

CONSTITUTIONAL KIDS



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Dedicated to:

A.C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
H.H Radhanath Swami Maharaj
H.H Bhakti Tirtha Swami Maharaj
and
Hladini Devi Dasi

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Chapter 1

Hi everyone! We know that you are learning all about really important subjects like Maths, Natural Science, Technology and Xhosa, but we would also like you to learn more about the most important and exciting subject of them all...YOU! This book was written with bucket loads of love especially for you. Not for your parents, grandparents, aunts or uncles, but only for you, fantastic, super cool YOU!

How rude, we haven't even introduced ourselves yet!



Hello, my name is Junior. I am in grade six.



Molo, my name is Mpho, I'm
in grade nine this year.

Namaste. My name is Krishna
and I am in grade eight.



Hi there, I'm Kayla and I am in
grade seven.



We all grew up together in the same neighbourhood of beautiful Cape Town. We have been best friends since we were toddlers, so we have become known as the awesome foursome. We are very excited about meeting and becoming friends with each and every one of you too!



You, the boy or girl whose eyeballs are reading these words at this very moment, are the future of our beautiful country. You are the doctors, policemen, teachers, nurses, artists and leaders of tomorrow. As long as you believe in yourself, you can be absolutely anything you want to be when you grow up. We already believe in you; you just need to believe in yourself too.

Our nation is going to be built on you, so you have to be very strong. You are already very powerful; you just don't know

yet that you are. That is why we are here, to tell you that because you are so special you have powers protecting you. Pretty cool, don't you think?

Our world is such an exciting and fascinating place to live in because you are wonderfully different from everyone else. Even though all of us are unique, every single one of us is born with the same thing and, no matter what, it can never be taken away from us. We are born with very special powers!

Adults know that we have these special powers; they just use a different name for them. Adults call our powers "rights". All of our rights are written down in a very special book called "The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa". The name is so long that for short everyone calls this book "The Constitution". Now just because it's such a special and important book doesn't mean that you won't be able to find it. You can find it in any public library, and it should be in your school library too.

What is The Constitution?

First of all, we know that you already have Social Science as a subject so we won't bore you with too much of that, but as the saying goes, "You won't know where you are going until you know where you have been." So we're going to take you on a super-quick trip back in time to help you understand why The Constitution is so important to us.

In 1994 something amazing happened in our country. We had our very first democratic election. A democratic election means that every single person who is born in South Africa

and is 18 years or older can vote for the political party which they would like to see in charge of our country.

A political party isn't where people get together, play games and eat cake. A political party is a group of people who work together and discuss the best way of running the country. The political party which gets the most votes in an election wins, and this group of people will become the Government of South Africa. The leader of that party will then become the President of South Africa. Voting seems like such a big and exciting responsibility, doesn't it? We all have that power, and when we turn 18 we will be able to use that power.

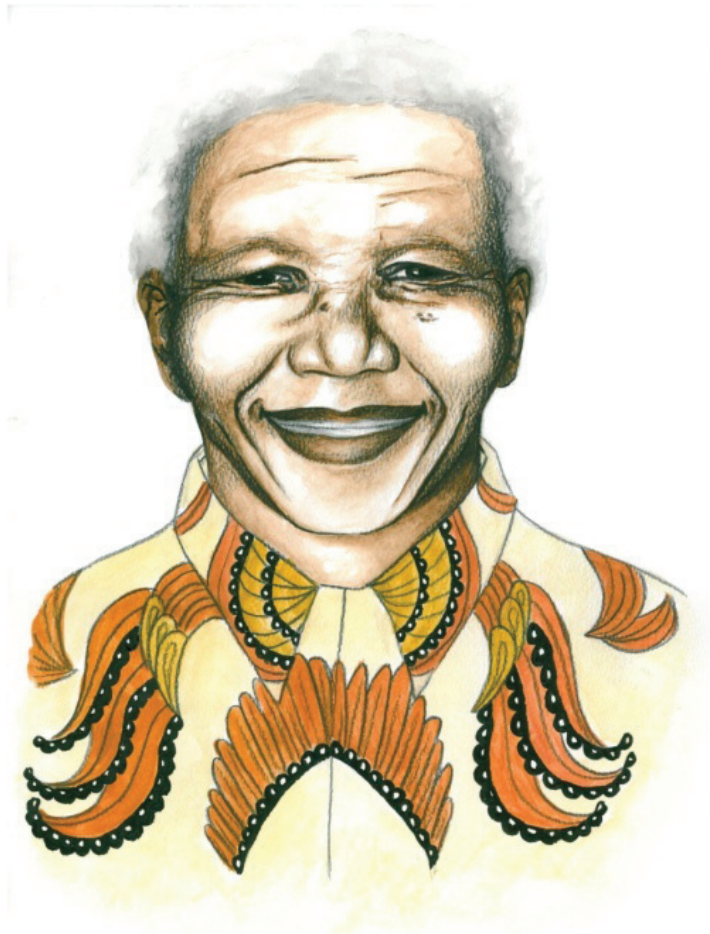
Voting is the same as when you vote for your class captain. Everyone in your class is allowed to vote, no matter if they are the best student, the slowest runner, tall, short, black, white, Indian, Jewish, Catholic or Muslim. After everyone has voted, the student who receives the most votes will then become the class captain. Quite simple, hey?



Oh my gosh! There we go again wandering away with your thoughts. You really should tell us the next time we do that.



You might be asking, "So which political party got the most votes in that election, and who became the President?" Well, the African National Congress (ANC) won that election, and Mr Nelson Mandela became the very first President of a democratic South Africa. He is a wonderful man, and because of that election and for everything he did for our country he became famous all over the world! He is also lovingly known as Madiba.



When Madiba became President, some very clever people came together and wrote The Constitution. As we said earlier, this book tells you all about the powers that you have. The Constitution is a very grown up book and is quite tricky for us kids to understand. So we are here to explain in a simple and easy way exactly what your powers are and how you can use them. We are very excited about taking you on this journey with us and hope that you are too. We are eager to get started, so let's begin!



Chapter 2



The Constitution is a very long book made up of chapters and sections. Please don't let this boggle your mind. In school, your work books are divided either into modules or into units and activities. Just think of the chapters and sections of The Constitution as being the same as modules, or units and activities. In each chapter there are numbered sections which make The Constitution easier to read. However, for the purpose of "Constitutional Kids," we are going to jump, hop and skip only to the chapters which are specifically important to you. The chapters which we are going to leave out are also very important, but they are about boring adult stuff that you will only need to know when you are older.

Before we get to your powers, we are going to tell you what The Constitution says about our President and what his job is. The President is in charge of our whole country. This means that he has a lot of responsibility towards us. When our President is chosen, he takes an oath. An oath is like a pinky swear. Our President makes a pinky swear with every single South African, you included, that he will not break his promise to us.

Chapter 5 of The Constitution tells us what the President promises us. Our President promises to protect the rights of all South Africans, to do his job as best as he can, to be fair to everyone and to devote himself to the well-being of the country and to all of us. He also promises to do all he can to make sure that our nation lives in harmony. Just so that you know, there is nothing stopping you from becoming our future President one day. You just have to believe that you can make a positive difference in our country. You must also be a strong, kind and compassionate leader, just like Madiba.

Now let's get back to your rights! Your rights are set out in Chapter 2 of The Constitution. This chapter is called "the Bill of Rights".

Section 7 of Chapter 2 says that the Bill of Rights is a cornerstone of democracy in South Africa. This means that the Bill of Rights is the foundation for all South Africans being equal. The Constitution is the highest law in our country; therefore, Section 7 also says that the Government must respect, protect, promote and fulfil the rights in the Bill of Rights. This means that everyone, even the President, must obey The Constitution and may not take your rights away from you. Wow, doesn't that make you realise how important you are?

Section 9 of Chapter 2 of The Constitution says that everyone is equal and has the right to be treated equally to others. It also says that you may not be unfairly discriminated against on grounds of gender, race, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, belief, language or birth. Sjoe, that's quite a mouthful, isn't it?

This means that you may not be treated differently to someone just because you are not the same as them. For example, you have the right to be treated equally, no matter what your skin colour is, if you are a boy or girl, if you are in a wheelchair, if you speak a different language or if your religion is different to someone else's. It also doesn't matter who your parents are, if they are divorced, or even if you are an orphan.

An important thing to remember is that if someone is richer, has a nicer car, wears more expensive clothes or has cooler gadgets than you, it does not make them better or more important than what you are. Everyone is very special, no matter what they have or don't have. The person that you are on the inside is what matters, not what you have on the outside. Remember that money can't buy the most important things in life like love, true friendship, happiness and health.

Section 10 of Chapter 2 says that everyone has the right to human dignity. This means that you have the right not to be treated in a way that makes you feel embarrassed, hurt or sad. No one, especially adults, may make you feel worthless. So tell those bullies they had better back off! Also, if you are in a position to help someone who is being bullied, or know of someone who is being bullied, you should try your best to help them.

Section 11 of Chapter 2 says that you have the right to life. This means that you have the right to be alive. You have the right to live your life, so no one may threaten you and say that they are going to take it away from you. Most importantly, you deserve to be here. Trust us; this world would be terribly dull if you were not in it.

Section 12 of Chapter 2 says that you have the right to freedom and security. This means that you have the right to move around freely. You are not allowed to be locked up in a small space or chained to anything. Junior was once in trouble for not doing his homework and for calling his older brother bad names. As his punishment, he was sent to his room for the rest of the day and was not allowed to go skate boarding with his friends for two weeks. This does not mean that his freedom was taken away from him. It means that he was being punished reasonably and fairly for being naughty.

Sometimes when our parents or guardians punish us for behaving badly, it feels like they are being so unfair and mean. The truth is that they only do this to teach us the right way of behaving. We might not see it now, but they are helping us to become responsible and respectable young adults.

Section 12 also means that no one may physically hurt you. Your body is private and belongs only to you. If anyone ever touches you in a way that is painful or makes you feel sad or bad about yourself, you must tell one of your parents, your guardian, a family member, or an adult that you trust right away about what happened.

Chapter 12 also says that you have the right not be tortured in any way. Torture is when someone causes severe physical or mental pain to someone else. No one has the right to torture anyone, so, if this ever happens to you, be brave and speak out!

You may also not be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way. There are different ways by which we can

get punished if we are naughty or disobedient. If you ever get punished in a way that is painful, embarrassing or makes you feel very sad, you should ask an adult or teacher that you trust if that form of punishment was fair.

To all the young ladies, if you are ever pregnant, you have the right to make your own choices about your pregnancy and your body. However, a pregnant girl should never have to make big decisions like these alone. A responsible adult who cares about the girl and her baby should be there for her. The Constitution also says that you have the right to have control over your body and that no one may do scientific or medical experiments on you without your permission.



Section 13 of Chapter 2 says that you may not be a slave. This doesn't apply to you if you and your siblings make bets where the loser has to be the winner's slave. That is all just for fun. The law says that you are not allowed to work before you are 15 years old, so you have the right not to be forced to work. However, Mpho helps her mom with the dishes, Krishna washes his dad's car every now and then, and Kayla does extra chores around the house for pocket money. This is not the same as forced work, so it's important that you understand the difference.





Section 14 of Chapter 2 says that you have the right to privacy. This means that you have the right not to have your privacy invaded. Most of you are still living at home so you have to obey the rules that your parents or guardians have made for you. They may have rules like you are not allowed to lock your bedroom door, or you can't have internet in your room. Some of the rules in your home might seem unfair to you now, but your parents are only doing what they know is best for you. What you may do is write all your feelings and thoughts down in your own personal diary. You can hide it so that no one else reads it.



Section 15 of Chapter 2 says that you have the right to freedom of religion, belief and opinion. Krishna's religion is Hindu. He has the right to practise his religion freely. No one may tell him that his religion is wrong, silly or that their religion is better than his.

Mpho's friend Saskia is Jewish. Saskia has special permission not to go to Bible study class with everyone else because her religion teaches her about God from a different book called the Torah. This does not mean that she is any different to any of us; it just means that her religion is different. You may not be nasty to anyone about their religion. People respect your religion, so you should respect all other religions as well. Our modern society has forgotten how important this right is. It is your right to explore different religions and decide which one you would like to practise. The common factor of all religions is to love God and to love each other. So you should not criticise, but encourage those who are following a religion.



Section 16 of Chapter 2 says that you have the right to freedom of expression. This means that you have the right to say what you are thinking and what you are feeling. You have the right to receive ideas and tell others of your ideas. You can express yourself by speaking, singing, writing, drawing, painting or even dancing. This right does not mean that you may encourage war or get people to fight with each other. This right also does not allow you to say hateful things about people based on their race, gender or religion. You may also not back-chat your parents, use nasty and rude words, or say mean things to your family and friends.



Section 17 says that everyone has the right, peacefully and unarmed, to assemble, to demonstrate, to picket and to present petitions. This means that if a group of people want to get together to discuss a certain matter, they may do so if it is peaceful and no one carries any weapons.



Section 18 of Chapter 2 says that you have the right to freedom of association. This means that you have the right to choose who you would like to be friends with. Just because someone has a different skin colour to you, speaks a different language or is of a different religion doesn't mean that you may not hang out with them.

If your parents or family say that you should not be friends with someone because they are too old, are involved with bad things like drugs and alcohol, or can't be trusted, then you should listen to them. They only warn you about certain people

to protect you and keep you safe. Besides, why would you want to be friends with people like that anyway? Your friends should be people who have the same interests as you, and who like you for who you are. Your friends should be people that you trust and who won't hurt or embarrass you. Friends are people you can have fun with and be yourself around.

Section 19 deals with your political rights. This section is about rights like voting, forming political parties, campaigning for a political party and standing for public office. You only need to worry about these rights when you turn 18, so let's move along for now, shall we?

Section 20 says that no South African may be deprived of citizenship. This means that the Government may not tell you that you are no longer a South African.

Section 21 says that everyone has the right to freedom of movement. Everyone has the right to leave the country. Every South African has the right to enter, to remain and to reside anywhere in the country. All of this means that you may go anywhere in the country. You may live anywhere in the country, leave the country and also come back into the country if you leave.



Section 22 says that every South African has the right

to choose their trade, occupation or profession freely. This means that you may choose to be anything you want to be when you grow up. When the time comes for you to decide what you want to do, think very carefully about it. Do something that you are interested in and that you know you will love doing. Making a lot of money is not the most important thing



about choosing a career. Some people are incredibly rich but are miserable because they don't like their jobs. On the other hand, some people might not earn that much, but are very happy because they love what they do.

Section 23 of The Constitution is entitled "Labour relations". It tells you all about the rights that you have as a worker. When you are old enough to work, you should definitely have a look at it.

Section 24 of Chapter 2 says that you have the right to live in an environment that is not harmful to your health or well-being. It also says that you have the right to have your environment protected by the Government for the benefit of your generation. This means that if there is an area near to your school or your home that is polluted, you have the right to tell your local municipality about it and ask that they clean

it up. You can even get your class mates involved and make it a school project. You can ask your teacher to write a letter to the municipality and have it signed by the whole class.



Section 25 talks about your property rights. Property means things which belong to you. This right of yours is a little bit tricky because usually if a piece of land or a house belongs to you, you won't be able to have control of it or do whatever you like with it until you are 18 years old. Until you turn 18, your parents or legal guardian will take care of all that boring stuff for you so that you can concentrate on more fun things, like climbing trees, swimming, having fun with your friends or whatever else it is that makes you feel warm and fuzzy in your tummy!



When you turn 18, you are allowed to make your own choices about legal things without having to ask permission from your parents first. This means that you may sign papers that will allow you to rent a house, buy land, open accounts and loads of



other awesome grown up stuff. You will also be able to vote in our country's elections. So instead of being dragged along with your parents every four years to the voting stations just to twiddle your thumbs, you may participate in being a part of making our country's history and shaping its future. Cool hey!

Things like your clothes, pens, cell phone, stationery, toys, bed, shoes and money in your piggy bank are your own personal goodies. If someone takes something that belongs to you without your permission, that is called stealing. It's a crime to steal and people who are caught stealing get punished.

If you see something that belongs to someone else and you want to take it for yourself, remember that it's wrong to steal and you will be in a lot of trouble, not only with your parents but also with the police. Imagine how sad you would feel if someone took your favourite thing in the whole wide world away from you. You wouldn't want someone to do that to you, so you shouldn't do that to anyone else.

Remember, it's not stealing if you are naughty and your

parents take your things away from you as punishment. Kayla didn't make her bed or pack her clothes away after her mom had asked her three times to do so. Kayla's mom took her favourite books away until Kayla fixed her bed and picked up her clothes. This does not mean that Kayla's mom stole from her. Kayla was being taught to listen to her mom when told to do something.

Section 26 says that everyone has the right to have access to adequate housing. This means that if your family or community lives in terrible conditions, the Government has a duty to do its best to help you as much as it can to improve those conditions.

Mpho lived in a community that had no electricity or running water. This was unacceptable, so the adults of her community had a meeting with their local municipality, and after a few weeks the problem was solved. Mpho was finally able to fill up her plastic portable pool. To celebrate, she invited her friends over for a pool party!



You and your family may not be forced to leave your home unless your parents have received a letter from a court telling you to leave. This is called a court order. If this ever happens to you and you have nowhere to go, you can phone one of the numbers we have given you at the end of this book.

Section 27 says that everyone has the right to have access to health care, food, water and social security. This means that you have the right not to be turned away from a public hospital if you are ill or hurt. You also have the right to have food and water.



If your parents or guardian cannot look after you, the Government must provide your family with access to social assistance. This means that the Government must have places available where you and your family can get help and be looked after.

Kayla's best friend is Ubrie. Last year, Ubrie's father lost his job and their family couldn't afford to live in their house anymore. They had nowhere else to go, so they moved into their local night shelter for a few weeks until Ubrie's father found another job and they could move back into a house of their own again.



Sometimes you might find yourself in a situation that seems scary and hopeless, but that is when the chance has come along for you to show how brave and strong you can be. Even though sometimes you might feel alone or lost, you never ever are. Inside your heart is a powerful, beautiful angel who is always with you. So whenever you feel alone or frightened, just close your eyes, float away on a candyfloss cloud and imagine your angel wrapping you up warm and snugly in her big, fluffy, silky soft wings.



Chapter 3

If you are under 18 years old, section 28 of The Constitution is dedicated especially to you!

This section says that you have the right to a name and nationality from birth. We are sure that all of you have names, but, if you don't, now you know that you have the right to have one. Your nationality comes from the country that you were born in. If you were born in South Africa, you are South African. If you were born in Sweden, you are Swedish. If you were born in India, you are Indian. If you were born in Kenya, you are Kenyan. If you were born in Scotland, you are Scottish. If you were born in... okay okay, we know you get the picture already so we'll stop now.

As a child, you have the right to family care, parental care, or to appropriate alternative care if you are removed from your family environment. This means that you have the right to be looked after by your family or parents. If you are taken away from your family for whatever reason, you have the right to be looked after by someone else.

Steven, Krishna's classmate, was taken away from his mother

because she was not able to care for him properly. Child Welfare found a very nice foster family who looked after Steven until his mother was able to take care of him again. Child Welfare is a special group of people who care very much about you. Your safety and happiness are the most important things to them. They will be there for you whenever you need them, so never feel too scared or too shy to phone them.



Section 28 repeats what is written in section 27. It says that every child has the right to basic food, shelter, health care and social services.

You have the right to be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation. This means that if you are being

treated very badly, if no one is looking after you at all, if you are being physically hurt by an adult, if you are being touched in a way that makes you feel bad about yourself, ashamed or scared, or if you are always being spoken to in a way that makes your heart sore, you can phone one of the numbers we have given you at the end of the book. A kind person will speak to you and do their very best to make it all better.



Section 28 also says that you have the right not to be required or permitted to perform work or provide services that are inappropriate for a person of your age or place at risk your well-being, education, physical or mental health or spiritual, moral or social development. Wow, there's another mouthful!

As we said earlier, legally you are not allowed to work until you are 15 years old. This part of section 28 means that if you are allowed to work, the work that you do must be suitable

to your age. An example of this is that you may not be a bartender if you are under 18 years old. It's against the law to pour alcohol in a restaurant or bar if you are not 18, but you may be a waiter or waitress when you turn 15 as a holiday job or for extra pocket money.

The Constitution says that you have the right to be protected from exploitative labour practices. This means that you have the right not to do work that harms you physically or mentally. If you are exposed to things at your work that make you feel uncomfortable, sad or scared, you have the right not to work there anymore.



You are not expected to work if it interferes with your education. Until you turn 18, going to school is your most important responsibility. If your working hours are the same as school hours, then you should not be working at all.



The Constitution says that you have the right not to be detained except as a measure of last resort, in which case you may be detained only for the shortest appropriate period of time. This means that you may not be arrested unless it is absolutely necessary to do so. If you are arrested, you may not be kept under arrest any longer than what is necessary and fair in that situation.

We know you would never do anything that would get you into so much trouble, but if you are ever arrested, you have the right to be kept separately from other arrested people who are over 18 years old. You have the right to be treated properly and kept in conditions that are suitable to your age. You have the right to have a lawyer who will help you if you are ever arrested. It's the Government's job to let you speak to a lawyer if your parents or guardian aren't able to help you. You have the right to remain silent and you may not be forced

to make a confession that could be used in evidence against you. This means that you don't have to say anything to anyone until your parents or a lawyer arrives to help you.



As a child, you have the right not to be used directly in armed conflict, and to be protected in times of armed conflict. This means that if there is ever a war in our country, you have the right to be protected from it. You may not be forced into participating in a war. You may not be forced into the army to be a soldier or to do anything else that has to do with war.

Don't let this scare you; our country is very peaceful and we are friends with all the other countries of the world. Friends don't fight with each other, so we don't have to worry about our country being involved with war anytime soon.



Section 28 also says that your best interests are extremely important in every matter concerning you. If there is a problem in your family that needs to be solved, the result of that solution must be what is best for you. For example, if your parents get divorced, the parent that you live with should be the one who can look after you the best and give you the most love. That should make you realise how super special you are.

Section 29 says that everyone has the right to basic education. You have the right to go to any public school you choose, and you may not be turned away from a public school if you are unable to pay school fees. No matter what your skin colour or religion, you may attend any public school you like. You have the right to be taught in your home language,

or in any other of our official languages. While you are at school, your teachers have the same authority over you as your parents. Your teachers take responsibility for you and only want what's best for you, so you must listen to them.

Section 30 says that you have the right to speak, read and write in any language of your choice. You also have the right to participate in and be a part of any culture you choose. This means that no one may force you to be a part of a culture that you don't want to be in. Just remember that all of our different cultures are very special and should be respected. One culture is not better than another, so it's wrong to make fun of someone else's culture.



Section 31 says that no one may prevent you from enjoying your culture and practising your religion with the members of your community. Also, no one may prevent you from speaking, writing and reading in your language.

Section 32 says that everyone has the right of access to any information held by the state, and any information that is held by another person and that is required for the exercise or protection of any right. This means that if the Government have made any laws, or have made decisions that affect our rights in any way, they must make that information available to us by putting it on the internet, in our local library or in another place that we have access to.

Section 34 says that everyone has the right to have any dispute that can be resolved by the application of law decided in a fair public hearing before a court. This means that if you have a legal problem, you have the right to go to a court of law to have it solved. If you are under 18 years old, your parents or legal guardian must assist you if you go to court. You can ask an adult that you trust if the problem you have is a legal problem or not.

One of Junior's best friends is Mvula. One day Mvula was riding his bike to the shops. As he was crossing the road, a car went through a red robot and knocked him over. Mvula had to go to hospital because he was badly hurt. After Mvula was sent home from hospital, his dad went to court on his behalf to claim back the money that was spent on medical bills from the driver of the car that knocked Mvula over.

Now that you know what your rights are, how do you protect

these rights? Section 38 says that anyone has the right to approach a competent court, alleging that a right in the Bill of Rights has been infringed or threatened, and the court may grant appropriate relief. This means that if your rights are being ignored or not respected, you may go to court with your problem. A judge will decide on the best way to solve it. If you are under 18, you must ask your parents, legal guardian or an adult that you trust to go with you.



So now that you know all of this, if you ever hear someone talking about the Bill of Rights, you can pipe up and say, "I know what that is: they are my rights and no one may take them away from me!" As we said earlier, the other chapters of The Constitution aren't very important to us for now. The rest of the chapters are about things like Parliament, courts, democracy, public administration, security services,

traditional leaders, finance, election procedures and other adult stuff that makes us yawn.

It's fantastic knowing that we have all these different rights, but with these rights come responsibilities as well. Yes we have the right to be treated equally, but that means that we must treat others equally too. You know now that you have the right not to be physically or mentally harmed, but this means that you yourself should also not hurt or embarrass anyone else.

We have the right to live in a clean environment, but that starts with us. We should wash ourselves and brush our teeth every day. We should also keep our rooms tidy. We know they aren't fun things to do but as soon as you get into the habit of doing them, you can find ways to make them fun in your own way.

We have the right to health care if we are ever sick, but we must take care of ourselves properly so that we don't get sick. For example, if it's cold outside we should dress warmly so that we don't get the flu. We should also stay away from dangerous places like building sites so that we don't get hurt.

Even though you have the right not to have your things taken away from you, you must still look after them properly and not leave them lying around so that someone is able to take them. It's a good idea to write your name on your things so that they won't get lost or be confused with someone else's stuff.

We are so lucky that we have the right to an education because

many children around the world would love to go to school but are either not able to or are not allowed to go to school. Having this awesome right means that it's your responsibility to go to school and do your best so that you can have the brightest future possible! All of you have the potential to be great leaders, but an important thing that you need so that you can lead others is knowledge. A great leader is unselfish and has compassion for everyone. Leaders help people feel happy and secure. Leaders are sensitive to people's emotions and needs. People will follow you if you make them feel loved and valued.



Chapter 4

Well that's it for now as far as The Constitution is concerned. We really hope that it all makes sense to you.

What we would also like to share with you are the reasons behind our country's public holidays. We love public holidays because we get to stay home from school, but they are also very important and meaningful because our different public holidays are the reasons why The Constitution was written.

Altogether we have six public holidays which are also known as national holidays. These don't include holidays like Easter, Christmas, New Year's Day, Good Friday, Family Day, Worker's Day, and the Day of Goodwill. The six holidays we are talking about only apply to our country. They remind us of events that happened in our country's history, and events which celebrate our country's many different cultures.

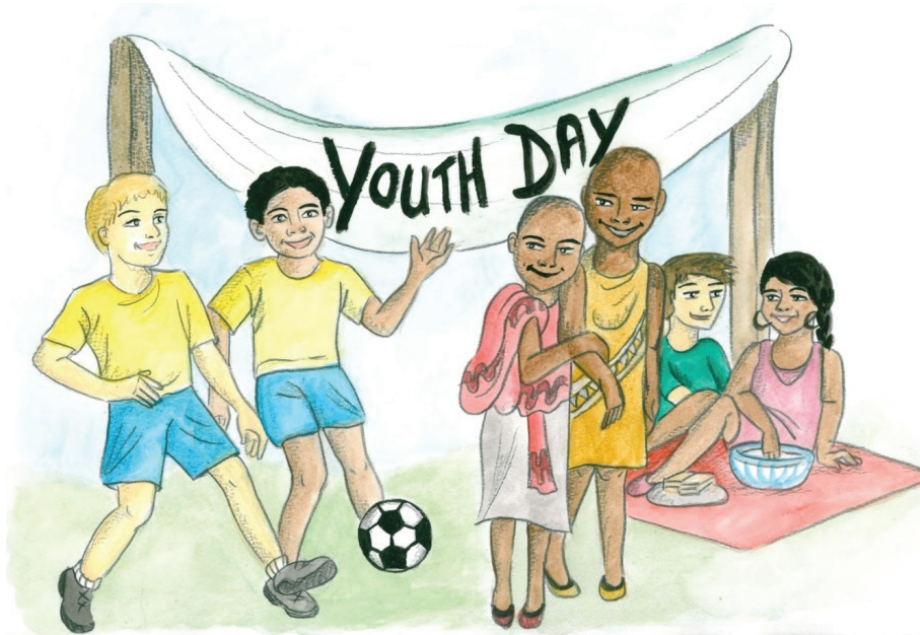
Our first public holiday is **Human Rights Day**. This day is celebrated on the **21st of March**. Many years ago before The Constitution was written, a law was made that people who had a certain skin colour had to carry papers with them from

the Government to allow them to go from place to place in South Africa. It's the same as needing a passport just to move around in your own country. As you can imagine, the people who this law affected were very unhappy about it. On the 21st of March 1960, a number of African people gathered at various police stations to protest against this law which forced them to carry these passes. Unfortunately, things became violent and many brave men lost their lives. They died for what they believed in; therefore, they did not die in vain. Now that is the true meaning of being a hero. It's because of them that The Constitution says that no one may be treated differently just because of their skin colour. So on our next Human Rights Day, take a moment to think about those people who gave their lives so that we may be free to go wherever we like today. The day is called Human Rights Day so that all South Africans can remember that, as human beings, we have rights protecting us. With these rights also come the responsibility of respecting the rights of others.

Our next public holiday is **Freedom Day**. It is celebrated on the **27th of April**. This day marks the day when the first democratic election took place in South Africa on the 27th of April 1994. Wow, that was before any of us were even born! If you can't remember what a democratic election is, then go back to the beginning of the book. You'll find the meaning under the heading, "What is The Constitution?" Go on, have a look quickly; we'll wait for you.

Welcome back! Now onto our next holiday, which is **Youth Day**. This holiday is celebrated on the **16th of June**. This day is meant especially for us because we are the youth of South Africa. This day honours amazing school children who

protested against laws in 1976 which wouldn't allow them to go to certain schools or universities just because of their skin colour. Sadly, many of these courageous students lost their lives. We have the freedom today to choose where we want to go to school and university because of their bravery. We are very grateful for what they did for us so we celebrate Youth Day in honour of them.



National Women's Day is the next holiday, which we celebrate on the **9th of August**. On the 9th of August 1956, women from all over South Africa marched in protest against the same laws that were protested against, which resulted in Human Rights Day (our first public holiday in March). Now that's girl power for you! Luckily no one was hurt during this march. This shows that girls can be just as brave as boys. Girls should not be told that they can't do something just because they are girls. Women are honoured on this day in remembrance of those wonderful ladies who fought for our rights back in 1956.



Our second last national holiday is on the **24th of September**, and is known as **Heritage Day**. This is a fun and happy day which celebrates all the different cultures of our amazing country. A culture is the tradition, custom and ideas of a certain group of people. This includes music, art, theatre, dance, language, food and even sport. Heritage means to inherit, so on this day we celebrate what we have inherited from our awesome country. This includes all the wild life, parks, important scientific places, national monuments, historic buildings, art works, literature, music and museums. All of our cultures are very important because they created, and continue to create our nation.

Things like your smile, eyes, personality, hobbies and talents make you who you are and form your identity. In the same way, the different cultures of our country form its identity.

I'm sure you'll agree with us that because our country has so many cultures, if South Africa was a person, he or she would be exciting, fun, beautiful and incredibly interesting! What makes this day even more special is that every year there is a different theme for Heritage Day. So why not make an effort to find out what the theme is, or create your own theme and get your friends to join in on the fun!



Our last public holiday is celebrated on the **16th of December**. This day is called **Reconciliation Day**. For us to tell the whole story behind this day, we would have to bore you with an entire history lesson. We're sure that you are just itching to

go and play already after having to listen to us babble on and on. So we're going to explain this holiday as quickly and simply as we can, deal?

In the 19th century, Britain was in charge of South Africa. A group of people called the Voortrekkers didn't like being under the control of the British. The Voortrekkers wanted to be independent, have their own Government and have their own land. The problem was that Zulu kingdoms were already occupying the land that the Voortrekkers wanted for themselves. Over the next few months, the Zulus and the Voortrekkers fought many times. However, on the 16th of December 1838, the biggest battle happened between them and more than 3000 Zulus were killed.

The purpose of Reconciliation Day is to reconcile and unite our country. This means that we must apologise to the people who we have hurt, and forgive those who may have hurt us. As South Africans we are all brothers and sisters, regardless of where we come from or how different we may seem. So as a family we must love, respect and support each other no matter what. It's up to us to set the right example so that future generations can learn from us and make our country the best place in the whole wide world to live in. We're up for the challenge, are you?

Chapter 5

As kids we have a lot to deal with while growing up, and it can get quite tough. Sometimes you might feel all alone and that no one understands you, but you have to keep in mind that every single one of you was born for a very special and important purpose. You might not see that now, but one day you will.

When God created you, he made you perfectly and exactly according to plan, so you should never want to change anything about yourself. There is no one else in the whole world like you so if you try to change yourself to be like someone else, then you are taking something very special away from the world.

It's important to remember that you are still growing into your bodies and many things about you are still going to change, but don't be impatient to grow up. Before you know it, you'll be all grown up and will have to do all the boring stuff that adults have to do. So enjoy being a child as much as you can while you still can.

If someone says horrible things about you that aren't true, then just ignore them. As long as you know the truth about yourself, then it doesn't matter what anyone else thinks. Sometimes you might feel quite small in this very big world but it's so important to believe in your heart that you have the power to be whatever you want to be. Sometimes you might feel like no one cares about you, but the truth is that you are loved, cherished and adored more than you could ever imagine!

All of our power lies in our mind. We create our future just by our thoughts. Our thoughts lead to words. Our words lead to actions. Our actions lead to habits. Habits become our character and our character becomes our culture. Every action you do has an equal reaction. This means that whatever you do to others will one day happen to you, so make good choices every day.

You have the power to affect every single person you interact with, so make it a positive effect. People are remembered for what they did for others, so strive to make a meaningful contribution in the lives of those around you. By learning to see everyone as your father, mother, brother or sister, and by treating others as you would like to be treated, you will naturally show kindness and respect to everyone. You have to give kindness and respect in order to receive it. You can't just demand it.

It is of utmost importance to be grateful for everything that you have. Even if you feel like you have nothing, there will always be someone out there who has less than you. Always. Every day you are growing more and more into lovely young

adults, so you must try your best to act like young ladies and gentlemen. The future of our planet lies in your hands, so be the change that you want to see in our world.

We hope that this book has made you realise how very special you are, not only to the people who know you but to our whole country. We hope that you enjoyed your time with us, because we definitely enjoyed our time with you. Thank you for becoming friends with us, but, most importantly, thank you for being you, fantastic, super cool YOU!



Important Phone Numbers

Child Line: 0800 055 555

Child Welfare: 011 452 4110

Police: 10111

Ambulance: 10177

Medical Rescue: 0800 111 990

Rescue Services: 083 1999