

Minister's book club titles 2026

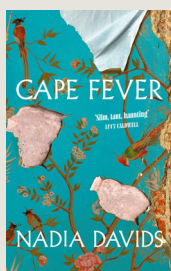
Theme: Cultural diversity

ADULT FICTION



KAGEE, Ashraf
By the fading light.- Jacana Media, 2021.

By the fading light is a historical fiction novel written by South African psychologist and academic Ashraf Kagee. Set in 1960 against the backdrop of the Sharpeville massacre and the looming shadows of Apartheid, the story takes place in the Cape Town suburb of Salt River. The narrative centers on four eleven-year-old boys: Ainey, Haroun, Cassius, and Amin. The book weaves together themes of troubled families, vibrant Muslim culture, South African politics, the resilience of children, loss of innocence and coming of age.



DAVIDS, Nadia
Cape fever.- Scribner, 2026.

Cape fever is a gothic psychological fiction novel written by award-winning South African playwright and author Nadia Davids. Set in 1920 within an unnamed coastal city heavily resembling colonial Cape Town, the story follows Soraya Matas, a 19-year-old Muslim girl from the Malay Quarter. She takes a live-in maid position for Mrs. Hattingh, an eccentric, financially struggling British widow living in a decaying manor. It is a haunting tale that explores themes of power, race, memory, and colonial class divisions.



VAN DER MERWE, Kirby
Eugene.- Human & Rousseau, 2022.

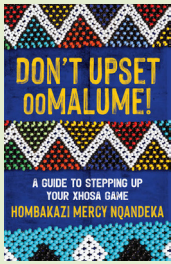
Eugene is an award-winning Afrikaans novel written by South African journalist, translator, and visual artist Kirby van der Merwe. The book follows Eugene, a successful middle-aged man whose comfortable Johannesburg life is shattered when he is arrested and charged with murder. The story delves into his past, tracing how childhood poverty in a Boland compound and illegal apartheid-era activism in Hillbrow led to a web of betrayal and fatal consequences.



MATSHOBA, Bulelani
Akwaba ndandingambonanga.- Vela Books, 2024.

Akwaba Ndandingambonanga follows the tragic romance of Fikile and Nandipha, whose plans to marry are shattered when deeply buried family secrets come to light. These revelations expose cultural taboos that make their union forbidden, forcing a painful separation filled with profound regret.

ADULT NON-FICTION



NQANDEKA, Hombakazi Mercy

Don't upset oomalume: a guide to stepping up your Xhosa game.- Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2022.

This book, written by Xhosa ambassador and agriculturalist Hombakazi Mercy Nqandeka, aims to capture the essence of Xhosa heritage and culture and explores the many unique characteristics of village life. It covers a range of topics, from basic greetings and major Xhosa life ceremonies to traditional clothing, what to expect in and around the rondavel and Xhosa cuisine.



PRADA SAMPER, José Manuel de

Fading footprints: in search of South Africa's first people.- Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2025.

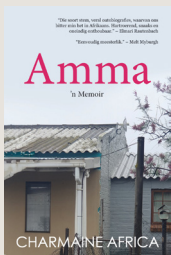
Part historical detective story and part personal memoir, the book follows the author's lifelong journey into the magical, endangered folklore of the /xam San hunter-gatherers of South Africa's Upper Karoo region.



MBOMBI, Mbonani Daniel

An African bite.- Penguin Books, 2022.

This cookbook celebrates the simplicity and authenticity of African food for a contemporary cook. Chef Daniel Mbombi has a deep connection to his Xitsonga culture and heritage, yet he is also a modern man living an urban lifestyle. Recognizing that if we don't keep cooking 'heritage' dishes, there is a risk of them being lost forever, he set out to create a cookbook that celebrates the food he was raised on.

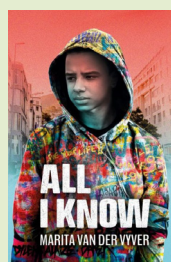
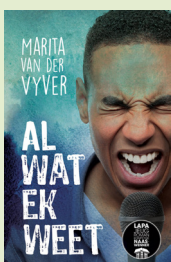


AFRICA, Charmaine

Amma: 'n memoir.- Tafelberg, 2024.

Amma is the multiple award-winning memoir of Charmaine Africa who grew up in Bishop Lavis against the backdrop of apartheid in an impoverished, apolitical family. She followed in the footsteps of her grandmother and her mother with a singular mission: to keep her family together while everything is falling apart.

YOUNG ADULT FICTION



VAN DER VYVER, Marita

Al wat ek weet/All I know/translated by Kobus Geldenhuys.- Lapa, 2016.

A truly South African story about a struggling father-and-son relationship and the healing power of words. Van der Vyver writes convincingly about the world of performance poetry and Gabriel's desperate attempts to make sense of life's challenges after the death of his mom.

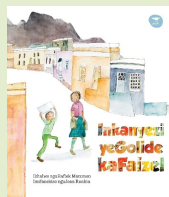
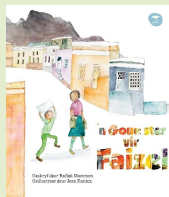
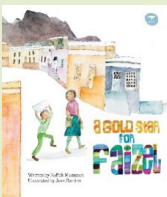


MKIZE, Loyiso

Kwezi — issues 1–3: collector's edition/Kwezi — amahlelo 1–3: uhlelo lomqokeleli. - David Philip, 2016/2017.

Kwezi is a groundbreaking South African comic book series created and illustrated by fine artist Loyiso Mkize. It features the journey of a 19-year-old city dweller who discovers he possesses superhuman abilities.

JUVENILE FICTION



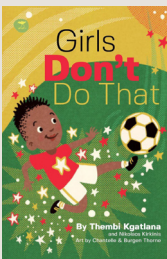
MAMMON, Rafiek

A gold star for Faizel/illustrated by Joan Rankin. - Jacana Children's Books, 2022.

'n Goue ster vir Faizel/illustrasies deur Joan Rankin.

Inkwenkwezi egolide kaFaizel/imizobo nguJoan Rankin; inguquleli yesiXhosa nguXolisa Guzula.

This local picture book sees Faizel taking a big step and going to school for the first time. Does Faizel enjoy his first day at school and very importantly, will he be able to share his love of nature and the wonder of the stars with his classmates? A gentle story about a Muslim boy who speaks Afrikaaps.



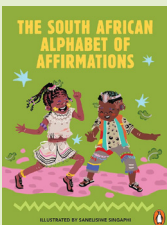
KGATLANA, Thembi and KIRKINIS, Nikolaos

Girls don't do that: the story of Thembi Kgatlane/illustrated by Chantelle en Burgen Thorne; translated by Kobus Geldenhuys.- Jacana Media, 2023.

Nie vir meisies nie: die storie van Thembi Kgatlane/illustrasies deur Chantelle en Burgen Thorne; vertaal deur Anita van Zyl.

Amantombazana akayenzi loo nto: ibali likaThembi Kgatlane/imizobo nguChantelle noBurgen Thorne; inguqulelwe yesiXhoseni nguXolisa Guzula.

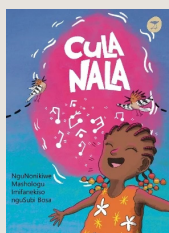
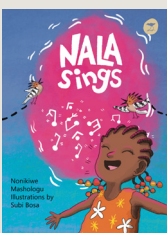
An inspiring children's book about Thembi, an eight-year-old girl in South Africa, who overcomes local insults and gender stereotypes to pursue her passion for football. Through unwavering dedication and resilience, she proves her doubters wrong, rising from the streets to become the African Women's Footballer of the Year.



HOAEANE, Disemelo and 9 others

The South African alphabet of affirmations/illustrated by Sanelisiwe Singaphi. - Penguin Random House South Africa, 2023.

A book of affirmations that highlights each of South Africa's eleven official languages: Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu. The book is a love letter to children in South Africa honouring their magic, worth, and power.



MASHOLOGU, Nonikiwe

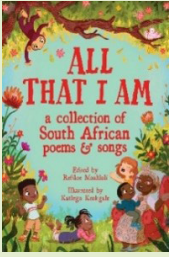
Nala sings/illustrations by Subi Bosa. - Jacana Children's Books, 2023

Cula Nala/imizobo nguSubi Bosa; inguqulelo yesiXhosa nguXolisa Guzula.

Nala sing/illustrasies deur Subi Bosa; vertaal deur Anita van Zyl.

Nala sings is a beautiful, lyrical children's picture book written by Nonikiwe Mashologu and illustrated by Subi Bosa. The story is a modern retelling of the classic African folktale *Tselane and the Giant*.

JUVENILE NON-FICTION



MOAHLOLI, Refiloe

All that I am: a collection of South African poems and songs/illustrated by Katlego Keokgale.- Pan MacMillan, 2024.

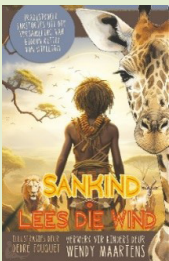
Explore a vibrant tapestry of South African culture with this enchanting treasury of songs and poems, curated especially for young readers. Compiled by acclaimed children's book author Refiloe Moahloli, this book features traditional and contemporary works in the rainbow nation's 11 official spoken languages, each accompanied by an English translation. Join 17 esteemed contributors, including beloved authors Sindiwe Magona, Jaco Jacobs, Gcina Mhlophe and more, as they share works that celebrate the diversity and beauty of South Africa and its people.



LABUSCAGNE, Cobi

Explore!: awesome South African artists/illustrated by Lauren Mulligan.- Jacana Media, 2019.

An inspiring and educational read for 9-15-year-olds. South Africa's finest living contemporary artists, like William Kentridge, Nandipha Mntambo and Penny Siopis, Banele Khoza, Zander Blom, Billie Zangewa and many many more, grace the pages of this funky children's book. Let children jump into the lively and flourishing local art scene, see it in full colour, learn about the diverse paths of the artists and their fascinating artworks.



MAARTENS, Wendy

Sankind lees die wind/lynskette deur Dedre Fouquet.- LAPA Uitgewers, 2024.

A breathtaking collection of short stories based on the rich oral traditions and traditional folklore of the San people. Come and discover the secrets of mythology, folktales, and ancient San history.



JAN BRAAI

Jan Braai Junior: resepte, tegnieke en raad: 'n braaigids vir die volgende geslag/fotograaf Toby Murphy.- Penguin Books, 2023.

A cookbook for the next generation of braaiers in South Africa. Filled with a collection of Jan Braai's very best braai recipes, simplified with easy-to-follow, step-by-step guidance, **Jan Braai Junior** can be enjoyed by kids and the whole family. This user-friendly book covers all the fundamental braai knowledge every South African should have, using basic equipment and budget-conscious ingredients.