



# Phendulani Literacy Quiz

## Report for 2024

**Inspiring readers  
since 2008**

**Over 200 schools  
participating**

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### Highlights of 2024

2024 saw two new regions hosting a Phendulani quiz, and one region re-launching their quiz. Well done to Kimberley and Makhanda for hosting their first events, and Bombela for

*Schools in Makhanda participated in their first Phendulani Literacy Quiz this year. (Photo: Nozipho Maphalala)*

reopening the quiz with a bang – including participation from district and circuit education officials.



The Cape Town Quiz expanded and the Makhanda Quiz was able to take place due to the sponsorship of the AESSEAL charitable trust.

This report includes a report for each regional quiz below. Aside from the regional quizzes, the GDE hosted a Phendulani quiz for 75 of its schools as part of its reading club programme.

### **Background to Phendulani Quiz**

The Phendulani Literacy Quiz was founded in 2008 by then high school teacher Marj Brown, who felt literacy was key to proficiency in all subjects, as well as important for the psycho-social well-being of the individual. Phendulani's primary goal is to promote reading and provide educational services that contribute to the intellectual and social development of young South Africans. Additionally, the quiz works with publishers and educational organizations to make books more readily available to children.

Brown is also the coordinator of Kids Lit Quiz in SA, a global quiz based on 2000 years of literature, and thus dependant on well-resourced school libraries. Brown decided to twin well-resourced schools with under-resourced schools so that the pupils of the latter schools could also benefit from the fun of a literary competition and to spread the access to books through building partnerships.

Since 2008, the Phendulani Quiz has developed in various ways in different regions of SA, and now incorporates over 200 schools.

## Franschhoek Phendulani: 17 May 2023

Report by Marj Brown

On 17 May, I was privileged to run the Phendulani Literacy Quiz for the schools in the Franschhoek Valley, as part of the popular Franschhoek Literary Festival (FLF).



*Wes Eind Primary claim first prize, celebrating here with author David Walliams and Phendulani founder Marj Brown.*

The level of excitement at the quiz is always infectious, and this year was no different. The winning team, encouraged by much jubilation, was from Wes Eind Primary. Coming second and third were two teams from Dalubuhle Primary, which won the quiz last year. The winners were treated to book prizes by the well-known author David Walliams from the United Kingdom. The real victory was to witness the steady increase in literacy scores, and the readers' excitement about reading.

The schools had been provided with English titles plus Afrikaans or IsiXhosa copies of the same book for many of the titles – thanks to Biblionef South Africa. All the books were

written by South African authors. Local author Jaco Jacobs proved to be the readers' favourite, for his book *Zack Attack*.

The evaluation of the quiz includes a question on how the quiz can be improved, and the answer invariably is "More books!".

### Participating schools:

- George Dickerson
- St Mary's
- Oatlands
- Ntaba Maria
- Good Shepherd
- SDA Primary

## Makhanda Phendulani: 8 September 2024

Phendulani was invited to Makhanda by the Lebone Centre to celebrate Literacy Month – bringing fun and excitement on top of its strong educational contribution. While the quiz increases literary knowledge and appreciation, it also boosts comprehension skills and critical thinking, giving learners in under-resourced schools an incentive to open a book and read.

Hosted by Kingswood College Primary School, all the teams were eager, laser-focused, and enthusiastically celebrated correct answers at every opportunity. Jade Botha, the teacher from Good Shepherd Primary, said she told her learners: "I want to take home a win." And take home a win they did!



Good Shepherd pipped SDA to secure the grand prize, with Ntaba Maria Primary School third. With Good Shepherd and Grahamstown Adventist Primary (SDA) scoring 34/40, quiz master Marj Brown had to hold a 'sudden death' round to determine which school would walk away with first prize.

(In another highlight, Jade won for Excellence in Intermediate Phase Teaching at the Makhanda Teaching Awards.)

This event was made possible by the AESSEAL Charitable Trust sponsorship, which enabled the purchase from Bargain Books of the sets of 12 books sent to each school – and also heaps of book prizes.

*Good Shepherd Primary teacher Jade Botha with her winning literary team. (Photo: Nozipho Maphalala)*

Further support for stationery and refreshments came from the Diocesan Schools for Girls and Kingswood Primary School.

The learners were accompanied by their teachers. SDA teacher Walter Mapfumo said the children's response to the quiz had been "overwhelming".

"I struggled to select the six to come here because the whole class wanted to come here," said Walter. "They all shared and read the books!"

Some of the participating schools – like SDA – lack functioning libraries.

Despite missing a member, the Ntaba Maria team was happy to participate, and their fighting spirit carried them to the winners' podium.

"We were nervous at first, but as the competition was going, we started to feel more confident, and we enjoyed everything," said one Ntaba Maria Primary School team member.

The quiz was a huge success, allowing learners to compete for literary glory in a convivial and joyful environment.



*The Grahamstown Adventist Primary School team digs deep for answers. (Photo: Nozipho Maphalala)*

Eleven of the books were written by South African writers, giving the kids relatable experiences to savour, while the twelfth was *The BFG* by Roald Dahl.

This report includes information from an article in the local newspaper, *Grocott's Mail*, written by Ndalo Mbombo and Nicole Palmer. (The article was entitled *Bookworms glow with literary glory at Makhanda's first Phendulani Quiz.*)



Some of the book prizes on offer at the Phendulani Literary Quiz in Makhanda. (Photo: Nozipho Maphalala)

Phendulani founder and quizmaster Marjorie Brown hands over a spot cash prize to a member of the Good Shepherd team in Makhanda. (Photo: Nozipho Maphalala)

## Johannesburg Phendulani: 11 October 2024

*Report by Bamaketse Ramaila*

**11 schools  
(20 teams)  
participated:**

Vuleka St Mark's

Vuleka Jellicoe

Vuleka St Michael's

Masibambane

St John's Academy

Ubambiswano

Yeoville Community  
School

Yeoville Boys

Nova Pioneer

Impala Crescent

Salvazione

Roedean School proudly hosted the Johannesburg round of the Phendulani Literacy Quiz, a much-anticipated annual competition designed to cultivate a love of reading among young learners. With 21 teams from schools across Johannesburg, the event was a vibrant showcase of knowledge, enthusiasm, and, most importantly, the joy of reading. The winning teams were:

- Salvazione Christian School
- Impala Crescent Primary (Team 2)
- Yeoville Community School (Team 2)
- Impala Crescent Primary (Team 1)
- Masibambane (Team 2)

Other schools with teams in the competition included HA Jack, Vuleka School, Mitra Academy, Ubambiswano, Albert Street, Yeoville Boys, Nova Pioneer and Wendywood Primary. Some schools brought multiple teams, while others were represented by just one. Charged by a competitive atmosphere, the day was a celebration of literacy, teamwork and the transformative power of books.

Roedean School's Executive Director, Mrs Lindiwe (Lindi) Dlamini, opened the event with an inspiring address. She encouraged participants to read widely, highlighting the immense opportunities that come with a love for books. Drawing from her own experience, Mrs Dlamini shared how her early passion for reading helped shape her path to success, eventually leading her to become Executive Head of one of the country's top schools.

Renowned author Hamilton Wende added to the excitement, speaking passionately about his career and the incredible experiences reading had afforded him, including global travel and a successful writing career. He emphasised that reading is not only an adventure but a key to unlocking creativity and critical thinking – essential skills for any field of work.

During the event, Marj Brown expressed her gratitude to Mrs Dlamini and Hamilton Wende for their heartfelt words of encouragement and support. She reiterated the quiz's purpose: to foster a love of reading and highlight the critical role it plays in shaping young minds, especially in a country where many children still face challenges in accessing books.

Behind the scenes, the success of the Phendulani Quiz was made possible by a committed team. Special recognition was given to the markers: Nicky Sulter from St John's Prep, Refilwe

Kgame from Roedean School, and Pulo Rampete, a former pupil of Lebone College and one-time Phendulani Quiz participant herself. The event was expertly coordinated by Roedean librarian Bamaketse Ramaila, ensuring the day ran seamlessly from start to finish.

The 2024 Phendulani Quiz was more than just a competition—it was a celebration of the power of books, the joy of reading, and the endless opportunities that literacy can unlock for South Africa’s youth. Participants left with not only trophies and certificates but also a renewed sense of purpose to continue their reading journeys.

As the day came to a close, the message was unmistakable: reading is not just about turning pages; it’s about opening doors to new worlds, new opportunities, and brighter futures. Roedean School looks forward to continuing its tradition of nurturing young readers and fostering a culture of literacy in the years to come.

## **Bosmont/Riverlea Phendulani: 7 September 2024**

*Report by Cyril Turton, Founder of 'Readers R Leaders'*

**10 schools  
(19 teams)  
participated:**

- Westbury
- Dowling Avenue
- Everest
- Newclare
- Bosmont
- Wilhelmina Hoskins
- Riverlea
- TC Esterhuisen
- Bernard Isaacs
- Bree

**9,000 learners  
impacted.**

The schools involved are located in eight different areas, contributing to a major spread of the quiz. Nine schools entered two teams each, totaling 19 participating teams.

The Phendulani Literacy Quiz for Bosmont and Riverlea was held at Newclare Primary School, and is Readers R Leader's biggest event. It involves 10 primary schools, their immediate school communities and the public.

On average, a school has a minimum of 900 learners, and this translates into Phendulani impacting the reading lives of at least 9,000 learners. The atmosphere at the quiz was electrifying and competitive. The turnout of parents and the public was exceptional, making this event our biggest public involvement in spreading a culture of reading.

Newclare's principal, Mr Derick Eastwood, opened the quiz and welcomed all contestants with his motivational talk.

We experienced an overwhelming response from parents and members of the public who attended the event, bringing their applause and enthusiasm to their school. This created an environment of support and encouragement for the young learners, ultimately promoting a culture of reading.

*Poetry:* Learners from the Readers R Leaders book club entertained the audience with their poetry, reciting their wise words calling for a better place to live free from gangsterism and drugs.

*Audience spot questions:* This became a popular addition to the quiz with a winner's prize of a children's book written by a local first-time writer.

*Event atmosphere:* The excitement was palpable, and the competitiveness was at its peak. The contestants showcased their depth of reading by responding to the quizmaster's reading of the answers after every question round. The quiz master Nicky Sulter did a fantastic job, and her professional handling of the event was appreciated by all. Readers R Leaders volunteers did an equally good job ensuring a smooth flow of the event.

*Impact:* The Phendulani Literacy Quiz is not just a competition; but an explosion of reading, a major movement of spreading a culture of reading and learning. This event is making huge strides in encouraging learners to develop a love of reading which is the foundation stone for academic growth, contributing hugely to eventually carving out a better life for themselves away from gangsterism, drugs and a dismal future.

*Results:* Newclare school won the quiz for the third time in a row. Being the third-time winner of the quiz, Newclare School will now retain the winner's trophy.



Newclare School's commitment to reading is phenomenal and their librarian is a major motivation to the entire school promoting reading daily amongst the learners.

*Outcome:*

- Newclare in first place
- Wilhelmina Hoskins in second place
- TC Esterhuysen in third place

This year's Phendulani Literacy Quiz was again an enormous success, marked by enthusiastic involvement and an uplifting atmosphere. The event continues to inspire all learners from the primary schools fostering a love of reading.

Thank you to Marj Brown for introducing the Phendulani Literacy Quiz to our schools and communities, and for hard work you put into the event. Thanks too to all your sponsors.

## **Pretoria/Johannesburg North Phendulani: 28 October 2024**

*Report by Radhika Singh*



*The winners from Nokhuphila Primary School.*

The Kyalami School Group actively promotes a reading culture across six schools: Modern Primary, MC Wieler Primary, Olivenhoutbosch, Nooitgedacht, Noordewyk Primary, and Nokuphila Primary School.

This year, students were motivated to read a total of fourteen books, spanning genres such as School and Family, Challenges, Fantasy, and Sport, with books provided by publishers and generous donors. This annual Phendulani Quiz not only allows students to demonstrate their enthusiasm for reading, but also strengthens ties with local communities.

The children expressed varying preferences for the books, with certain genres like sport, school and family, and challenges emerging as favorites based on their scores and votes. Their visit to the school was filled with excitement as they explored the premises and captured numerous photographs, while the food provided was a delightful treat for both students and accompanying teachers.

The quiz was organized with the assistance of Beaulieu Prep staff, featuring Loren Frost from Christchurch Primary as the quiz mistress. I managed the organization and communication aspects, with books donated by our publishers and Beaulieu Prep, ensuring each school received a box of books.

Nokuphila Primary 2 emerged as the winning school, followed by Nooitgedacht Primary 1 and Nokuphila Primary 1 in third place. Prizes and certificates were awarded to the winners and all participants, who also enjoyed the accompanying singing and dancing during the event.

We extend our gratitude to our generous stakeholders for their invaluable resources, support, and encouragement.

## Bombela Phendulani Quiz: 2 November 2024



The winning team from Thekwane

Peggy Singwane, a Seswati teacher and champion of reading, this year re-launched the Phendulani Quiz in Bombela, assisted by her daughter, Kayise and husband Raymond Muziwakhe Singwane

Participating schools included Boschrand, Thekwane South, Sijabulile, Nelsville, John Mdluli, Entabamhlophe, Valencia Combined and Crocodile Valley.

“These primary schools all feed into secondary schools in the Mbombela Circuit,” Peggy Singwane noted. “They will have a positive impact on the matric pass rate in the near future”.

The winning team was from Thekwane South, with second place going to John Mdluli Primary and third place to Boschrand Primary.

Peggy voiced her appreciation of learning and attributed this to her parents’ support for reading. She underscored the importance of reading for enjoyment, leisure and vocabulary, as well as improving fluency in language, writing and communication in general.

Mr Mkasi, a teacher in Peggy’s former school who has been supporting Phendulani while at Mgwenya Circuit, hosted the quiz. Mr Teen Mbombela and Ms Teen Universe graced the occasion. Mlu Ligwalagwala FM and Loyal Ratau were the young and dynamic Quiz Master and Mistress.

Circuit Manager Mr Linkwati, PM expressed his appreciation of the quiz’s contribution to developing reading and literacy. Media advisor for school libraries Ehlanzeni, Ms Mashaba, also attended, signifying the importance of the occasion.





*Media advisor for school libraries Ehlanzeni, Ms Mashaba*



*Circuit manager Mr Linkwati*



*Coordinators for the Phendulani Quiz in Bombela*

## Margate Phendulani: 17 October 2024

Report by Meg Dickson



As always, the Phendulani Quiz was a huge success this year. Initially we had 9 schools participating but unfortunately 2 had to withdraw at the last minute due to internal school issues.



*Winners of Phendulani Quiz in Margate: Isikhuthali Primary School*

Our winning school was Isikhuthali Primary school, a rural school in Jericho Location, inland of Margate. They are a small school with just one class per grade. This is the first time they have won the quiz.

There was a tie for second place between Ithuba Wild Coast Community College, a school situated in the Eastern Cape with Xhosa speaking learners, and Insingizi Primary School situated in Umbango, inland of Port Shepstone. Ithuba won last year, but this is the first time Insingizi has achieved result in the top three.

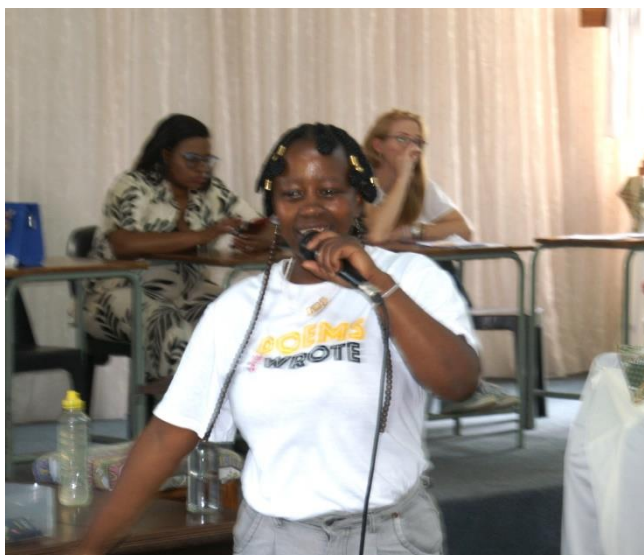
The schools love receiving the books and their participation in the quiz is always a highlight of their school calendar.



*Second place was tied between Ithuba Wild Coast Community College (above) and Insingizi Primary School (right)*



*The quiz was held in a wonderful venue near Gcilima - the photo shows part of the venue. The two empty tables were for the missing schools.*



*Luleka Mhlanzi, poet, actress and motivational speaker gave a wonderful presentation that involved the learners writing their own stories.*

**Schools participating in Kimberley's first Phendulani Quiz:**

- Staats Primary School
- St Patrick's CBC
- Kimberley Junior School
- Vooruitsig Primary



*Tremayne Aiken (host) with Marj Brown (quiz master)*

## **Kimberley Phendulani Quiz: 21 October 2024**

*Report by Tremayne Aiken, with added comments by Marj Brown*

The Phendulani Literacy Quiz took place in Kimberley in October – for the first time in the Northern Cape province! Four schools in the city participated and it was a momentous experience, both for the scholars taking part and the educators who coached them.

I am a language educator at Staats Primary School and first interacted with Marj Brown after I saw the photos she posted on LinkedIN. When I asked her how to get the quiz to Kimberley, she immediately responded by sending me the setwork and instructions needed to get it going.

We had a total of eight teams entered with a setwork of about 10 books written by local authors. These books, written in four different languages, were read by the participants between March and October 2024.

When the day of the quiz arrived, the learners were abuzz with excitement and their anticipation could be felt in the air. After all, great suspense had been created over the seven months they spent preparing. Learners were so forthcoming and welcoming to one another and once the quiz commenced, facilitated by the ever-so-brilliant Marj Brown, learners were wholly present and engaged.

Each school fielded two teams, and the eight teams had such enthusiasm – with Kimberley Junior and Vooruitsig Primary coming tie in first place!

All the learners had a great time and they had multiple opportunities to win a host of prizes, like books by exciting authors, and cash. Not only were the learners excited by the prizes, but they were also so eager to participate and ask about participating again. Learners had a plethora of questions about the authors, other schools which have participated in the past and, most of all, when they would be able to do it again.



*Enthusiastic teams from Kimberley's first Phendulani Quiz*

Learners today do not have adequate exposure to reading or books, as a result of economic conditions but also the changing nature of how children are being raised. Learners are prone to choosing electronic devices over paperback books, or programs on their computers over graphic novels and animated films over story books. But it is our responsibility as educators to foster a love of literature within them.

The existence of a strong reading culture is paramount to the development of all children, who eventually become adults that aim to be positive role-players in society. Children flourish and thrive when a love of literature is stirred within their spirits. I am so pleased to have the opportunity to do this work among the learners in my immediate community. So I would like to extend my thanks and gratitude to Marj and the Phendulani Literacy Quiz team for allowing me to expose my learners to this exciting experience and I look forward to hosting this quiz again in 2025!

*Note from Marj Brown:*

I flew to Kimberley in October to run the pilot Phendulani Literacy Quiz for schools in the area – on the invitation of a wonderful young teacher, Tremayne Aitken of Staats Primary School. I was struck by the conversations after the quiz, of the importance of introducing learners to good books by SA authors as well as international authors. One learner just loved the author Michael Morpurgo, from the UK, while another thanked me for including "diverse" books such as Athambile Masola's "Women Who Shape Us" series.



I worked as a rural fieldworker in the Northern Cape, with communities resisting forced removals into the 'bantustans'. The repression in these communities was intense, as was the bravery of the communities in resisting it. It was inspirational to see the courage of another kind emerging among young teachers, to build a literate future.

## Gqeberha Phendulani Quiz, 16 July 2024

*Report by Michele Kerley, Grey Junior School*

Our 14th Phendulani in Gqeberha was held at the Grey Junior Pavilion, with seven teams from six schools taking part. We welcomed newcomers Boet Jeggels with their partner school Kabega to the quiz. The Municipal Library's school, John Masiza, withdrew at the last minute.

As usual, Grant Butler, the headmaster of Grey Junior School, proved to be a highly professional and entertaining quizmaster – bringing a special magic to this event that will be long remembered.

Every child received a book to take home, as well as a snack box, fruit juice and bottle of water. Chocolates were given as prizes for each round, as well as between the rounds. Prizes for the first, second and third position were sponsored by Nyosi Wildlife Reserve, Isuzu and The Herald.

The quiz was won by newcomers Boet Jeggels, who scored 32 points out of 40. In second place, Heatherbank Primary scored 29, while third place went to Sancto at 27.

It is interesting that the most popular book this year was an easy read. The abridged classics Alice in Wonderland, The Jungle Book, The Wizard of Oz were among the least popular of the books on offer.

With grateful thanks to The Herald journalist, Catherine Richards, for her exceptional support in not only sourcing all the above prizes for the day, but also producing a wonderful article of the event. This article was published in print form and online. The online article attracted a great deal of positive attention for the winning school!

A word of thanks and appreciation must go to Marj Brown for the tireless efforts she puts into sourcing books for the region and all that goes on behind the scenes in getting them to us.

Below is the article on our event by the Eastern Cape Herald:

### **Participating schools:**

- Arcadia
- Boet Jeggels
- Heatherbank
- Sancto
- Thornhill
- Triomf

### **Partnerships:**

- Clarendon
- Collegiate
- Grey
- Kabega Primary
- St George's

### **Most popular books:**

- Goth Girl
- The Ickabog.

The participants also said they wanted to read more books by Jaco Jacobs and JK Rowling.

Romance and adventure were the two most popular genres.

# Boet Jegels pupils crowned winners of 14th Phendulani Literary Quiz

● Primary school teacher proud of hard work put in for Eastern Cape regional event

**Catherine Richards**

Newcomer Boet Jegels Primary School has proved it has what it takes — its pupils have won the 14th Phendulani Literary Quiz.

The other primary schools that took part in the quiz, held at Grey Junior School on July 16, were Arcadia, Heatherbank, Sanctor, Triomf and Thornhill. Defending champions Sanctor Primary came third and Heatherbank were second.

Boet Jegels Primary school teacher Robin Maart said he was incredibly proud of his pupils.

"I am ecstatic! They worked so hard for this and this win is a reflection of that.

"They come from difficult circumstances so this win just shows you can do anything if you put your mind to it."

Grade 7 Boet Jegels pupil Endinako Bucu, 15, said: "It was nice to win! I didn't think we would after a few rounds but it was a nice surprise.

"I enjoyed reading the books with my team and discovering new authors.

"I am glad we get books for



**THE WRITE STUFF:** Phendulani Literary Quiz winners from Boet Jegels Primary School, back from left, Robin Maart, Asive Mantashe, 12, quiz master Grant Butler and Lauren van Rensburg. Front: Lamar Maqilli, 11, Inako Maqilli, 11, Iviwe Dyasi, 12, Mande Jodwana, 12, and Endinako Bucu, 13. Picture: WERNER HILLS

our library," he said.

The Phendulani Literary quiz was founded in 2008 by high school teacher Marj Brown, who decided to twin well-resourced schools with under-resourced ones so pupils from disadvantaged schools could benefit from the fun of a literary competition, and to increase access to books by

building partnerships.

Phendulani also aims to promote reading and comprehension in a fun way while making sure that books which have been donated are read.

With the shocking news about how the country's grade 4 pupils fared in the 2021 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study — 81% did

not reach the study's low international benchmark — a programme such as this was welcomed.

In April, the participating schools each received 12 books to read.

These included Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, JK Rowling's *The Ickabog* and Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book*.

Each school enters up to two teams of up to six grade 6 or 7 pupils, who are required to read as many of the books as possible.

The entertaining quizmaster, Grey Junior School headmaster Grant Butler, kept the pupils on their toes as he asked them questions about the books.

Each team works on the questions together, writing down the answers which are then marked.

The school librarians from St George's, Grey, Collegiate, Clarendon, Kabega and Woodridge support the participating schools by providing transport to the quiz, lunch packs for the children and prizes for the winners, as well

as ensuring that every participant goes home with a book.

The Eastern Cape region's quiz is co-ordinated by Grey Junior School librarian Michèle Kerley.

"It is a real celebration of reading," Kerley said.

"These good memories hopefully will further encourage the love of reading."

Butler, who is passionate about literacy, said there was value to being involved in the programme.

"Every educator should look for opportunities to be involved in events like the Phendulani Kids' Literary Quiz.

"Volunteerism helps to shift one's focus from the enormous mountain of work that always sits on good teachers' desks under the scrutiny of their red pens, and serves to remind them of the reason they chose to teach in the first place.

"I personally find this time with bright young people very energising and positive," he said.

The top three winning schools walked away with prizes from The Herald, Isuzu and Nyosi Wildlife Reserve.

## Knysna Phendulani Quiz, 15 August 2024

*Report by Julie Stevenson*



Oakhill School pupils loved the pre-quiz activities and interaction with the children from six schools who brought their hard-reading Grade 7's to the Phendulani Quiz in August this year. The quiz promotes the reading of English literature amongst the second language schools around South Africa. This was the brain-child of Marj Brown who is the organiser of the South African Kids' Lit Quiz. She knew that this competition would benefit children in developing a real love of reading.

This is the 5th time we have run the competition, which relies on donations for the books; each school receives copies of the same books, as well as for the book prizes.



We were very thankful to have had Sue Buchalter and KILT involved in helping to distribute, culminating in their arrival for the quiz.

Oakhill School hosted 60 very keen and excited pupils from Chris Nissen, Concordia, Fraaisig, Hornlee, Sunridge and Thembelisha. We congratulate Fraaisig for their teams' success: first and third; and Thembelisha for second place. We displayed the first, second and third prize books and gave each of the winners a chance to choose their own book. We love this interaction and look forward to next year.

## Cape Town Phendulani Quiz, 7 October 2024

Report by Marj Brown



*Phendulani Cape Town participants at Muizenberg Junior School*

In October, I ran the Cape Town Phendulani Quiz at Muizenberg Junior School. As the answers to the questions were read out for each round, the excitement in the room was indicative of the engagement the learners had with the books. I am reminded that many of these children may not own books and rely on their schools to expose them to whatever books are available. During the quiz, 42 books were handed out to learners as prizes, and to participate the learners read 12 good books. In answer to the question on the evaluation form, “How can the quiz be improved?” The answer is often “more books!”.

Here is an article that appeared in the Southern Mail:

*“Grade 5 to 7 pupils from six schools faced off on Monday for this year’s Phendulani Literary Quiz on Monday October 7.*

*“Muizenberg Junior School hosted Grade 5 to 7 pupils from six schools for this year’s Phendulani Literary Quiz on Monday, with the hosts taking first and second place. Phendulani Literacy Quiz is a non-profit organisation that was founded in 2008 to promote reading by high school teacher Marjorie Brown, who felt literacy was key to proficiency in all subjects. Pupils from Sid G Rule Primary in Grassy Park, Heathfield Primary, Claremont Primary, Muizenberg Junior, Westlake Primary, and St Anne’s Primary School in Plumstead worked in teams of six to answer ten questions across four themes on Monday October 7.*

*“The excitement in the room is always intense, and crescendos when the answers to the questions are read out for each round,” said Ms Brown, adding that pupils had to read 12 books for the quiz. Muizenberg Junior sports coach Karen Hampson said she was “thrilled” with her team’s achievement. “We have never reached this level in the quiz,” she said, adding that one of the pupils who had been in the team from Grade 5, Grade 6, and now Grade 7, turned to her and said: “Finally”.*



*The winners from Muizenberg Junior School*

**Participating schools in  
Cape Town:**

Alpine Primary School

Claremont Primary  
School

Heathfield Primary

Muizenberg Junior  
School

St Anne's Primary

Sid-G-Rule

Westlake Primary

*“Ms Brown said Muizenberg Junior and Sid G Rule Primary had a tie for second place, so they had to answer a tie-breaker question, and Sid G Rule Primary finished in third place. All the contestants also had a chance to win R20 spot prizes during the quiz, and a set of books went to the winner of each of the four rounds. Ms Brown said that during the 16 years that she has been running the Phendulani Quiz it had grown from 10 schools to 200 schools across South Africa. She stressed the importance of introducing children to local authors, adding that most of this year’s quiz books were written by them.*

*“This year’s participants had expressed a preference for local author Jaco Jacobs, whose *The Girl with Wings and Waldo* and the *Werewolf in Red Tackies* were particularly popular, and other notable books included Roald Dahl’s *BFG* and Salamina Mosese’s *Disaster at Gogo’s Spa*, she said.”*

## Durban Phendulani Quiz, 1 November 2024

*Report by Ros Toerien*

### Participating schools in Durban:

Ekuthuleni Primary School  
Buhlebethu Primary School  
Kasturba Gandhi Primary School  
Joel Primary School  
Zuzokhule Primary School  
Mthubi Primary School  
Durban South Primary School  
Windy Heights Primary School  
Eqinisweni Primary School  
Eskhululiwe Primary School

The LEARN Project has been successfully hosting the Phendulani Literacy Quiz in KwaZulu-Natal for a couple of years.

This year, there were a total of 120 learners participating in the quiz, from 10 schools carefully selected from the 26 LEARN Beneficiary Schools – where the LEARN Project has established libraries and book corners.

The winning team was Kasturba Ghandi Primary (Team 1), followed by Joel Primary School (Team 1) in second place, Eskhululiwe Primary (Team 1 & 2 tied) in third place, Joel Primary School (Team 2) fourth, and Ekuthuleni Primary in fifth.



*Quiz master Roslynn Toerien, LEARN CEO*

Principals and librarians were provided with inspirational tips to assist in the preparation of learners for the quiz. Books were handed out with enough time to prepare. The Quiz Assistant was Wiseman Njeke, and marking of answer sheets was by LEARN assistants Nonceba and Lungile.

There were 13 Quiz Books per school. Each school was invited to bring up to two teams of learners and up to two reserves per school, which meant our Durban quiz had 20 invited teams participating.



The preparation leading up to the quiz was well planned, with all donated Phendulani Literacy Quiz books covered in plastic, including spine labels and accessioned into registers which were added to the schools existing library registers so that the books could be added to the schools' libraries. This then means that the books will be available for other learners in the schools to read the books once the quiz is over and the

quiz teams are finished with their books. Wiseman Njeke visited participating schools weekly to help the teams prepare for the quiz and assisted Librarians. This really benefitted the teams as they were well prepared for the quiz and learners were confident on the day.



*A team discussing the answer*

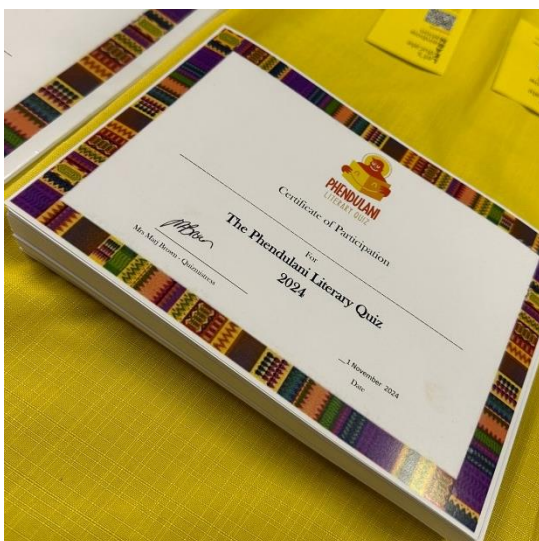
Each participating school won a gift box filled with a selection of new books for their library and the top four schools won extra books for their libraries.

This year we received sponsorship from the AES Charitable trust, to cover the cost of plastic for the books to be covered to ensure longevity when they get placed back into their libraries, as well as pockets, date sheets and cards and spine labels, printing costs of the certificates, the book prizes of a collection of books for each of the top 4 schools, as well as individual book prizes for learners in the top 3 teams. We also hosted a lunch of KFC meals and drinks for the children and teachers after the quiz to celebrate their hard work and great efforts in preparing well for the quiz, ending our Quiz on a high note.

Each learner filled in the quiz review sheet which we have collected for the Phendulani Quiz. The most popular book as a firm favourite was 'Girls don't do that', followed by 'Nozincwadi mother of books.' The least favourite book was 'Chanda and the devious doubt.'

Their request was for more South African authors and books and that the Phendulani Quiz continues for many years to come as they see it as the highlight in their years calendar and it gives their school something positive to work towards and grow from.

Thank you so much to Phendulani Literacy Quiz organisers for providing such an incredible platform for our Durban disadvantaged schools to learn and grow from. They have all benefitted greatly from the experience and learners and teachers left the day motivated to continue reading and expanding their knowledge through the power of books.



We extend our utmost gratitude to Marj and the Phendulani Literacy Quiz team for creating and upholding such a wonderful Quiz for schools and learners – as well as all those who made it possible for our LEARN Beneficiary schools to attend on the day. Thank you for continuing to support our quest of educating our Rainbow Nation through the power of books and literacy. We believe that Readers Make Leaders and with a wealth of knowledge at their fingertips, a brighter future can be seen ahead for each individual child, as well as our beautiful country. Equipping the future leaders of South Africa!



## Sponsors

Every year, I am amazed and humbled by the generosity of the publishers and book dealers. A huge thanks goes to the sponsors of books below:

- Jacana
- Penguin RandomHouse Struik
- PanMacMillan
- NB publishers
- New Africa Books
- Jonathan Ball
- Exclusive Books
- Biblionef

Thanks too to author Edyth Bulbring, who offered me a large discount on one of her titles.

Due to the sponsorship of the AESSEAL charitable trust, the Phendulani Quiz was extended to Makhanda, and the quiz in Cape Town was expanded.

**Extra Book donors for Phendulani prizes or reading in Johannesburg( in addition to publishers listed below).**

Roedean School's Parent Teacher Association contributed two titles for the Johannesburg Phendulani round.

Nicky Sulter of St John's Prep School donated prizes for the Jhb Phendulani round, in conjunction with Pan MacMillan.

## Mother tongue reading

I was very keen to include mother tongue books this year; in the Franschhoek Phendulani Quiz, we included titles in Afrikaans and English, or IsiXhosa and English, for the schools in the valley who participated. The mother tongue titles were donated by Biblionef.

## Contact

For more information about the Phendulani Quiz or to involve your school in next year's event, visit [www.phendulani.com](http://www.phendulani.com) or email Ms Brown at [marjoriebrown58@gmail.com](mailto:marjoriebrown58@gmail.com).

**Marj Brown**  
**Phendulani Founder and Coordinator**  
**December 2024**

**Email: [marjoriebrown58@gmail.com](mailto:marjoriebrown58@gmail.com)**