

UITGAWE 2

HOËRSKOOI BEN VILJOEN

BEN VILJOEN

2026



THE MEANING BEHIND THE SCHOOL SYMBOL

BY TENITA DA SILVA

Every great school has a symbol that represents its identity, and at Hoërskool Ben Viljoen, that symbol is the owl. But why an owl?

For centuries, the owl has been known as a symbol of wisdom, knowledge, and insight.

These are qualities that lie at the heart of Hoërskool Ben Viljoen. Just as an owl sees clearly in the dark, our learners are encouraged to think critically, overcome challenges, and strive for excellence in everything they do.

The owl also represents determination and focus. It patiently observes, learns, and acts with purpose, qualities that can be seen in our classrooms, on our sports fields, and in our cultural activities.

At Ben Viljoen, we believe in working hard, staying dedicated, and giving our best, no matter the challenge.

Another reason the owl is such a fitting mascot is its strong sense of awareness and leadership.

As a school, we aim to develop learners who are not only academically capable but also responsible, respectful, and ready to make a positive impact on the world around them.

The owl is more than just a mascot, it is a reminder of who we are. It reflects our pursuit of knowledge, our commitment to excellence, and the pride we have in being part of the Hoërskool Ben Viljoen family.



DALLERS SE DOELE SINK

DEUR JENNA BERRY



Ons lê weer aan die einde van 'n suksesvolle netbalseisoen vir Hoërskool Ben Viljoen.

Hierdie seisoen was iets besonder, aangesien dit die eerste jaar was wat die netbalspelers van die Dal aan die Mpumalanga-liga deelgeneem het.

Alhoewel hierdie seisoen vol onsekerheid was, aangesien ons in een van die moeilikste poele ingedeel was om teen skole soos Middelburg Hoër en HTS Middelburg deel te neem, het hierdie meisies hulle goed van hul taak gekwyt.

Die drie van ons spanne het deurgedring na die Nkangala Distriksuitspele. Hier het die o.14's en 15's besonders presteer en deurgedring na die Mpumalanga Kampioenskappe.

Die Dallers het vir niks terug gestaan nie, en het onder die top 10 in die provinsie geëindig! Uit 16 skole het die o.14's 'n agtste plek verwerf en die o.15's 'n negende plek.



Ons moet ook nie vergeet van die NWU Pukke Reeks nie, dit het verseker 'n groot bydrae gelewer tot die suksesse wat behaal is.

Hier het die Dallers net so goed presteer! Die netbal het algeheel vierde geëindig, waar die o.14's en o.15's beide 3de plekke verwerf het, die o.16's en Eerstespan met 9de plekke, en die Tweedespan in die 12de plek.



Ons wil baie dankie sê aan elke afrigter wat hierdie spanne na goeie resultate gelei het. Elke fiksheidssessie en elke druppeltjie sweet het dit die moeite werd gemaak om te sê "Well done girls!".

HOW ARE GRADE 8 LEARNERS ADJUSTING TO HIGH SCHOOL?

BY JESSICA NWADIKE



This article is based on interviews conducted with Grade 8 learners from classes 8A–8E at Hoërskool Ben Viljoen.

Starting high school is a major milestone in every learner's life. It brings new opportunities, new challenges, and many exciting experiences. To find out how Grade 8 learners are adapting to life at Hoërskool Ben Viljoen, learners from classes 8A–8E were interviewed about their experiences so far.

Most learners described their transition to high school as positive and exciting. Many said they enjoy the new environment, the opportunity to meet new people, and the greater independence that comes with being in high school. One learner described it as "a great adventure," while another said it had been "exciting and enjoyable" despite the challenges.

A common theme throughout the interviews was the significant difference between primary school and high school. Many learners mentioned the larger number of students, having different teachers for each subject, and a much heavier workload. Several explained that moving from being one of the oldest learners in primary school to one of the youngest in high school required adjustment. Others compared the experience to being "a small fish in a big pond."

When asked about their favourite subjects, Mathematics and Biology emerged as the clear favourites. Learners praised their teachers for making lessons engaging and easy to understand. Some enjoyed Biology because of the fascinating topics covered, while others appreciated the challenge and problem-solving aspects of Mathematics.

The biggest challenges faced by the Grade 8 learners appear to be adapting to the increased workload, managing their time effectively, balancing academics with sport, and adjusting to new environments such as the hostel. Several learners noted that the amount of homework and the faster pace of learning were much greater than they had expected.

Making friends, however, seemed less challenging for most learners. Many reported forming new friendships through sport, class activities, and simply getting to know their classmates. While some found it difficult at first, most agreed that making friends became easier over time.

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Opinions differed on whether high school was harder than expected. Some learners felt that the workload, tests, and added responsibilities made high school more difficult than they had imagined. Others said they expected it to be challenging and found that they adapted more quickly than anticipated.

The advice given by learners for future Grade 8s was remarkably consistent. They encouraged new learners to work hard, stay organised, manage their time wisely, make new friends, and enjoy the experience. One learner summed it up perfectly by saying, “High school is a brand-new adventure for everyone.”

Overall, the interviews show that although the transition to high school comes with challenges, Grade 8 learners at Hoërskool Ben Viljoen are adapting well. Through hard work, friendships, sport, and a positive attitude, they are finding their place in their new school environment and making the most of their high school journey.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following Grade 8 learners for participating in this interview project and sharing their experiences:

Grade 8A

Estelle Myburg

Thapelo Mmako

Grade 8B

Luandi Jansen

Gawie Engelbrecht

Anethemba Mabena

Grade 8C

Rati Mangoale

Melinke Milner

Amahle Ntuli

Grade 8D

Neo Maphopha

Rowan Ross

Grade 8E

Reatile Kgaphola

M.L. van Zyl

Their contributions provided valuable insight into the experiences of Grade 8 learners as they adjust to high school life at Hoërskool Ben Viljoen.

THROWBACK CORNER & MEMORY LANE: WHERE NOSTALGIA COMES ALIVE

BY BONTLE MKWANAZI

Every school has its own special memories that stay with you long after you leave. It is not only about the work you do in class but also about the people you meet, the moments you share and the experiences that shape you along the way.

This is where the Throwback Corner and Memory Lane feature comes in. It is all about nostalgia and that feeling of déjà vu when you look back and suddenly feel like you are reliving those school days again. It takes us back to the moments that made us laugh, grow and sometimes even embarrass ourselves, but in the best way possible.

In this feature, we spoke to both former learners and current students of Hoërskool Ben Viljoen. They shared their favourite memories, funny moments, important lessons and the people who inspired them during their school journey.



As part of our Throwback Corner & Memory Lane feature, we invited both current learners and recent alumni to reflect on the moments, friendships, and experiences that have shaped their journeys at Hoërskool Ben Viljoen.

Naledi Malatjie, a former learner of Hoërskool Ben Viljoen who matriculated in 2025, fondly remembers Spirit Week 2022 as one of her favourite school memories. She credits Juf. Berry as the teacher who had the greatest impact on her life, always encouraging her to strive for excellence both academically and on the netball court.

One of her most memorable moments was when her boyfriend at the time organised Grade 8 learners to sing for her on her birthday. Looking back, Naledi says she would not change anything about her high school journey. Her advice to younger learners is to be mindful of the company they keep, as the people around you can influence both your character and how others perceive you.



THROWBACK CORNER & MEMORY LANE: WHERE NOSTALGIA COMES ALIVE

BY BONTLE MKWANAZI



Mosebjadi Ledwaba, a former learner who matriculated in 2025, remembers the 2024 revue, “Euphoria of Life,” as a highlight of her school career.

Mr Viljoen’s passion, dedication, and unwavering belief in his students left a lasting impression on her. She also fondly remembers the creativity and excitement that Spirit Week brought to the school each year.

One amusing memory involves receiving a test paper with ten extra marks due to a calculation error, only to discover later that the marks were corrected. Looking back, she wishes she had stepped outside her comfort zone more often and encourages current learners to believe in themselves and not let small worries hold them back.

One anonymous learner fondly remembers arriving at Grade 8 camp, feeling both nervous and excited while meeting lifelong friends for the first time. The learner recalls the Grade 8 concert, spirited war cry sessions before school, and a humorous incident involving a skateboard accident near the canal.

The friendships formed during high school remain the most meaningful part of the journey, with friends teaching valuable lessons about diversity, understanding, and true friendship. Looking back, the learner says meeting those friends on the first day of Grade 8 remains the memory that brings the biggest smile.



THROWBACK CORNER & MEMORY LANE: WHERE NOSTALGIA COMES ALIVE

BY BONTLE MKWANAZI



Keetumetse Matea is currently a Grade 12 learner at Hoërskool Ben Viljoen. She recalls Interhigh in Grade 8 as one of her favourite school memories.

Some of her funniest moments include falling while running for church and tearing the knee of her school pants, as well as being locked outside Juf. Berry's classroom in Grade 9.

She values the friendships she formed throughout her school journey and believes they have taught her important lessons about self-confidence, positivity, and faith.

She describes 2023 as a particularly special year because of the meaningful connections she made with both friends and the chaos and funny moments of Mr. Dlamini's class.

Hlogi, who is currently in Grade 11, remembers the Grade 8 initiation camp and the 2023 Bosveld Interhigh hosted at Ben Viljoen as standout moments.

One unforgettable experience involved being made to sing in front of the entire school by an EC.

She also takes great pride in making the netball team, which provided the opportunity to represent the school. Through friendships and sporting experiences, she has learned valuable life lessons and developed lasting memories. The Grade 8 bell-ringing ceremony remains one of the most meaningful moments of her school journey.



THROWBACK CORNER & MEMORY LANE: WHERE NOSTALGIA COMES ALIVE

BY BONTLE MKWANAZI



Theto Tlomatsana, currently a matriculant at our school, recalls the 2022 athletics meeting during her Grade 8 year as one of her most vivid school memories. With schools such as Curro Nelspruit participating, she especially remembers the excitement surrounding the relay events and the strong sense of school spirit. The person who has inspired her most is Lesego Mthembu, a current matriculant and Top 10 learner, whom she admires for her hard work, kindness, and graceful balance of academics, relationships, and family life.

She also recalls a humorous moment during the 2022 swimming gala before the Grade 8 camp, when Generaal Phala (Kagiso Phala, class of 2022) made her and her friends bow repeatedly to “thank” the DJ because music was playing at the time.

Her favourite teacher is Juf. Mariska Joubert, and she especially enjoys poetry in English. A typical school day often included extra lessons, which she describes as challenging at the time. A song that reminds her of school is Inge 2.

These stories remind us that while academic achievements and sporting successes are important, it is often the friendships, laughter, traditions, and shared experiences that leave the greatest mark on our hearts.

DEAR GRADE 8 ME – A LETTER FROM THE FUTURE

BY LERATO MAKWANA

I asked 3 matrics: "What would you say to your Grade 8 self?" This is what they had to say:

INOTHANDO MMOTLA (Hockey Player)

"I'd say: In grade 8, you're still exploring and enjoying yourself but at some point you'll be hit by realities that no one warned you about and you'll have to deal with them as young as you are because that's part of life. You'll have to remember that not everybody is your friend, even in matric and that's okay because along the way you'll know who your real ones are. Don't make the mistake of trusting easily. Academically it honestly doesn't get easier, grade 8 is still pap and vleis so don't be fooled and take school seriously especially in the senior phase of high school. Make sure to choose your subjects wisely in grade 10 and listen when people tell you to study in grade 11 because it will matter in future."



THETO TLOMETSANA (Academic Warrior)

"Do everything and anything you're interested in. The worst thing you could do for yourself in high school is to watch an opportunity pass you by. I tried a new sport too: Bisley, and I met so many kind people and learned so many things. Even if I wasn't the best, I can look at the scroll on my blazer and all the pictures and be reminded of the good old days. There's so many sports and cultural activities at your disposal; don't let that go to waste. All the information that you receive from grade 8 going forward is definitely needed in grade 12 so make sure you understand. All the best and enjoy high school while it lasts"

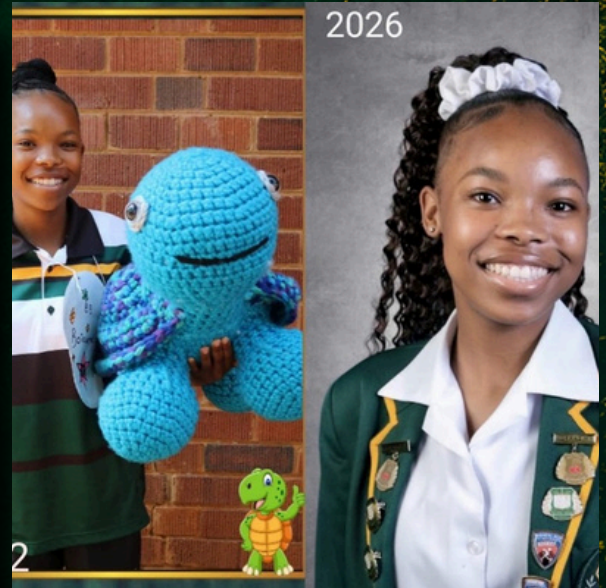
DEAR GRADE 8 ME – A LETTER FROM THE FUTURE

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I asked 3 matrics: "What would you say to your Grade 8 self?" This is what they had to say:

BOITUMELO MPHAHLELE (Head of Culture)

'Dear Grade 8 Tumi' I'm just so proud of you. I know you walked into high school shy, alone, and far from home. You probably didn't think you'd make it this far. You had nights where you wondered if it was even worth it. But look at everything you've achieved. All those wins, all those times you got back up, all those moments you chose to keep going – that wasn't just you. That was God. That was His strength carrying you when yours ran out. That was His resilience in you when obstacles kept coming and you wanted to quit. You kept going, Tumi. Even when it was hard. Even when you were scared. You didn't give up on yourself. And I'm so proud of you for that. Proud of who you were then, and proud of who you've become now. You made it."



5 YEARS, 3 VOICES, 1 BEAUTIFUL CHAPTER CLOSING

A HOME AWAY FROM HOME: WHY HOSTEL LIFE IS WORTH CONSIDERING

BY KAMO MASHISHI



For many parents, the thought of sending their child to a hostel can be worrying. Questions about safety, academics, supervision and well-being often arise. As a matric learner who moved into the hostel just two months ago, I understand these concerns. I remember wondering whether I would get used to hostel life, miss home too much or even enjoy the food. Looking back now, I can confidently say that the hostel has become a second home.

One of the first questions parents ask is whether their children will be safe. As someone who lives here, I can honestly say that safety is taken seriously. With dedicated staff, clear rules and regular supervision, we are always cared for and supported in a secure environment.

I quickly got used to the routine. We have set times for meals, studying and other activities, which helps us stay organised throughout the term. The meals are enjoyable, and during exam periods, extra study sessions are arranged to help us stay focused and prepared. As matriculants, we are also given the privilege of studying in our rooms under supervision, allowing us to work independently while staying on track.

Of course, hostel life is not only about academics. One of the best parts is the activities that bring us together. From creating country-themed burgers in fun competitions to decorating our hostel passages as a team, there is always something that encourages creativity, teamwork and school spirit. One of my favourite memories so far has been our bonfire evening. We sat around the fire with hot chocolate and roasted marshmallows and enjoyed each other's company under the night sky.

These moments are what make hostel life special. The friendships, support, and shared experiences make it much more than just a place to stay. What started as a new and unfamiliar experience has quickly become a place where I feel comfortable, supported and at home.

THE POWER OF GETTING INVOLVED: HOW PARTICIPATION CREATES OPPORTUNITIES

BY KAMO MASHISHI



School is about much more than what happens in the classroom. Some of the best memories, friendships, and opportunities come from getting involved in activities outside of academics.

Whether it is sport, culture, leadership, debating, community service, or school events, participation helps you grow as a person. It teaches confidence, responsibility, teamwork and communication skills that cannot always be learned from a textbook.

Many learners hesitate to join activities because they are afraid of failing, being judged or stepping out of their comfort zone. However, every successful captain, prefect, athlete or leader was once a beginner too. The most important step is simply showing up and trying.

Getting involved also opens doors. You meet new people, discover hidden talents, build valuable experience and create memories that will stay with you long after your school years are over.

You do not have to join everything. Find something that interests you and give it a chance. You may be surprised by what you can achieve.

Remember: opportunities rarely come to those who wait for them. They come to those who get involved.

BENNIE BEKENDES: MARNU HANCKE

DEUR ESTEA JOVNER

Ons kuier saam met een van ons Graad 11-uitblinkers om uit te vind wat hom inspireer om voortdurend na uitnemendheid te streef. Hoe slaag hy daarin om akademiese prestasie, sportverpligtinge en die uitdagings van die hoërskoollewe suksesvol te balanseer? Ons het met hom gesels oor sy motivering, doelwitte en die gewoontes wat hom help om bo uit te styg.

Wat motiveer jou om elke dag jou beste te gee?

Ek dink aan die doelwitte wat ek vir myself gestel het, en die feit dat elke dag wat ek nie my beste gee nie, is 'n dag wat ek nie kan teruggekry nie.

Wat doen jy voor 'n belangrike sportwedstryd?

My nommer 1 prioriteit is om ordentlik te eet voor 'n wedstryd en dan na my playlist te luister wat my help om te fokus.

Watter onderwyser of mentor het die grootste invloed op jou?

My ma en pa het die grootste invloed op my. Hulle het my geleer wat dit beteken om hard te werk en nooit moed op te gee nie. Hulle is ook altyd daar om my te ondersteun.

Waar sien jy jouself oor 10 jaar?

Oor 10 jaar sien ek myself as iemand wat klaar gestudeer het en 'n stabiele loopbaan opgebou het, en moontlik ook nog besig om my liefde vir rugby uit te leef.

Wat is die belangrikste les wat jy al geleer het?

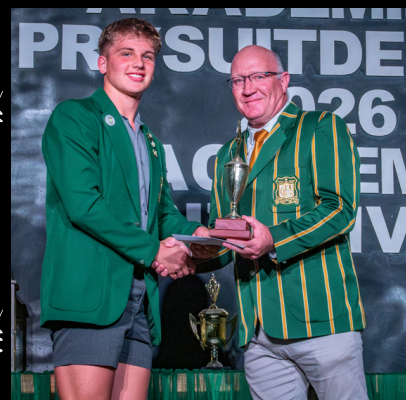
Die belangrikste les wat ek al geleer het, is dat dit nie gaan oor hoe jy val nie, maar hoe jy weer opstaan. Dit het my geleer dat terugslae deel van die proses is, en dat jou reaksie daarop is wat regtig saak maak.

Wat is sover die hoogtepunt van jou jaar gewees?

Die hoogtepunt van my jaar was sonder twyfel toe ek SA's in diskus gewen het. Dit was 'n ongelooflike gevoel om te weet dat al die harde werk en oefening uiteindelik vrugte afgewerp het.

Bonus: Lewensmotto

Dit wat jy insit, is dit wat jy uitkry.



FILM NEGATIVE

FILM NEGATIVE

FILM NEGATIVE

FILM NEGATIVE

FILM NEGATIVE

FILM NEGATIVE

THE DOUBLE LIFE OF STUDENT ATHLETES

BY TISETSO NETILI



Monday morning. Your maths test starts in ten minutes. Your sports bag is sitting next to your desk. Your coach wants you at practice after school. Your teacher wants the assignment submitted by midnight. And somehow, you're expected to survive all of it.

For many learners, balancing school and sport can feel like living a double life. One moment you're solving equations and analysing poems and the next, you're sprinting across a field, diving for a ball, or pushing through another exhausting training session.

From the outside, being involved in sport seems exciting. There are matches, team spirit, medals and victories. What people don't always see are the late nights spent studying after training, the early mornings, and the constant struggle to keep up with deadlines.

Grade 12 learner, Odirile Mateya, knows this challenge well. As a hockey player who trains several times a week, she often finds herself switching between textbooks and training gear. "There are days when I get home completely exhausted and still have hours of schoolwork waiting for me," she said. "Sometimes it feels impossible, but when I step onto the field, I remember why I do it. Sport gives me a break from stress and helps me stay motivated."

Her experience is one shared by many learners. While balancing school and sport is not always easy, it teaches valuable lessons that cannot be learned from a textbook alone. Commitment, resilience and determination are developed every time students show up, whether it is for a test or a training session.

The truth is that there is no perfect balance. Some days school takes the lead. Other days sport demands more attention. The challenge is learning how to keep moving forward when both seem overwhelming.

Behind every learner carrying a sports bag through the school gates, is a story of hard work, sacrifice and perseverance. They may not wear capes, but student athletes perform a balancing act every day – and that deserves recognition.

So the next time you see someone rushing from class to practice, remember: they are not just playing a sport. They are mastering the art of doing it all.

DALLER-VANG- MASJIENE

DEUR JENNA BERRY



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Vanjaar is Hoërskool Ben Viljoen se tweede jaar in die Limpopo Skole Varswateroewerhengelliga.

Ons het vanaf een span na drie volle spanne van vier gevorder. Boonop het die dogters ook besluit om by hierdie sport betrokke te raak, en het beslis die manne geskok!

Alle Ligas word by die Nyl Biodiversiteitsdam in Potgietersrus gehou en die spanne kompeteer teen skole wat insluit Hoërskool Pietersburg, Hoërskool Nylstroom en vele ander.

Elke kompetisie word in twee sessies met 'n uur-breek opgedeel. Tydens elke sessie het hengelaars die geleentheid om groot visse uit te trek en persoonlike rekords op te stel. Aan die einde van elke sessie word die visse geweeg en getel, dan word alles verwerk om die finale uitslae te kry.

'n Spesiale woord van dank word aan Meneer Sarel Snyman en Meneer Tiaan Smit gegee vir die op-en-af-ry op die oewers om te kyk hoe elkeen presteer. Hulle ry ook die voer aan en help om die skool se naam hoog te hou.

Alhoewel jy dink Hengel is net visse uit die water katrol en jou gunsteling "playlist" langs die dam luister, is dit baie meer as dit. Dié sport vereis baie ure se deursettingsvermoë wanneer die visse besluit om besig te wees, asook goeie geestesgesondheid vir wanneer jy 'n bielig van 'n baber verloor of selfs wanneer jou penmaat die dam leeg vang en jy nog net 'n riet of twee gevang het. Hierdie sport leer jou ook om in jouself te glo, want soos die "pro's" sê "*Confidence catches victory*" is 100% die waarheid!

Ons vertrou dat ons die hengelseisoen van 2026 op 'n hoë noot sal beëindig, want as ons hengelaars aanhou vang soos wat hulle vang, is die kans goed dat die Nasionale Kampioenskappe in die toekoms lê.

Sterkte vir die res van die seisoen en katrol oorwinning uit daardie waters uit!

THE SILENT STRUGGLE OF MATRIC: THAT GRADE 11 DOESN'T PREPARE YOU FOR

BY ONKARABILE RAMATSHEGO

The transition from Grade 11 to Grade 12 is often treated like a normal step forward, but the reality of entering Matric caught me completely off guard. While Grade 11 was tough, it only tested how much schoolwork I could memorize for exams. It did not prepare me for the deep mental, emotional, and physical tiredness that comes with being a Matric student.

Suddenly, the pressure is everywhere, and no one truly prepares you for how heavy the workload becomes or how loud the constant noise about your future gets. It is a silent struggle because you try your best to look okay on the outside while keeping up with everyday classes, but underneath it all, the sudden jump in responsibility feels overwhelming.

For me, this pressure doubled right from the beginning of the first term. Starting the year with intense academics immediately took a massive toll on my energy. On top of the heavy school syllabus, the constant demand from universities makes you realize that your future is happening right now. People are always on your back asking overwhelming questions like, "Have you applied yet?" or "What are your plans for next year?" These questions are so hard to answer because deep down, I know how difficult this journey actually is. Certain Matrics do not have it easy, and trying to balance regular school tests while trying to secure your future can make you feel like you are drowning.

However, you cannot just bury your face inside your books twenty-four hours a day because you will eventually crash and burn. You absolutely need to stay focused, but you must also allow yourself to have fun and breathe at some point.

In conclusion, the silent struggle of Matric is a massive journey that goes way beyond anything we experienced in Grade 11. It challenges every single part of who you are, from your emotions to your physical strength. Work as hard as you can and respect your studies, but always remember to look after your own well-being and enjoy the final moments of school.

Balance is the ultimate key to making it through, and if you protect your mental health while keeping your focus, you will successfully survive this tough route and walk into a bright future.

THE POWER OF KINDNESS IN SCHOOLS

BY ANNE-MIKÉ VAN STADEN

More Than Just a Good Deed...

Imagine walking into school on a Monday morning feeling nervous about a test or worried about a problem at home. Then, a friend greets you with a smile, a teacher asks how you are doing, or a classmate offers to help you with your work. Suddenly, your day feels a little brighter. This is the power of kindness. Although kindness may seem like a small thing, it has the ability to create a positive environment where learners feel valued, supported, and motivated.

Kindness is the act of being considerate, caring, and helpful towards others. In schools, kindness can be shown in many ways, such as including someone who feels left out, helping a struggling learner, encouraging a friend, or simply treating everyone with respect. These small actions can make a significant difference in the lives of others.

One of the greatest benefits of kindness in schools is that it creates a welcoming atmosphere. Learners who feel accepted are more likely to participate in class activities and build healthy friendships. A kind school environment reduces feelings of loneliness and helps learners develop confidence. When people know they are supported, they are more willing to take on challenges and work towards their goals.

Kindness also helps reduce bullying. Bullying is a serious issue that affects many schools around the world. It can damage a learner's self-esteem and academic performance. However, when learners choose kindness over cruelty, they contribute to a culture of respect and understanding. Standing up for someone who is being bullied or offering support to a victim can make a huge difference. Kindness encourages empathy, which is the ability to understand and share the feelings of others.

Teachers also play an important role in promoting kindness. By treating learners fairly, listening to their concerns, and encouraging respectful behaviour, teachers set an example for everyone to follow. Learners often imitate the attitudes and actions of adults, making it essential for teachers to demonstrate kindness in their daily interactions.

Furthermore, kindness can improve academic performance. Studies have shown that learners perform better when they feel safe, happy, and supported. A positive learning environment allows learners to focus on their work instead of worrying about negative social interactions. Group projects and classroom discussions also become more productive when learners treat each other with respect.

Another important aspect of kindness is that it is contagious. When one person performs a kind act, it often inspires others to do the same. A single act of kindness can create a chain reaction that spreads throughout an entire school. For example, helping a new learner feel welcome may encourage that learner to help someone else in the future. In this way, kindness has the power to transform a school community.

In today's world, where people are often busy and focused on their own problems, kindness is more important than ever. Schools should not only be places of learning but also places where values such as respect, compassion, and empathy are encouraged. By choosing kindness every day, learners can help create a school environment where everyone feels included and appreciated.

In conclusion, kindness is a powerful force that can improve relationships, reduce bullying, and create a positive learning environment. It costs nothing, yet its impact can be priceless. Every learner has the ability to make a difference through simple acts of kindness. After all, a small act of kindness can change someone's day, and sometimes even their life.



Hard times...



will always reveal true friends.

AM

CHILDHOOD HOBBIES TO MOTION DESIGN

BY MOSHOPIADI NCHABELENG

Two years after leaving Hoërskool Ben Viljoen, former art student Kai is carving out a place for himself in the creative world. Now studying Motion Design at the Cape Town Creative Academy, he is exploring animation, 3D design and visual effects while pursuing his lifelong passion for storytelling.

Born in Colesberg in the Northern Cape on the 2nd of March 2006, Kai jokes that he "took a very long time to evacuate the womb" because he was not quite ready to face the world. Yet, years later, he has embraced the world of creativity with enthusiasm and ambition.

Interestingly, art was not always his first love. As a child, Kai dreamed of becoming an author. He spent countless hours writing miniature books made from printer paper and illustrating the scenes inside them. His imagination flourished through stories, reading and make-believe adventures. He recalls pretending to travel through fairylands on his rocking horse, called a "hobbelperd" in Afrikaans, and playing imaginative games with friends, where he was often a black wolf with blue eyes.

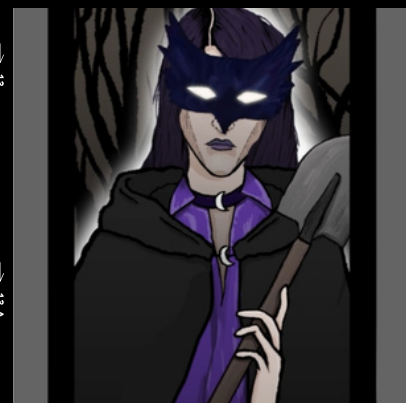
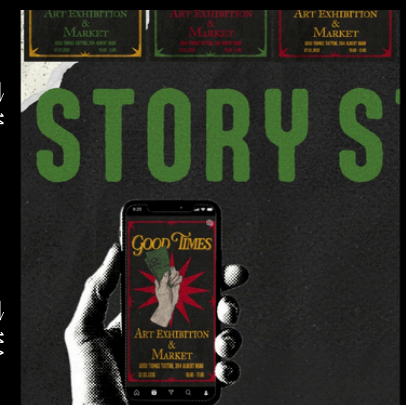
Despite his creativity, Kai never considered himself particularly talented at Visual Arts. In fact, he almost chose Accounting as a school subject. That changed when his high school art teacher, Juffrou Mareli de Klerk, showed him an art textbook. Paging through it, Kai encountered the sculptures of Jane Alexander and was immediately captivated.

"They were brilliant and seemed so interesting," he says. That moment proved to be a turning point, leading him to choose art instead of Accounting – a decision that shaped the course of his future.

Today, Kai studies Motion Design at the Cape Town Creative Academy, located in the Waterfront Silo District in Cape Town. Motion Design combines graphic design with animation and can be seen in everything from Netflix title sequences to animated advertisements and website graphics. Kai is specialising in 3D design, which includes 3D modelling, animation and visual effects.

His talents have already led to exciting opportunities. Recently, Kai was selected as one of only five students from his university to create an animation for Lumenocity, a company that specialises in light projection artworks. His work was projected onto the Iziko Museum in Cape Town's Company's Garden.

Inspired by African beadwork and pattern animation, Kai created a vibrant and abstract piece that celebrated South African visual culture. The project challenged him creatively and demonstrated his ability to combine tradition with modern digital art forms.



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CHILDHOOD HOBBIES TO MOTION DESIGN

BY MOSHOPIADI NCHABELENG

Throughout his artistic journey, Kai has been inspired by many people. He credits Juffrou Mareli de Klerk for introducing him to art and encouraging him during his high school years. He also speaks highly of his university lecturers, Lodi Inga and Jarrod Hassenjager, both accomplished creatives who continue to motivate him. According to Kai, inspiration can be found everywhere – in artworks, films, music, books, podcasts and video games.

Over the years, he has experimented with a wide variety of artistic mediums, including pencil drawing, charcoal, painting, sculpting, digital painting, digital sculpting, animation and 3D texturing. While painting remains his favourite traditional medium, he currently enjoys 3D sculpting and texturing the most.

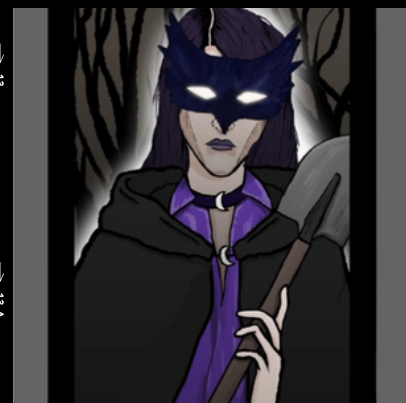
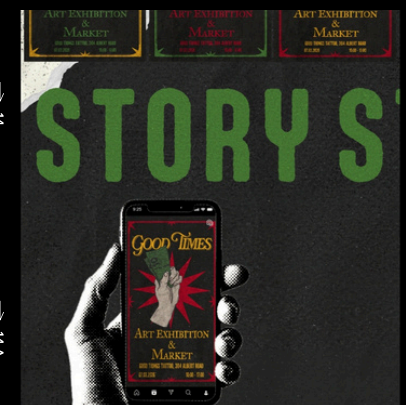
His work often leans towards dark fantasy and is frequently set in medieval, Victorian or vaguely historical worlds. Although he does not consider this a deliberate niche, his classmates and lecturers have noticed this recurring theme in his creations.

Looking ahead, Kai hopes to work in the gaming industry, creating assets and designing 3D characters for games or films. He acknowledges that freelancing may be part of his journey but dreams of joining a smaller studio and contributing to projects that inspire others.

Despite all he has achieved, Kai remains humble.

"I'm still shocked that I'm considered an artist," he says. "I didn't realise when I was younger just how many ways there are to be creative. I'm shocked each time I achieve a new milestone, and I hope I never stop surprising myself."

Kai's story is one of curiosity, courage and growth. From youth, writing stories in Colesberg to a university student creating animations projected onto historic buildings, he proves that sometimes the path we never expected becomes the one that leads us exactly where we're meant to be.



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SEEING NOSTALGIA IN MUSIC AND FASHION

BY LOTI LEDWABA

Nostalgia is an inevitable part of being human. Some may say it's a bad thing, but I don't totally agree.

What is nostalgia? It can be defined as a sentimental longing for the past. It is a common, universal, and highly social emotional experience.

Old trends and norms seem to become popular again. From baggy jeans and vintage sneakers to the return of vinyl records, nostalgia is everywhere in today's music and fashion.

In music, artists often sample older songs or take inspiration from previous decades. Many Gen Z listeners are discovering music from the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s through social media, introducing classic hits to a new generation. Since 2020, there has been a significant increase in the purchase of turntables and vinyl records.



Fashion works in a similar way. Trends that were popular years ago are returning with a modern twist. Oversized clothing, bootcut jeans, layering, and retro accessories have all made a comeback, proving that great style never truly disappears. David Beckham wore baggy jeans in 2003, and A\$AP Rocky is still embracing the trend in 2026.

Why is nostalgia so popular? It provides comfort and familiarity. In a fast-changing world, people enjoy reconnecting with memories, styles, and sounds from the past. At the same time, nostalgia allows younger generations to experience trends they never lived through themselves.

Whether it's an old song becoming a viral hit or a fashion trend making a comeback, nostalgia reminds us that the past continues to influence the present in creative and exciting ways.



CULTURE ACTIVITIES DESERVE THE SPOTLIGHT

BY BLESSING RATAU

The Overlooked Side of School Life

When learners think of success, they often think of top marks or winning sports matches. While academics and sport deserve recognition, culture activities such as public speaking, choir, theatre, revue, debating, and spelling bees are often overlooked. Many learners see culture as less impressive, despite the fact that it develops skills that last a lifetime.

Why Learners Don't Participate

The biggest reason learners avoid culture activities is fear. Many are afraid of being judged, making mistakes, or performing in front of others. Some believe they are not talented enough, while others worry that culture activities are not valued as highly as sport or academics.

Why Culture Matters

Culture activities do much more than fill up a timetable. According to the Journal of Youth Development, young people who participate in public speaking report improvements in confidence, communication skills, leadership, organisation, and research abilities.

According to a 2024 study by Wang, Li, and Yao, learners who participate in arts and cultural activities develop stronger social and emotional skills, including collaboration, communication, self-confidence, and emotional regulation.

Research on extracurricular activities has also found that learners involved in debating and drama experience significant improvements in confidence and communication skills, both of which are valuable in school, university, and future careers.

Take the Chance!

Culture activities are not only for the naturally talented. They are for anyone willing to step out of their comfort zone and grow and learn. Whether it is joining theatre, entering a spelling bee, acting in a play, or delivering a speech, every experience helps build confidence and valuable life skills.

The next time an opportunity arises, don't sit on the sidelines. Give culture a chance. You may discover a talent, gain confidence, make new friends, and develop skills that will benefit you long after your school years are over.

References:

- According to the Journal of Youth Development (2009), public speaking helps learners develop confidence, leadership, communication, and research skills.
- According to Wang, Li, and Yao (2024), participation in arts and cultural activities strengthens learners' social and emotional skills.
- According to research on extracurricular activities and communication skills (2025), debating and drama contribute to improved confidence and effective communication



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HOW TO “FAKE” CONFIDENCE DURING SCHOOL PRESENTATIONS

BY LERATO MAKWANA

What’s scarier: a Maths test or a three-minute oral? If your answer is the oral, you’re in the right place.

Presentations can be intimidating, especially for shy or anxious students. Between shaky hands, a trembling voice, and racing thoughts, standing in front of a class can feel overwhelming. Here are a few tips on how to “fake” confidence during presentations, from an ex-introvert.

Know Your Topic Like the Back of Your Hand

You’re far more likely to panic if you don’t know what you’re talking about. You don’t need to memorise every single word, but you should be familiar with your key points and understand your topic well. The more prepared you are, the more confident you’ll feel.

Practice Makes Perfect

Practice your presentation in front of a mirror or with people you feel comfortable around. You can also record yourself speaking to identify mistakes in your tone, pace, or pronunciation. Fixing these small issues beforehand can make a big difference when it’s time to present.

Body Language Matters

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart to create a strong, stable base. This can help prevent nervous pacing or rocking from side to side. Relax your shoulders, keep your chin up, and maintain eye contact with your audience. Positive body language can make you appear more confident, even if you’re feeling nervous inside.

Most importantly, remember to breathe. Chances are, your classmates aren’t judging you—they’re probably just relieved that it isn’t their turn yet.

Confidence is a skill. Sometimes, you have to fake it until it becomes real.



ORATORS COMPETITION 2026

BY THETO TLOMATSANA & BLESSING RATAU

On the 29th of April both juniors and seniors participated in an English Orators Competition in the staff room– juniors being grades 8-9 and seniors being grades 10-12. The atmosphere was filled with boldness and confidence as the learners showcased their exceptional public speaking skills.

The juniors explored the themes *weed*, *mentor* and *tendency*, offering their interesting perspectives in even more interesting speeches. The seniors tackled themes such as *postscript*, *risk* and *polemic*. The argumentation skills displayed in these speeches showed their mature and profound insight in their respective themes.

Every learner's speech was a win-worthy speech but a ranking still had to be made. After careful deliberation from the judges the following learners were selected:



From the juniors we have:

1. Jessica Nwadike
2. Reatile Kgaphola
3. Loti Ledwaba



From the seniors we have:

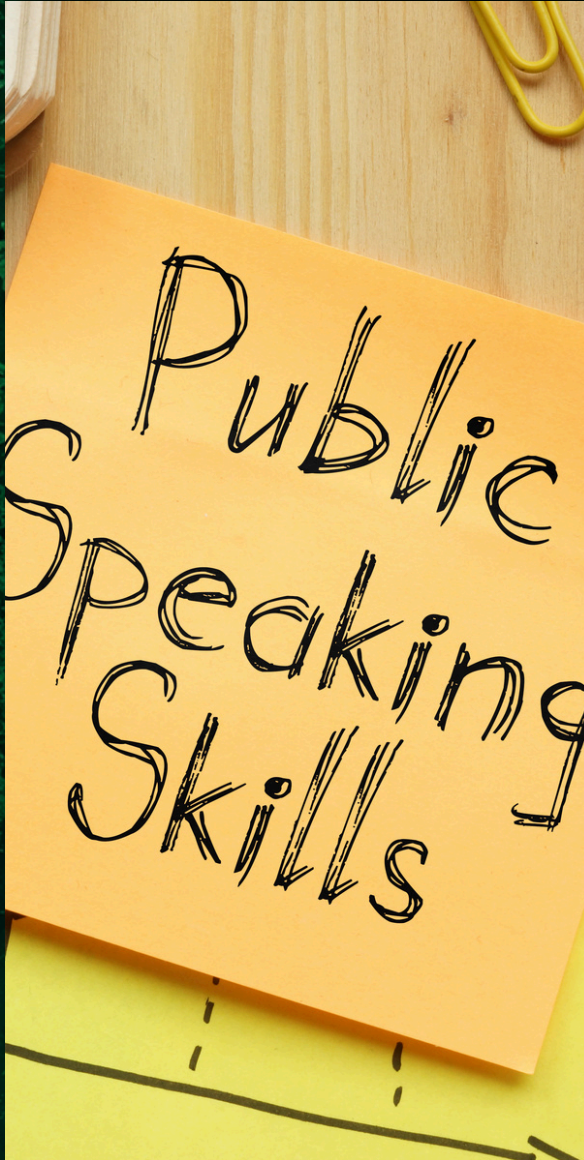
1. Blessing Ratau
2. Theto Tlomatsana
3. Moshopiadi Nchabeleng (absent from photo)

The top 2 will be moving forward to the Interhigh Orators Competition that will be held at Hoërskool Ellisras on the 14th of August. We trust that their exceptional skills and talent will hold the school's name high.

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR PUBLIC SPEAKING SKILLS AND OVERCOME FEAR

BY BLESSING RATAU

Public speaking is a skill that many people find intimidating. Standing in front of an audience and sharing your thoughts can be nerve-racking, even for confident individuals. However, public speaking is a skill that can be developed through practice, preparation, and the right mindset.



Practise Before the Big Day

One of the best ways to improve your public speaking skills is through regular practice. Start by rehearsing your speech in front of a mirror. This allows you to observe your facial expressions, body language, and overall delivery. Once you feel more comfortable, practise in front of friends and family members. Speaking to a small, supportive audience can help you build confidence before presenting to a larger group. The more familiar you become with your speech, the less nervous you are likely to feel.

Focus on Your Message

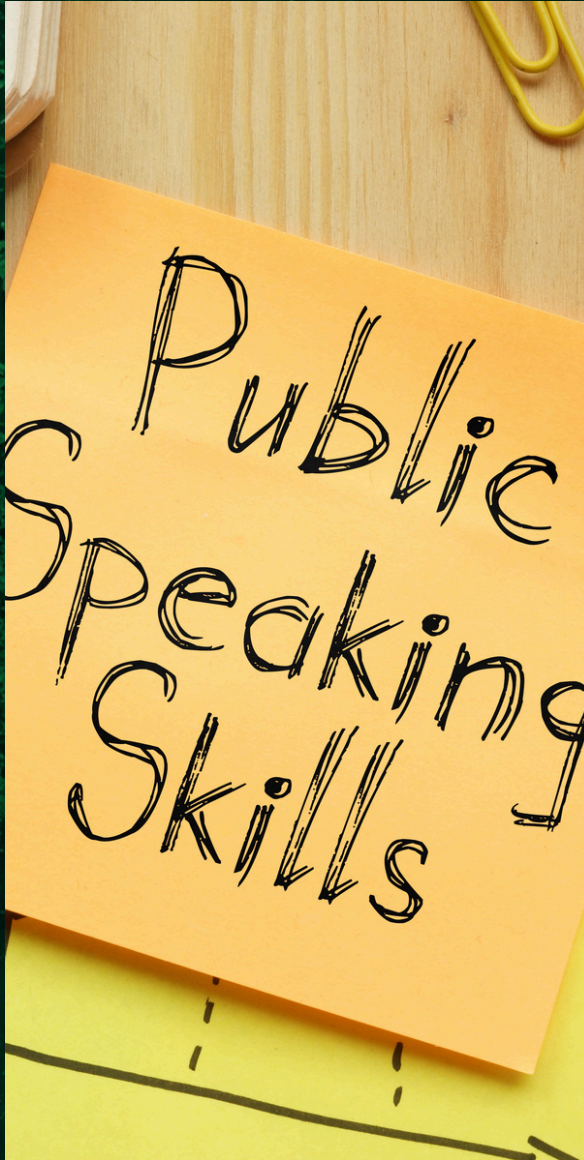
When preparing to speak, remember why you are speaking in the first place. Think about the importance of the message you are trying to communicate rather than worrying about how others might perceive you. Shifting your focus from yourself to your audience and your message can reduce anxiety and help you speak with greater purpose. People are often more interested in what you have to say than in judging every detail of your performance.

See Public Speaking as an Opportunity

Many speakers become nervous because they focus on what could go wrong. Instead, try viewing public speaking as an honour and an opportunity. In that moment, the audience is there to listen to you. They have given you their attention because your words have value. Feeling nervous will not improve your performance, but feeling grateful for the opportunity to share your ideas can help you approach the experience with a more positive mindset.

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR PUBLIC SPEAKING SKILLS AND OVERCOME FEAR

BY BLESSING RATAU



Learn to Enjoy the Experience

Perhaps the most effective way to overcome the fear of public speaking is to learn to enjoy it. Rather than dreading your speech, try to get excited about it. When you begin to enjoy speaking in front of others, you naturally become more relaxed. The more relaxed you are, the more confident and engaging your delivery will be. Public speaking becomes much more enjoyable when you stop seeing it as a test and start seeing it as a chance to connect with people.

Fear of public speaking is common, but it does not have to hold you back. By practising regularly, focusing on the importance of your message, viewing speaking opportunities positively, and learning to enjoy the experience, you can become a stronger and more confident speaker. Like any skill, public speaking improves with time and effort. The more you practise, the easier it becomes, and before long, what once felt frightening may become something you genuinely enjoy.

THE BIG DEBATE: HOCKEY VS RUGBY - WHICH SPORT COMES OUT ON TOP?

BY CEBOLENKOSI MAHLANGU

When it comes to school sports, few debates are as exciting as hockey versus rugby. Both sports are popular, competitive, and require teamwork, but they offer very different experiences for players and supporters.

Rugby is known for its physical strength, power, and determination. Players tackle, pass, and work together to score tries. It is a fast-paced game that demands courage, fitness, and discipline. Many fans enjoy the excitement of big tackles and thrilling last-minute victories.

Hockey, on the other hand, is all about speed, skill, and precision. Players use sticks to pass the ball and score goals while relying on quick thinking and excellent teamwork. Hockey requires sharp hand-eye coordination, stamina, and smart decision-making.

Both sports teach valuable life lessons. They help players build confidence, improve fitness, develop leadership skills, and learn the importance of working as a team. Whether you're on the rugby field or the hockey pitch, commitment and practice are the keys to success.

So, which sport is better? There is no right or wrong answer. Some people enjoy the physical challenge of rugby, while others prefer the speed and technique of hockey. In the end, the best sport is the one that inspires you to play, improve, and enjoy yourself.



HOW OUR BOYS' HOCKEY TEAM MADE HISTORY

BY KAMO MASHISHI



Our Boys' Hockey Team has once again made Hoërskool Ben Viljoen proud by successfully defending their Limpopo League title.

The team showed great determination throughout the competition. In the semi-final, they faced Ridgeway and delivered an impressive performance, securing a convincing 3-0 victory to book their place in the final.

In the championship match, they came up against Frans du Toit. The final was a closely contested battle, but our boys remained focused and fought until the end, earning a hard-fought 1-0 victory.

This remarkable achievement means that Hoërskool Ben Viljoen has won the Limpopo League title for two consecutive years, having also lifted the trophy last year. Their success is a testament to their hard work, dedication and teamwork.

As a school, we are incredibly proud of our hockey team for once again placing Hoërskool Ben Viljoen at the top. We congratulate every player and coach involved and hope that their reign as Limpopo League champions continues for many years to come.



DIE HARTKLOP AGTER ONS SPORT

DEUR ELENE BOTES

As jy op 'n Saterdag langs die kantlyn staan en die skoolgees hoor eggo, verstaan jy dit dadelik. Die gees wat die leerders bring en die ondersteuning van vriende, familie en afrigters is nie net mooi woorde nie, maar die bron van ons skool se sukses. Sport is soveel meer as 'n spel teen jou vyand, maar waar karakter gebou word, selfvertroue ontwikkel en vriendskappe gevorm word.

"Die droom het hier 'n daad geword" - 'n bekende frase van ons skoollied. Van o.14 tot by ons eerste spanne deel almal gesamentlik een droom. Nie net die genot van oorwinning nie, maar die wete dat harde werk en ekstra ure ons dryfkrag is. Daar is 'n belangrike aspek wat in die stiltes bydrae tot die droom, sonder enige erkenning, en dit is ons ondersteuning.

Ouers - Die onsigbare span. Agter elke suksesvolle skoolspan is daar 'n hele netwerk van ouers. Van die o.14 ma wat die eerste span aanmoedig tot by die matriekpa wat die o.14 wedstryd kom kyk. Hierdie wys ons kinders wat gemeenskap beteken - niemand juig net vir hulle eie kind nie. Dis ons kinders. Dis ons skool.

Die grootste oorwinning is nie altyd die trofee of eindtelling nie, maar die gemeenskap wat daarom gebou word. 'n Eerste span speler wat 'n graad agt ondersteun plant ware samehorigheid en opwinding vir wat voorlê.

Ondersteuning bou die toekoms en verander die onsekerheid en vrees na trots



THE MIGHTY BOKS

BY ELIANAH SIMELANE



Where the Name Comes From

Rugby arrived in South Africa in the 1800s, but the legend of the Springboks began in 1906. During a tour of Great Britain, captain Paul Roos gave the team the nickname “Springboks” after the South African antelope. The name quickly became part of the country’s identity.

Over the years, the Springboks became known for their physical style of rugby, powerful forwards, and never-give-up attitude.

The Historic 1995 World Cup

The 1995 Rugby World Cup was about much more than sport. Due to apartheid, South Africa had been banned from international rugby for many years. After becoming a democracy, the country hosted the tournament, creating a moment that would go down in history.

The Springboks defeated New Zealand in a tense final, but one of the most unforgettable moments came when Nelson Mandela walked onto the field wearing a Springbok jersey and presented the trophy to captain Francois Pienaar.

For many South Africans, this moment represented unity, hope, and a new beginning for the nation.

Four-Time World Champions

The Springboks have lifted the Rugby World Cup four times, matching the record of their biggest rivals, the New Zealand All Blacks.

THE MIGHTY BOKS

BY ELIANAH SIMELANE



Their victories came in:

1995 – Captain: Francois Pienaar

2007 – Captain: John Smit

2019 – Captain: Siya Kolisi

2023 – Captain: Siya Kolisi

History Maker: Siya Kolisi

In 2019, Siya Kolisi became the first black captain to lead the Springboks. Under his leadership, the team achieved back-to-back World Cup victories in 2019 and 2023, creating a historic chapter in South African rugby.

The Boks Today

Today, the Springboks, coached by Rassie Erasmus, remain one of the strongest teams in world rugby. They are recognised for their strong defence, dominant forwards, and famous “Bomb Squad” of powerful replacements.

More than just a rugby team, the Springboks represent pride, resilience, and unity for many South Africans.

As Rassie Erasmus said:

“In South Africa, pressure is not losing a rugby match. Pressure is having a loved one murdered. Pressure is not having a job. Pressure is one of your close relatives being hurt. Rugby is not pressure; rugby is a privilege.”

BARCELONA FEMENÍ

BY ELIANAH SIMELANE



Barcelona Femení have achieved what many teams can only dream of, a historic quadruple. The club completed a remarkable season by winning four major trophies: Liga F, the UEFA Women's Champions League, Copa de la Reina, and the Supercopa de España.

This achievement also marks their fourth European title in six years, highlighting an incredible level of consistency and dominance in women's football.

The Barça Style

Barcelona Femení continue to represent the famous Barcelona identity: quick passing, intelligent movement, and complete control of possession. Their style is often described as "tiki-taka," but with a modern twist, more speed, creativity, and direct attacking play in the final third.

One of the biggest strengths of the team is their ability to develop talent. When first-team players are injured, the team can rely on young players from La Masia, Barcelona's famous youth academy, to step up and compete at the highest level.

Stars Everywhere

Barcelona's success is not only because of their coaching philosophy, the squad is filled with world-class talent.

Ewa Pajor has been a key figure, proving herself as a ruthless goal scorer with 30 goals this season, including two goals in the Champions League final.

Vicky López is another exciting young talent. She gained international recognition after winning the Golden Ball award at the 2022 UEFA Women's Under-17 European Championship.

BARCELONA FEMENÍ

BY ELIANAH SIMELANE



The End of an Era, The Start of Another

Barcelona Femení are entering a new chapter following the departure of club legend Alexia Putellas. The two-time world player of the year spent 14 seasons at the club, helping shape Barcelona's identity and playing a major role in growing the popularity of women's football.

Even without some of their biggest legends, Barcelona Femení remain the blueprint for modern women's football, a team that is organised, talented, and consistently one step ahead.

As Alexia Putellas once said:

"I don't look back; I always look forward. When you win, you enjoy it for a moment, but then you think about what's next."

EXCESSIVE SCREEN TIME – WHY “TOUCH GRASS”?

BY LOTI LEDWABA



Let's be honest: most of us spend a huge part of our day staring at screens. Whether we're scrolling through TikTok, playing video games, watching YouTube, doing research, or completing schoolwork, screens have become a major part of our daily lives.

While technology has many benefits, too much screen time can negatively affect our health, productivity, and social lives.

One of the biggest concerns is its impact on our health. Spending hours looking at a screen can cause eye strain, headaches, poor posture, and even affect sleep patterns. The blue light emitted by phones, tablets, and computers can make it difficult for our brains to recognise when it's time to sleep, leaving us tired and unfocused the next day.

Excessive screen time can also affect our mental wellbeing. Constant exposure to social media often leads to comparing ourselves to others, which can increase feelings of stress, anxiety, and FOMO (fear of missing out). Sometimes, we become so focused on what's happening online that we forget to appreciate what's happening around us. After all, there is much more to life than a screen.

This is where the advice comes in: touch grass!

Although it started as an internet joke, the phrase carries an important message – take a break from your screen and reconnect with the real world. Going outside, exercising, spending time with friends and family, or simply sitting in nature can help reduce stress and improve your mood. Fresh air and sunlight are beneficial for both your mental and physical wellbeing.

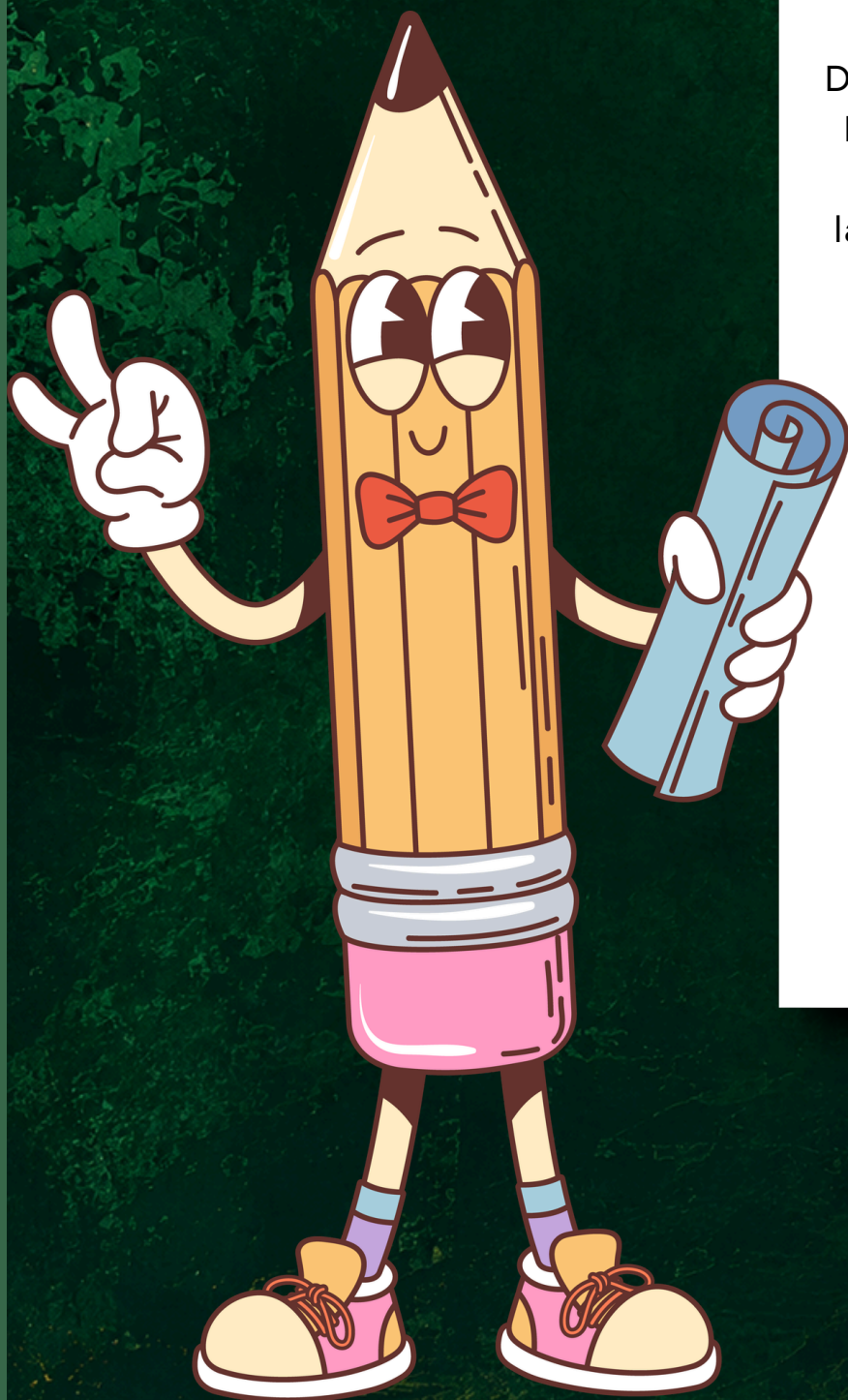
Of course, touching grass doesn't mean giving up technology completely. It simply means finding a healthy balance. Technology is an important part of modern life, but instead of spending all your free time scrolling mindlessly, consider taking a walk, playing a sport, reading a book, or having a face-to-face conversation with someone.

Technology is an amazing tool, but it shouldn't control our lives. The next time you find yourself scrolling for hours and can't remember why you picked up your phone in the first place, take a break. Go outside, get some fresh air, and yes – touch grass.

You might be surprised by how much better you feel.

GEHEIME LEWE VAN 'N POTLOOD

DEUR LANÉL COETZEE



Sodra die laaste voetstappe
verdwyn
kan die potlode hul geheime skryf
en niemand sal sien wat darna
gebeur...

Die potlode spring uit hul plekke uit.
Die spog van die skerpste potlood
se blink punt
laat die stompstes kla,” dis mos nie
reg!”
en die uitveer vee hul rusies uit.

“Moenie dink dis Toy Story nie,”
spog ‘n potlood ondeund
“ons is nie speelgoed wat voor
kamas dans nie,
maar net gewone skryfgoed”

Wanneer die son weer op kom
vroeg,
maak die leerder die skooltas oop
sonder om ooit die geheim te
vermoed

NEW DAY

BY MOSHOPIADI NCHABELEM

I look above the sky
As the pregnant clouds die.
The moodiness has gone
And it has become dawn.

The forenoon rain has
quieted
And air in its finest stead
Turns into wind and blows;
The roses show.

I pick up a little seedling
While the little mouse is
peeping -
It runs around the yard
Leaving no regard.

I plant the little seed
Doing nature a good deed.
It's the start of a new day
And for this, everyday, I pray.

