

International Mother Language Day

Watch the video read the paragraph and then answer the questions below.

In South Africa with the large diversity of language and culture we have a large span of languages, probably one of the few countries in the world with a numerous number of languages that are official in one country. We have 11 official languages being:- Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu. These are our 12 official languages, but with other cultures amongst our population there are many other languages spoken in homes.

No matter what is your Mother Language, it is important to know continue the heritage and teach others about your language and what it means to you. Learn that language, and be proud.

Knowing other languages is good and can open many opportunities for one in a work environment.

International Mother Language Day. International Mother Language Day is intended to celebrate and encourage the preservation of all the languages of the world. This celebration is an opportunity to reflect on the role languages and dialect play in our lives, and the importance of preserving linguistic diversity in the world and in our communities. Every language is unique and it gives insight into one's culture and interpretation of knowledge. This day harbours the respect and

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admiration of the multilingual world we live in cultures associated with them. Learning and appreciating the diversity is an enriching occurrence filled with emotion.

According to UNESCO, International Mother Language Day was established as an official event in 1999. The essence of this day, is to work towards "preserving linguistic diversity and promoting mother tongue-based multilingual education". More and more languages are becoming endangered as some languages are taking up significant percentages of the world's speakers. With languages like English and Mandarin taking preference, indigenous languages are slowly being used less as there isn't a large demand for these languages to be used in a global perspective.

Why is preserving our mother languages important?

- It helps in the intellectual development of children as it boosts intellectual and cognitive development
- Communication within your own culture assists in staying connected to your roots
- Higher success in learning second languages
- Better employment opportunities if you are bilingual or multilingual
- Boosts your confidence as speaking your mother tongue gives one a sense of pride

It is important for continuous progress in keeping UNESCO's vison alive by promoting mother tongue-based education with a growing understanding of its importance, particularly in early development education, and being more commitment to its development in society. UKZN Extended Learning (UEL) is also contributing to this mission by offering a number of language courses in some of these indigenous languages and more. UEL has also included sign language as one of its offerings and embraces diversity, even in the languages. These programmes are designed to assist delegates in improving their knowledge and practical command of the language, with a focus on effective spoken and written proficiency. Delegates will learn the practical application in situations that they encounter in daily life.

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Questions

1. How many official languages does South Africa have? Name 4 of them.

2. What is your Mother Language ? How do you say, Hello, how are you in your language?

3. When was International Mother Language Day each year?

4. What does this day mean to you? Write 4 sentences about this.

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