



# National Reading Strategy



education

Department:  
Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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## Contents

## Page numbers

1. Introduction . . . . .	4
2. Why improve reading? . . . . .	5
3. The situation in South Africa. . . . .	5
4. Specific challenges in implementing the <i>National Reading Strategy</i> . . . . .	8
i) Teacher competency . . . . .	8
ii) Libraries . . . . .	8
iii) Teaching conditions . . . . .	9
iv) Print environment . . . . .	9
v) Language issues . . . . .	9
vi) Inclusive Education . . . . .	10
5. South Africa's <i>National Reading Strategy</i> . . . . .	10
6. Key pillars of the <i>National Reading Strategy</i> : . . . . .	13
6.1 Monitoring learner performance . . . . .	13
6.2 Teaching practice and methodology . . . . .	14
6.3 Teacher training, development and support . . . . .	15
6.4 Management of the teaching of reading . . . . .	16
6.5 Resources . . . . .	17
6.6 Research, partnerships, and advocacy . . . . .	18
7. Conclusion . . . . .	19
8. Reading Steps:	
i What learners can do. . . . .	21
ii Teaching Emphasis. . . . .	22
iii Resources you need to have or to make. . . . .	23
9. References . . . . .	25

### Vision of the *National Reading Strategy*

Every South African learner will be a fluent reader who reads to learn, and reads for enjoyment and enrichment.

#### 1. Introduction

*“To read is to empower  
To empower is to write  
To write is to influence  
To influence is to change  
To change is to live.”<sup>1</sup>*

We all have a responsibility to get involved in the national effort to combat illiteracy. In 2001 and 2004, the Department of Education conducted two national systemic evaluations to establish literacy and numeracy levels in primary schools. These surveys showed shockingly low levels of reading ability across the country. Large numbers of our children simply do not read. The Department of Education continues to investigate why the levels of reading are so poor, and to find ways to deal with the problem. This National Strategy for Reading is part of its response.

In developing this National Strategy for Reading, South Africa is participating in a number of United Nations development campaigns. These include the UNESCO Literacy Decade 2003-2013, and the Education for All (EFA) campaign, which aim to increase literacy rates by 50% by the year 2015. Underpinning these campaigns, are the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Literacy promotion is at the heart of the MDGs.

Leading world nations pride themselves in promoting reading in all aspects of life – in homes, in schools, at work, in public places. Literacy takes many forms: on paper, on the computer screen, on TV, on posters and signs. Literate people take their skills for granted - but illiterate people are excluded from much communication in today's world.

South Africa faces many challenges in promoting literacy. It is rare to find schools with well-used general libraries. Many homes have no books. Books in African languages are scarce, so children do not have the opportunity to read in their home language. Some classrooms have no books, and even those classes which do have sets of readers, often have them at the wrong level. Poor matriculation results are in part due to the low levels of students' reading skills. University students – even those enrolled for the languages and the arts – are not proficient in reading, in



terms of international standards. Overcoming these challenges is not going to be an easy task. This **National Reading Strategy** aims to promote a nation of life-long readers and life-long learners.

### 2. Why improve reading?

Reading is part of nation building.

- Reading promotes confidence as an individual in a modern society, and as a member of a national and world community.
- Reading enables us to act creatively and critically in a world which is ever-changing and competitive.
- Reading provides rapid, ready access to new information and knowledge that will help us in life-long learning.

The main goal of this **National Reading Strategy** is to improve the reading competence of learners. The Strategy aims to improve the reading level of all learners in the country, including those who experience barriers to learning and those learners who are at special schools and youth care centres.

More broadly, this **National Reading Strategy** will have these benefits:

- Help learners to move through the education system;
- Improve matriculation results;
- Improve people's capacity to communicate in an ever-changing world;
- Bring economic benefits for the country by producing workers who are competent in their reading and writing skills.

The Department of Education, working closely with the provincial Departments of Education, promotes this Reading Strategy.

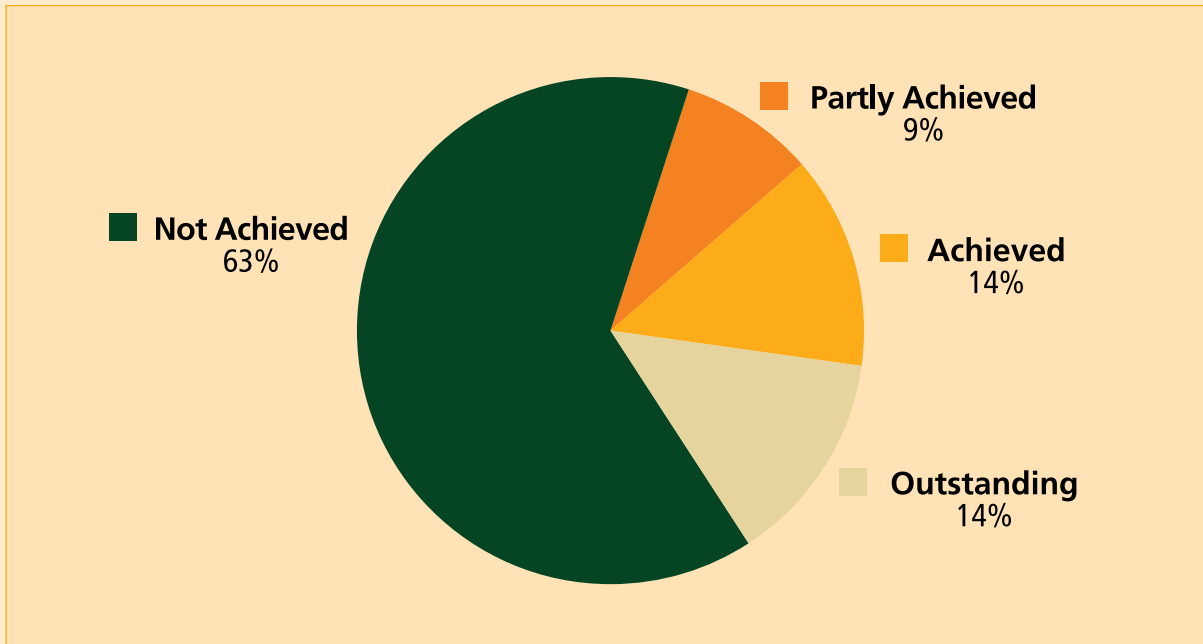
### 3. The situation in South Africa?

The Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy<sup>2</sup> states this important aim: Ensure that every South African is able to read, write, count and think.

This statement underpins the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). It was an essential factor when the curriculum learning outcomes were designed.

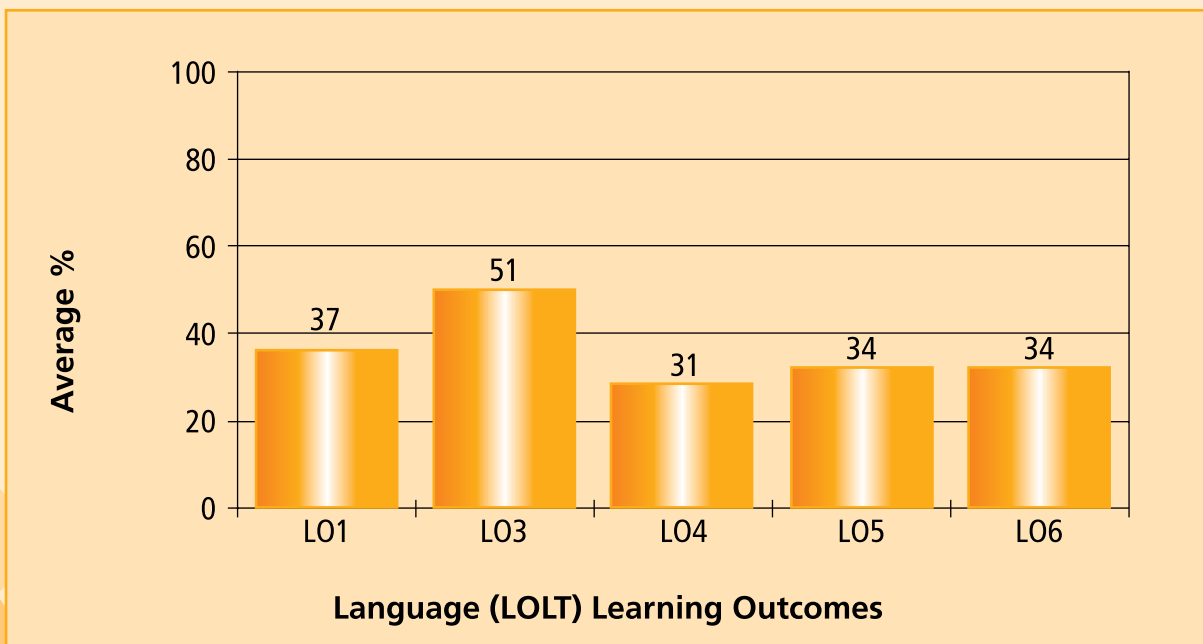
However, systemic evaluations – those conducted by the Department of Education, provincial Departments of Education as well as international bodies – show that learners in South African schools performed poorly when tested for their ability to read at age-appropriate levels.

Figure 1: Language competence of Intermediate Phase learners in South Africa, 2005



This diagram shows the results of the Systemic Evaluation<sup>3</sup> which was conducted on Intermediate Phase learners : 14% of learners were outstanding in their language competence; 23% were satisfactory or partly competent, but a big majority – 63% were below the required competence for their age level.

Figure 2: Learning Outcome 3 – Reading and Viewing



The diagram above shows the results for Intermediate Phase Learning Outcome 3

– Reading and Viewing. This LO states: “The learner will be able to read and view for information and enjoyment, and respond critically to the aesthetic, cultural and emotional values in texts.” However, only 51% of learners were able to read at an age-appropriate level. Thus, for half of the learners, the Learning Outcome was not achieved. This has important implications:

- Learners’ language competence affects their performance in all subjects, at all grades. Poor language competence limits conceptual development.
- If *reading* competence is poor, then learners’ *writing* competence will be poor, and their *comprehension* (understanding) levels will equally be poor.

Why don’t teachers raise the standards? The problem is that most teachers who are teaching beyond Foundation Phase are not trained to teach basic reading. They don’t know how to help struggling readers.

Language “mismatches” make the problem worse:

- the language of home and school do not match in many cases;
- the language of the resources at school, e.g. books, posters, generally do not match the home language of the learner.

International research shows that in most developing countries, illiteracy is a severe problem. More than half the population in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia have no literacy skills. But richer countries are also struggling to meet literacy challenges.

Poor literacy and numeracy are generally related to historical disadvantages and poor socio-economic conditions. In South Africa, there are a number of specific reasons for the problems, and these need to be addressed in implementing the *National Reading Strategy*.



### 4. Specific challenges in implementing the National Reading Strategy

#### i) Teacher competency

Many teachers in South Africa have an under-developed understanding of teaching literacy, reading and writing. Many teachers simply don't know how to teach reading. Too often, teachers know only one method of teaching reading, which may not suit the learning style of all learners. Teachers don't know how to stimulate reading inside, and outside, the classroom.

There has been a misunderstanding about the role of the teacher in teaching reading in Curriculum 2005 and in the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). For years, many teachers believed that they did not have to "teach" reading, but simply had to "facilitate" the process; they believed that learners would teach themselves to read. The expectation that teachers had to develop their own teaching materials and reading programmes further aggravated the situation for teachers; they had no experience in developing material. In the past, they relied heavily on textbooks – even if the teacher had only one book in the class.

Many Foundation Phase teachers have not been explicitly trained to teach reading. That is why they find it difficult to help learners with reading difficulties. Consequently, many teachers have resorted to rote teaching as the only option, and tend to be satisfied with rote learning by their learners.

The Monitoring Learning Achievement (MLA) Survey in 1999<sup>4</sup> found that the employment of under/unqualified teachers, particularly in the Foundation Phase, and in rural schools, has been a common practice. Inevitably, the employment of such teachers has had a negative impact on the quality of teaching and has contributed to the poor performance of learners.

#### ii) Libraries

The majority of schools in the MLA Survey (1999) had no access to libraries. This also impacts negatively on the quality of teaching and learning. Results of the survey were:

- 25,145 schools were surveyed in South Africa in 1999
- 22,101 schools had no space for a school library
- 3,388 had space for a library, but had no books in the library
- Only 1,817 schools had library space that was stocked with books, i.e. just over 7% of the schools in South Africa

In the absence of school or community libraries, classroom collections of books can promote reading and understanding. Unfortunately, classroom collections were found in only 25% of the schools. Mobile libraries are currently being introduced in a number of provinces. The main advantage of mobile libraries is that they can take books to learners. The lack of libraries is especially significant in a country where many learners and their parents cannot afford to buy books.

### **iii) Teaching conditions**

Crowded and dilapidated classrooms hinder the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). High learner-educator ratios, combined with poor physical conditions and inadequate facilities for teaching and learning, such as inadequate instructional support materials, make it even more difficult to deliver quality education.

### **iv) Print Environment**

The MLA Survey found that about 40% of the parents interviewed had not completed primary education. In the majority of the provinces, about 60% of the parents had either not completed primary school, or had not achieved education levels higher than primary school.

Educational background of parents has a strong influence on their children's achievement. Uneducated parents, or parents with little education, find it difficult to help their children if they themselves do not understand the tasks that their children are doing.

The MLA survey also showed that a very small percentage of interviewed households had access to books. (Only about a quarter of the parents were members of a library, and more than 50% of them had access to fewer than 10 books.) Where printed materials are lacking, learners are likely to have difficulties with reading and spelling.<sup>5</sup>

### **v) Language issues**

Despite the Language-in-Education Policy of 1997<sup>6</sup>, it is still the case that most learners in South Africa do not learn in their mother tongue. Most schools have inadequate language policies which do not address the learning needs of the learners. They do not ensure the right of learners – especially Foundation Phase learners – to learn in their mother tongue. This is a serious problem.

Foundation Phase teachers have generally not been taught to teach reading in the home language of African learners. There is also the problem that African languages are structured differently from English or Afrikaans.

Interestingly, recent research in the Western Cape<sup>7</sup> showed that although Afrikaans learners in Afrikaans schools learn in Afrikaans at the Foundation Phase, and they hear it daily on radio and TV, many of these learners perform less than their English counterparts. There are possibly many reasons for this phenomenon, but it has been suggested that socio-economic factors are part of these explanations.

### vi) Inclusive Education

Learners who experience barriers to learning often do not receive the support that they need to become fluent readers. This is despite the policies of Inclusive Education<sup>8</sup> that recognize the special needs of learners in all sectors of education.

## 5. South Africa's *National Reading Strategy*

### 5.1 Why do we need this *National Reading Strategy*?

This *National Reading Strategy* is the response of the Minister and Department of Education to promote reading in schools in South Africa. It is a management tool that states the vision for improving the competence and levels of reading of learners. This Strategy indicates how the Department of Education intends to achieve that vision.

South Africa's education system needs a common approach to promote reading. In this way, we can create synergy between teachers and all role players who support teachers. We can build confidence in what needs to be done.

The *National Reading Strategy* is inclusive because it aims to reach all learners, including those who experience barriers to learning, whether they are in mainstream or special schools. A common approach does not mean that all children must be taught in the same way at the same time. Good education allows for different contexts – it differentiates between children, and does not treat all children in class as a single unit.

Learning to read occurs not only in the Foundation Phase at school. Learning begins from birth, so children should be stimulated from an early age.

The exposure that children experience early in their lives, influences how they cope later in life. Early Childhood Education (ECD) targets children between 0 – 4 years of age, including pregnant mothers. Wherever possible, if there are learning problems, these should be identified early and acted upon. Providing access to Grade R for all learners is another way of recognizing the importance of early learning.

Programmes at this level focus on the development of:

- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Abilities to communicate and use language
- Physical, motor abilities and healthy well-being

While this strategy focuses largely on primary school learners, it recognises that learning – especially the development of reading skills – is a life-long practice that continues into high school and beyond.

### 5.2 Purpose of the *National Reading Strategy*

The purpose of the *National Reading Strategy* is:

- To put reading firmly on the school agenda,
- To clarify and simplify curriculum expectations,
- To promote reading across the curriculum,
- To affirm and advance the use of all languages,
- To encourage reading for enjoyment. This is a legitimate aspect of the teaching of reading, and
- To ensure that not only teachers, learners and parents, but also the broader community understand their role in improving and promoting reading.

### 5.3 Intended outcome of the *National Reading Strategy*

The desired outcome of the Strategy is that all learners must be able to read basic texts by the end of Grade 3. After that, all learners will develop reading and comprehension skills according to the requirements of each grade level.

### 5.4 Principles of the *National Reading Strategy*

The principles upon which the *National Reading Strategy* is based on, is:

- Every learner has the right to quality education
- All children, with the appropriate support, can be taught to read
- Reading is a foundational skill for all learning
- Learners have the right to learn to read in their mother tongue, especially at Foundation Phase level

The National Curriculum Statement (NCS) takes as its starting point the same position as the International Reading Association which states that:

“There is no single method or single combination of methods that can successfully teach all children to read. Therefore teachers must have a strong knowledge of multiple methods for teaching reading and a strong knowledge of the children in their care so they can create the appropriate balance of methods needed for the children they teach.”<sup>9</sup>

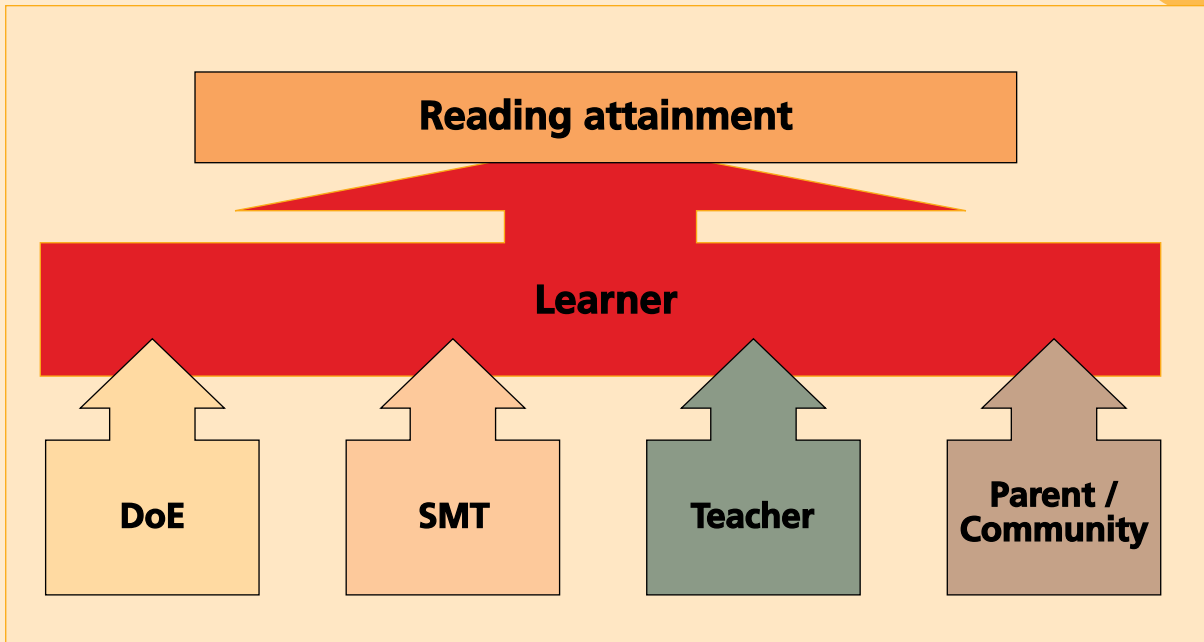
The Overview of the National Curriculum Statement includes literacy as an important feature of life-long learners: “The learner is able to read and view for information and enjoyment, and respond critically to the aesthetic, cultural and emotional values in texts.”

### 5.5 Who is involved?

The *National Reading Strategy* requires the involvement and commitment of a range of role players

- First, the learner is central to improved reading competence. Ultimately it is the learner who should want to improve, so that s/he can read fluently and with comprehension.
- Second, the teacher has to actively teach reading, supported by the principal and school management team (SMT) who must create an environment that promotes reading and the teaching of reading.
- Third, parents and the community need to value reading and books. Wherever possible, they need to read to their children and encourage them to practise reading.
- Finally, the Department of Education (DoE) at all levels – national, provincial and district – must provide the necessary resources and support required for the *National Reading Strategy* to succeed.

The following diagramme depicts important stakeholders in the teaching and promotion of reading among learners.



### 6. Key pillars of the *National Reading Strategy*

The *National Reading Strategy* builds on six key pillars for success in South African schools. The six pillars are:

- i) Monitoring learner performance
- ii) Teaching practice and methodology
- iii) Teacher training, development and support
- iv) Management of the teaching of reading
- v) Resources
- vi) Research, partnerships and advocacy

#### 6.1 Monitoring learner performance

The essential focus of the *National Reading Strategy* is to enable learners to read fluently and with comprehension. Monitoring learners' progress is a critical part of the Strategy. This monitoring will take place through the National Systemic Evaluation at Grade 3 and Grade 6 levels. Provincial Education Departments also conduct systemic evaluations to monitor reading competencies.

Learner improvement depends on teachers being able to assess the reading level of each and every learner. Teachers need to be able to measure whether their teaching methodologies in the classroom have resulted in improved reading by



learners. To enable teachers to assess reading performance, the Department of Education is providing teachers in the Foundation Phase with Early Grade Reading Assessment tools. These tools will be available in all official languages, and will be used to establish benchmarks for reading competence in South African schools. Continuous assessment is embedded in current teaching practices; it assists teachers in monitoring the ongoing progress of the learners, and supports and guides further development.

Monitoring and support of any strategy are essential elements to ensure effective service delivery. The function of the Department of Education in this regard is to monitor standards of teaching and learning in all schools. This monitoring will assess whether the education system has achieved the reading goals by measuring the performance of learners. The results of all research, monitoring and evaluation will be used by the education system to enhance the work that is being done in the classroom.

### **6.2 Teaching practice and methodology**

Teaching happens in a special relationship between a teacher and a learner. The teacher has to be trusted to provide each and every learner with the competence and skills of reading, and the love for reading. The best teacher of reading is a teacher who conveys not only the value of reading, but also the joy of reading. Reading is a competence that teachers have to actively teach since learners do not simply “pick up” reading skills. There is no clear pathway for progress in learning to read unless the teacher has a plan for teaching the learners how to read.

Teachers need to know what is expected of learners. They need to know precisely how to help learners to achieve satisfactory reading levels, and where necessary, they should ask for extra professional support. There are computer DVDs which show learners reading at different levels; teachers can use these DVDs to establish appropriate expectations and standards. DVDs which show good reading and classroom management practices can also help teachers to learn about good practices to apply in their classrooms.

The National Curriculum Statement (NCS) provides for approximately 10 hours per week for the teaching of reading and writing in the Foundation Phase. The NCS also gives guidance on a balanced approach to the teaching of literacy. The five critical areas of reading that need to be taught are phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

A good reading teacher allows for different learners' learning styles. Learners should know a range of techniques to help them to reach appropriate reading levels, with comprehension for information and enjoyment. Teachers should use a range of methods. Too often, teachers use whole class reading from the same book as the only reading experience in the classroom.

To meet the crisis of reading, one of the practices promoted by the Department of Education is that all schools (especially primary schools) should arrange an additional half hour per day to "Drop All and Read". This campaign creates a culture of reading in the classroom and in the school. Everyone – from learner to teacher, principal and support staff – can be seen reading for enjoyment for half an hour a day. If learners enjoy reading, this will raise literacy levels and improve the ability of learners to learn.

A reading recovery programme will be made available for learners who, owing to a variety of circumstances, are unable to master reading skills in the early grades

### 6.3 Teacher training, development and support

Teachers are key to the successful teaching of reading. Teacher training, development and support are therefore a key pillar of the **National Reading Strategy**. The Department of Education will provide teachers with a manual on reading strategies<sup>10</sup>. This manual will contain practical guidelines and strategies for teaching reading in Grades R-6.

In addition, Teacher Guidelines on strategies to address the strengths and weaknesses revealed by the Systemic Evaluation will be distributed to all schools. The Early Grade Reading Assessment provides teachers with a tool for assessing the reading competence of the learners, as well as a range of other resources. The Department will also develop and maintain a catalogue of appropriate Learning and Teaching Support Material for the General Education and Training band; this will include material for teaching and supporting reading.

To support teacher development, accredited training courses in strategies for teaching reading will be offered at tertiary institutions. These courses will enable teachers to earn credit points in accordance with the South African Council for Educators (SACE) requirements for continuous professional teacher development. Teacher development programmes in reading strategies, for both pre-service and in-service teachers, will focus on the pedagogy of reading, and give special guidance

for teaching reading in mother tongue. The Advanced Certificate Education (ACE) in school leadership will offer training in the management of the curriculum and reading programmes.

District curriculum officials will provide further support. These curriculum officials will be specially trained in reading strategies. They will help teachers by mediating the reading material and other resources that will be made available to teachers.

Family literacy programmes will help parents to support their children in their reading. Families are encouraged to take responsibility to ensure that reading continues even after the bell has rung for the end of the school day.

Business and other organizations that wish to support the **National Reading Strategy** will help by supplying schools with some of the selected materials, providing incentives and showing an interest in the work of the teachers and learners at particular schools.

### 6.4 Management of the teaching of reading

Good management and leadership are essential for successful teaching and learning. The principal needs to show a relentless determination in pursuing the **National Reading Strategy**. The principal is responsible for the reading programme in the school, by at least taking the following steps: organizing staff training and support in the teaching of reading; recognizing achievement amongst learners and teachers; and involving parents in the reading programme.

It is the principal's responsibility to ensure that:

- every learner learns to read,
- steps are taken to promote reading,
- reading strategies are integrated in all school subjects, and
- a culture of reading is instilled in the school.

It is essential that the principal takes a direct and personal interest in reading in the school.

Heads of Department within the school and district officials, including the district director will support the principal in the management and leadership of the reading campaign. At a provincial and national level, senior officials will take

responsibility for leading, managing and driving reading improvement. At a national level, the Minister of Education heads the drive to improve reading.

### 6.5 Resources

There is no doubt that a good learning and text-rich environment in schools encourages children to perform better. Teachers need adequate resources for the teaching of reading. The Department has mounted a “Drop All and Read” campaign in which Grade R and Grade 1 learners are provided with personal story books and bags. They can take these books home to read, enjoy and experience the pleasure of possessing their own books.

Good readers need access to good reading material. Learners need access to appropriate reading books throughout the school year, and they should be able to take books home in order to practise reading. Magazines and other materials can also enrich the reading experience, and encourage the whole family to engage in reading. The Department is organizing campaigns to provide schools with good reading materials – books, magazines and even comics!

Schools who are part of the Quality Improvement, Development and Support Upliftment Programme (QIDS-UP) will receive a range of reading support materials in the form of a Reading Toolkit. Schools can order a complete range of reading programmes/schemes in all 11 official languages (through the General Education & Training Band Learning and Teaching Support Material Catalogue). A number of schools in disadvantaged communities have already been supplied with reference materials, including multi-lingual dictionaries to support reading in all 11 official languages.

As part of the **National Reading Strategy**, all Foundation and Intermediate Phase classrooms will have a “reading/library corner”, with exciting story books in all the languages spoken in the class. These reading corners will have story books for learners and reference materials for teachers and learners, to help them to effectively implement the NCS.

The Department has already provided packs of 100 reading books (called the “100 Story Books Campaign”) to schools in disadvantaged communities to support classroom libraries. Other schools are expected to set aside funds to ensure that teachers are able to create library or reading corners in their classrooms. The Intermediate Phase classes in 2000 schools will be receiving reading books written by teachers in the ITHUBA Writing Project.

Libraries are the backbone of all reading communities. The Department is collaborating with the Department of Arts and Culture in developing a joint Library Strategy. Together, the Departments will provide classroom libraries, the use of mobile libraries to serve clusters of schools, block loans from provincial education libraries, partnerships with municipal and provincial libraries, and ultimately the development of fully stocked libraries in schools

### 6.6 Research, partnerships and advocacy

In all these reading projects and plans, the Department will ensure that its strategies, pedagogy and support materials are modern and at the cutting edge. Although the Department does conduct some of its own research, it relies heavily on universities and other specialist reading organizations to assist.<sup>11</sup>

The Department of Education is working hard to promote these reading campaigns with all its teachers, principals, district officials and parent communities. However, we realize that it will be difficult to turn the tide in reading achievement in the country, and sustain improvement. We need the ongoing support of non-profit organizations, the higher education community, the business community, and the broader community. The Department welcomes partners in these campaigns to improve reading. Preferably, all interventions by partners – in training, or the provision of resources – will be aligned to the ***National Reading Strategy*** and be approved by the national, provincial or district office.

Furthermore, the Department of Education will publicise successes in this campaign, as well as ways in which learners can be supported. We believe that success of the implementation will be measurable in terms of learner performance.

A national communication drive will be conducted to ensure that reading is “everybody’s business”. Direct communication systems will be set up with school principals and teachers to share expectations, experiences and best practice. In the longer term, the Department will introduce book clubs to support reading for enjoyment.

As part of the campaign, we will celebrate International Literacy Week, World Book Day and International Library Week, both at school level and in the media.

## CONCLUSION

Reading is, without doubt, the most important linguistic skill that needs to be developed in young children. Reading serves as a building block upon which all other learning takes place. Reading can also be fun. By developing a love for reading in young children, we will be giving them one of the greatest gifts of life, namely, life-long learning.

This *National Reading Strategy* takes as its focus that reading failure begins in early grades, and it is at that level that interventions must be made.



1

1. I can open and page through a book.
2. I talk about pictures in a text.
3. I can listen to a story with understanding.
4. I can read my own name.
5. I know what a letter is and can name some letters.
6. I know what a word is and can recognise a few words.
7. I can say or sing some rhymes.

2

1. I can read and understand some texts (20 to 40 texts).
2. I can make sense of the illustrations in texts.
  1. I can listen to a story with understanding.
  2. I can answer questions about a story I have heard.
  3. I know all the letter names.
  4. I know all the letter sounds.
  5. I can sound out three-letter words.
  6. I can read over 50 common words (and, the, me etc).

3

1. I can read and understand some texts (20-40 texts).
2. I can answer questions about texts I have read.
3. I can make sense of the illustrations in books.
4. I can listen to a story with understanding.
5. I can retell a story I have heard.
6. I can sound out the beginning letters of words.
7. I can look at word endings and sort words into word families.
8. I know that vowels can sound different in different words.
9. I can read words with a silent e at the end of the word.
10. I can sound out words with three or four letters.
11. I can read 100 common words (and, the, me etc).

4

1. I can read and understand longer texts (20 to 40 texts).
2. I can answer written questions about texts I have read.
3. I can make sense of the illustrations in books.
4. I can listen to a story with understanding.
5. I can retell a story I have heard.
6. I can sound out vowels in the middle of words.
7. I know that vowels can sound different in different words.
8. I can sort words into word families.
9. I can find words that rhyme.
10. I can sound out words beginning with two or three consonants.
11. I can read and spell 200 common words (and, the, me etc).

5

1. I can read and understand stories.
2. I can read and understand poems.
3. I can read and understand information texts.
4. I can read and understand posters.
5. I can use a dictionary.
6. I can answer oral and written questions about texts (comprehensions).
7. I can write a book report.
8. I can complete a summary of a text.
9. I can sound out or make good guesses about new words as I read.
10. I can read and spell 300 common words.

6

1. I can read and understand stories and chapter books.
2. I can talk about characters, plots and illustrations in a story.
3. I can read and understand children's magazines.
4. I can read and understand elements of poetry (rhyme etc)
5. I can read and understand elements of information texts (diagrams, timetables etc)
6. I can read and reply to invitations and messages.
7. I can use a dictionary, sound out or make informed guesses about new words.
8. I can answer oral and written questions about texts (comprehensions).
9. I can complete a summary of a text and a book report
10. I can read and spell 400 common words.

7

1. I can read and understand stories and chapter books.
2. I can talk about characters, settings, plots, illustrations and values in a story.
3. I can read and understand elements of poetry (rhyme, alliteration, simile etc).
4. I can read and understand elements of information texts (instructions, plans, timetables, recipes, maps etc). I can use a contents page and an index.
5. I can read and understand advertisements.
6. I can use a dictionary, sound out or make informed guesses about new words.
7. I can answer oral and written questions about texts (comprehensions).
8. I can complete a summary of a text, a book report and a book or film review.
9. I can read and spell 500 common words.

8

1. I can read and understand chapter books.
2. I can talk about the main points and purpose of the text as well as the characters and plot.
3. I can read and understand elements of poetry (rhyme, alliteration, simile etc).
4. I can read and reply to invitations and personal letters.
5. I can read and understand elements of information texts (instructions, plans, timetables, recipes, maps etc).
6. I can use a dictionary, thesaurus, contents page and an index.
7. I can read and analyze advertisements and pamphlets.
8. I can use different reading strategies to make informed guesses about new words.
9. I can answer oral and written questions about texts (comprehensions).
10. I can complete a summary of a text as well as a book report and a book or film review.
11. I can read and spell 600 common words.
12. I can read in different ways (skimming, scanning, read slowly and carefully etc).

9

1. I can read and understand stories.
2. I can read and understand poems
3. I can read and understand information texts
4. I can read and understand magazine articles
5. I can read and understand invitations
6. I can use a dictionary
7. I can answer complex questions about texts
8. I can complete a summary of a text
9. I can listen to a story with understanding
10. I can sound out or make informed guesses about new words
11. I can read and spell 300 common words



# READING STEPS Teaching emphasis

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- Reading aloud:** Read longer texts to learners.
- Shared reading:**
  - Use big books and Chant in class.
  - Use shared reading to teach reading strategies (predicting, sounding out, using picture cues, reading on, self-questioning).
- Independent reading:** Give learners opportunities to look at simple picture books.
- Word and sentence level work:**
  - Alphabet: Sing alphabet songs and point at the letters on your leg.
  - Watch: Teach learners own words and approximately 10 common words.
  - Vocabulary: Build up learners' general knowledge and vocabulary through themes: use books, pictures, stories or talk.
  - Sound: Say or read rhymes and sing songs. Help learners hear patterns, rhymes and rhythm.

- Reading aloud:** Read and re-read different stories to learners.
- Guided and group reading:**
  - Listen to each learner read at least once a week (preferably daily).
  - Have learners practice their new graded text each week.
- Shared reading:**
  - Read and re-read Big Books.
  - Chant and writing on the board: Encourage learners to join in.
  - Use shared reading to teach reading strategies (predicting, sounding out, using picture cues, reading on, self-questioning).
  - Use shared reading to teach word and sentence work where possible.
- Independent reading:**
  - Provide opportunities for learners to read other texts (DAR text).
  - Phonics: Teach learners to recognise more word families (50 word families) (DAR text).
  - Diagrams: (20)
    - to recognise more consonant digraphs (10);
    - to sound out 3 letters
  - to recognise a range of simple words in context.
  - to hear the short and long vowel sounds in words.
  - to hear the short and long vowel sounds with silent e (a/e, i/e, o/e, u/e)
  - to sound out and recognise 2 letter blends at the beginning of words.
  - to sound out and recognise some digraphs at the beginning of words.
- Vocabulary:** Build up learners' general knowledge and vocabulary through themes (use books, pictures, stories and talk).
- Comprehension:** Teach learners to complete simple comprehensions (pictures, stories and talk).

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    - to read and use maps, recipes, timetables, plans etc.
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    - to solve word puzzles.
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  - to sound out and recognise some digraphs at the beginning of words.
- Vocabulary:** Build up learners' general knowledge and vocabulary through themes (use books, pictures, stories and talk).
- Comprehension:** Teach learners to complete simple comprehensions (pictures, stories and talk).

- Reading aloud:** Read longer texts to learners over a few weeks.
- Group reading and independent reading:** Learners read books in groups.
- Independent reading:**
  - Learners read at least one chapter of a book or one book each week.
  - Provide opportunities for learners to read other texts (DAR).
- Shared reading:**
  - Teach learners:
    - to recognise characters, plots, illustrations
    - to evaluate stories and find the moral
    - to recognise rhymes, alliteration, onomatopoeias
    - to read and use maps, recipes, diagrams, graphs
    - to read and respond to invitations
- Word and sentence level work:**
  - Sight words: Teach another 100 common words in context.
  - Spelling: Teach spelling each week (200)
  - Vocabulary: Build up learners' general knowledge, vocabulary through themes (use books, pictures, stories and talk).
  - Comprehension: Learners to complete comprehensions (16).
  - List: 180 words (5).



# READING STEPS

## Resources you need to have or to make

1

- 1. Alphabet chart/ frieze.** Learners' names, classroom labels (window, table, books).
- 2. Flashcards:** Learners' names, classroom labels (window, table, books).
- 3. Charts:** Picture charts (colours, numbers, my body). Weather chart, Birthday chart, Rhymes or songs.
- 4. Graded texts:** 20 + assorted pictures, repetition of sentences, 1 – 3 new words per book/text, familiar topics. (Either books, readers or texts from a language text book can be used).
- 5. Big Books:** 5 – 10 Big Books on familiar topics (my body, my family, colours etc.).
- 6. Read aloud books:** 10 + read-aloud books (traditional tales, modern stories in familiar settings, bible stories, etc.).

2

- 1. Alphabet chart/ frieze.** Learners' names, classroom labels, 50 sight words.
- 2. Flashcards:** Learners' names, classroom labels, 50 sight words.
- 3. Charts:** Picture charts (transport, wild animals, farm animals, food, numbers, colours, my body etc., all with labels). Weather chart; Birthday chart; Poem charts.
- 4. Graded texts:** 20 – 40 texts. All with pictures, some repetition, and no more than 5 unknown words per page on familiar topics. (Either books, readers or texts from a language text book can be used).
- 5. Big Books:** 3 – 30 graded Big Books (my body, my family, colours etc.).
- 6. Independent readers:** 20 – 40 assorted texts for DAR time. (Comics, children's magazines, picture books, hand-written texts, etc.).
- 7. Read aloud books:** 10 + read aloud books (traditional tales, modern stories, non-fiction books, bible stories, newspaper articles, stories from far away).

3

- 1. Alphabet chart/ frieze.** 100 sight words; vocabulary/ theme words as they occur.
- 2. Flashcards:** 100 sight words; vocabulary/ theme words as they occur.
- 3. Charts:** Picture Charts, Weather chart, Birthday chart; Poem charts for each of the Word families (50), vowel digraphs (20), consonant digraphs (10).
- 4. Graded texts:** 20 – 50 texts. Familiar topics, no more than 5 new words per page.
- 5. Texts for shared reading:** 5 – 20 graded Big Books, poems, charts, language text books. These should include poems, stories, timetables, maps, recipes.
- 6. Independent readers:** 20 – 60 assorted texts (poems, comics, children's magazines, picture books, books, hand-written texts, children's writing etc.).
- 7. Comprehension texts:** 5 – 10 line (fiction/nonfiction/ poems).
- 8. Read aloud books:** 10 – 20 read aloud books: Traditional tales, modern stories, non-fiction books, bible stories, newspaper articles.

4

- 1. Alphabet chart/ frieze.** Sight words; vocabulary and theme words as they occur.
- 2. Flashcards:** Sight words; vocabulary and theme words as they occur.
- 3. Charts:** Picture Charts, Weather Chart, Birthday Chart, Weekly Spelling Chart, Timetable, Charts with examples of different text types (poem, recipe, map, invitation, message etc.).
- 4. Graded texts for guided, group and independent reading:** 20 – 50 titles. Familiar topics, no more than 5 new words per page.
- 5. Texts for shared reading:** 5 – 20 graded Big Books or texts from language text books. These should include poems, stories, timetables, maps, recipes.
- 6. Independent readers:** 20 – 60 assorted texts (poems, comics, children's magazines, picture books, newspapers, children's books, hand-written texts, children's writing etc.).
- 7. Comprehension texts:** 5 – 10 line (fiction/nonfiction/ poems).
- 8. Read aloud books:** 10 – 20 read aloud books: Traditional tales, modern stories, non-fiction books, bible stories, newspaper articles.

5

- 1. Flashcards:** Sight words; vocabulary and theme words as they occur.
- 2. Charts:** Picture Charts, Weather Chart, Birthday Chart, Weekly Spelling Chart, Timetable, Charts with examples of different text types (poem, recipe, map, invitation, message etc.).
- 3. Graded texts for guided, group and independent reading:** 20 – 50 titles. Familiar topics, no more than 5 new words per page.
- 4. Texts for shared reading:** 5 – 20 graded Big Books or texts from language text books. These should include poems, stories, timetables, maps, recipes.
- 5. Independent readers:** 20 – 60 assorted texts (poems, comics, children's magazines, books, newspapers, children's books, hand-written texts, children's writing etc.).
- 6. Comprehension texts:** 5 – 10 line (fiction/nonfiction/ poems, children's texts etc.).
- 7. Read aloud books:** 10 – 20 line comprehension texts based on fiction/ non-fiction/ poems, etc.
- 8. Read aloud books:** 10 read aloud books: Traditional tales, modern stories, non-fiction books, bible stories, newspaper articles, longer novels read over a number of days/weeks.

6

- 1. Flashcards:** Sight words; vocabulary and theme words as they occur.
- 2. Charts:** Birthday Chart, Weekly spelling charts, Timetable, Charts with examples of different text types (poem, recipe, map, invitation, graph etc.).
- 3. Graded texts for guided, group and independent reading:** 20 – 50 titles. Familiar and unfamiliar topics, no more than 5 new words per page.
- 4. Texts for shared reading:** Texts from language text books, readers, photocopies of texts for the class. These should include poems, stories, timetables, maps, recipes.
- 5. Independent readers:** 20 – 60 assorted texts (poems, comics, children's magazines, books, newspaper texts (selected), newspaper supplements, children's writing etc.).
- 6. Comprehension texts:** 20 – 30 line comprehensions based on fiction/nonfiction/poems, etc.
- 7. Read aloud books:** 10 read aloud books: Traditional tales, modern stories, non-fiction books, bible stories, stories from far away, newspaper articles, longer novels read over a number of days/weeks.

7

- 1. Flashcards:** Sight words; vocabulary and theme words as they occur.
- 2. Charts:** Birthday Chart, Weekly spelling charts, Timetable, Charts with examples of different text types (poem, recipe, map, invitation, graph etc.).
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- 5. Independent readers:** 20 – 60 assorted texts (poems, comics, children's magazines, books, newspaper texts (selected), newspaper supplements, children's writing etc.).
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- 7. Read aloud books:** 10 read aloud books: Traditional tales, modern stories, non-fiction books, bible stories, stories from far away, newspaper articles, longer novels read over a number of days/weeks.

8

- 1. Flashcards:** Sight words; vocabulary and theme words as they occur.
- 2. Charts:** Weekly spelling charts, Timetable, Charts with examples of different text types (poem, recipe, map, invitation, graph etc.).
- 3. Graded texts for guided, group and independent reading:** 20 – 50 titles. Familiar and unfamiliar topics, no more than 5 new words per page.
- 4. Texts for shared reading:** Texts from language text books, readers, photocopies of texts for the class. These should include poems, stories, timetables, maps, recipes.
- 5. Independent readers:** 20 – 60 assorted texts (poems, comics, children's magazines, books, newspaper texts (selected), newspaper supplements, children's writing etc.).
- 6. Comprehension texts:** 30 – 40 line comprehensions based on fiction/nonfiction/poems, etc.
- 7. Read aloud books:** 10 read aloud books: Traditional tales, modern stories, non-fiction books, bible stories, stories from far away, newspaper articles, longer novels read over a number of days/weeks.

9

- 1. Flashcards:** sight words; vocabulary and theme words as they occur.
- 2. Charts:** Spelling charts, different text types; plan, procedure.
- 3. Graded books:** 20 – 50 titles if short books or 5 – 10 longer chapter books. Familiar topics.
- 4. Independent readers:** 20 – 60 assorted texts; poems, comics, magazines, books, newspapers, etc.
- 5. Comprehension texts:** 30 – 50 line comprehensions based on fiction, nonfiction, poems, etc.
- 6. Texts for shared reading:** 20 texts duplicated, from readers, language text books, photocopied timetables, maps, recipes.
- 7. Read aloud books:** 10 read aloud books: Non-fiction books, bible stories, stories from far away, newspaper articles, longer novels read over a number of days/weeks.
- 8. Lists:** sight words 5, spelling words 3.

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