School Newspaper
An important learner activity

The school newspaper project has proven to be a platform that helps learners to develop an informed and critical understanding of the nature of print media, the techniques used, and the impact of these techniques. More specifically, it is education that increases learners understanding and enjoyment of how the media works, how they produce meaning, how they are organized, and how they construct reality. This project has also provided learners with the skills to create their own media products.

Beyond the outlined objectives of the project, the School Newspaper Project has been able to develop learners in a unique way, as follows:

- A school newspaper has improved communication between all groups in schools.
- Encouraged study by giving learners effective study tips.
- Learners who aspired to be part of the school newspaper improved in various skills.
- It inculcates in learners reading and writing habits.
- The goal of impartiality in news provided learners with lessons in fairness and accuracy.
- The ethical imperatives that facts be distinguished from opinions helped learners understand the meaning and importance of objectivity.
- Learners who did interviews gained experience in dealing with people.
- Reporting experience helped learner to recognize the difficulty of finding firm facts.
- Editorial writing provided practice in weighing evidence and reaching conclusions based on sound reasoning and facts.
- Feature writing gave practice in imaginative treatment of facts to appeal to human interests.
- Conducting developed a critical ability and a quality of selfless service in improving the work of other staff members.
- Production of a school newspaper provided valuable experience in teamwork.
- Experience learners gained made them better critics of the public press.

Take a note of recently published School Newspaper toolkit “Start Your Own School Newspaper”, an initiative by Institute for the Advancement of Journalism (IAJ) with the support of Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA).

Media Rocks
“Our learners will be very much interested in creating a school newspaper because it will help them express their feelings about challenges they face as modern youth”

By: Kagisano So Barolong High School

And how the newspapers will boost them academically and will enable them to express their feelings about challenges they face.

“Our learners will be very much interested in creating a school newspaper because it will help them express their feelings about challenges they face as modern youth” says Palesa Morolong from Setlolo High school. The schools expressed that there will be a feeling of excitement about the whole school newspaper thing.

Newspaper formation will ignite enthusiasm and also help to improve grammar and reading skills. Many learners will probably love to join the field of journalism as a career they can pursue.” Our learners will be interested in creating a school newspaper because it’s going to entertain them and will enable them to enter the world of media and journalism”, says Palesa Morolong from Setlolo High School.

We as Kagisano Barolong High School learners from Logageng Village, a school that is 127 km away from town are excited and feel privileged to be presented with such an opportunity that will give us courage and inspiration. It teaches us that positive things can happen to schools like ours.

Newspaper Boom

By: Batloang High School

“The newspaper can also be a solution to illiteracy in your school for it will encourage the learners to read,” said Mr Monareng.

He added that the newspaper will inform the people about the school and attract learners who will like to enrol there.

As the Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA) aims to promote that teachers have started identifying in schools, this can be the solution to the current challenges.

“This can also improve the relationship between learners and educators in terms of attitudes, school work and learning skills.” said Me George Monareng.

Reading Your Number One To Learning

By: N E Lebeke

The Curriculum Directorate through the TLTE section, Library Unit is highly committed in assisting schools to establish their school based libraries as well as classroom reading corners.

It has since been discovered by the Systematic Evaluation results done by the DoE that our learners cannot read, write nor calculate.

In response to that, the Provincial Office through the Resource Centre at Zwelitsha has since then donated books for District cluster libraries as well as school libraries. Upon implementation, the unit has realized that clustering of resources does not yield positive results because schools do not utilize such resources. They hardly visit the clusters to collect books for reading purposes.

However Maluti Librarian, with the assistance of her DCES, are working very hard in assisting schools to establish and how to manage their libraries.

A word of Gratitude

By: R.T. Tenza

Maluti District Office is pleased to have been selected to participate in this project. It started in 2008 when our teachers were invited by MDDA for training at Mt Ayllif. Initially MDDA trained five schools in Maluti District (St Margaret SSS, Mt Hargreaves SSS, Moiketsi Graves SSS, Maluti JSS and Potshejng JSS).

In 2009 the same project was coordinated by AJ and our teachers were further trained. The sessions were enjoyable as one could observe in the active participation of the learners and the type of products they came up with.

The Project was further sustained in Maluti to an extent that the participating schools were requested to come together to showcase their products and again to submit their copies to the District office. Schools are doing their best to meet the deadlines especially when one remembers that teachers are overloaded and are also operating with mean resources. It is also pleasing to note that teachers have started identifying learners with writing skills.

Schools like Paballong JSS and Prospect JSS have shown interest in the Project to an extent that Paballong JSS has made a contribution in this newsletter.

The District Office team also hope that a continued participation in the Project will yield positive results as far as promoting the skill of reading in our learners and to the community at large. It was quiet pleasing to read some articles written by learners and also to notice that some of our learners are showing a potential of being aspiring journalist, editors, script writers, …

As we write this, we are proud to announce that most of our schools have started having their libraries. Most of these schools have been given books by Bibliomef, Breadline, Edcon, Vodacom as well as A.S.A.P. As a District we also acknowledge the contribution of A.S.A.P.(African Solutions to African Problems) at Maria Linden’s JSS' library.

We are hoping that all schools will be having their libraries and reading corners by the end of 2012.