

SABC Education Outreach Parent Newsletter



Dear parents and community members

Heritage Day is held on 24 September. What is heritage? Let us take a look at this topic and discuss how you can assist your child/ren in understanding their heritage. Knowing their past heritage will give them the realisation that they too have a place in society. It will also foster an understanding and acceptance of the other varied cultures that make up the people of this country.

To assist you in bringing this understanding to your child, we give start with a brief summary of what 'heritage' means and also suggest a few activities that you can do at home with your child/ren.

We really look forward to receiving feedback from you regarding these activities and would also love to receive your suggestions for other great ideas.

Educational greetings

Nikki Florence (SABC Education - Outreach)



HERITAGE DAY 24th September 2008

Defining 'heritage'

The author John Steinbeck once said: "How will our children know who they are if they don't know where they come from?"

So, where do our children come from? Let's begin by asking 'what is heritage'?

It can be described as 'practices that are handed down from the past, through tradition'.

Different forms of heritage include aspects such as historical, architectural, cultural, natural, arts and crafts, traditional food and music. This also includes places or objects newly discovered from the past, e.g. historical sites and buildings, natural environment and archaeological finds.

Background to Heritage Day

With SA's first democratic elections in 1994, it was decided that important historical days, not officially recognized by the apartheid government, should receive attention.

Cabinet decided that there should be a day (24 September) on which South Africans celebrate their heritage each year; the first of which took place in 1995.

The Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology is the custodian of South Africa's culture, has the responsibility to plan and manage events for Heritage Day at national level annually.

Objectives of Heritage Day:

The ideal is to preserve, exhibit and promote our diverse but connected cultures. Heritage Day should encourage the youth, in particular, to embrace South Africa's common heritage.

In South Africa a rich blend of different forms of heritage makes its people unique in the world and it is that heritage that must be preserved.

Our heritage sets us apart from other people and allows us to identify ourselves from other nations. One's heritage gives a feeling of belonging and pride of place.

The SAHRA:

The task of identifying and protecting our heritage is the responsibility of the **South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA)** – visit the website for more interesting information: www.sahra.org.za

Here are some activities and ideas for you to do with your child/ren in and around the home:

Literacy

Write the Anthem on a poster:

You will need:

A2 sheet of poster paper
Koki pens
Crayons / waterbased paint
Gluestick
Prestik

Get your child to write the words of the National Anthem on a large A2 sheet of poster paper.

If your child is too young to write the anthem, you could help them.

Give them old magazines to look for pictures of typical cultural items such as traditional homes, traditional dancers, utensils, etc.

Let them decorate the sheet of paper with these pictures. Display the poster on your child's bedroom wall.

Take out interesting books from the library:

Visit the local library with your child and take out books about South African culture and traditions.

Discuss the different cultures, traditions and rituals with your child.

Explain that although there are many people with all different types of beliefs, dress, food, traditions, etc. we are all still people who have the same feelings and needs.

Therefore, although we are different on the outside, we are the same on the inside.

This type of discussion will truly contribute to promoting an understanding and a platform to embrace different cultures that make up this interesting country.



Mathematics, Science and Technology

Visit museums:

Take your child to a museum. Show them the artefacts that ancestors used.

Ask your child questions such as:

- What did they use the object for?
- Why is the object that shape?
- What do we use to perform that function today?
- When you get home, ask the child to draw some item.

Activities such as these really get the child's imagination fired up and make museum visits FUN!

Make research fun & interesting:

Why not research, together with your child/ren, what is South Africa's contribution to the fields of Mathematics, Science and or Technology?

In which fields are South Africans leading the way? Did you know a young South African entrepreneur has just developed the first locally produced HIV Test?

What other interesting facts can you find?

Make your own fossils:

You will need:

- Plaster of Paris powder
- An ice-cream tub.
- Various items from nature which will make interesting patterns such as different shaped leaves, peach pip, bark of a tree, different shaped small stones, twigs, etc. The children could collect these items.

How to proceed:

Mix the plaster of Paris with just enough water to form a thick paste.

Your child should carefully press the various items into the wet plaster of Paris. They must remove the items before the plaster begins to set.

Now ask your child to use their imagination to make up a story about what the "fossil" is, how it was formed and how it was found.

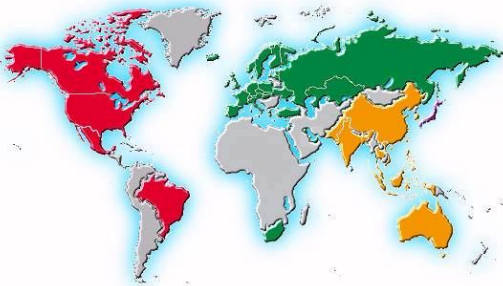


Agriculture and Environment

Where did we all come from?

On a large sheet of paper, draw a map of the world showing the continents and specifically South Africa.

Talk about where we live in South Africa and point out where people of other cultures come from e.g. Indian, Chinese, American, etc.



What do we know about traditional farming in South Africa?

Traditional farming systems vary from culture to culture and region to region but, some traditional farming systems include multi-crops or polycultures.

Many traditional farmers do not kill-off weeds but actually use them within their crops as well as for medicinal purposes, etc.

Find out more about traditional farming and see how you could use some of this knowledge to create a home/food garden where you live.

For more information on Food Gardens, go to www.sabceducation.co.za click on 'Free Educational Resources' and then select 'How To' and view an interactive site showing you the 6 easy steps to a great Food Garden!

Economics, Commerce and Finance

Role-play bartering:

Explain how the bartering system worked, i.e. no money was exchanged between people, but rather goods were exchanged for goods.

Have a few packets of sweets or chips available and tell the child that he /she can buy it through bartering.

They must produce some of their own possessions with which to barter with you. Tell them that their possession will not be returned to them but that you will donate it to charity (although this is not the case)

Pretend not to be satisfied with what they offer in exchange for the goodies and see how far they would be prepared to go to part with their possessions for a few sweets or chips.

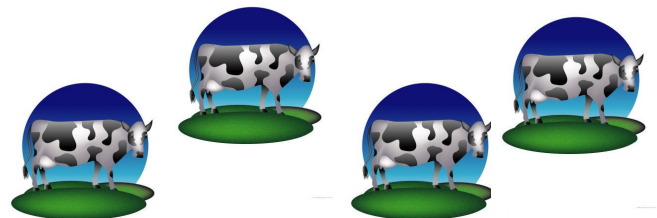
What's your currency?

Ask your children to imagine the country many, many years ago, before the concept of money was introduced to Africa.

Now ask them to make a list of at least 3 items that they think would have been of value, i.e. if they had an abundance of this in those days, they would have been known to be wealthy.

Wealth was probably measured by the amount of livestock one owned, with cattle being more valuable than chickens.

What other ideas can you and your child/ren list?



Heritage, Arts and Culture

The National Flag:

Together with your child/ren, draw and colour in the national flag on a sheet of paper.

This will help them to remember position of the various colours. It is surprising how many people don't know which colour is on top.



What were our ancestors lives like?

Tell your child how the people of your culture lived in the past e.g. what their homes were made of, the traditional food they ate, their mode of dress, what they used for medicines, and so on.

Gather pictures of people of South Africa over the past centuries. Let your child arrange them in chronological order (from oldest to most recent) on a piece of cardboard and discuss events of that time period with your child.

Your own traditional songs and dances:

Teach your child traditional songs / dances and arrange for friends of other cultures to teach your child how to perform the songs /dances of their particular culture.

Health and Wellbeing

Traditional food of different cultures:

Obtain recipes from other cultures and make that specific type of food for your family. Try to create a typical cultural atmosphere for the meal.

If you are acquainted with someone of that specific culture ask them to join your family for dinner and to talk about their culture.

Show the family a picture of the typical traditional dress of that culture and tell them to improvise and dress up in that style before coming to the table to eat.



Civic Issues

Understanding each other's circumstances:

Make your child aware that people live in different circumstances, some people have a lot of money and live in big houses, others are underprivileged and struggle to keep their families warm, fed and healthy.

Encourage your child to gather items from your home that are no longer needed to pass on to families where it is needed.

Leadership and Management

Taking the lead:

Assist your child in creating a project where your family can help others in need. Set up a simple plan of action (keep this age appropriate).

Write up this plan and set specific timeframes of what must be done and by when.

Your child ticks off each planned activity as it takes place. This provides a sense of achievement and further motivates them to take action and **Make a Difference!**

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