tse tshimoro tse Molokong ena ba etetseng museamo ho fia sheba dipontsha, le moo haphe ba neng ba Thabiswa ka bashele ka dipale ba kong Basil Mills, Cebu Solomela, Mbulelo Bokwe, Madoda Ndlakuse le Babalwa Kona. Dinfh tse ding tse kgahlang di ne di kanyeletsa ho thoglowlwa ha dibuka le ho hala, eshany le dikarola tsa maake a buitsweng moo baluufi le dinano tsa motseng ba neng ba elsas a ditshokako le ditshoko le dipana tsho.

Laebanang e haufhi ya Fingo, bana le batsoa le ile le ba ratelweke ka pontsha ya metlae, ditshokako, ho pheta dipale le ho hala, le ho penwa ditshikho!

Nal’ibali e ne e emetswe ke Abongile Davani le Madoda Ndlakuse. Botlaitsi ba rona ba Tsebo ya ho Bala le ho Ngiro ba Eastern Cape. Ba ile le bana ka puo e filetseng menyaka masiapa le ditshelapo tsa ho hala, e neng e bontsha karalo ya boholwa eho ho pheta le ho hala dipale bakeng sa boholwabo ho neng le yona thuuteng le kgolong ya bana.

Gaboleng ya matsatsi a mararo, Puku e ile ya tsebiso hore maberwa wa yona o motlha o ne o sa kanyeletse moleke o mong haphe. Empe jwalo kaha Gcina Mhlophe a ile a ngola ho Tweeter. “Puku Story Festival 2018 le ha e ka fela, empo dipale isona di keke tsa fela.”

There were plenty of books for children to enjoy!

Ho ne ho ane le dibuka tsa ngato bakang sa ho natefela bana!
It was late afternoon. Chiku and her brother, Jabali, stood on the beach near their home in Mombasa. Big green waves crashed in front of them.

“Are you ready?” asked Jabali.

“Yes!” said Chiku.

Jabali took a deep breath, lifted his arm and flung the glass bottle far out into the sea. It flew across the foamy waves, glinting in the sunlight. Chiku and Jabali grinned at each other as they turned and walked home.

“How long do you think it will take?” asked Chiku.

“I don’t know!” answered her brother. “You may have to wait a long, long time, but somebody will find it! Just wait and see.”

The bottle bobbed on the water for many weeks. Once a big fish swam right up to it. “Hmmm,” she said. “There’s something inside this hard bubble … it’s white with black squiggles on it. I wonder what it is?”

WOOSH! Suddenly a school of tiny silver fish swam past right under her. The big fish forgot all about the bottle. “How lucky,” she chuckled as she swam after the silver fish, “my lunch has arrived!”

On went the bottle, floating through calm water and stormy seas. One evening, a baby shark lifted it up to see what was inside. “Human things,” warned his father. “Don’t eat it; it will make you sick!”

The little shark dropped the bottle, and raced off to find his friend instead.

Still the bottle drifted, carried along by the ocean tides. One afternoon, a wise old dolphin saw it in the water nearby. “Look!” she said. “I see human writing!”

Dolphins are very clever. She knew she could read the words she saw through the glass. But before she could try, her grandchild pushed his nose under the bottle. “Catch!” he shouted. A whole pod of dolphins laughed and squeaked as they passed the bottle to each other.

One stormy evening many months later, the waves carried the bottle all the way to the beach at Umgababa on the KwaZulu-Natal coast. A little later, a boy named Sandile and his family arrived there for a holiday with their cousins.

The next morning, Sandile woke up early. Usually, he hated getting out of bed. “School is so boring!” he always grumbled. “Why do we have to learn to read and write? Playing games is much more fun!” But today was different because Sandile was on holiday and he loved the beach.

Soon he was running about on the wet sand with his younger sister and cousin.

Suddenly, he noticed something floating in the shallow water near some big rocks.

“Look!” he shouted, pointing to the bottle. It had turned a little green, but Sandile could still see that there was a piece of paper inside it. “What is it?” he asked excitedly.

“Maybe it’s money!” suggested his sister, Sindi.

“No,” said their older cousin, Mpumi, peering at the bottle. “It looks like a letter!”

Sandile pulled a face. “BORING!” he said.

“Think about it,” said Mpumi. “This letter may have travelled a very long way, and it could have been in the water for years! Let’s take it home and open the seal with a knife!”

At last the bottle was open. Mpumi pulled out the letter.

“Hello,” read Mpumi. “My name is Chiku. I am nine years old.”

“Like me!” said Sandile.

“Shhh!” said the others.

“I live in Mombasa in Kenya,” read Mpumi.

“Where’s Kenya?” asked Sindi.

“I know!” shouted Sandile. “It’s far away, up the east coast of Africa! I read about it at school just last week!”

“You said that was a boring book!” teased Sindi, but Sandile didn’t hear her. He was too busy reading the letter over Mpumi’s shoulder.

“If you find this letter, please write back to me,” read Mpumi. “Then there’s an email address here,” she told Sandile. “Ask your mom if you can write to Chiku tonight.”

And that was how Sandile started writing to Chiku. After a few emails, reading and writing didn’t seem boring anymore.

“One day, I’m going to meet Chiku,” he told Sindi. “Until then, we can send emails to each other!”

And when Sandile’s family went to visit their cousins in KwaZulu-Natal again, he also wrote his own letter on a piece of paper, sealed it in a bottle and threw it into the sea. He never got an answer, but he would have been very surprised to learn who found the bottle.

The dolphins had swum all the way down the coast, and were living near a tiny island. When the oldest dolphin saw Sandile’s bottle floating by, she was very excited.

“Another one!” she said. “This time, I’m going to read it!” She dragged the bottle onto the beach, and stored it under a big rock.

Every day, she stares at the words she sees through the glass. She can’t read them yet, but I’m sure she’ll work it out soon!
E ne le ka shwalane. Chiku le kgaitseki ya hae Jabali ba ne ba ene lebopong la lewatle haufi le lehla hae bana mane Mombasas. Maqhubu a maholo a matala a ne a otlana ka pela bona.

“O se o loki le?” ba botsa Jabali.

“Ee!” ba rialo Chiku.

Jabali a hemela hodimo, a phahamisa matsoho a hae mme a akgela botlolo ya galase kwana hole ka hara lewatle. Ya fofela ka hodimo maqhubu a lekweba, e benya kganyeng ya letsatsi. Chiku le Jabali ba bososela ba shebana mme ba kgutlela hae lapeng.

“O nahana hore e tla nka nako e kae?” ba botsa Chiku.

“Ha ke tsebe!” ba araba kgaitseki ya hae. “Mohlomong o tla ema nako e telele telele, empa motho moeng o tla qetella a e famane! Ema o tla bona!”


SHWAA4! Hanghang sehlopha sa ditlhatswana tse silivera tse sese a metsi ka tiisa yona. Tlha e kgotla ya lebala hohang ka botlolo. “Lehlohonolo;” ya bososela sa sesa ho latela dithapi tse silivera, “dijo tsa tsa tsa metsheea, tse fihile!”

Botlolo ya tswela pele, e sesa ka hodimo metsi a kgutsitseng le lewatle le halefiling. Ka tsatsi le leng mantsiboya, ledinyane la shaka lla e phahamisa ho sheba hore ho na le eng ka hare. “Dintsho tsa batho,” ntatae a mo lemosa. “O se re wa e ja; e tla o kudisa!”


Didolfine di bohlale haholo. E ne e tsebe hore e tla khete ke fumane! E tla o tla qetella a e fumane! Ema o “Ha ke tsebe!” ba hae. “Mohlomong o tla ema nako e kae?” ba botsa Chiku.

“Kana ya hae,” ya rialo Mpumi. “Lengolo lena e ka nna yaba le hlahatlwe diba ke tsangina haholo, mme e ka nna yaba bohotlolo e bile ka hara metsi ka dilemo tse ngata! Ha re yeeng le yona hae mme re bule sekuhalo sa yona ka thapi!”

Sindi ba lewatle eo e ile ya bulwa. Mpmum e ntsela lengolo.


“Jwolaka nna fela!” ba rialo Sindi.

“Shhh!” ba bang ba rialo.


“Ke a tseba!” ba hohetsa Sindi. “Ke hole hwele, hodimo ka botjhabela ba lebopon la Afrika! Ke ithutile ka yona sekolong bekeng e sa tswe feta!”

“O tse ka buka sa kgaahliseng!” Sindi a mo qala, empa Sandile a se ka a mo utlwa. O ne e a duletse ho bale lebengolo a nyaretse ka hodimo lehthena la Mpmum.


Mme ke kamoso Sandile a ngale ya nqalana ho haholo. Kamora diimeile tse mmalwa, ho bale ho la ho ngala ha ho a ka shebha e le ntho e sa kgaahliseng haholo.

“Ka tsatsi le leng, kela ya copana le Chiku,” ba bolella Sindi. “Ho fihile tsatsi leeng, re tla dula re romellana diimeile feela!”

Mme yare ba wa lelapa la Sandile ba e eya ho ya etela balelelelela bale lebopon la Afrika! Ke ithutile ka yona sekolong bekeng e sa tswe feta!”

Mpmum e halenga e kagela na ka haholo. Kamora diimeile tse mmalwa, ho bale ho la ho ngala ha ho a ka shebha e le ntho e sa kgaahliseng haholo.

“Ke a tseba!” ba hohetsa Sindi. “Ke hole hwele, hodimo ka botjhabela ba lebopon la Afrika! Ke ithutile ka yona sekolong bekeng e sa tswe feta!”

“O tse ka buka sa kgaahliseng!” Sindi a mo qala, empa Sandile a se ka a mo utlwa. O ne e a duletse ho bale lebengolo a nyaretse ka hodimo lehthena la Mpmum.


Mme ke kamoso Sandile a tseka a metsi ka haholo. Kamora diimeile tse mmalwa, ho bale ho la ho ngala ha ho a ka shebha e le ntho e sa kgaahliseng haholo.

“Ka tsatsi le leng, kela ya kopa le Chiku,” ba bolella Sindi. “Ho fihile tsatsi leeng, re tla dula re romellana diimeile feela!”

Mme yare ba wa lelapa la Sandile ba e eya ho ya etela balelelelela bale lebopon la Afrika! Ke ithutile ka yona sekolong bekeng e sa tswe feta!”
What's in the picture?

- How many things are there to read in the picture? ____________
- Which of these things have you read before? ________________
  _______________________________________________________
  _______________________________________________________

Ho na le eng setshwantshong?

- Ho na le dintho tse ka tse balwang setshwantshong? _____________
- Ke elle ho dintho tse ka tse lebiding wa di bali? _______________
  ___________________________________________________________
  ___________________________________________________________

Here's a word challenge!

- Follow the rules in the box and use the letters in the word wheel to complete this word. (Two of the letters have already been used.)
  m _ _ a _ _ _ _
  • How many other words can you make following the same rules? (Remember: The letter in the middle of the wheel MUST be in each word!)
  ___________________________________________________________
  ___________________________________________________________

Pephetso ya mantswe ka ena!

- Latele melawana e lebokosong mme o sebedise difihoku tse lebiding ka mantswe ho ahetla lebiding le tsa. (Difihoku tse pedi di se di sebedise.)
  m _ _ _ s _ _ _
  • Ke mantswe a makae a mang ao o ka a eathing o sebedisa melawana ao? (Lopola: Tlhaku e bohareng ba lebidi e LOKELA ko ba lebiding ka leng)

Rules
1. Make words with two or more letters in them.
2. Use each of the letters in the wheel only once in each word.
3. Always include the letter in the middle of the wheel in your words.
4. No proper nouns allowed.

Melawana
1. Etsa mantswe o nang le difihoku tse pedi kopa ha feta.
2. Sebedisa tlhako tsa ngenwe lebiding hangwwe feta kopa ha lebiding.
3. Kamehla kenyeletsa tlhako e bohareng ba lebidi mantsweng o hao.
4. Ha ho a dumelwa mabitsibitsi.