SECONDARY SCHOOLS EDITION

The OXFORD Press

February 2010 Volume 4 Issue 1

Test what has been taught

The new education system has introduced many new forms of assessment for all Learning Areas. Some forms of assessment suit particular learning areas better, e.g. an oral is an excellent way to evaluate a learner's spoken language and an investigation would suit a discovery-type lesson in Mathematics.

Assessments, including tests and examinations, are a planned opportunity for learners to show their learning achievements. These assessments should relate to the teaching/learning. A poorly designed test or examination will just tax learners' test-writing skills. It will not really give an indication of the learning achievement attained during the class time. One of the biggest problems is the difference in the levels between teaching objectives and testing.

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It is very important that teachers design the assessment for a particular section when they are preparing their lesson plans. This helps to ensure that the objectives that they will be assessing are covered during lessons.

It is more difficult to maintain consistency between testing and teaching with external examinations. Many checks and balances are in place, e.g. cluster group meetings, so that teachers and schools can check that they are in maintaining the standards required. It is very important that the examining body communicates changes in objectives or levels with teachers. This can be done by:

- making exemplars available annually so that teachers can check that the levels in the classroom are consistent with what will be expected in the final assessment
- communicating changes to objectives in the testing so that teachers can provide practice for learners, when they teach.

Good assessment results must not be the only outcome expected from teaching, but when we do evaluate the achievements of our learners, it should be fair and relevant to the teaching that they have received.

Did you find this article helpful? Let us know by sending an sms to **082 881 7596** (SMSs charged at R2 per message).

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PROUD SHAREHOLDER

THE MANDELA RHODES FOUNDATION

Sefika

Publisher of the Year 2009

Free Teacher's Hotline:
0800 202 463
www.oxford.co.za

Biodiversity is our life

What does 'biodiversity' actually mean?

You are an integral part of nature; your fate is tightly linked with biodiversity, the huge variety of other animals and plants, the places they live and their surrounding environments, all over the world.

You rely on this diversity of life to provide you with the food, fuel, medicine and other essentials you simply cannot live without. Yet this rich diversity is being lost at a greatly accelerated rate because of human activities. This impoverishes us all and weakens the ability of the living systems, on which we depend, to resist growing threats such as climate change.

2010 is the International Year of Biodiversity, and people all over the world are working to safeguard this irreplaceable natural wealth and reduce biodiversity loss. This is vital for current and future human wellbeing. We need to do more. Now is the time to act.

National Teacher's Awards

Malefu Mphatane Winner – Lifetime Achievement Award

Meloding Secondary School,Free State

The seed was planted 32 years ago when Malefu Mphatane's husband suggested she take up teaching. At the time she was a domestic worker, a job she took because she did not have money to study for a different career. When the opportunity presented itself, she registered for a Junior Certificate in ABET. That marked her journey into the "exciting" world of teaching. She then enrolled with the Free State Mphohadi College of Education. After graduating she taught as a remedial teacher at Foundation Phase, and proceeded to Meloding Secondary School in Virginia (Lejweleputswa) to teach Sesotho. Before becoming the principal, she was head of department and deputy principal. She has scaled down on her classroom duties but still teaches media and library studies to all grades. "When my husband suggested I take up teaching, it was as if he read my mind. I always wanted to be a teacher," she says. Among the projects Mphatane has initiated are extra classes for Grade 12 learners at weekends and during holidays. Some NGOs provide meals for learners during these sessions. She has also started a vegetable garden. Vegetables are sold to generate income and some vegetables go to orphans and vulnerable children once a week.

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From left to right: Mrs Angie Motshekga, MP, Minister of Basic Education, Malefu Mphatane and His Excellency Mr Jacob Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa

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Malefu Mphatane

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Message from Ms Mothibi

It is the start of a new school year and there are exciting challenges ahead for us all. Our team at Oxford University Press Southern Africa has been hard at work developing learning material that will assist you in achieving the best possible outcome for your learners – that is to successfully complete and pass the 2010 school year.

In this issue of The Oxford Press we have tips on building exam writing skills, basic skills on teaching languages, career guidance and lots more. We've also included a beautiful poster of the Periodic Table of the Elements on the last page for you to display in your Physical Sciences classroom.

Because Afrikaans is the third most spoken language in South Africa (Stats South Africa), the importance of high-quality Afrikaans First Additional Language textbooks is mentioned time and again when we speak to educators. So it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you a full complement of Afrikaans textbooks, including the brand new *Leestekste* in our *Oxford Suksesvolle Afrikaans* series for Grades 7 to 9.

We at Oxford are also delighted to announce that we were voted 2009 Publisher of the Year by booksellers nationally, and our *Oxford Bilingual School Dictionary Northern Sotho – English / English – Northern Sotho* has won the SATI Outstanding Translation Award – beating off fierce competition. This is our second bilingual dictionary to be honoured in this way – the first was *Oxford Afrikaans – Engels / English – Afrikaans School Dictionary,* which won the prestigious ATKV Word Wise Award in 2008.

I hope that you enjoy the first newsletter of 2010 and please remember to sms any feedback to 082 881 7596.

Good luck!
Botho Mothibi
National Sales Manager Schools, OUPSA

To find out more about any of these materials, call our Teacher Talkline on **0800 202 463**.

Basic skills for teaching languages in the curriculum

The main test for real success in language teaching and learning should be whether or not the learners can communicate effectively in real situations – inside and outside the classroom!

So how do learners learn a language?

Input, thinking and concept development, and imitation

Learners learn the language through listening and reading. They imitate bits of this input, usually imperfect at first. Learners use this input to find out how language works. So how can you assist the learners? Give them models to imitate or copy, examples for practice and, if needed, translations in their mother tongue. Allow the learners to practise through imitation and through developing concepts. Give them enough learning time, and extensive exposure to the spoken word in order to develop good listening skills. Check what your learners are able to do in normal conversation and written composition and not only what they are able to do in formal exercises that focus on grammar.

Planned and incidental processes

Planned learning of language takes place when learners repeat language forms again and again. The process of learning a language incidentally while being exposed to it and using it in communication is generally referred to as 'language acquisition'. Learners notice things about grammar or vocabulary simply by using it for listening, reading, speaking, or writing. Learners can also become aware of language features when they are *thinking* about it, for example, learning grammar or vocabulary. When language forms are used for real communication and are not just repeated mechanically, real language learning takes place. So how can you assist your learners? Give the learners ample opportunities to communicate in the language in real situations!

Pedagogical and natural syllabi

Teachers are mostly required to teach language according to a syllabus or a specific course. This means concentrating on one thing at a time. This may result in learners doing satisfactorily or well in exercises or tests. Does this mean that they are learning the language? Research shows that learners who learn a language through the 'natural syllabus', which deals with everything mixed together naturally, learn better, although they still make basic mistakes. So how can you help the learners? Focus on mixed grammar that occurs naturally and allow your learners to learn from their mistakes.

Variables exist!

Learning situations differ. Individual learners also differ from one another. However, one thing is common: motivation. Motivation can be instrumental (a real need to learn the language for study or work), intrinsic (enjoy the language), or integrative (the desire to be involved with speakers of the language). So how can you help your learners? Recognise what stimulates actual or potential motivation in individual learners: some learners are more 'visual'; some learners are more 'aural'; some learners are more 'communicative'; and others are more 'analytical'. Give learners a variety of activities and help them to learn without your help, so they can begin to use the language outside the classroom!

So, in conclusion:

- use varied, appropriate activities
- get learner output, and provide encouraging, confirming feedback
- work with natural, mixed grammar
- be patient and positive
- make review work enjoyable and satisfying!

Happy language teaching!

Did you find this article helpful? Let us know by sending an sms to **082 881 7596** (SMSs charged at R2 per message).

Food gardens

Not just a source of income, but a resource for your lessons

One tried and tested way of raising funds for your school is to grow a vegetable garden on your school grounds. It really is very simple and creates a common goal across the grades, giving learners a sense of pride in their school. Learners feel proud to raise funds for their school and help their community!

Sometimes people think that food gardening is a "dirty" and simple activity (perhaps even undignified) that does not serve any real purpose in a school. But if you think creatively, you will find very useful ways to incorporate it into the different Learning Areas in a fun and informative way.

A food garden is a concrete and visible tool, as well as a pedagogical

model that can be used in each Learning Area. This is especially true for those institutions that lack educational resources, such as videos, posters and/or models. The food garden is always readily available and easily accessible (as it is on the school property), and will serve as a model that will stimulate an interest in the learners and even the rest of the community. It is an easy, affordable and healthy example that can be duplicated with ease and at a minimal cost, because it uses available resources (even if limited).

It raises awareness of environmental issues and is totally environmentally friendly through the use of organic pest control and fertilisation.

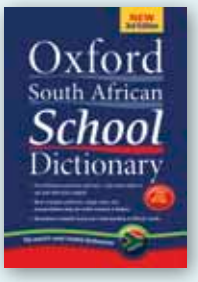
The food garden has an important benefit – it can have an income generating component for the school, supplement an existing feeding scheme or add to the food that some schools supply to their learners. It can therefore impact positively on the education, health and nutrition of each and every learner – at school and at home (when they make their own food gardens). Some food gardening schools have as many as 100+ trench beds, generating substantial income for their school by selling vegetables to staff and the community. A large number of learners also earn money selling the produce from their own food gardens.

Source: Food Gardens Foundation

In our next edition we'll show you how to grow your own food garden!

Vegetables ©iStockphoto.com/dfli Vegetable garden©Niki Anderson

Hot off the Press!



Building on the astoundingly popular and entirely approved 2nd Edition, the brand new 3rd Edition of the *Oxford South African School Dictionary* is now available. Developed for Grade 4 to 9 learners, the dictionary's exciting new features include:

- double the amount of example sentences
- synonyms and opposites to help learners expand their vocabulary and write clearly and creatively
- carefully chosen illustrations and diagrams to help learners understand hard-to-define words
- more usage notes to help learners avoid common mistakes, such as pronouncing corps incorrectly, or thinking a desert is a pudding
- easy-to-understand pronunciation guidance for every headword
- study pages for use in the classroom – perfect as the basis for lessons, such as prefixes and suffixes
- up-to-date design to help you find what you're looking for quickly!

Just in time for 2010!

One of the poems that has been used in *Text Bites: South African poems, plays, stories and non-fiction*, compiled by Chris Thurman and published by OUPSA in June 2009, is 'I feel a poem' by poet, Dr Don Mattera. Instead of a fee for the use of his poem, Dr Mattera requested a soccer kit for the team that he coaches at the Don Mattera Centre in Edenvale. The centre is a 'Place of Safety' where children aged 12 to 18 are looked after and educated. Oxford University Press is privileged to be able to use this struggle hero's poem and assist the boys, who were delighted with their soccer kit.

Study tips

Many learners 'freeze up' at the very thought of tests or end-of-year exams and the consequence is often that their results are not necessarily a true reflection of their abilities. If learners were to study consistently throughout the year, their level of confidence would be sufficiently high to avoid this 'freeze up'. Below are some pointers that you can give to your learners to assist them in building this confidence and to properly prepare for exams or tests.

- When you read your textbooks, write notes on all the important points.
- Review your notes every day.
- Create study skills activities to use every week. For example, have a weekly session where you write down important facts on a sheet of paper from memory alone.
- Start your own study skills lesson plan for each subject. Your study skills lesson plan should include test-taking ideas that you will use for each class.
- Don't allow test anxiety to creep into your emotions. Reduce your test anxiety by spending more time preparing for each test. Spread your test preparation time out over a period of time.
- Write down notes on important facts so that you can review them the morning of your test. If you are writing a Maths or Science test or exam, write out all of the important formulas on one sheet of paper and review these formulas the morning of your test or exam.
- Your main helpful study skills resource is your teacher. Don't be too proud or embarrassed to ask for help when you need it.

Source: www.cbn.co.za/pressoffice/studyitonline/fullstory/1988.htm

Raise funds for your school

Collect-a-can!

The aim is to collect as many used beverage cans as possible each month and deliver them to your nearest Collect-a-Can branch (in Cape Town, Durban, Vanderbijlpark, Johannesburg or Pretoria). There are generous monthly prizes from each branch and fantastic national prizes. Not only do schools stand a chance to win these prizes, but each school is paid good rates for every can it recovers.

The competition commences on 1 February and ends on 31 October 2010. Prize-giving functions for the winning schools are held in Gauteng, Cape Town, Durban and North West Province during November. To get your entry form, go to **www.collectacan.co.za** or phone Jeanette Raath at Collect-a-Can on 011 466 2939.

In our next edition we'll give you more ideas on how to raise funds for your school!

Featured teacher

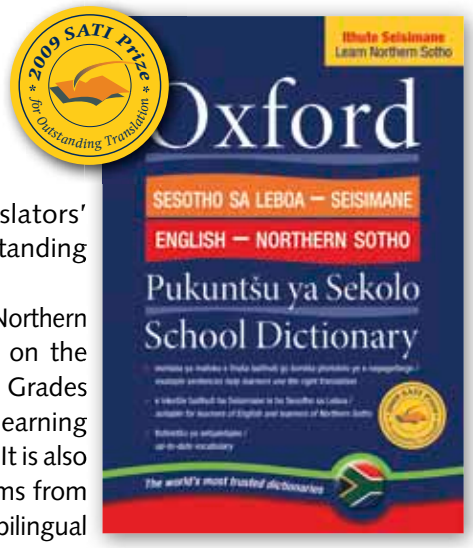
Our *Featured teacher* article will appear in the next issue. Please send in your nominations in the meantime.

Nominate a teacher and win!

Is there a teacher out there you admire? Or would you like to be interviewed yourself? Let us know and you could win yourself (and the teacher of your choice) a brand new copy of the *Oxford South African School Dictionary.*

Call the Teacher Talkline on **0800 202 463** or sms your name and nomination to **082 881 7596** (SMSs charged at R2 per message).

Oxford does it again!



In October of last year, our *Oxford Bilingual School Dictionary: Northern Sotho – English / English – Northern Sotho* received the South African Translators' Institute Award for Outstanding Translation: Dictionaries.

This dictionary is the first Northern Sotho dictionary to focus on the needs of school learners in Grades 4 to 9, whether they are learning English or Northern Sotho. It is also the first to include key terms from the school curriculum (with bilingual definitions), a guide to pronunciation, sample emails and letters, and help with writing SMSs.

The dictionary is revolutionary in lexicographic terms too: it is the first for an African language to be fully developed from a corpus, using the most modern, internationally accepted dictionary-development processes.

Mamokgabo Mogodi, the main compiler for Northern Sotho, received the prize on behalf of the development team. She explains how she worked: 'For each word in the dictionary, I first studied hundreds of lines of text from the corpus. From this I saw how a word was really used and I could work out the different meanings it could have. For each meaning I then selected an authentic example sentence. For the first time I have seen how my own language, Northern Sotho, is actually used.'

The *Oxford Bilingual School Dictionary: Northern Sotho – English / English – Northern Sotho* is on the Limpopo Department of Education's approved list.

No-fees schools to be expanded

The Department of Education is pushing ahead with plans to expand the no-fees school programme in a move that has drawn mixed reactions by school governing body organisations.

Under current regulations, schools classified as quintiles one and two are exempt from paying fees, and this will be expanded to include quintile three schools from 2010. South African schools are ranked from poorest, quintile one, to richest, quintile five.

The expansion of no-fees schools will affect 60% of public schools in the country, but not all SGB organisations are happy about the changes.

'It has been on the cards for some time, and schools were given the option of moving up to quintile four or staying in quintile three,' says Cathy Callaghan of the Governor's Alliance. 'It is problematic, but schools knew it was coming so hopefully they are prepared for the changes.'

Funda Mani of the National Association of School Governing Bodies (NASGB) has however welcomed the move: 'We are fully behind the move as it is a small step towards realising what we have been pushing for, which is free and compulsory education.'

The changes are scheduled to take effect from 1 January 2010.

Source: *The Teacher*, Published Tuesday 10 Nov 2009

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What's on your mind?

We would love to hear from you. Voice your opinion on current educational topics, share your success stories, comment on this or other issues or ask questions, and you could win a copy of the *South African Concise Oxford Dictionary* if your letter is published.

You can use a pen name if you want, but we will still need to keep your real name and address on our records. Also bear in mind that we reserve the right to edit letters owing to space constraints. Address all letters to our Head Office postal address (listed below).

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www.saasta.ac.za

ALKALI METALS
ALKALI EARTH METALS
TRANSITION METALS
OTHER METALS
OTHER NONMETALS
HALOGENS
NOBLE GASSES
RARE EARTH METALS

At room temperature the element is:
- Gas
- Liquid
- Natural solid
- Man-made solid (synthetic)

H
Hydrogen 1
1.01

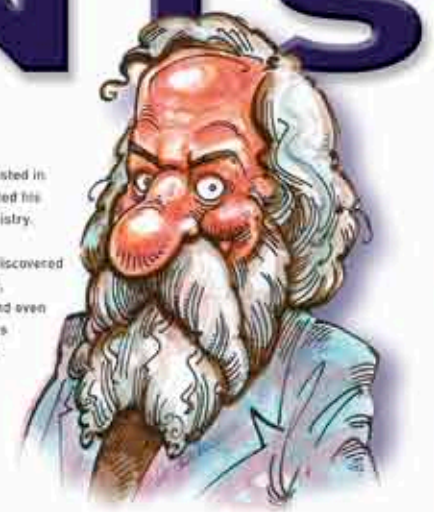
Symbol
Element name
Atomic number
Atomic mass

DMITRI MENDELEYEV (1834 – 1907)

The Russian chemist, Dmitri Mendeleyev, was the first to observe that if elements were listed in order of atomic mass, they showed regular (periodical) repeating properties. He formulated his discovery in a periodic table of elements, now regarded as the backbone of modern chemistry.

The crowning achievement of Mendeleyev's periodic table lay in his prophecy of then, undiscovered elements. In 1869, the year he published his periodic classification, the elements gallium, germanium and scandium were unknown. Mendeleyev left spaces for them in his table and even predicted their atomic masses and other chemical properties. Six years later, gallium was discovered and his predictions were found to be accurate. Other discoveries followed and their chemical behaviour matched that predicted by Mendeleyev.

This remarkable man, the youngest in a family of 17 children, has left the scientific community with a classification system so powerful that it became the cornerstone in chemistry teaching and the prediction of new elements ever since.
In 1955, element 101 was named after him: Md, Mendelevium.



	IA 1	IIA 2	IIIB 3	IVB 4	VB 5	VIB 6	VIIB 7	VIIIB 8	VIIIB 9	VIIIB 10	IB 11	IIB 12	IIIA 13	IVA 14	VA 15	VIA 16	VIIA 17	VIIIA 18
1	H Hydrogen 1 1.01																	He Helium 2 4.00
2	Lithium 3 6.94 Li	Be Beryllium 4 9.01											B Boron 5 10.81	C Carbon 6 12.01	N Nitrogen 7 14.01	O Oxygen 8 16.00	F Fluorine 9 19.00	Ne Neon 10 20.18
3	Na Sodium 11 22.99	Mg Magnesium 12 24.31											Al Aluminium 13 26.98	Si Silicon 14 28.09	P Phosphorus 15 30.97	S Sulphur 16 32.06	Cl Chlorine 17 35.45	Ar Argon 18 39.95
4	K Potassium 19 39.10	Ca Calcium 20 40.08	Sc Scandium 21 44.96	Ti Titanium 22 47.88	V Vanadium 23 50.94	Cr Chromium 24 52.00	Mn Manganese 25 54.94	Fe Iron 26 55.85	Co Cobalt 27 58.93	Ni Nickel 28 58.69	Cu Copper 29 63.55	Zn Zinc 30 65.39	Ga Gallium 31 69.72	Ge Germanium 32 72.61	As Arsenic 33 74.92	Se Selenium 34 78.96	Br Bromine 35 79.90	Kr Krypton 36 83.80
5	Rb Rubidium 37 85.47	Sr Strontium 38 87.62	Y Yttrium 39 88.91	Zr Zirconium 40 91.22	Nb Niobium 41 92.91	Mo Molybdenum 42 95.94	Tc Technetium 43 (98)	Ru Ruthenium 44 101.07	Rh Rhodium 45 102.91	Pd Palladium 46 106.42	Ag Silver 47 107.87	Cd Cadmium 48 112.41	In Indium 49 114.82	Sn Tin 50 118.71	Sb Antimony 51 121.76	Te Tellurium 52 127.60	I Iodine 53 126.90	Xe Xenon 54 131.29
6	Cs Caesium 55 132.91	Ba Barium 56 137.33	Lanthanide Series	Hf Hafnium 72 178.49	Ta Tantalum 73 180.95	W Tungsten 74 183.85	Re Rhenium 75 186.21	Os Osmium 76 190.23	Ir Iridium 77 192.22	Pt Platinum 78 195.08	Au Gold 79 196.97	Hg Mercury 80 200.59	Tl Thallium 81 204.38	Pb Lead 82 207.20	Bi Bismuth 83 208.98	Po Polonium 84 (209)	At Astatine 85 (210)	Rn Radon 86 (222)
7	Fr Francium 87 (223)	Ra Radium 88 (226)	Actinide Series	Rf Rutherfordium 104 (261)	Db Dubnium 105 (262)	Sg Seaborgium 106 (263)	Bh Bohrium 107 (262)	Hs Hassium 108 (265)	Mt Meitnerium 109 (266)									

La	Ce	Pr	Nd	Pm	Sm	Eu	Gd	Tb	Dy	Ho	Er	Tm	Yb	Lu
Ac	Th	Pa	U	Np	Pu	Am	Cm	Bk	Cf	Es	Fm	Md	No	Lr

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