Coping with Covid

African Storybook
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Ulwazi Lwethu

Schools were closed for months due to a national lockdown. The lockdown was to slow down the spread of Covid-19.

Schools opened again last week. Some learners are still staying home.

At Maxeke Primary School, it is time for a Life Skills lesson.

Teacher Piti wants to find out how the children coped with lockdown.

"I would like to hear about your experiences during lockdown," he says to the class.

Sello begins, "My dad believes everyone should have a set routine."

"So, he woke us every morning from Monday to Friday, and he would have us do something constructive from 8 am to 2 pm," says Sello.

Munya asks, "What does it mean, 'something constructive'?"

"It is doing something useful and positive," replies Sello.

"Yes Sello, that's right," says Teacher Piti.

Sello's sister Neo adds, "Our dad made sure lockdown was just like school time!"

Neo says, "The only thing that I enjoyed about lockdown is that we did lots of activities together as a family."

Munya says, "I think I used my time quite wisely. I went over my Maths because I want to improve my marks.

I watched movies and played outdoor games for entertainment. I also read, to keep myself busy.

I did workouts to keep fit."

Basani says, "With regards to lockdown, I think there were positives and negatives."

"Positive aspects are that I had time to rest, and I spent quality time with my family. I used the time to read books and to revise schoolwork," she explains.

She continues, "I was worried about whether domestic workers would receive their income.

I had anxieties about my family and people continuing to break the law."

Teacher Piti nods. He knows that during the lockdown it was easy to feel uncertain and anxious.

Yash says, "In my family, there are six of us. As much as I love my family, being in their company constantly drove me crazy.

To solve this problem, my mom bought the game Monopoly. It was my favourite board game as a kid."

Yash concludes, "I've been playing Monopoly so much in the past few weeks I even considered a job in real estate!"

Amanda laughs then says, "What I did to cope during lockdown was cooking and baking. I really missed school!"

Many learners agree.

Teacher Piti says, "It is useful to talk with someone we trust about how we feel.

Today I heard good ideas for how to cope when life is challenging.

Let us continue to talk about this tomorrow," says Teacher Piti as the bell rings.

1. Write the meaning of these words: cope, challenging, anxious, routine.

2. Write words that mean the opposites.

3. Explain Yash's joke.

4. What are three ideas for how to cope when life is challenging?

5. Do you agree with Basani? Explain your answer.

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This storybook is based on reports for RX Radio. RX Radio is a children's internet radio station, by and for children.

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Ulwazi Lwethu is a Zenex Foundation funded and initiated project to develop a series of graded and leisure African language readers and teacher support materials. This project is targeted at teaching and supporting learners in the Foundation Phase to improve their home language reading and understanding. The readers have been originated in nine African languages in collaboration with Molteno Institute for Language and Literacies, Nelson Mandela Institute for Education and Rural Development, Room to Read South Africa, and Saide. All resources are developed as Open Education Resources (OER).

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