WINTER 2025

sa Homeschooling and beyond



Classic Books

Timeless classics to spark the imagination

How to parent in the digital age

Manage your kids' screentime

How a simple bread roll can bring you and your kids together

Homeschooling

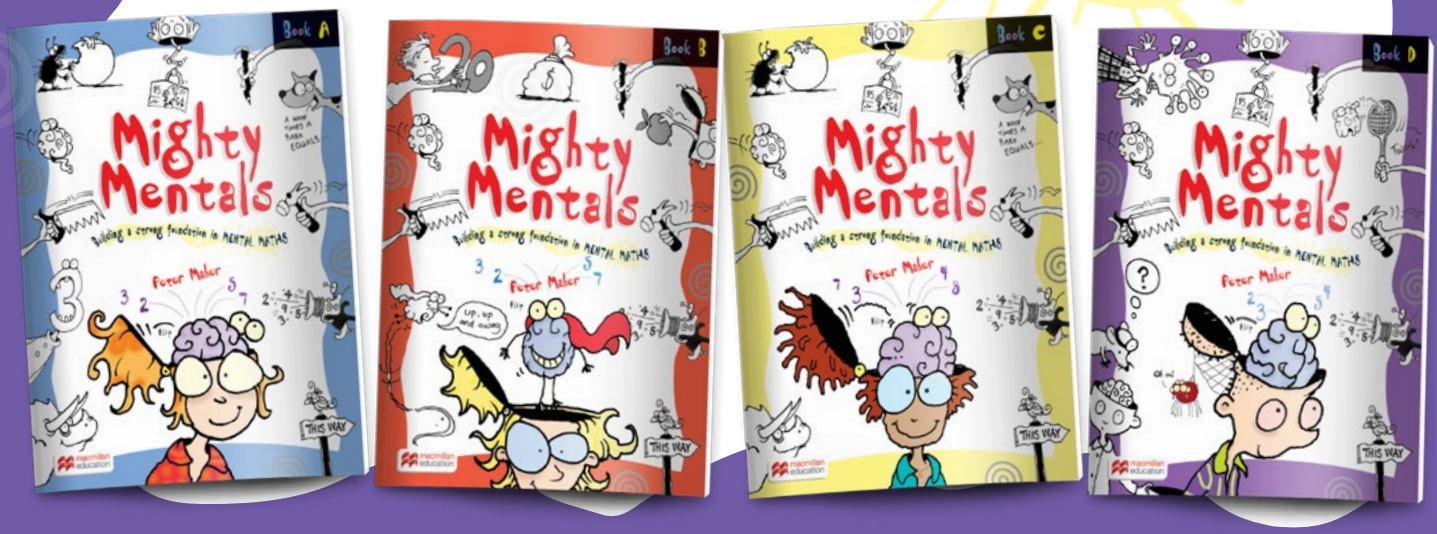
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Contents

5 **EDITOR'S NOTE**
by Earl Joseph

7 **A HOMESCHOOLER'S GUIDE TO DIGITAL PARENTING**
Navigate the impact of technology on kids with our guide to digital parenting in South Africa



13 **WHY YOUR CHILD SHOULD READ THESE 4 CLASSIC BOOKS**
Explore the enduring and timeless value of classic books for children in today's digital world





16 **COOKING & BONDING - BREAD ROLLS**
Bake these easy white bread rolls with your kids

19 **THE BEAUTY OF THE HOMESCHOOLING JOURNEY**
Move beyond academics to explore the deep connections, flexible learning and pure joy of discovery that make homeschooling a rewarding choice for families

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now available!



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Hello everyone,

and a warm welcome to our Winter 2025 issue of SA Homeschooling & Beyond! As we step into the new season, we are pleased to announce The Digital Afrikan as the new publishers of this magazine. As a homeschooler myself, I have had very different experiences of homeschooling all my children.

Two of my older kids attended homeschooling centres prior to COVID lockdowns while my youngest is now in Grade 5 and homeschooled with an online service provider. This has been a sometimes tumultuous but genuinely fulfilling experience. "The Beauty of the Homeschooling Journey" is a story that looks at how homeschooling builds connections outside of academics.

Winter often brings a chance to slow down and remain indoors. A good book is always a good companion. Our feature "Why Your Child Should Read These 4 Classic Books" takes you and the kids into magical worlds through timeless stories.

Comfort food is also a winter warmer and the simple bread roll becomes a wonderful way to huddle around the oven and bond while kneading and rolling. Try out our "Easy Bread Recipe for Kids".

Staying indoors also means having to entertain the kids. "A South African Homeschooler's Guide to Digital Parenting" is a great guide on how to avoid unfettered screen time, keep them safe and use technology as a learning tool as well.

SA Homeschooling & Beyond and the community we serve would not be where we are without the support of our brand partners. Our thanks go out to Conquesta Olympiads PRAXIS Online School, MacMillan Education, Bellavista SHARE, and Nova Pioneer. We also thank AEE Group, Parrot Products and KragDag. Your continued commitment and support helps us to keep helping our parents and kids.

We hope this Winter edition fills your homes with warmth, inspiration and new ideas.

Happy reading and stay cosy.

Earl Joseph

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Recognised as a homeschooling stakeholder
by the Department of Basic Education.
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Advertsing, events and partnerships: sales@digitalafrikan.com
SA Homeschooling magazine is independently published
by The Digital Afrikan (Pty) Ltd
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+27 11 883 4627 | www.sahomeschooling.com
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A South African Homeschooler's Guide to Digital Parenting



Technology is an inseparable part of modern life. For homeschooling families, it is a powerful ally as a gateway to endless educational resources. Yet, every parent understands the tension that comes with this access. This guide moves beyond the debate of whether technology is "good" or "bad." Instead, it provides a practical framework. It will help you manage screen time, protect your children from online risks and integrate technology into your curriculum in a way that supports healthy development.

Understanding the Double-Edged Sword

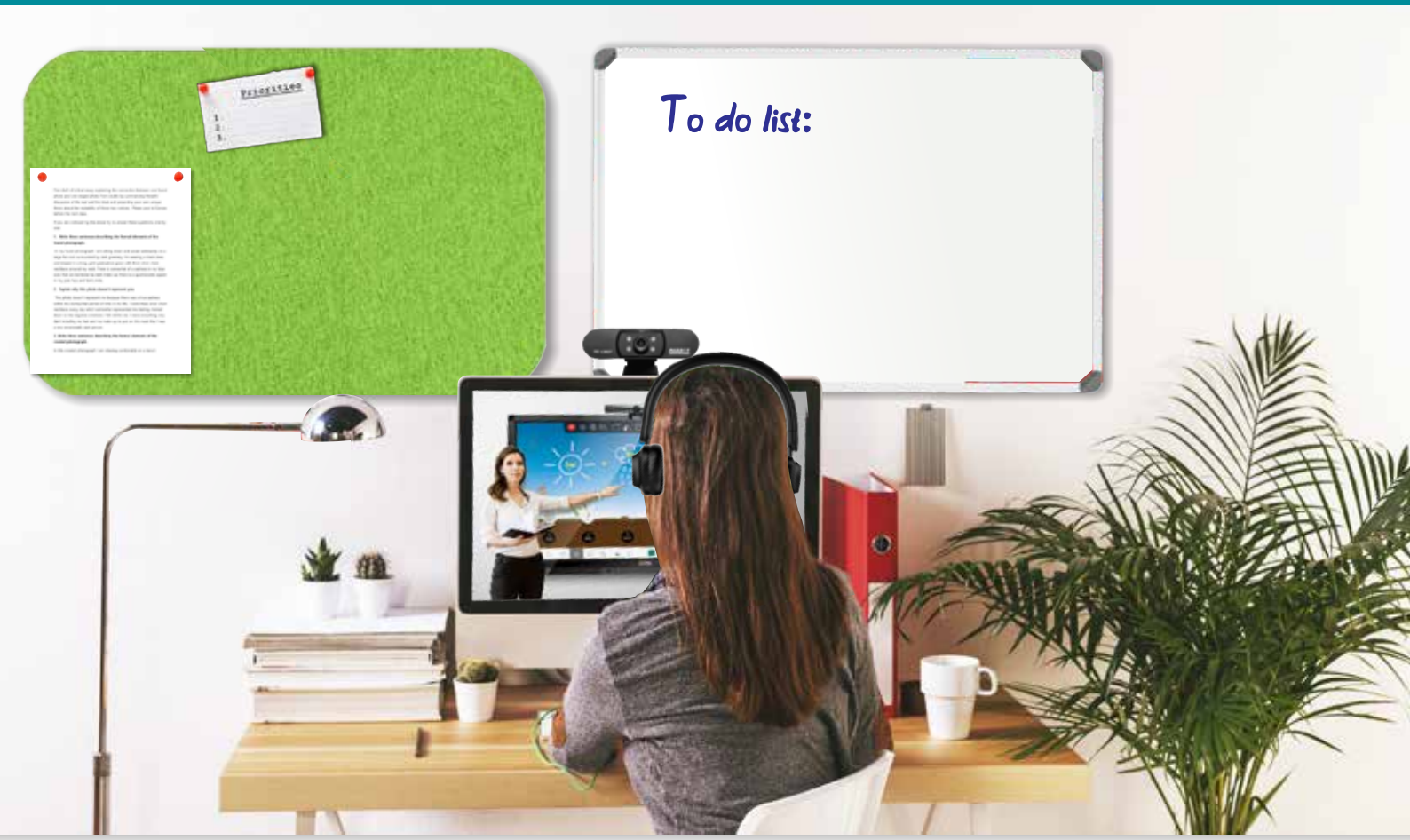
Technology is great for learning. It provides access to virtual museum tours, expert-led courses and even collaborative projects with learners across the globe. These tools can bring subjects to life in ways that traditional textbooks cannot.

However, concerns from all sectors are valid and backed by research. A recent study from Stellenbosch University found that South African teenagers spend, on average, three hours and 17 minutes per day on their smartphones. It also found that this level of screen time can affect concentration, sleep patterns and mental well-being. A survey by the Smartphone-Free Childhood (SFC) initiative in South Africa revealed that 81% of parents are worried about their children accessing inappropriate content.

Navigate the impact of technology on kids with our guide to digital parenting in South Africa. Pick up a few practical strategies for managing screen time, ensuring online safety and using technology as a powerful educational tool

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Digital law expert Emma Sadleir has warned South African parents about the risks, stating, "Introducing a smartphone before a child is ready can lead to serious consequences." There is a clear need for solid boundaries and proactive guidance from parents.

Finding a Balance: Screen Time Guidelines

One of the most common questions parents ask is, "How much screen time is too much?"

While there is no single magic number, international bodies like the World Health Organization (WHO) provide evidence-based screen time guidelines.

- Under 2 years: No sedentary screen time is recommended, except for live video chats with family.
- Ages 2-5: No more than one hour of high-quality programming per day, ideally co-viewed with a parent
- Ages 6 and older: Consistent limits should be set by parents. Technology use should not displace sleep, physical activity, and face-to-face interaction.

In South Africa, movements like the "digital parent pact" encourage parents to collectively delay giving children smartphones until high school. This community-based approach helps reduce peer pressure and supports families in setting firm boundaries. The goal is not to eliminate technology, but to ensure it is used in an age-appropriate and intentional manner.

Practical Strategies for Homeschooling Families

Effective digital parenting is about having a plan. Here are four strategies to implement in your homeschooling routine.

1. Create a Family Media Plan

A family media plan is a set of agreed-upon rules for technology use. This written document removes ambiguity and makes enforcement easier. Your plan should outline:



- Tech-Free Zones: Such as the dining room table and bedrooms.
- Tech-Free Times: During meals, the first hour after waking, and the last hour before bed.
- Device Curfews: All devices are put away and charged overnight in a central location, not in bedrooms.

2. Prioritise Quality Content

Not all screen time is equal. An hour spent on a coding app is different from an hour watching random videos. As a homeschooling parent, guide your child towards content that educates and inspires. Use technology to supplement your lessons. Explore high-quality educational apps, documentaries, and websites that align with your curriculum.

3. Teach Digital Citizenship and Child Online Safety

Just as we teach children to be safe in the physical world, we must teach them to be safe online. This is a critical component of child online safety. Discuss topics like:

- Privacy: What information is safe to share online and what is not.
- Cyberbullying: What it looks like and what to do if they or a friend experience it.
- Online Strangers: Reinforce the rule that online friends are not the same as in-person friends.

Organisations like UNICEF provide excellent resources that can help you start these important conversations.

4. Model Healthy Digital Habits

Children learn by watching their parents. If you are constantly distracted by your phone, your child will see that as normal behaviour. Be mindful of your own technology use. Put your phone away during lessons and family time. Show them that you value face-to-face connection over digital distraction.



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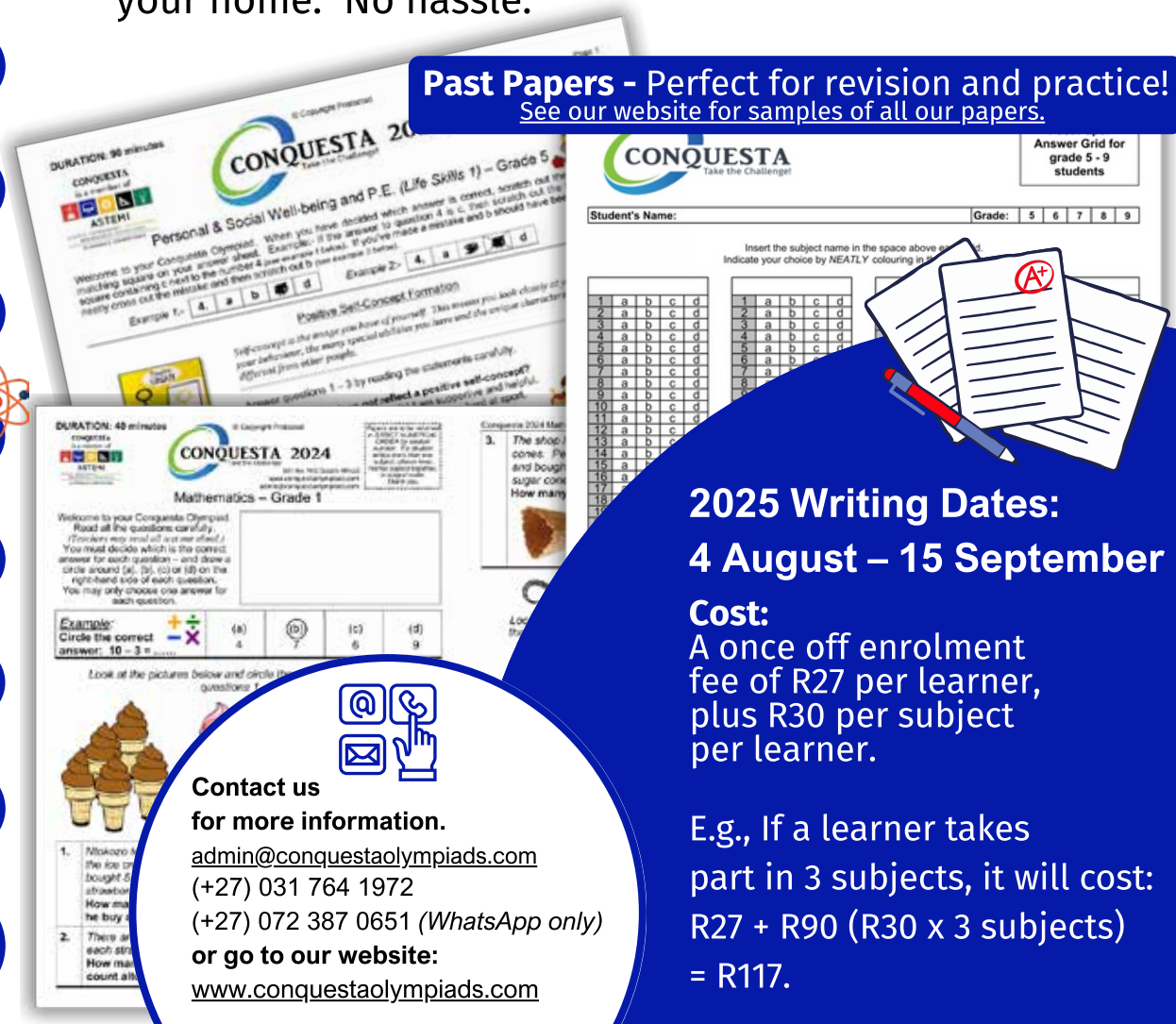
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What Are Academic Olympiads?

Academic Olympiads are tests designed to challenge learners' knowledge in various subjects. They involve problem-solving and creative thinking.



Conquesta has hosted multiple choice academic Olympiads since 1998, throughout South Africa and neighbouring countries, for learners from all walks of life. 2023 marked the 25th anniversary of their annual Olympiads, and in 2024 they were awarded 'Most Trusted Educational Resource Provider' in the Africa Excellence Awards.

Conquesta's Olympiads are available to learners in Grades 1–9 in English and Afrikaans. New papers based on the CAPS Curriculum are written every year by top qualified teachers sourced from around the country. At the end of each year, these papers get added to Conquesta's vast past papers collection. Current subjects include Maths, English, Afrikaans, Science, Technology, Life Skills, Social Sciences, EMS, General Knowledge, Bible study and Robotics & Coding.

Conquesta supplies everything to schools, and no teacher training is required. The Olympiads are written at the school under the supervision of a teacher/parent. Conquesta takes care of all the marking and schools receive certificates for every participant, regardless of results, in time for year-end prize giving.

A results list showing all participants' results is also provided, together with Mathematics, Science and Technology reports by learning area and grade, for grades 4 – 9 learners, enabling teachers to identify strengths and weaknesses in these areas.

Conquesta is a member of ASTEMI, a division of SAASTA and the NRF. They have a passion for conservation and are supporters of Project Rhino KZN.

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- No teacher training required.
- Conquesta does all the marking.
- Certificates for every participant.
- Easy access for homeschools and schools alike.
- Past papers are available for revision purposes.

The 2025 Conquesta Olympiads will take place from 4 August to 15 September.

Past papers are available for purchase to help with revision and preparation.

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Explore the enduring and timeless value of classic books for children in today's digital world. This guide is a perfect entry point to cultivate a deep love for reading and the classics in your children.



Why Your child Should Read These 4 Classic books

In a world filled with digital distractions, the simple act of reading a book can seem almost revolutionary. Introducing your child to classic literature can be a cornerstone of a rich homeschooling curriculum. It builds a strong foundation in a South African context, where community and 'ubuntu' are cherished values, the story's focus on interconnectedness resonates deeply.



1. Charlotte's Web by E.B. White

A heart-warming tale of friendship, loss, and loyalty, Charlotte's Web has been a beloved classic since its publication in 1952. The story of Wilbur the pig and his unlikely friendship with Charlotte the spider is a gentle introduction to some of life's most profound themes.

- **Why it's a classic:** The book handles the concept of mortality with grace and sensitivity. It teaches children about the cycle of life and the importance of true friendship.
- **Educational Value:** The language is beautiful and accessible, making it an excellent choice for read-aloud sessions or for independent readers. It offers opportunities to discuss empathy, kindness, and the value of keeping a promise. In a South African context, where community and 'ubuntu' are cherished values, the story's focus on interconnectedness resonates deeply.



2. The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis

The first book published in The Chronicles of Narnia series, this fantasy novel opens the door to a magical world locked away in a wardrobe. It is a story of courage, sacrifice, and the eternal struggle between good and evil.

- **Why it's a classic:** C.S. Lewis masterfully weaves allegory and adventure. The story is exciting and fast-paced, keeping young readers engaged from the first page to the last.
- **Educational Value:** The novel is rich with symbolism and can be explored on multiple levels. It introduces children to complex narrative structures and character archetypes. Use the story to discuss themes of betrayal, forgiveness, and heroism. The imaginative world-building also serves as a great prompt for creative writing exercises.



3. The Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson Burnett

This story follows Mary Lennox, a sour and unloved girl who is sent to live in her uncle's manor in England after her parents die in India. The discovery of a locked, neglected garden begins a journey of healing and transformation for Mary and those around her.

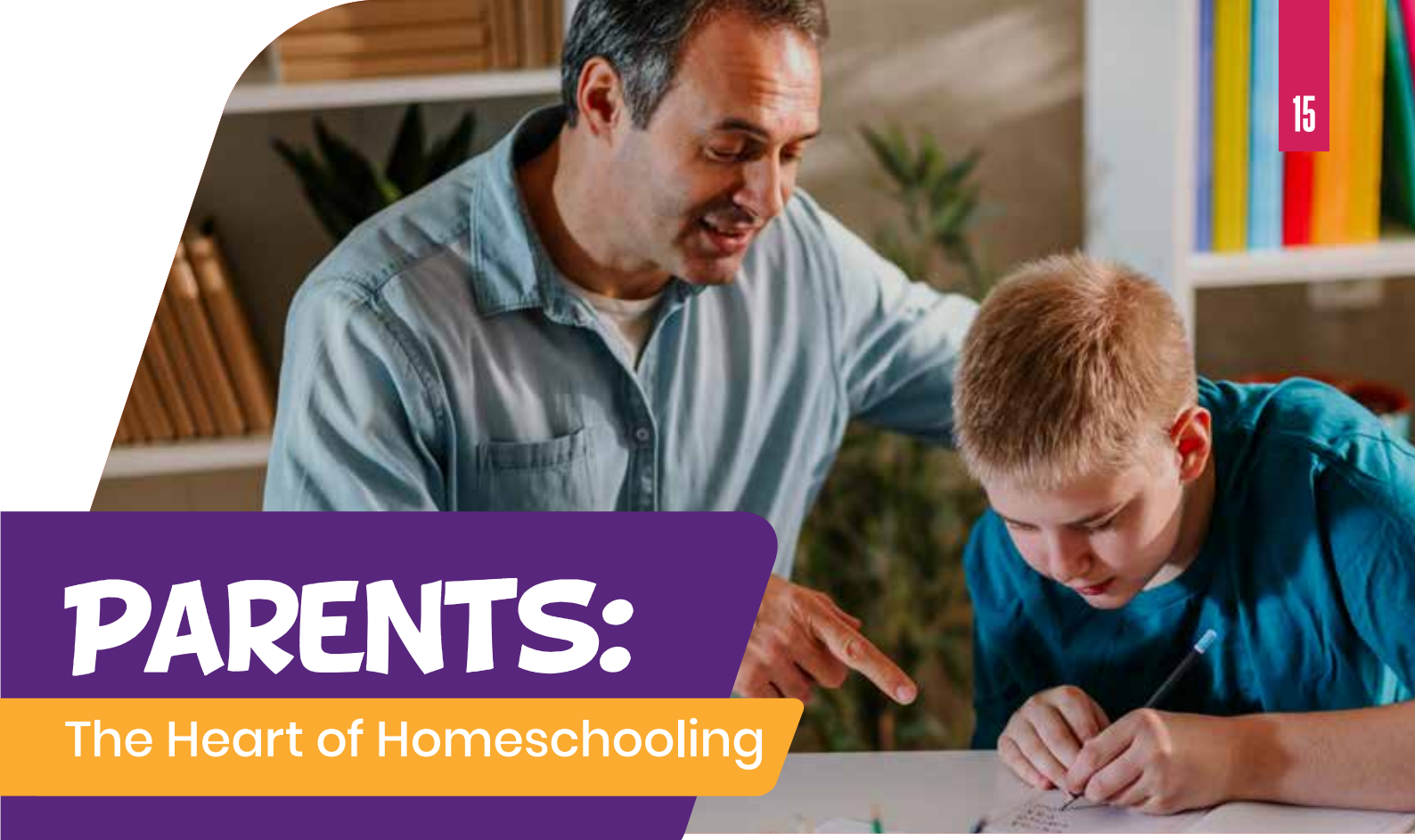
- **Why it's a classic:** The Secret Garden is a powerful story about the restorative power of nature and human connection. It explores the idea that emotional and physical well-being are intertwined.
- **Educational Value:** It provides a rich historical context of the British colonial era, a great talking point for South African families. The character development is superb, demonstrating how individuals can change and grow. It encourages discussions about mental health, the importance of outdoor activity, and how caring for something can help one to heal.



4. Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak

Though a picture book, Where the Wild Things Are is a profound classic that deals with big emotions in a way that is accessible to even the youngest children. When Max is sent to his room without supper, he sails away to an island inhabited by Wild Things.

- **Why it's a classic:** The book gives children permission to feel their anger and provides a safe, imaginative outlet for processing it. It reassures them that after the storm of emotion passes, they will still be loved.
- **Educational Value:** It is a masterclass in storytelling through both words and illustrations. Use this book to talk about managing emotions and understanding that it is okay to feel angry sometimes.



PARENTS:

The Heart of Homeschooling

Parents are more than just a watchful eye—they are mentors, motivators and memory-makers. For parents looking for a transformative homeschool programme for their children, Accelerated Christian Education (A.C.E.) provides academic excellence, as well as spiritual and character development.

Personalised Learning, Tailored by You

One of the greatest advantages of the A.C.E. homeschooling programme is how adaptable it is, built for every child no matter their needs. As a parent, you can adjust the pace and explore your child's interests in ways that resonate with their learning style. This personalised approach helps children grasp concepts more deeply and fosters a genuine love of learning.



Nurturing Character and Virtue

A.C.E. homeschooling emphasises the cultivation of godly character. Wholesome values and character traits are woven into the fabric of every module that children engage with, at every grade level, throughout their schooling with A.C.E. This daily discipleship moulds not only behaviour but also the heart, aligning with biblical values and shaping young lives.

Fostering Emotional and Social Growth

Beyond academics, a parent's involvement plays a crucial role in their child's emotional and social development. Engaged parents help children build confidence, resilience and effective communication skills. By guiding them through challenges and celebrating their successes, you lay the foundation for lifelong emotional intelligence.

This is where a programme like A.C.E. shines: a Christian values-based learning system that moulds to the needs of each learner and encourages a deeper connection with God and His Word. A.C.E.'s homeschooling curriculum allows parents to encourage their children to embrace these values.

A Lasting Impact

Your active participation in your child's education sets the stage for long-term success. Children with involved parents are more likely to develop positive attitudes towards learning. In the journey of homeschooling your children through A.C.E., your commitment today paves the way for their achievements tomorrow.

Get started by contacting us at info@aeegroup.co.za or 087 820 4858.



Bake These Easy White Bread Rolls With Your Kids

There is something truly special about the smell of freshly baked bread wafting through the home. Baking with your children is not just about the delicious results; it is a chance to connect, learn and create memories. This easy bread recipe for kids is the perfect starting point for your family's baking adventures. It is a fantastic hands-on activity for homeschooling, combining science, maths, and art in one tasty project.

Why Baking with Children is a Great Bonding Activity

Baking with your kids delivers more than just a sweet treat. It is an opportunity to teach them valuable life skills. Measuring ingredients introduces them to basic maths and fractions, while kneading dough is a fun way to develop their fine motor skills. As you work together, you create a space for open conversation and teamwork. According to a study on the benefits of cooking with children, these shared experiences can strengthen family bonds and build self-esteem.



Ingredients for Your White Bread Rolls

- 500g cake wheat flour
- 10ml salt
- 5ml sugar
- 10g instant yeast
- 30g margarine, softened
- 320ml lukewarm water

Step-by-Step Instructions

1. Prepare Your Dry Ingredients: In a large bowl, mix the flour, salt, and sugar. Then, stir in the instant yeast.

2. Add the Wet Ingredients: Rub the margarine into the flour mixture with your fingertips. Gradually add the lukewarm water and mix until a soft dough forms. This is a great sensory step for little hands!

3. Time to Knead: Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Knead for about 10 minutes until the dough is smooth and elastic. This is where the real fun of this easy bread recipe for kids begins! Let your children have a go at pushing and folding the dough.

4. First Rise: Place the dough in a lightly greased bowl, cover with a clean cloth, and let it rise in a warm spot for about 30 minutes, or until it has doubled in size. This is a great time to explain the science of yeast.

5. Shape Your Rolls: Gently press the dough down. Divide it into 12 equal pieces and roll each piece into a ball. Place the rolls on a greased baking tray.

6. Second Rise: Cover the rolls and let them rise for another 20 minutes.

7. Bake to Perfection: Preheat your oven to 200°C. Bake the rolls for 15-20 minutes, or until they are golden brown and sound hollow when tapped on the bottom.

Creating these simple bread rolls is a wonderful way to spend quality time with your children. The pride on their faces when they see and taste their own creations is priceless.

We would love to see your creations! Share your pictures with us on social media. What are your favourite things to bake with your children? Let us know by emailing info@digitalafrikan.com. For more homeschooling ideas and recipes, subscribe to our weekly newsletter at www.sahomeschooling.com.

Earl Joseph is a parent to three very different children one of whom is homeschooled. He is passionate about making cooking accessible and enjoyable for everyone, especially families.

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The Beauty of the Homeschooling Journey

Deciding to homeschool your child is often peppered with questions from well-meaning family members and concerns about curriculum choices and socialisation. Yet, for a growing number of families, the homeschooling journey in South Africa is proving to be one of the most rewarding decisions they can make. It is a journey that goes far beyond ticking academic boxes; it is a process of discovery, connection and profound beauty.

While the administrative side of homeschooling requires careful planning, the day-to-day reality is where the real transformation happens. It is in the small moments—the shared laughter over a science experiment, the spontaneous field trip on a beautiful day, the comfort of learning at one's own pace—that the true value of this educational choice shines through. This is not just an alternative to school; it is a different approach to life and learning.

The Beauty of a Flexible Learning Schedule

One of the most immediate benefits of homeschooling is the freedom from a rigid, one-size-fits-all schedule. Conventional schooling operates on a strict timetable that does not always account for a child's natural rhythms or interests. A flexible learning schedule in homeschooling allows you to tailor the day to your child's needs.

Is your child an early riser, full of energy in the morning? You can tackle core subjects like maths and science then. Do they hit a creative peak in the afternoon? That is the perfect time for art, music, or project-based learning. This adaptability is invaluable. As the Pestalozzi Trust, South Africa's homeschool legal defence association, often highlights, homeschooling allows education to be "custom-made to the needs of each child." This flexibility reduces academic anxiety and allows learning to happen when a child is most receptive.

The Beauty of Curiosity-Led Education

Children are born with an innate curiosity. The homeschooling environment is uniquely positioned to protect and nurture this quality. When your child develops a sudden interest in ancient Egypt, you have the freedom to lean into it. You can visit a museum, borrow a stack of library books, watch documentaries and even try cooking ancient Egyptian recipes.

This is parent-led education at its finest. It transforms learning from a passive activity into an active pursuit of knowledge driven by genuine interest. This approach not only makes learning more enjoyable and memorable but also teaches children how to learn independently—a critical skill for life. Renowned educational institutions like Harvard University have published articles on the power of curiosity in cognitive development, confirming that an engaged mind retains information more effectively.

The Beauty of Strong Family Bonds

Perhaps the most profound beauty of the homeschooling journey is the opportunity to build deeper, more meaningful family relationships. By spending your days learning and exploring together, you create a shared history and a foundation of mutual respect. You are there for the 'aha!' moments and the struggles quietly providing guidance and encouragement every step of the way.

This shared experience creates a level of connection that can be difficult to achieve when family time is limited to evenings and weekends. You get to know your child not just as a student, but as a whole person, with unique thoughts, passions, and a distinct sense of humour. In a world that often pulls families apart, homeschooling provides a structure to grow together.

The Beauty of a Customised Pace

In a traditional classroom, children are expected to learn at the same pace. Some may get bored waiting for others to catch up, while others may feel anxious about falling behind. The homeschooling journey eliminates this external pressure. If your child grasps a mathematical concept quickly, you can move on. If they need more time with reading, you can provide that support without the stigma of being "behind."

This individualised pacing builds confidence. It assures children that their educational journey is their own and that it is okay to have different strengths and challenges. This approach aligns with a mastery-based learning philosophy, where understanding a topic thoroughly is more important than simply covering the curriculum by a specific date. This is one of the core benefits that directly impacts a child's self-esteem and long-term love for learning.

Move beyond academics to explore the deep connections, flexible learning and pure joy of discovery that make homeschooling a rewarding choice for families.

NOVA PIONEER

FLEX

INTRODUCING NP FLEX - FROM EXAM-ONLY SERVICES TO FULL HYBRID SUPPORT, NOVA PIONEER HAS YOUR BACK!

NP Flex is built on four core principles - ***Flexibility, Support, Access and Community -*** to ensure students can thrive in their Cambridge journey. For those studying independently, it offers the structure they need without sacrificing autonomy. For students wanting a deeper connection to a learning community, it offers access to Nova Pioneer's facilities, staff, and peer networks.

With two pathways - the Enriched Exam Centre and the Holistic Hybrid Programme - NP Flex provides everything you need to excel in your Cambridge journey, on your terms.

CHOOSE YOUR PATH!

NP Flex 1: The Enriched Exam Centre
Designed for students who study independently but need a reliable Cambridge exam center, NP Flex 1 offers:

- Access to our registered Cambridge exam centre
- Optional support services to help with exam preparation
- Subject-specific advisory and focused exam prep sessions
- Pay-per-service structure, so you only pay for what you need

NP Flex 2: The Holistic Hybrid Programme
The perfect blend of independence and structured support, NP Flex 2 includes:

- Access to Nova Pioneer's Ormonde campus resources
- A Support Coach for guidance
- Tutoring sessions, practical labs, boot camps, and extracurriculars
- Access to Nova Pioneer's Post School Success Programme
- Opportunities for community building with peers

Whether you prefer full independence or more support, NP Flex lets you tailor your experience to fit your needs.

WHY CHOOSE NP FLEX?

- **Flexibility**: Choose the support level that fits your lifestyle, whether fully independent or hybrid.
- **Support**: Our experienced Success Coaches are ready to guide you through challenges and celebrate your achievements.
- **Access**: Access world-class facilities for exams, labs, and study spaces at Nova Pioneer.
- **Community and Extracurriculars**: Engage in sports, clubs, and meet new friends. With NP Flex, even distance learners can be part of a vibrant school community.

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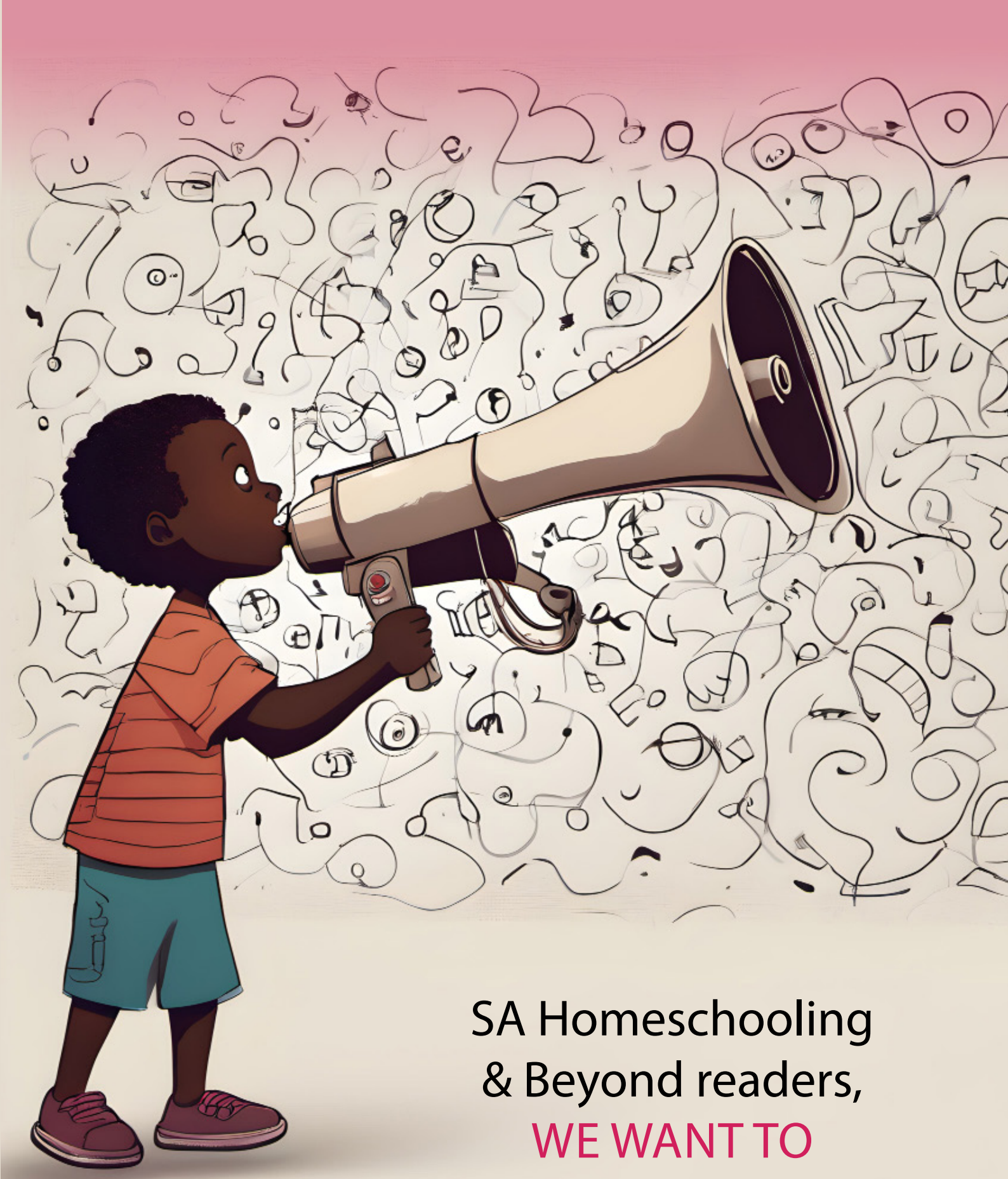
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SA Homeschooling & Beyond readers,

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

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Share your homeschool journey with us by emailing info@digitalafrikan.com

STANDARD PACKAGE

- 8 billboard banners
- 8learderboard banners
- 81/2 page side panels
- 1 annaul listing
- 2 miduim rectangle
- banner (weekly)
- 2 facebook post /reel
- 2 instagram post /reel

R8000

PREMIUM PACKAGE

- 15billboard banners
- 15 learderboard banners
- 15 1/2 page side panels
- 1 annual listing
- 4 miduim rectangle
- banner (weekly)
- 3 facebook post /reel
- 2 instagram post/reel

R15000

DELUXE PACKAGE

- 30 billboard banners
- 30 learderboard banners
- 30 1/2 page side panels
- 1 post take-over
- 1 annual listing
- 1 native article
- 1 newletter published
- 3 miduim rectangle
- banner (weekly)
- Blurb of native article
- native article published
- 3 facebook post /reel
- 3 instagram post /reel

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