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**SPECIAL POINTS  
OF INTEREST:**

- We are now an official registered non-profit organisation!
- There are now two full time project managers volunteering in the Centre four days a week!
- Over 40 volunteers and growing!
- Truworths, Cebano, Sentient Communications continue to support our work.
- Nussbaum Foundation are funding all our new resources for 2008.

# The SHINE Centre

## Support and Help IN Education

### A Year of Growth and Success!

It has been an exciting year for everyone involved in the SHINE Centre. Here is a breakdown of how our year was structured.

#### TERM 1

In Term 1 we were able to, for the first time, assess all 80 Grade 2 children. As a result, 56 of those children came into our programme. The main reason for the large amount of children is that learning in a second language remains a major difficulty.

We had some wonderful news from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED). The literacy rate of the Grade 3 children was up 13% from the previous year and is now at 71%.

Towards the beginning of Term 1 we were given two more rooms from the school which we have named the Moon Room and the Sunshine Room. Thank you to all you who helped furnish those rooms.

We were also fortunate to receive a years membership to *Reading A-Z* and downloaded 64 multi-leveled reading books. Our aim is not only to increase the amount

of books in the centre but for these books to become the property of each child in the



**Maurita Weissenberg, the SHINE Director, and Ayanda in the Centre.**

centre. Thanks to Custom Graphics for photocopying hundreds of books at no cost.

#### TERM 2

The second term started with group teaching by our trained volunteer teachers and the continued hustle and bustle of our reading mentors and their reading partners.

#### TERM 3

As a result of the four week strike (at the end of Term 2) our SHINE Centre core

management team decided to pilot Literacy Hour for Grade 2. This formed part of the school's recovery program and was such a success we later included the Grade 3 classes.

We met with the classes either once or twice a week and had four 15 minute rotating sessions of Group Reading, Have-a-Go Writing, Shared Reading (language enrichment) and practicing the 100 Most Common Words (game section).

#### TERM 4

We focused on re-assessing the Grade 2's and also assessing the Grade 1's and 3's, while continuing with Literacy Hour. There has been a marked improvement in each child and we needed to create a new category for children who are now reading well above their reading age!

We invited WCED to visit our project. They were thrilled by our work and keen to work with us.

# Parent Workshop



**Volunteer Kathryn Torres addresses a group of parents at one of the Workshops**

In the 2nd and 3rd terms we held our first Parent Workshops. We had more than 65 parents attending the second workshop and the feedback from parents was very positive. Topics covered were nutrition, how to support your child's language and literacy and the value of storybook reading. A direct result from parent's comments about the price of books was to start a second hand bookshop at school. Volunteers have assisted us in approaching schools and SACS parents have been particularly generous in their donations.

*Giving children a love of books, sharing their own stories and allowing them to reach their full potential.*

## Dancing Pencils

Maurita, our Director, and Margie Rosenberg, a volunteer, attended a two day creative writing course where they received valuable information on how to encourage pupils to write stories. 'Have a go' writing is now part of Literacy Hour and children are given lots of encouragement to write free of anxiety and not to worry about spelling. (yet!) It has been wonderful to see how children have broken through a barrier and are excited about writing their own stories. They share their stories with the class along the way and Carrie has been very busy typing them up and putting them on their own blogsite. In April the Grade 3's writing will be handed in to Umsinsi Press and published into an anthology thanks to Sian Mahoney and friends from the UK. Sian was one of our overseas volunteers this year who was very excited by this writing project. You can find a link to the Dancing Pencils Club run by Felicity Keats, on our website. Please feel free to look at our blog: <http://dancingpencilsclub.blogspot.com/> (There is also a link from the SHINE Centre Blogsite.)

## SWAP SHOP!

We began an after school second hand bookshop that aims to bring a sense of ownership to the children of Observatory Junior School. Any child in Grade 2 and 3 could join, not just those directly involved in the SHINE Centre. For R20 a child is able to take home a book and choose to either keep the book (for however long they wanted to or forever) or bring it back and check out another book. The SWAP SHOP was extremely successful (over 70 children involved!) and we look forward to continuing it again in the 2008 school year.



**Zintle is enjoying a book in the SWAP SHOP.**