



NEWS RELEASE FROM GROWSMART, AN INITIATIVE BY GROWTHPOINT PROPERTIES, THE WESTERN CAPE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE EASTERN CAPE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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### 20 young storytellers become published authors with Growsmart

*Once upon a time, 391 books were written by South African children from 220 schools in the Western Cape and Eastern Cape with the help of their teachers and Growsmart, an initiative of Growthpoint Properties and both provinces' education departments. Their best books are so good that they are being published, launching the very bright futures of 20 new talented young published South African authors.*

Growsmart, the leading education initiative by Growthpoint in collaboration with the Western Cape and Eastern Cape Departments of Education, is a programme focused on boosting the literacy, numeracy and science performance of primary school children.

Growsmart schools are chosen by the - respective education districts to improve their literacy performance. Growsmart is designed for grade four, five and six learners. This is the level where the most transition takes place in the literacy foundation when changing from home language to the English curriculum. This makes ensures Growsmart has the biggest possible positive impacts.

The fun, competitive, and exciting curriculum-based resource supports educators and learners to master their required syllabus work. One of its most popular and loved activities is an inspiring story writing competition.

Individual learners of participating Growsmart schools can enter their story, which is handwritten and hand illustrated with a beautiful cover page, just like a book.

This year, the story writing competition was presented for the fourth year running in the Western Cape, where 247 books were submitted from 160 schools. Each school that takes part has to choose new writers to represent their school every year, allowing more opportunities for all the learners.

The story writing competition was also introduced for the first time in the Eastern Cape in 2018, where 144 books were entered by the province's 60 participating Growsmart schools.

The children could choose their own topic for their story but were also given 19 topic suggestions as inspiration.

The storybooks are judged according to criteria set by the education departments, based on the CAPS policy for the Intermediate Phase. Each story must be at least 300 words for Grade 4s, 400 words for Grade 5s and an impressive 500 words for Grade 6s.

With lots of interesting reading, the story writing competition markers certainly had a fun but tough job this year. Twelve markers assessed all 391 books twice over a 12-day period - each book was read twice.



*“The children’s writing skills were visibly improved compared with last year’s levels, a clear sign of better teacher involvement. A big thank you to all the young writers for sharing their carefully written tales with us, and to their teachers for guiding these young talents on their writing journeys. We also extend our sincere appreciation to the dedicated markers as well as BDO Auditors for auditing the marking process,”* says Jewel Harris who heads the Growsmart initiative for Growthpoint.

The top 20 books will be published by VIA Africa Publishes and launched on 15 September 2018 at the Growsmart Final. The published books are distributed to all participating Growsmart schools for use in their libraries and as additional reading material, with each book serving as inspiration to other learners, encouraging them to write their own stories. Each young published author also receives a copy of their own work.

Growsmart is a leading example of the impacts and importance of ongoing effective public-private partnerships. It is designed to be transformative for educators and children, but also for their families, communities and South Africa as a whole.

Shawn Theunissen, Head of Corporate Social Responsibility at Growthpoint Properties, says: *“Growthpoint is a major property investor in both provinces where Growsmart is offered and the Growsmart education initiative is another way that we invest in these communities. We are pleased, through Growsmart and its partners, to help give primary school learners access to quality education and we are humbled to share their remarkable stories.”*

This year, all top 20 books were written by children from the Western Cape schools. Because this was the Eastern Cape’s first year of participation, it was an introductory learning year for the teachers who mentored the children’s book writing project. Feedback from the judges is designed to help boost the performance of the province’s already promising book submissions for next year.

**The top 20 books in the 2018 Growsmart story writing competition are by:**

#### **Grade 6**

- Aminah Arend, Talfalah Primary: The Weary Travellers
- Erin Reynolds, Kuils River Primary: The Strange Night
- Ndalo Mngxuma, Alicedale Primary: Sleepover
- Alessandro Small, Goeie Hoop: The Greedy Lesson
- Mpetha Nonhlanha, Intshayelelo: A Letter from a Rhino
- Diego Esau, Blackheath: Unlocked Vision
- Tinevimbo Meki, Factreton Primary: Change can be Magical
- Shakira-Lee Dickson, Arcadia Primary: Toothfairy
- Siphx Xawuko, Belthorn Primary: The Garden Where All Your Dreams Come True
- Nashia Kleinsmith, Symphony Primary: Alice
- Joshua du Preez, Talfalah Primary: The Pair of Magical Kicks
- Kouthar Waggie, Schotsche Kloof: Murder and Mystery
- Cee Jay Syms, Alicedale Primary: Journey to The Unknown Island

#### **Grade 5**

- Janeeka Baartman, Athlone North: Monsters House
- Lithalethu Gida, Belmor Primary: Scruffy and Shabby: A Tale of Well-Worn Shoes
- Courtney Silieur, Bramble Way: Alexa Solves her First Mystery as a Spy
- Kuhle Javu, West End Primary: The Kingdom of the Magical Garden



#### **Grade 4**

- Blayze Barnes, Balvenie Primary: Blayze and the Butterfly
- Ade Sikwebu, Liwa Primary: The Flying Chair
- Bernice Pedro, Balvenie Primary: Bernice and the Beautiful Blanket

/ends

#### **Growsmart:**

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