

# Demystifying maths

*A pair of former teachers have produced an invaluable reference book to help pupils tackle a tough subject, writes Sharika Regchand*

**T**WO retired teachers with a passion for erasing the fears associated with learning maths have launched a maths dictionary to assist senior primary- to entry-level high school pupils in understanding the subject.

Sandy Edwards and Dawn Williams, of Hilton and Kloof respectively, decided to write the book because they believed there was a need for a maths study aid for pupils.

Titled *Dawsan's Maths Dictionary*, it is a concise reference of all mathematical knowledge, concepts and terminology required from grades 4 to 8. Edwards said it took 18 months to source and collate the contents of the dictionary.

As former maths teachers, Edwards and Williams had been asked by colleagues, who had seen their material, to produce extension exercises for pupils. They then

realised that they didn't know the extent of a child's knowledge as they were dealing with various schools and, given the flexibility of the syllabus, they had no definitive guidelines.

"We needed to provide schools with specific resource material, hence the idea to devise a reference book to which children could turn in order to solve the tasks with confidence," said Edwards.

The 84-page dictionary was also aimed at homework facilitators, teachers, parents and home-school tutors.

"It is a quick and easy reference, a useful troubleshooter that introduces and reinforces mathematical concepts," Edwards said. "Furthermore, it facilitates self-learning. The dictionary has proven to be valuable to both pupils with an aptitude for maths and those requiring remediation. The mental challenges, however, are



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designed to extend to the more capable pupil."

After the dictionary was published, Edwards and Williams produced extension exercises for grades 6 and 7.

"Once the dictionary was published, this gave us the platform to produce the extension booklets, which, in our opinion, are essential for reinforcement and consolidation required to be

assimilated before entrance to high school," said Williams.

A pilot scheme of the extension exercises for Grade 5 pupils was being implemented.

"We are of the opinion that the mental challenges of grades 5, 6 and 7 are not necessarily suited to the grade, and we are planning to refer to them as levels 1, 2, 3. In this case the extension exercises can be utilised according to mathematical ability and not restricted to a specific grade. Schools purchasing the package deal, namely the dictionaries and the challenge exercises, are offered introductory orientation exercises in order to familiarise the pupils with the material," she added.

The book is being sold privately. For details, contact Sandy Edwards at 074 132 6296, Dawn Williams at 082 562 3054, Helen Smith at 083 775 2153 or Kyle Schouw at 071 870 9917.

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