



FOREWORD

The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) will provide all Grade R practitioners / teachers in registered Grade R classes with the opportunity to attend this course on Emergent Literacy as part of our plan to strengthen language teaching and practice in the Foundation Phase grades. We believe that language performance levels in Grades 1 to 3 will improve noticeably when Grade R learners are exposed to quality, developmentally-appropriate early language and literacy teaching and learning.

Often Grade R learners are pushed too soon to begin with formal instruction for reading and writing without having had the benefit of comprehensive early language and emergent literacy experiences. After this course, it is hoped that Grade R practitioners / teachers will be encouraged to reduce the time spent on colouring-in and copying and rather allocate most of the language lesson time to activities which develop language use, vocabulary, thinking skills and comprehension.

The Grade R year should be fully devoted to ensuring that foundational language and literacy skills are properly taught, understood, experienced and applied by learners.

We expect all Grade R learners to be confident communicators of ideas and stories, both orally and in their recorded work (that is, in their drawings and pretend writing). They should be able to interpret pictures, build puzzles and play language games. They should know how to “read” books (that is, pretend read), independently or to a friend. Learners should recognise names and some familiar words in context, be able to identify sound patterns in language (rhyme and rhythm) and connect sounds to words and letters. Their vocabulary should extend beyond everyday usage and increase noticeably every week. They should record their thoughts with confidence and enthusiasm through their drawing and “writing” (that is, pretend writing). These are the critical, creative language and emergent literacy skills which we expect Grade R learners to develop in the Grade R year. Along with these early language knowledge and skills the Grade R learner will also need to practice and develop the auditory, visual and motor skills that enable learning.

The content of this course will therefore provide participants with the opportunity to:

- Understand the expectations of the 4 language skills in the CAPS (listening, speaking, emergent reading, emergent writing) and what is actually required of learners in Grade R;
- Plan a daily programme and a focused Home Language lesson;
- Adapt and implement methodologies of the balance language programme;
- Adapt and implement structured language programmes and cycles; and
- Use a variety of learning and teaching materials for a rich text-based language experience.

This course consists of a 5-day workshop plus regular cluster sessions over a year for sharing and consolidating practice. The WCED thanks all Grade R practitioners / teachers for participating in this course and for their commitment to improving the education of Grade R learners.