Upfront with Zakes Bantwini

Upfront with Zakes Bantwini is a not-to-be-missed one-night only musical extravaganza taking place on June 16th at the Soweto Theatre.

The Durban-based music mogul announced that his first theatre stage performance, in association with his current album, Love, Light and Music, will pay tribute to the great South African musical story of Sophiatown.

Well-loved for his exceptional talent as an entertainer, Zakes Bantwini will take to the stage, performing jazz renditions and popular tracks from his current album, Love, Light and Music. In anticipation of the performance, Zakes Bantwini repaid with one word, fireworks!

"Growing up, I was told about the great musical stories of Sophiatown and as a musician, I want to bring this culturally-rich era to life. This was a time in our nation's history that was brimming with musical talent and where legends were born.

Music was a central feature that developed in Sophiatown and it has been said that this cultural hub is where the most important indigenous jazz evolved.

As a trained jazz musician, I am only fitting that Zakes Bantwini pays homage to this era on June 16th, National Youth Day in South Africa.

Studying smarter - memorisation and study practices

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Preparing for an examination is not always an easy task and can become daunting if you do not know where to start.

The key to effective studying is not about cramming in information before an exam or reading for long hours, it is about studying smarter.

1. Think positively

Aim to think positively.

Instead of thinking, "I am not good at this", the more positive view is "I did not do so well with this the last time where can I improve?"

2. Create a favourable study space

Aim to study in a place that does not have any distractions because this is not conducive to learning.

3. Rest and manage your time

Ensure that you are not tired during your study period.

Your brain can focus better on the content you want to memorise if it is rested and refreshed.

This means that you have to design a study timetable to suit your individual needs and schedule.

Allocate time for leisure, rest, eating, exercising and studying so that there is an even balance. The timetable works best if you follow it.

4. Read and write your own study notes

It is important to read the study material yourself so that you can make summaries or notes that are easier for you to understand and memorise.

Avoid using study notes that someone else wrote.

Each person is unique, so too are the ways in which they put information together in summary format.

Use short sentences in your study notes and underline or highlight the words that you have to remember.

Some people find it better to associate drawings to a particular set of information.

5. Memorise your study notes

After you have written down effective study notes, it is time to begin memorising.

Learning to memorise does not come naturally, it takes practice, so ensure that you spend time doing this.

The first step to memorising information is to write it down as noted in point 4 above.

The second step is to read the words or sentences in the study notes aloud.

Third, is to repeat the words or sentences without looking at the notes.

This process encourages you to commit the information to memory.

 Aim to memorise small sections of your notes at a time so that you gradually commit these to memory.

If you use drawings in your study notes, it may be useful to memorise a sentence to accompany the individual drawing.

This way you avoid confusing complex study topics.

6. Practice by yourself or with friends

Once you have memorised your study notes test yourself to see just how much you know.

You can do this by working through past exam papers or class tests.

Some people find that working in groups assists their learning and understanding of subject content.

7. Preserve your health and balance

Your body and mind should work in harmony and the best ways to get this balance right it to practice healthy eating and exercise routines.

Schedule time for both.

8. Ask for help

Offer a teacher or lecturer offers to assist with additional lessons or tutorial sessions, only to find that no one asks for help.

If you are experiencing difficulties with a particular section of the subject content, do not be afraid to ask for help.

In conclusion, when you feel like studying is a waste of time or just a means to pass an exam, think about the bigger picture.

You are learning and gaining experiences from this learning journey that will be beneficial for you in the future.
Studying smarter - memorisation and study practices

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With the mid-year examinations upon us, our attention goes toward achieving successful results at the end of term or semester. Preparing for an examination is not always an easy task and can become daunting if you do not know where to start. The key to effective studying is not about cramming in information before an exam or reading for long hours, it is about studying smarter. This article aims to provide you with eight basic skills to study smarter and memorise information effectively.

1. **Think positively**
Avoid comparing yourself to others. Remind yourself that you are unique and have a special way of understanding and learning. What you think about yourself and your unique abilities is an important first step to studying smarter. Aim to think positively. Instead of thinking 'I am not good at this', the more positive view is 'I did not do so well with this the last time where can I improve?'

2. **Create a favourable study space**
Aim to study in a place that does not have many distractions because this is not conducive to learning. Rather find a quiet and comfortable learning space to suit your individual needs. Ensure that you have all your stationery and study material available and organised in this space so that you do not waste valuable time searching for information.

3. **Rest and manage your time**
Ensure that you are not tired during your study period. Your brain can focus better on the content you want to memorise if it is rested and refreshed. This means that you have to design a study timetable to suit your individual needs and schedule. Allocate time for leisure, rest, eating, exercise and studying so that there is an even balance. The timetable works best if you follow it. It is best to study regularly over a period of few weeks instead of trying to cram in the subject content on the last minute. This is where the study timetable comes in handy.

4. **Read and write your own study notes**
It is important to read the study material yourself so that you can make summaries or notes that are easier for you to understand and memorise. Avoid using study notes that someone else wrote. Each person is unique, so too are the ways in which they put information together in summary format. What works for another person may not work for you. When you write down study notes, you are encouraging your brain to remember and understand the information. Use short sentences in your study notes and underline or highlight the words that you have to remember. Some people find it better to associate drawings to a particular set of information. They then choose to write the sentences and draw pictures next to it because it assists in learning and remembering. If this works for you then use it.

5. **Memorise your study notes**
After you have written down effective study notes, it is time to begin memorising. Learning to memorise does not come naturally, it takes practice, so ensure that you spend time doing this. The first step to memorising information is to write it down as noted in point 4 above. The second step is to read the words or sentences in the study notes aloud. Third, is to repeat the words or sentences without looking at the notes. This process encourages you to commit the information to memory. Aim to memorise small sections of your notes at a time so
that you gradually commit these to memory. If you use drawings in your study notes, it may be useful to memorise a sentence to accompany the individual drawing. This way you avoid confusing complex study topics.

6. Practice by yourself or with friends
Once you have memorised your study notes test yourself to see just how much you know. You can do this by working through past exam papers or class tests. You may also want to design your own tests or quizzes to assist you in practicing. Some people find that working in groups assists their learning and understanding of subject content. In this case, it may be a good idea to form a small study group with friends so that you can test each other and discuss topics related to the subject content.

7. Preserve your health and balance
Your body and mind should work in harmony and the best ways to get this balance right is to practice healthy eating and exercise routines. There are no short cuts to better health so schedule time to exercise regularly and eat well balanced meals.

8. Ask for help
Often a teacher or lecturer offers to assist with additional lessons or tutorial sessions, only to find that no one asks for help. If you are experiencing difficulties with a particular section of the subject content, do not be afraid to ask for help. You can ask your teacher, lecturer, an older sibling, members of your study group, tutors or other members in your family to assist you. If they cannot assist, they will most likely ask someone else who can. Remember they too want you to succeed.

In conclusion, when you feel like studying is a waste of time or just a means to pass an exam, think about the bigger picture. You are learning and gaining experiences from this learning journey that will be beneficial for you in the future. Every learning experience has value in that it makes you who you are, unique and special in every way. That uniqueness will contribute in some way to the development and sustainability of the future generation of South Africa.