



### **In order to make it work you would ideally need:**

- A smart device, ideally a tablet or laptop
- Stable internet access, ideally ADSL, LTE or a fibre connection
- Time (try to negotiate working hours with your employer. You could start your day at 10am to enable teaching from 7.30am or 8am. I strongly recommend mornings for teaching and learning, and not afternoons or evenings.)
- A printer (although not absolutely necessary, it can save you a lot of time, especially with younger children who have to do a lot of actual writing).

Once these are in place, parents need to be structured in terms of what they will teach and they need to have a very good understanding of the outcomes for the specific term, per subject.

The Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) is accessible on the Department of Education website and is very detailed in terms of what children should be able to do by the end of each term. This means that parents can link the learning outcomes with the activities that their children need to do, or concepts they need to learn, eg. by end of Term 2 in Grade 1 Maths, a child should be able to describe and order numbers from smallest to greatest and greatest to smallest. There are a number of activities parents can do with a child to make sure they are able to order numbers. Once a parent knows the outcome, it is easier to search for activities to teach your child so that they can reach that outcome.

Of course, this type of schooling arrangement is only going to be practical for the most privileged South Africans, but that should not stop families everywhere from caring for their children and supporting their education from home if that is what they are most comfortable with.

### **Support guides**

A home-learning support guide has been produced by the C-19 People's Coalition with contributions from the Nal'ibali reading-for-enjoyment campaign. The guide shares information about the virus, support and ideas for helping children 0-13 years to learn while at home, as well as guidance on setting daily schedules.

It specifically suggests activities that many South African homes will be able to implement. An abbreviated version will appear in eight different South African languages at the end of June in the Nal'ibali reading-for-enjoyment story supplement.

### **Keep reading**

My recommendation for parents of primary school children, particularly for those who want to keep their children home but who are pressed for time, is to focus on developing their children's literacy skills. Reading underpins all school learning and so many children struggle with this. Follow the CAPS outcome guidelines and look for activities that support the mechanical skills of learning to read but, most importantly, don't forget that just simply enjoying a good story together will show your children that reading is satisfying and enjoyable. This will prompt them to want to read themselves.

If homeschooling is the best option for you and your family, make sure you register this with the Department of Education, or at least visit their website for details on the portfolio of evidence which you'll need to put together.

I am acutely aware of the fact many South Africans do not have access to the basic prerequisites for enabling a homeschooling environment. There isn't a worse time for us as South Africans to be exposed to the inequalities for our society. But I would urge parents to do what is best for them and their families, and to remember the power they have as their children's first teachers, and the power of stories.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Yandiswa Xhakaza is the CEO of the Nalibali reading-for-enjoyment campaign.

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