

But the development of new textbooks froze at this stage. Mark shifted his focus to rural schools, which didn't have textbooks at all, and looked into the printing and distribution options. A few sponsors came on board but not enough to meet the need.

In 2007, Shuttleworth and the Open Society Institute convened a group of open-education activists for a small but lively meeting in Cape Town. One result was the Cape Town Open Education Declaration, a statement of principles, strategies, and commitment to help the open-education movement grow.² Shuttleworth also invited Mark to run a project writing open content for all subjects for K–12 in English. That project became Siyavula.

They wrote six original textbooks. A small publishing company offered Shuttleworth the option to buy out the publisher's existing K–9 content for every subject in South African schools in both English and Afrikaans. A deal was struck, and all the acquired content was licensed with Creative Commons, significantly expanding the collection beyond the six original books.

Mark wanted to build out the remaining curricula collaboratively through communities of practice—that is, with fellow educators and writers. Although sharing is fundamental to teaching, there can be a few challenges when you create educational resources collectively. One concern is legal. It is standard practice in education to copy diagrams and snippets of text, but of course this doesn't always comply with copyright law. Another concern is transparency. Sharing what you've authored means everyone can see it and opens you up to criticism. To alleviate these concerns, Mark adopted a team-based approach to authoring and insisted the curricula be based entirely on resources with Creative Commons licenses, thereby ensuring they were safe to share and free from legal repercussions.

Not only did Mark want the resources to be shareable, he wanted all teachers to be able to

remix and edit the content. Mark and his team had to come up with an open editable format and provide tools for editing. They ended up putting all the books they'd acquired and authored on a platform called Connexions.³ Siyavula trained many teachers to use Connexions, but it proved to be too complex and the textbooks were rarely edited.

Then the Shuttleworth Foundation decided to completely restructure its work as a foundation into a fellowship model (for reasons completely unrelated to Siyavula). As part of that transition in 2009–10, Mark inherited Siyavula as an independent entity and took ownership over it as a Shuttleworth fellow.

Mark and his team experimented with several different strategies. They tried creating an authoring and hosting platform called Full Marks so that teachers could share assessment items. They tried creating a service called Open Press, where teachers could ask for open educational resources to be aggregated into a package and printed for them. These services never really panned out.

Then the South African government approached Siyavula with an interest in printing out the original six Free High School Science Texts (math and physical-science textbooks for grades 10 to 12) for all high school students in South Africa. Although at this point Siyavula was a bit discouraged by open educational resources, they saw this as a big opportunity.

They began to conceive of the six books as having massive marketing potential for Siyavula. Printing Siyavula books for every kid in South Africa would give their brand huge exposure and could drive vast amounts of traffic to their website. In addition to print books, Si-

USING SIYAVULA BOOKS GENERATED HUGE SAVINGS FOR THE GOVERNMENT.