

Mobis hooking kids into books

Writer makes stories real by dipping into kasi life

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MORE than 40 pupils from Bethelsdorp and Paterson high schools in Port Elizabeth are slowly falling in love with a number of new mobi books they have just been introduced to by teen books writer Dorothy Dyer.

Paterson High pupils have hailed the initiative – which makes books available on cellphones – as a major success, saying that Dyer has made reading easier and a lot more fun.

They say Dyer, of the Fundza Literacy Club, has come across a brilliant way to keep teens from involving themselves in smut.

Grade 9 pupil Nolitha Dingga, 15, said: "This is a good idea because every single teenager logs onto mxit

every day and now there will be something worth looking at rather than those dodgy chat rooms."

Mobi books are electronic stories that can be downloaded to computers, tablets and cellphones.

Grade 10 pupil Chandra Clark said:

"This makes books so much more accessible. I will not have to go to the library to find something to read. I will just use my phone and there is no way I can be bored any more."

Paterson High School English teacher Lindie Boo said: "Our children are so keen to read Dorothy's books, some have already subscribed to them. I think it is because they mostly re-

flect them as teenagers."

Speaking at the Reading Association of South Africa (Rasa) open day at the weekend, Dyer said books like *Jealous Jozi* and *Broken Promises* were set in townships that resembled those many South African teens lived in.

Dyer hit on the idea of launching mobi books a year ago.

She said the books were part of her *Harmony High* series that was sent to two high school reading clubs in Port Elizabeth to spread the word of reading for pleasure.

She said use of social networks would hopefully have a positive outcome on reading campaigns.

"I realised that kids like to spend time on social networks so as a teacher I thought using mxit as a platform for reading would real-

ly improve their interest in reading.

"We will upload new chapters from different books every day and with assistance from younger writers and Rasa we hope we, as Fundza, achieve our goal of getting children reading for enjoyment," she said.

Rasa coordinator and NMU lecturer Eileen Scheckle said phones were a reliable source and one that youngsters liked to spend time on.

"If we can tap into this exciting practice and extend pupils into reading books on their cellphones, then they would continue to develop as readers with many personal and academic spinoffs," she said.

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