Knowledge and practice standards and a curriculum framework for graduate language and literacy teachers

A sub-project of the
Consolidated Literacy Working Group
of

the Primary Teacher Education (PrimTEd) project of

the DHET's

Literacy teaching core competency standards

Process of development by the literacy working group

1. A literature review
2. Analysis of the competencies required by new teachers [from the literature review]
3. Compare these with those informing actual (or planned) university courses/ modules – including SACE professional standards
4. Develop draft standards, consult widely and revise as necessary
5. Develop competency assessment items with the Assessment Working Group

Our notion of teacher standards

- Their purpose is to make something else happen – children learning to read and write (that children create meaning using texts).

- Teacher **knowledge** and **practice** standards are statements that describe what a teacher needs to *know* and be able to *do* to carry out their core function professionally and effectively.

- Substantial evidence-based information exists on what the standards should cover.

- Have obvious HEI Initial Teacher Education reading and writing curriculum revision implications.

Standards exist in a socio-economic-political context.

Interests and differences exist between academics, education provision decision makers, and teachers on standards.

Process – steps developing these standards

1. The literature review
2. The mapping of standards
3. The drafting of seven sets of standards
4. The editing, refining and condensing to four sets of standards
5. Consultation and four revisions
6. DHET presents to Deans' Forum and to a Stakeholder group
7. DHET authorisation, release and distribution

The literature review

- Output – a brief annotated bibliography

  https://www.jet.org.za/clearinghouse/primted/standards/literacy-teacher-standards

- Usefulness of the examples

Annotated list of readings on literacy teacher competencies and standards

The readings have been categorised under the following headings and sub-headings:

Part 1: General teacher competencies

Part 2: Literacy teacher competencies | General literacy teacher competencies
| English teacher competencies

Part 3: Literacy teacher competencies as assessors of literacy learning

Part 1: General teacher competencies

British Columbia Ministry of Education. 2013. *Standards for the education, competence and professional conduct of educators in British Columbia*. Fourth Edition. Vancouver, British Columbia: Ministry of Education, Teacher Regulation Branch

A set of eight short and very general standards.

General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland. 2011. *Teaching: The Reflective Profession. Incorporating the Northern Ireland Teacher Competencies*. Belfast: General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland

Provides a general discussion on these general competencies, the aspects of which are then given in some detail, with exemplars appropriate to the educator's experience and length of service.

Jobs for the Future and the Council of Chief State School Officers. 2015. *Educator competencies for personalized, learner-centered teaching.* Boston, Massachusetts: Jobs for the Future

Describes a general set of teacher competencies that would support a more personalized, learner-centred approach to school and college education. It assumes curricular freedom and educational systems that are already making innovative learner-centred reforms. Includes cross-references to the *InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards*.

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. 2010 [2016]. *What teachers should know and be able to do.* Arlington, Virginia: National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

Provides five general standards described as "core propositions" with a discussion of each including a set of sub-propositions.

COMPONENT A: Demonstrates knowledge of milestones and processes of first language development (e.g., receptive period, first words, two word phrases, productive speech, etc.) and second language acquisition (e.g., quiet period, telegraphic speech) including how culture relates to communication.

Monolingual		Bilingual		Biliterate	
Monocultural	**Bicultural**	**Monocultural**	**Bicultural**	**Monocultural**	**Bicultural**
Skills: • Demonstrates a basic understanding of language milestones while interacting with children. • Demonstrates a beginning familiarity of the stages of second language acquisition while interacting with children.	**Skills:** • Demonstrates a basic understanding of language milestones while interacting with children. • Demonstrates a beginning familiarity of the stages of second language acquisition while interacting with children. • In interactions with children and families, shows a beginning understanding of how culture influences communication (e.g., eye contact, use of proper names, etc.).	**Skills:** • Demonstrates a basic understanding of language milestones while interacting with children. • Demonstrates a beginning familiarity of the stages of second language acquisition while interacting with children. • In interactions with children and families, shows a beginning understanding of how culture influences communication (e.g., eye contact, use of proper names, etc.).	**Skills:** • Demonstrates a basic understanding of language milestones while interacting with children. • Demonstrates a beginning familiarity of the stages of second language acquisition while interacting with children. • In interactions with children and families, shows a beginning understanding of how culture influences communication (e.g., eye contact, use of proper names, etc.).	**Skills:** • Demonstrates a basic understanding of language milestones while interacting with children. • Demonstrates a beginning familiarity of the stages of second language acquisition while interacting with children. • In interactions with children and families, shows a beginning understanding of how culture influences communication (e.g., eye contact, use of proper names, etc.).	**Skills:** • Demonstrates a basic understanding of language milestones while interacting with children. • Demonstrates a beginning familiarity of the stages of second language acquisition while interacting with children. • In interactions with children and families, shows a beginning understanding of how culture influences communication (e.g., eye contact, use of proper names, etc.).
Indicators: • Uses some of the following strategies with DLL children: modeling good listening skills; repeating common phrases slowly and clearly; allowing for wait time and voluntary participation. • Learning to pronounce the child's name, organizing the classroom with linguistically and culturally appropriate materials, and learning how to say hello and goodbye in the child's first language. • When interacting in small groups, supports the receptive language development of DLLs through the use of gestures, props, and the repetition of key words in the children's first language and English. • Asks for translation help from others in order to respond to the needs of DLL children.	**Indicators:** • Learns and uses culturally appropriate phrases in the child's first language (e.g., can I help you, are you ok) • Uses cultural endearments with the child (e.g., family nickname, expressions that signal affirmation such as "Que bien" (very good); di-di, ni hao bun! (Little brother, you did great.).	**Indicators:** • Uses appropriate greetings towards children and families in the first language that are appropriate for age and status. • Creates opportunities for children to communicate with each other using names, basic gestures and high function words. • When the DLL child mixes languages, repeats the phrase in the language the child is attempting to speak.	**Indicators:** • Uses knowledge of the child's culture to help the child learn new vocabulary (e.g., reads a folktale about the child's home culture in the child's first language). • Begins to help child notice that there are features of communication (e.g., eye contact, use of proper names, wait time) that are different and helps them to practice the new behaviors.	**Indicators:** • Identifies and emphasizes key words in the child's first language during a math lesson (e.g., size, quantity of objects). • Reads books with repeating phrases in the child's first language to support first language development and in English to encourage receptive language. • Takes dictation from child to collect "favorite phrases" and reads stories in the child's first or second language.	**Indicators:** • Begins to model culturally and linguistically appropriate behavior for greeting and departing. • Reads a book about the child's heritage in the child's first language and asks questions about it. • Discusses with parents how they can promote first language development (e.g., asking questions, descriptive vocabulary and extended two-way conversation).

**BEGINNING**

How are the standards presented?

- **No** generic categories – only those relating to literacy teaching
- Specific – not broad principles
- Fairly concise and not overcomplicated
- Linguistically and conceptually accessible
- Not graded in terms of ratings of proficiency or in terms of teacher experience, etc. Should be for all graduating teachers.

Knowledge and Practice Standards for primary teacher education graduates: language and literacy

Prepared by the PrimTEd Literacy Working Group
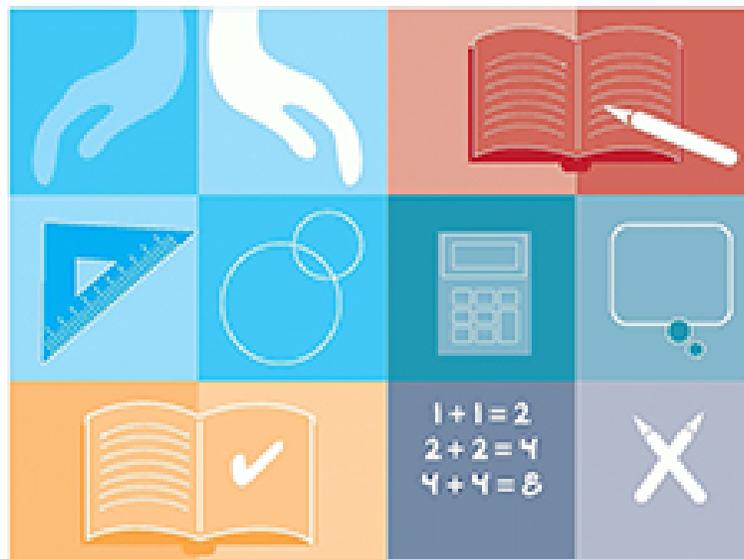
Fifth version 2019

Four sets of standards

- Knowledge (21)
- Practice (6)
- English as First Additional Language (6)
- First Additional Languages (6)

Available on PrimTEd website:
https://www.jet.org.za/clearinghouse/primted/standards/

Knowledge

1. Demonstrate basic knowledge of the key components of **language**.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of basic **grammatical concepts** that are necessary for language and literacy teaching.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical and research-based foundations of **home language acquisition** and **additional language learning**.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the role of **bi- and multilingualism** and of **standard and non-standard varieties of language**s in communication and learning in South Africa.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the importance of **oral language** in literacy development and of the influence of written language on oral language.
6. Demonstrate basic knowledge about the terminology and theories of **literacy and literacies**.
7. Demonstrate knowledge that **reading and writing** are complementary and recursive processes.
8. Demonstrate knowledge of theoretical and research-based components of **reading and writing** teaching through the phases and grades (including its cognitive, linguistic and socio-cultural foundations and the processes and concepts involved).
9. Shows understanding of the need to teach all the components of reading and writing in a purposeful, **systematic and structured** way.
10. Demonstrates **phonological awareness** including **phonemic awareness**
11. Demonstrates basic knowledge of **phonics**, e.g. knowing letter shapes, knowing that written words are built up from letters and letter groups with sound values.

12. Demonstrate **vocabulary** and word study knowledge, e.g. know how to help learners extend vocabulary for communication and academic purposes
13. Demonstrates knowledge of **comprehension**, strategies to develop comprehension and strategies to develop comprehension across a range of genres.
14. Demonstrates knowledge of how to develop **fluency** in reading through a flexible use of strategies.
15. Identify the **level of reading competences** learners have attained and can provide appropriate responses.
16. Demonstrates knowledge about typical sequences of development in children's **spelling**.
17. Demonstrate knowledge of phase appropriate **features of page or screen-based visual texts**, of how the relationship of verbal and visual features of texts affects meaning and of strategies to teach learners to become firstly, visually literate and subsequently, critically visually literate.
18. Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical, historical, and research-based components of **writing** development and the writing process through the grades
19. Demonstrate practical knowledge of the **teaching of writing** and the creation of a writing-rich environment.
20. Display knowledge about **writing genres.**
21. Displays knowledge of **literature** for children, e.g. knowing a range of suitable literature and authors for particular children, having some understanding of quality in children's literature (fiction and non-fiction), and of how to enhance children's responses to literature.

Practice

1. Demonstrate the foundational knowledge required to teach a language and literacy **curriculum**.
2. Select and organise content into a coherent, well-sequenced **instructional design** using knowledge of the curriculum, learners' strengths and weaknesses, and assessment and reporting requirements.
3. Implement multimodal forms of instruction and evaluate **instructional practice** in each of the key components of reading and writing.
4. Select and plan the use of a range of **instructional materials** and resources, including a variety of print and digital texts, to engage learners in the learning process.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of the range of types and multiple purposes of **assessment** in literacy, including for selection (screening), diagnosis, guidance, grading, prediction, motivation and standard maintaining.
6. Plan **instructional collaboration** with other teachers and education professionals in designing, adjusting, and modifying the curriculum, instructional approaches and practices to meet learners' language and literacy needs.

EFAL

1. Demonstrate knowledge of **home language acquisition** and **additional language learning** theories and research findings.
2. Recognise the **reciprocal relationships between home and additional languages** as resources for learning and development.
3. Demonstrate sound knowledge of, and ability to use, the **English language**.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of how the **sounds, vocabulary and grammar** of the English language are taught.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of and ability to use a **range of instructional strategies and methods** to support the development of orality and literacy in EFAL.
6. Can source, design, display and manage appropriate **EFAL resources.**

FAL

1. Demonstrate knowledge of **home language acquisition** and **additional language learning** theories and research findings.
2. Recognise the **reciprocal relationships between home and additional languages** as resources for learning and development.
3. Demonstrate sound knowledge of, and ability to use, the **FAL.**
4. Demonstrate knowledge of how the **sounds, vocabulary and grammar** of the FAL are taught.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of and ability to use a **range of instructional strategies and methods** to support the development of orality and literacy in FAL.
6. Can source, design, display and manage appropriate **FAL resources.**

Teacher standards: knowledge

Graduate teachers have knowledge of language and literacy and how to teach learners to read and write.

Anchor statement	Graduate teachers have knowledge of language and literacy and of how to teach learners to read and write.
Purpose and rationale	Language and literacy teachers need to have knowledge of : • the theoretical, historical, and research-based-foundations of reading and writing, language structures and conventions, speaking, listening, viewing and presenting, the processes and phase appropriate instruction used in teaching these; and • the role of the language and literacy teacher within and across subjects.
General competencies assumed to be in place	Knowledge of at least two official languages, one as home language and another as first additional language (FAL). In most cases, one of these will be English.
Level descriptors	National Qualifications Framework level 7 (See South African Qualifications Authority. 2012. *Level Descriptors for the South African National Qualifications Framework*. Pretoria: South African Qualifications Authority, p. 10).
Related SACE Professional Teaching Standards	• Teachers understand that language plays an important role in teaching and learning. • Teaching is fundamentally connected to teachers' understanding of the subject/s they teach. • Teachers understand how their subjects are taught and learnt effectively.
Standards	**Evidence of achievement**
1. Demonstrate basic knowledge of the key components of **language.**	1.1 Explanations can be given of the five basic components found across languages: phonology, morphology, grammar, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. 1.2 A basic comparative knowledge of similarities and differences in the components across the South African languages is described.

Anchor statement

Purpose and rationale

General competencies assumed to be in place

Level descriptors

Related SACE *Professional Teaching Standards*

Standard

Evidence of achievement

Do these standards make sense?

- Are these things that newly graduated teachers should know and be able to practice?

- Where do they learn these things in reality?

- Are these standards what teachers are doing already – though maybe with a different technical vocabulary?

- Or are they all mainly new – and would it involve creating a whole new curriculum and modules?

Key issues

- Are these standards genuinely useful?
- Any unintended consequences likely?
- How would HEI institutions implement them?
- Who should 'own' them and update them as required?
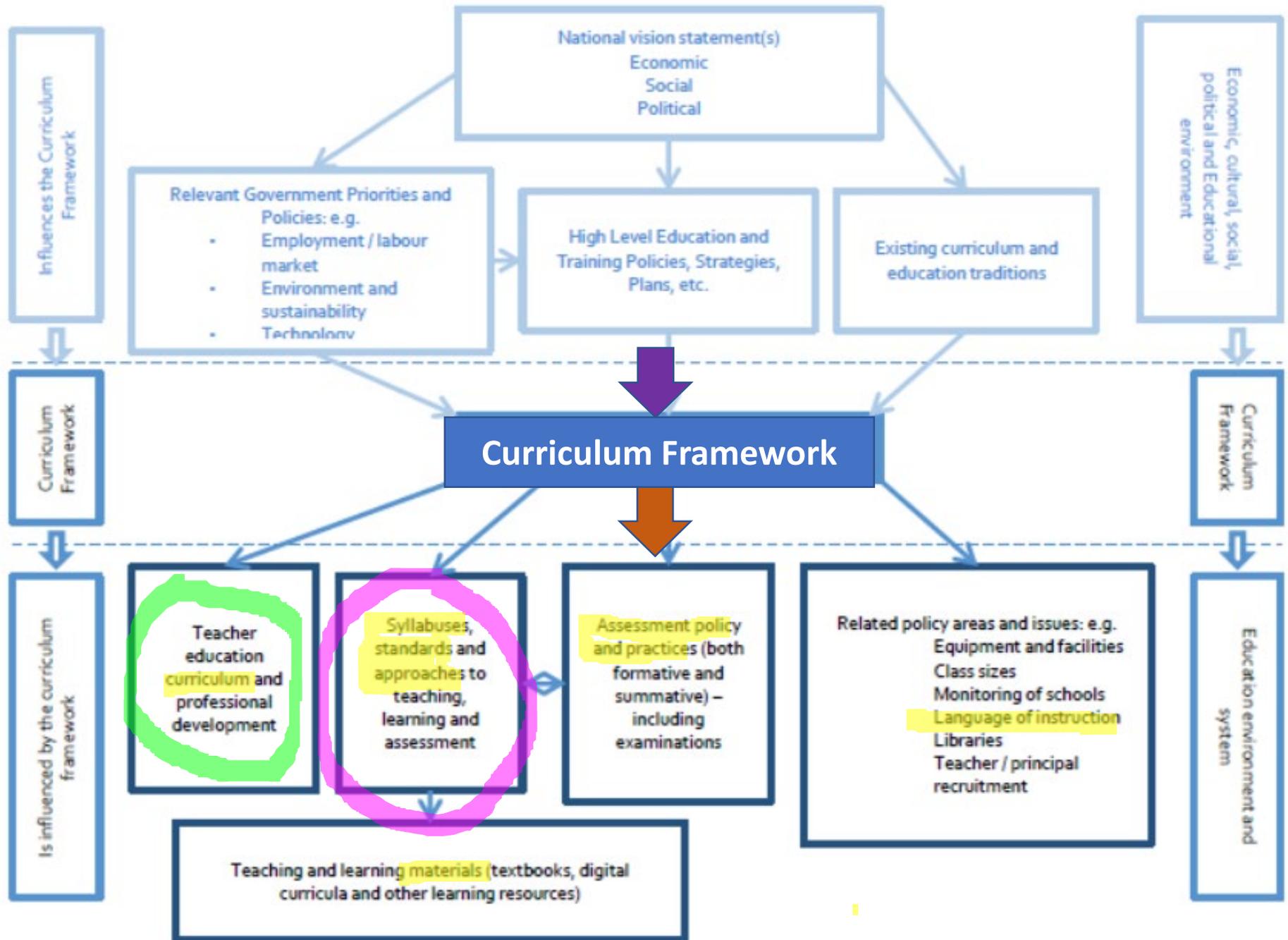- What help is needed to implement them?

From standards to a curriculum framework

Curriculum frameworks: a somewhat new concept and field of study

Key resource:

UNESCO. 2017. *Developing and Implementing Curriculum Frameworks*

- A complex process
- Influences the actual curriculum, syllabi, standards, the language(s) of instruction, approaches to practice, materials and assessment policy and practice

National vision statement(s)
Economic
Social
Political

Influences the Curriculum Framework

Economic, cultural, social, political and Educational environment

Relevant Government Priorities and Policies: e.g.
- Employment / labour market
- Environment and sustainability
- Technology

High Level Education and Training Policies, Strategies, Plans, etc.

Existing curriculum and education traditions

Curriculum Framework

Curriculum Framework

Curriculum Framework

Is influenced by the curriculum framework

Teacher education curriculum and professional development

Syllabuses, standards and approaches to teaching, learning and assessment

Assessment policy and practices (both formative and summative) – including examinations

Related policy areas and issues: e.g.
Equipment and facilities
Class sizes
Monitoring of schools
Language of instruction
Libraries
Teacher / principal recruitment

Education environment and system

Teaching and learning materials (textbooks, digital curricula and other learning resources)

Fourth version 2019

higher education & training

Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DRAFT Curriculum Framework for literacy teaching in Initial Primary Teacher Education

Compiled by the Consolidated Literacy Working Group of the Primary Teacher Education Project

t&ldcip

TEACHING & LEARNING DEVELOPMENT
CAPACITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

Parts of the Curriculum Framework

1. **Introduction** – definition, background, purpose, location
2. **Conditions required for a coherent curriculum** – six conditions (coherence, purposeful learning, CAPS related, research evidence based, aligned to standards, compliant with *MRTEQ*)
3. **Assumptions** – vision, language policy, teaching approaches, for all primary school teachers, and the transition to English
4. **Structure and content of the curriculum** – twelve components
5. **Implementing the curriculum** – communication, human and financial resources, support structures, and research and teaching resources

1 Introduction

- What is a curriculum framework
- Background to the development of this Framework
- Purpose of the Curriculum Framework
- Locating the Framework in the hierarchy of regulatory and curricular levels

2 Conditions required for a coherent curriculum for literacy teacher education

1) Well organized, coherent and interlinked across the various years, courses/modules, assessments, tests and examinations, practical teaching (work integrated learning) and free of academic gaps and/or repetitions

2) Purposefully designed to facilitate learning

3) An adequate preparation for the teaching of the formal state CAPS curriculum for the relevant Home and First Additional languages

4) Based on firm research evidence

5) Aligned to the approved language and literacy teacher education standards

6) Compliant with the policy requirements for teacher education qualifications

3 Assumptions

- A curriculum vision
- Issue of school language policy
- Literacy teaching approaches
- All primary school teachers need to know how to teach basic literacy
- Attention has to be paid to preparing teachers to handle the medium of instruction transition in Grade 4.

A key question now arises:

How will the necessary **content** (dealing with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes) be **selected** and **organized** in a new or revised curriculum?

4 The structure and content of the curriculum

- A suggested set of components
- Component content descriptions
- Bringing knowledge and practice together

Suggested components

1. Foundational overview: How do children learn to read?
2. Decoding
3. Vocabulary
4. Comprehension
5. Writing
6. Motivation and response in reading

7. Texts for children
8. CAPS reading and writing activities
9. Assessment and re-mediation
10. Planning and consolidation
11. Teaching EFAL
12. Teaching FAL

Notes:
Not of equal weighting
All components will take in account issues of home language, FAL, SAL, multilingualism, etc.)

5 Implementing the Framework

- Do all relevant areas of the education system understand the curriculum framework and its implications?
- What level of resources available (both financial and human) to implement the framework?
- What structures (committees, working groups and authorized individuals) would be most effective in overseeing and co-ordinating its implementation?
- What methods and tools can be used to support implementation?

Influences that cannot be ignored

- *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement* (CAPS)
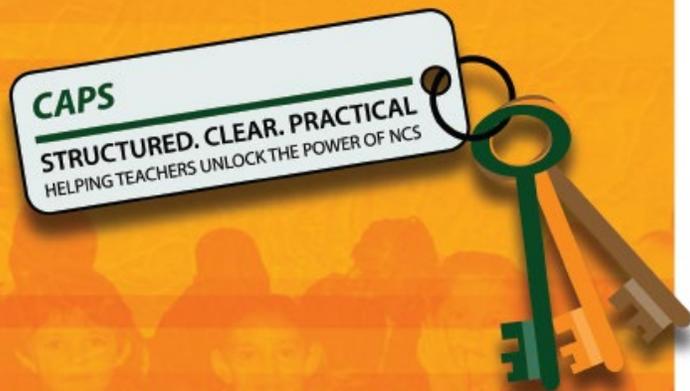
- *National Framework for the Teaching of Reading in African Languages in the Foundation Phase* (2019)

CAPS on Reading

The five components of teaching reading

Most reading experts agree that there are five main components to the teaching of reading:

- Phonemic awareness

- Word recognition (sight words and phonics)

- Comprehension

- Vocabulary

- Fluency

Each of these components needs to be taught explicitly and practised on a daily basis.

Phonemic awareness

Phonemic awareness is recognising that speech consists of a sequence of sounds and being able to recognise these individual sounds, how they make words and how these words can make sentences. Developing this awareness should begin early in Grade 1.

A sequence for the teaching of phonemic awareness could be:

- Activities that focus on rhyme (e.g. *What rhymes with cow?)*

- Activities that focus on syllable units (e.g. Clap for your name, e.g. *Pau - la)*

The CAPS has a very short discussion of the way to approach the teaching of reading. This does include the so-called Big-Five components.

Issues about the translations of the English version

- Activities that focus on onset (the part before the vowel) and rime (the vowel(s) + the consonant(s) that follow) (e.g. *St + and, br + own*).

- Activities that focus on phonemes: Put these sounds together: /st/-/o/-/p/

- Matching activities: Do these start the same? *Sandwich/sandbag*

- Isolation activities: What do you hear at the beginning of *black?*

- Substitution activities: What word would you have if you replaced /st/ in *stool* with /f/?

- Blending activities: Which word would you have if you put these sounds together:

  - /str/ā/n/ (blending phonemes)

  - /str/ain/ (blending onset and rime)

  - /mu/mmy/ (blending syllables)

- Segmentation activities: Say the parts you hear in this word:

  - Stable: /stā-/ble/ (separating syllables)

  - Dog: /d/-/o/-/g/ (separating phonemes)

- Deletion activities

  - Say stirfry without the stir (syllable deletion)

  - Say friend without the /fr/ (onset deletion)

  - Say Pete without the /p/ (phoneme deletion)

Useful activities to develop basic skills such as listening include listening games, nursery rhymes, rhyming games and games using alliteration (words that begin with the same sound).

Phonics

Phonics refers to the sounds in words and the symbols (letters of the alphabet) used to represent them. It is an important tool in both reading and writing.

There are a range of phonic programmes available. Schools may select the programme that will support explicit and systematic teaching of phonics through the school. Schools should remain loyal to their chosen programme. The suggested sequence of introducing the phonic elements in the CAPS document is a guide. Where phonic programmes have different sequences, follow these instead. However, the pacing of introducing the phonic elements should be similar to the pacing in the CAPS document.

Phonics and handwriting should be linked as the teaching of the letter sound and how to write it go together. Teach the more frequently used sounds first in Grade 1. Also bear in mind letter formation so that, for example, one might choose to teach the letter *c* before *a* and the letter *l* before *h* and *b*. The CAPS document paces the introduction of phonics so that 1-2 new sounds are introduced each week during the first two terms so that at least eight sounds are taught by the end of the first term and the remainder by the end of the second term. Some consonant and vowel

combinations can be introduced in the second half of Grade 1. At the same time continue practice in building and breaking down words.

In Grade 2 and Grade 3 more consonant and vowel combinations are taught, increasing in complexity over the year and across the two grades. The teaching of phonics is not an isolated activity and should be linked to the Shared Reading programme.

As children are learning the sound symbol system of the language taught, they should be encouraged to use 'invented spelling' until such time that they learn conventional spellings. Children who use 'invented spelling' become better spellers than those who do not. Strive for the children to write with phonemic accuracy where each sound in a word is represented in writing such as 'becors' or 'stashun'.

Spelling is closely linked to phonics and the spelling programme should be informed by the phonics taught during that week. Whilst the teaching of spelling will be informal during Grades 1 and 2, in Grade 3 a more formal spelling programme should be implemented with periodic, informal spelling tests and dictations. However, correct spelling needs to be evident in children's written work and not only in spelling tests and dictations.

Word Recognition

Sight words (or 'look and say' words) involve the child recognising an individual word 'on sight' through the use of continued repetition of a word. Words that appear frequently in text (high frequency words) can be learnt in this way. English, unlike many languages, contains a large percentage of irregular words, that is, words that are not spelt as they sound so there is a strong argument for teaching sight words in English.

Use the Shared Reading and Group Guided Reading lessons to model the following **five finger strategy** where each finger represents a strategy the reader can use to systematically figure out how to read an unknown word and its meaning:

- *The thumb: Leave the word out and read to the end of the sentence.*

- *The first finger: Look at the picture*

- *The second finger: Look at the word and to see if any parts of the word are known.*

- *The third finger: Sound the word out*

- *The fourth finger: Ask for help in reading the word or understanding its meaning*

  Start teaching children this process when they meet unknown words.

Comprehension:

During the reading lessons the teacher has many opportunities to engage children in a range of levels of thinking and questioning. Here are a few ways of starting questions that will help to develop both lower and higher order comprehension skills.

Literal comprehension

- Identify…. (e.g. *Identify the main character in the story.*)

- Point out… (e.g. *Point out the car the robber was driving.*)

- Read/quote the line that… (e.g. *Read the line that tells you the grandmother was unhappy.*)

- Describe… (e.g. *Describe the villain of the story.*)

- Find… (e.g. *Find the name of the book she was reading.*)

- Show … (e.g. *Show me the part of the story you liked best.*)

- Locate … (e.g. *Locate the place the family was driving to in the story.*)

- State… (e.g. *State the name of the little black dog that ran away.*)

Reorganisation

- Compare…. (e.g. *Compare the two sisters. What was different?*)

- List …. (e.g. *List the places the grandfather visited.*)

- Contrast… (e.g. *Contrast the place where they were living with their new home.*)

- Divide….into…. (e.g. *Divide the different animals in the story into two groups, those that were kind to the girl and those that tried to eat her.*)

- Classify… (e.g. *Classify the animals in the story.*)

- Summarise… (e.g. *Summarise the story in not more than four sentences.*)

- How is….different to… (e.g. *How is the hero different from the villain?*)

Inferential

- Pretend… (e.g. *Pretend you were the hero. What would you have done?*)

- Suppose… (e.g. *Suppose the zookeeper had left the cage door open. What would have happened?*)

- Could…. (e.g. *Could the man have reached the other side of the river a different way?*)

- What are the implications … (e.g. *What happened because of that decision?*)

- What might have happened if…. (e.g. *What might have happened if his father had gone to see his uncle?*)

- What consequences…. (e.g. *What were the consequences of her actions?*)

Evaluation

- Should… (e.g. *Should her grandmother have told her the story?*)

- In your opinion… (e.g. *In your opinion was the boy right to behave that way?*)

- Do you agree… (e.g. *Do you agree that leaving home was the best choice?*)

- Would you have… (e.g. *Would you have done the same thing if you were in that position?*)

- Is it right that… (e.g. *Is it right that his uncle threw him out of the house because he stole some bread?*)

- What best describes… (e.g. *What best describes the main character in the story?*)

Appreciation

- What did you think when… (e.g. *What did you think would happen when the lion opened his mouth?*)

- Is this word/phrase effective for… (e.g. *Is this word a good word to describe the villain?*)

- Do you know anyone like… (e.g. *Do you know anyone who behaves like his sister?*)

- Why did you like/dislike… (e.g. *Why did you dislike her uncle?*)

Work also on meta-cognitive skills to teach children to monitor themselves when reading, both in the area of word recognition and comprehension. Children should be taught to ask: *'Does it sound right?'*, *'Does it look right?'* and *'Does it make sense?'* Model the process in Shared Reading and apply it in Guided Reading with support.

Reading fluency

Fluency in reading involves:

- Accuracy in decoding: being able to accurately identify the majority of words

- The rate or speed of reading: immediately recognising words or being able to get the words off the page quickly and effortlessly

- Reading smoothly with appropriate phrasing and expression

- Comprehension

Fluency levels can be improved by teaching specific reading skills for decoding and word recognition, by selecting simpler texts, by providing more interesting texts, by rereading books and by increasing the volume of texts read.

"Read alouds" by the teacher

A final and vital component of a balanced reading programme is the reading aloud (story-time) by the teacher. This develops a whole range of language skills (including those of reading) in a meaningful context and is at the heart of a balanced programme for literacy. Through *"read alouds"* teachers can create in children a love of reading and a passion for stories.

More information on all aspects of the teaching of reading can be found in the Department of Basic Education's handbook, *Teaching Reading in the Early Grades.* (2008).

Some curriculum development starting points

Some curriculum development starting points 1

- Literacy is a developing continuum

- A structured systematic curriculum (Caveat: one that allows for teacher creativity, flexibility and that several components may need to be done simultaneously)

- Differences and similarities between curriculum for African languages and English to be highlighted

Some starting points 2

- Real attention to:
  - **teaching** *phonics*
  - **teaching** *comprehension* (not just the assessment of meaningful reading but how development of comprehension is taught and scaffolded)
  - the shift from home language to EFAL in grade 4
  - African languages in the Intermediate phase

Some starting points 3

- Serious percentage of the credits must be devoted to language and literacy (120 at least, Taylor suggests 240).

- *MRTEQ* needs to highlight this for Foundation and Intermediate phases.

- The *CAPS* curriculum may itself need to be revised in the light of this curriculum framework and the *Framework for the Teaching of Reading in African Languages in the Foundation Phase*.

- Ongoing full reading and writing development does not stop for African languages because the LoLT changes to English.

Some starting points 4

- Framework is silent on the constraints of the current language policy environment (and must **not** be taken as endorsement of certain school language policies such as shift to English as medium of instruction in Grade 4)

Some starting points 5

- The PrimTEd website has resources and materials and some material on standards
- Need to set up working groups at individual universities

Towards new courses/modules and materials

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