

African Bank Limited press release

5 April 2017

Polokwane primary schools learn English through games

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to know what gets youngsters excited these days.... screens, games and moving pictures. So what better way to help primary school children learn English than by taking an iPad loaded with language games into the classroom.

This year African Bank's CSI Programme, LETT (Learning English Through Technology), kicked off this year in ten schools in Polokwane, Limpopo and the results have been incredible.



Figure 1: Grade 4 lessons conducted by Ms. Mosibudi Mametja

Kennedy Dembetembe, National CSI Manager for African Bank, says that the change is tangible. "From sleepy eyes and heads slumped on desks, these learners are practically jumping out of their chairs to answer the basic pronunciation questions that are on the screen in front of them," he says.

Maite Letsoalo, who heads up the programme that supports and trains 60 teachers from Polokwane and who runs the LETT programme alongside it, explains that they have always worked with teachers with good teaching methods who teach learners basic literacy. “This year the addition of LETT has been a fun way of injecting life and vibrancy into the English classes,” she says. “You can walk into a school and all is quiet, and then you will hear children loudly reading and laughing and shouting out answers in the classrooms where we have our LETT lessons.”



Figure 2: Excited learners responding to learning games

The programme uses digital application games for learning the alphabet, pronunciation, reading and grammar. The real test of the programme’s success will be the year end final assessments. “When we first introduced the programme these learners had little to no knowledge of the English language, so it is invigorating to see the confidence that the iPad games have given them,” says Dembetembe.

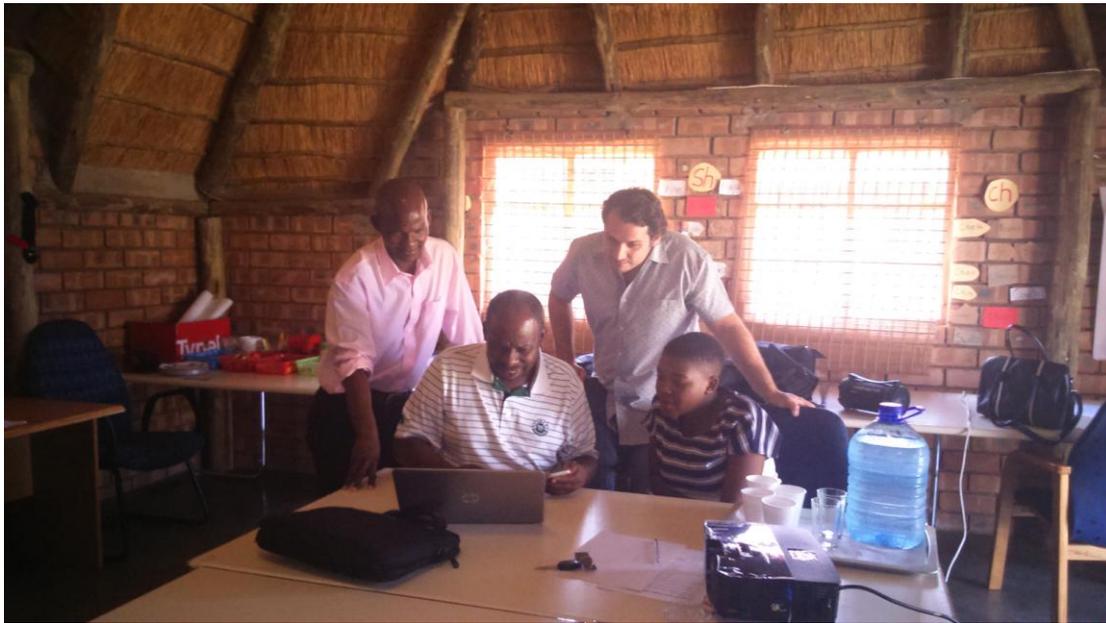


Figure 3: Programme Training with Nathan Wit, founder of LETT project

The LETT Programme is being rolled out in schools in Limpopo and will soon be extended to schools in Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Eastern Cape.

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'There are many advantages of using games in the classroom:

1. Games are a welcome break from the usual routine of the language class.
2. They are motivating and challenging.
3. Learning a language requires a great deal of effort. Games help students to make and sustain the effort of learning.
4. Games provide language practice in the various skills- speaking, writing, listening and reading.
5. They encourage students to interact and communicate.
6. They create a meaningful context for language use.'

Source: Lee Su Kim - From 'Creative Games for the Language Class'

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PREPARED ON BEHALF OF AFRICAN BANK BY CATHY FINDLEY PR. CONTACT JACQUI RORKE ON JACQUI@FINDLEYPR.CO.ZA OR (011) 463-6372 WITH ANY CONSUMER PR QUERIES.