

## **Studying Literature in Secondary School**

### **English translation:**

B: We used to stay in the rural area and in the urban area as well. So when it was vacation time, because in primary school we used to have three terms, so at the end of each term we used to go to the city. While in the city, we would meet other kids who were studying in town and we would ask them about good schools that had good education. There were certain schools where you could learn at those while staying there, that is, boarding schools. Schools that are in towns you usually go everyday and return home at the end of each day. So there were very few schools. The year that I finished primary, that is in 1971, that is the time that I finished grade seven. So I succeeded and I went to look for a place in form one in town, in the city of Gweru. That is where I found a non-boarding secondary school, Ascot Secondary School. This was one of the two secondary schools where black people were allowed to go in the city of Gweru.

A: Okay. So is that the school where you started form one?

B: That is the school where I started form one in the year 1972.

A: Can you explain what form one is? Is it the one that follows after Primary school?

B: Yes. That is the school that follows after Primary school. After Primary school, you would go to Secondary school. Like I said before, there were two types of schools. There were boarding schools where you would go at the beginning of the term and you would spend three months there learning. You would return [home] after finishing the term and stay for three to four weeks and then you return again. That is boarding school. However, we also had day-schools. You would learn coming from home and you would return home after school everyday. So Ascot Secondary School, where I learnt, was a day-school.

A: Okay. So what did you learn in secondary school?

B: In secondary school, that is where we started learning interesting things. We were learning the subjects that I once mentioned such as English. We were now learning advanced English. The other one was spoken English and the other one was English language which included reading and writing. The other one was called Literature which was the study of different books.

A: Do you still remember the books that you studied that time?

B: We studied a lot of interesting books. They were many. Some the authors are well-known authors such as Charles Dickens.

A: Okay.

B: Yes. We also had David Copperfield, and we also learned about Shakespeare, like plays. This was one of my favorite classes, that is, Literature.

A: Okay.

B.: Yeah, but we used to have Literature in English which was different from English Literature. I think there a slight difference.

A: Do you know what the main difference was?

B: Literature in English was a subject where you would analyze different sorts of books. But we used English to analyze those books. However, if we say English Literature, this was analyzing books about the lifestyle of the English people. They were only English books and there were no books from other languages (tribes). That's the difference between English Literature and Literature in English. We also used to learn our mother tongue, Shona. We were learning Shona in greater depth, learning the grammar, how you write the language, that is the structure of the language and also the (Shona) authors, for instance authors of poems and many other things. We would also learn Mathematics and Sciences. In such cases, we would have our classes in special buildings that were designed for science classes, because we used to carry out experiments to see if what we learned was true. We also used to learn about sports. There were a lot of sporting activities at my school because we had enough resources to do sporting activities. We used to do swimming, and we had the swimming pools. We used to play soccer and other sports like rugby and volleyball. We used to compete against each other with other neighboring schools. We used to travel to other cities. We were defeated at times and in some cases we would win.

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