

**EMERGENT LITERACY PROFILES OF LEARNERS WITH FETAL ALCOHOL  
SPECTRUM DISORDER IN A GRADE ONE CLASSROOM: A SOUTH AFRICAN  
CONTEXT**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

A vulnerable group, learners with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) within the Foundation Phase learner population, has often been neglected with regards to literacy development. These learners in many cases do not get optimal teaching and learning due to an inability of teachers to address the literacy needs adequately within the mainstream classroom context. The purpose of this study was to determine the emergent literacy profile of learners with FASD in a Grade One classroom in a selected rural farming community. This study aimed to understand the socio-economic elements that may contribute to barriers in the families of learners with FASD that contribute to the possible emergent literacy problems. As well as highlight the strengths present in the socio-economic context of these families that can be used to support learners with FASD.

Bronfenbrenner's and Morris (1977; 1992) ecological systems theory provided a framework for understanding the complexity of influences, interactions and interrelationships between an individual and various other systems that are linked to the individual. A mixed methods research design was used in order to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. Multi-method data collection strategies were employed in this study. The multi-method approach involved: baseline assessment, interviews and drawings. An interpretive data analysis style was employed for the qualitative data analyses and the quantitative data analysis was statistical. The results of the quantitative and qualitative data were interpreted together.

The findings suggest that the participants showed significant challenges in the areas pertaining to phonemic awareness, print awareness, oral language and reading skills. And according to the mothers' adverse socio-economic environmental conditions also daze the effects of FASD on the learners emergent literacy profile.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION, RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

'I just learned that I'm not the problem. I have a problem. I can deal with that.'

15-year-old with FASD (Malbin 2002)

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

In the first chapter of this study, attention is paid to the background and rationale of the study. Furthermore, the rationale of the study, problem statement, research questions, research objectives and an overview of the research design and research methodology elucidates the contextualization of the study.

Education has to be relevant and meaningful to the lives of all learners. Statistics South Africa (2014) has highlighted that in recent years, the education system in South Africa has come under intense scrutiny and has become a cause of great concern to those involved in education, because South Africa possesses a diversity of languages, cultures, religions and disabilities. Diverse learning needs are displayed by learners, which creates a need for diverse learning strategies. For education to be meaningful to all learners, these learners must be successfully integrated into society. Consequently, a greater understanding of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder is required to assist teachers in adopting different modes of teaching because schools are often unable to provide critical and much-needed support to learners with diverse needs and backgrounds in order to overcome their contextual, social and individual difficulties.

My interest in learners with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) began after working in the field of Education, particularly the Foundation Phase (FP) of schooling for the past twenty years and being conscious of a group of learners who are judged as noncompliant, uncooperative or unmotivated which often left teachers, parents, and learners feeling frustrated. These learners were diagnosed by a multidisciplinary team at my Full service / Inclusive School (Department of Basic Education, 2010), as children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and are at risk for school failure, alcohol and substance abuse problems, and delinquency and incarceration (Streissguth, Bookstein & Barr, 2004). Widespread research on the topic has provided evidence of major cognitive, behavioral, adaptive, social, and emotional impairments

among individuals with FASD, including intellectual and learning disabilities, deficits in executive functioning, memory problems, speech and language delays, inattention, hyperactivity, internalizing and externalizing behavior problems, and social impairments (Guerri, Bazinet & Riley, 2009; Kodituwakku, 2007; Streissguth, 2007). Blackburn, Carpenter and Egerton (2009) are of the opinion that FASD is misdiagnosed in schools as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), resulting in a partial diagnosis because of the diagnostic overlap of these conditions (Autti-Ramo, 2002). This has serious implications for learners with FASD in the classroom. While alternative diagnoses may make teachers aware of some of the needs of learners with FASD, other needs not associated with the alternative diagnosis and specific to FASD may be overlooked. Whatever the background, the challenge remains: how do we as teachers optimize learning for learners with FASD?

## **1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

My own context brought me to the realization that a vulnerable group, learners with FASD, has often been neglected with regards to literacy development and in many cases fail due to an inability of teachers to address their literacy needs adequately within the mainstream classroom context. When I initiated research to investigate this claim, I discovered a gap in research relating to FASD and literacy development within my school context. According to Inan (2010), the term “emergent literacy” was first used by Teale and Sulzby (1986), whilst Marie Clay is known for pioneering the concept of emergent literacy (United Kingdom Literacy Association, (UKLA, 2007). Clay (2000), defines emergent literacy as the process of developing an awareness and control of print language, which occurs before young children begin reading conventionally. Such perspective emphasizes that children’s knowledge and use of written language emerges over time (Christie, 2003). The above highlights that emergent literacy is a gradual process that takes place over time from birth - until a child can read and write in what we consider to be a conventional sense (Sulzby, 1991). A key to the term literacy is the interrelatedness of all parts of language: speaking, listening, reading, writing, and viewing (Department of Education, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, CAPS, 2011).

The lack of research on emergent literacy experiences for children with FASD can be attributed to a number of factors. According to Riley and McGee (2005), one important factor has been the minimal communication between teachers and families of learners with FASD on emergent literacy especially in low socio economic environments. While other research (Green, 2007; O'Malley & Nanson, 2002) relates to the extensive literature on the neurobehavioral functioning of children with FASD (Riley & McGee, 2005), there is no consensus yet among researchers on their cognitive phenotype. Also, there has been minimal exchange of ideas between learner support teams with regard to development of effective intervention programs and especially mothers as an intellectual resource. This status quo prompted this particular investigation as I now endeavor to answer the question: What is the emergent literacy profile of a child with the FASD symptoms as noted above? What are the socio-economic elements that may contribute to barriers in the families of learners with FASD that contribute to the possible emergent literacy problems? If we understand the strengths and weaknesses at this level, then we can start to assist the child, parents and teachers. Although many learners are diagnosed with FASD, there is much more to understand and 'know' about these children and their emergent literacy development.

In particular, teachers in mainstream classrooms in South Africa need to understand how to respond to the learning needs of learners with FASD effectively and enable them to maximize their potential, bearing in mind that alcohol consumption among teenage women increased significantly in the last decade, causing an increase in the number of alcohol-exposed pregnancies. This increase in alcohol consumption among pregnant women is accompanied by an increase in the number of alcohol-related births. As the number of alcohol-related births increases so does entrance of these children into the education system (Griffin, Bengry-Howell, Hackley, Mistral & Szmigin, 2009). The difficulties that learners with FASD face in the classroom exemplify that much-used phrase 'complex needs' (Carpenter, 2009a; Dittrich & Tutt, 2008). Their unusual style of learning and their extreme challenging behaviour fall outside the range of experience of many teachers and as there is a significant shortfall in guidance for teachers on how to educate children with FASD, teachers find themselves 'pedagogically bereft' (Carpenter, 2009). This is also the case with regards to the literacy development of learners with FASD, and more specifically their emergent literacy profile.

Only when a greater understanding is attained, can one implement appropriate and effective intervention strategies for each child as early as possible, in the FP. This led me to the decision to structure my dissertation as a mixed-method research study, at a specific school detailing the emergent literacy profiles of learners with FASD in a Grade One classroom.

### **1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The school where I teach is situated in a rural area and is mostly surrounded by shacks which lack basic necessities like running water and bathroom facilities. The majority of parents are unemployed or seasonal farm workers who struggle to make ends meet. The parents tend to resort to alcohol abuse as a means to deal with their problems. Poverty related deprivation in the home environment therefore impacts on the schooling and literacy development of most learners in this community. Roberts, Jurgens and Burchinal (2005) are of the opinion that the support and the responsiveness of the home environment is the most consistent predictor of children's language and emergent literacy skills development.

The concept of emergent literacy has been increasingly replacing the notion of reading readiness. Many facets of emergent literacy have received the attention of researchers and have been widely reported, however, not regarding to learners with FASD. There has been a strong advocacy of acknowledging what the child is able to do when he or she enters school, how the contexts of his/her life influence this, and how parents and preschools can interact with the child's learning and reading abilities (Clay, 1991). It is thus important to form an idea of the emergent literacy profile of learners with FASD, but in developing a plan with regards to emergent literacy development, it remains important to be cognisant of the levels of impairment in a range of areas such as sensory perceptual functioning; gross and fine motor skills; visual-motor integrative abilities; visual-spatial and visual-perceptual skills; attention and processing speed; expressive and receptive language; auditory and visual learning and memory; executive functioning; Intelligence Quotient (IQ) and academic abilities (Blackburn, Carpenter & Egerton, 2009).



## **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION**

Given the above problem statement, the research will therefore address the following overall research question:

**What is the emergent literacy profile of learners with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder in a Grade One classroom in a selected rural farming community?**

**The secondary research questions are:**

What are the socio-economic elements that may contribute to barriers in the families of learners with FASD that contribute to the possible emergent literacy problems?

What are the strengths present in the socio-economic environment of these families that can be used to support learners with FASD?

## **1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

In my endeavour as the researcher to find possible solutions to my research problem, I aim to set the following objectives:

- To determine the emergent literacy profile of learners with FASD in a Grade One classroom in a selected rural farming community;
- To understand the socio-economic elements that may contribute to barriers in the families of learners with FASD affecting emergent literacy problems;
- To highlight the strengths present in the socio-economic context of these families that can be used to support learners with FASD.

Through expanding the understanding of some of the critical issues of the educational process for learners within a challenging socio-economic context, this study may serve to improve the quality of emergent literacy opportunities for learners with FASD in the Foundation Phase (FP) (Gr R-3) education system in South Africa.

## **1.6 LITERATURE**

The concept of FASD and all its related limitations and challenges, needs to be examined against the background of the literature on emergent literacy and how

opportunities for emergent literacy can be created in order to grasp the full extent of what the emergent literacy profile of FASD learners entails. This necessitates a closer look at an appropriate theoretical framework and the literature on both FASD and emergent literacy. It is important to bear in mind that within the educational arena, internationally as well as in South Africa, there has been almost no systematic research on the needs of learners with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders or on the most effective educational strategies to address such needs (Ryan & Ferguson, 2006).

### **1.6.1 A theoretical framework for understanding the context and the emergent literacy profile of the learner with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) - ecological systems theory**

The theoretical framework underpinning this study is based on Bronfenbrenner's (1994; 1992) ecological systems theory, (subsequently revised as the bio-ecological model), which is an example of a multidimensional model of human development. This theory provides a framework for understanding the complexity of influences, interactions and interrelationships between an individual and various other systems that are linked to the individual. Swart & Pettipher, (2005:10) mention that the levels of interacting systems give rise to multifaceted and reciprocal relationships that result in change, growth and development. Bronfenbrenner (in Van der Merwe, Dawes & Ward, 2011 ) illuminated the fact that forces external to the family also influence family functioning and ultimately the development of children. Characteristics of the parent, the child, as well as the context or the social environment, therefore affect child development.

In explaining Bronfenbrenner's theory further, Swart and Pettipher (2005:10), and Swart and Phasha, (2005: 215) state that the micro-system, meso-system, exo-system and macro-system interact with the chrono-system. Microsystems are systems such as family, school, and the peer group in which the child is an active participant and is involved in continuous, face to face interactions with familiar people. The influence between family, child and environment is not one way but reciprocal as parents and children are both influenced by, and influencing the context. This serves to emphasise that situations and actions of people in the child's environment significantly impact on the child's development within the microsystem. For example, exposure to a rich variety of books, which impacts on the development of emergent literacy at home

cannot be assumed. Emergent literacy centers around books and in poor contexts may be viewed as a non-essential commodity when resources are scarce.

Mesosystems refer to a set of interrelated microsystems and the interactions that exist between them, for example, the interrelationships between the peer group, family and school (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). Accordingly, what happens at home or in the peer group can influence how children respond at school, and vice versa. Children who experience a lack of support at home or lack literacy examples in both parents and material may receive care and understanding from their peers and/or teachers. Even though lack of support may result in children being apprehensive and insecure, established positive relations with their peers or teachers over a prolonged period may transform their sense of insecurity.

Exosystems include other systems in which the child is not directly involved as an active participant, but which may influence or be influenced by what happens in settings and relationships that directly influence the child. For example, the parent's stressful relationship with an employer may indirectly affect the parent's relationship with the child. The exosystem defines the larger social system in which the child does not function directly. The structures in this layer impact the child's development by interacting with some structure in her microsystem (Berk, 2000). A parent might have a supportive employer that allows the parent to take time off from work to attend regular parent guidance meetings. The child may not be directly involved at this level, but he/she does feel the positive or negative force involved with the interaction with his own system. The unemployment status of the parents of this study's participants places them at a great risk. Catts, Fey, Zhang and Tomblin (2001) show that a set of four variables, (letter identification, sentence imitation, phonological awareness, and rapid naming), that encompass both early literacy skills and oral language skills, in addition to a fifth variable representing socio-economic status, all individually predicted the probability of later reading difficulties with 93% accuracy based on a logistic regression analysis. The stresses that poverty places on parents influence home literacy processes (Mistry, Biesanz, Taylor, Burchinal & Cox 2004; Parke, Coltrane, Duffy, Buriel, Dennis & Powers, 2004). Young children with limited exposure to educationally stimulating experiences and materials, (often a consequence of constrained financial resources), are more likely to show deficiencies in basic literacy

and arithmetic skills upon entering school and consequently to be at a disadvantage compared to children who have mastered such skills before entering school (Sarama, & Clements, 2009).

Macro systems refer to the dominant social structures which include attitudes, beliefs, and values of a particular society or culture. For example, democracy, human rights and social justice policies, may influence or be influenced by other systems. All these systems are interrelated with the chronosystem, which marks changes over time. These relationships are seen as a whole. Every part is as important as the other in ensuring the survival of the whole system, thus it enables the system to facilitate the development and display of positive or negative individual characteristics, which in turn facilitates positive or negative subjective experiences. The macro system involves dominant social structures as well as beliefs and values that influence and may be influenced by all other levels of the system (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). In the case of this study, this system level deals with the largest and most remote people and things that have an influence over a Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) learner's life like the National Department of Education and its policies, and how they impact on the child's development within the classroom context.

### **1.6.2 Emergent literacy**

The concept of emergent literacy had its origins in Anglophone countries (e.g. New Zealand, Australia, Britain) in the 1970s, when researchers began to question traditional reading readiness, attitudes and practices. Mary Clay, a New Zealand researcher, was one of the first pioneers to examine young children's reading and writing development (Teale & Sulzby, 1986). Clay (1966) introduced the term 'emergent literacy' to describe the behaviours seen in young children when they used books and writing materials to emulate reading and writing activities, even though the children could not actually read and write in the traditional sense (Carrington, 2001). While the concept of reading readiness proposes that there is a physical and neurological point in time when children were ready to learn to read and write, emergent literacy proposes that there are connections in children's literacy development between early literacy behaviours and those displayed once children can read independently (Morrow, 2007).

According to Neaum (2012:139) there are four reasons for referring to this process as emergent, namely:

- Emergence indicates that the development of a child as a literacy user comes from within the child. Children, supported by adults, are able to make sense of the print which surrounds them (Doyle, 2012).
- Emergence implies a gradual process that takes place over time (Wasik & Hermann, 2004).
- Emergence focuses on the inherent abilities that children have to make sense of the world; it suggests that children are active in their learning rather than as passive recipients of knowledge (Doyle, 2012).
- Literacy only emerges if the conditions are right (Van der Berg, Girdwood, Shepherd, Van Wyk, Kruger, Viljoen, Ezeobi & Ntaka, 2013). Consequently, meaningful engagement with print and the adults who support it is needed for it to emerge.

In this study, reference to literacy includes all four understandings.

#### *1.6.2.1 Factors influencing emergent literacy development*

An emergent literacy perspective values the literacy experiences young children engage in at home and at school during their early years (Reutzel & Cooter, 2008). The minds of young children absorb information about language, literacy, and printed concepts by interacting with the world of print. For example, children benefit from listening to storybooks, experimenting with writing and drawing materials, engaging in pretend reading, singing, and playing with spoken language through rhymes and riddles, (See Chapter 2.5). Parents and teachers could foster a child's emerging literacy development through the creation of print-rich environments which provide access to books, writing and drawing supplies, and literacy play materials (Reutzel & Cooter, 2008). Emergent readers and writers need to be actively engaged and exposed to a wide variety of books on a daily basis. Through participation in literature responses, discussions, and opportunities to make personal connections with text,

young children develop important understandings about print, books, the alphabetic principle, and phonemic awareness (Paige-Smith & Craft, 2011).

In reading programmes that focus on the phonological processing, or 'bottom-up' approach, to reading instruction, learners are expected to first decode individual letters and words before any focus on comprehension is done. Bloch (2002) comments that in South African Grade One classrooms the emphasis is still focused on imparting these basic skills needed for reading and writing, often to the disadvantage of encouraging personal construction of meaning. Learners must learn to decode printed language, to translate print into sounds and to learn alphabetic principles associated with sound-symbol relationships (Lewis & Ellis, 2006). Certainly, skill in decoding does not automatically mean that skill in reading comprehension has been achieved (Pretorius, 2000). Boucher (2004) accentuates that phonic awareness is an essential skill to be achieved, and direct instruction and the use of basal readers are main tactics in the implementation of this approach.

#### *1.6.2.2 Emergent literacy in low socio-economic contexts*

The socio-economic milieu of learners could place them at a disadvantage as emphasized by Willenberg (2004:88) where the children's pre-school environments often offered 'inadequate quality and quantity of access to literacy resources and activities'. It is of concern that children from high poverty contexts generally begin school with less well-developed emergent literacy than their middle-class peers (Stuart, 1990). However, children who live in families with limited resources and lower parental levels of education frequently have less access to a rich verbal environment at home, less access to books, and fewer experiences with which to construct their learning, all of these being critical components in developing literacy skills (Morrow, 2007, Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998).

Living in poverty carries with it an assortment of stressors for parents that eventually can have damaging effects on children. Depressed mood, social isolation, lessened feelings of personal efficacy, and the trauma of violence deplete the energy, focus, and hope of parents and reduce their ability to provide the attention and encouragement that young children require for literacy development. Children's abilities to express their thoughts verbally and to understand verbal language tended

to be higher when their parents had higher levels of education, income, literacy skills, and reported positive school experiences (Weigel, Martin & Bennet, 2006). Whilst Feinstein (2003) highlighted that impoverished learning environments are likely to impact on children's cognitive skills, language and emergent literacy. The reasons for this relative disadvantage are complex, but the most important contributing factor may be that learners from low Socio Economic Status (SES) backgrounds have less-developed oral language skills than students from middle class backgrounds (Beck & McKeown, 2007; Hay & Fielding-Barnsley, 2009).

### **1.6.3 Definition and description of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)**

Kenneth Jones and David Smith in 1973, along with a multidisciplinary team, recognised and defined a group of Washington State children who had similar facial dysmorphology. On careful investigation, that group of children had all been exposed to excessive amounts of alcohol in utero. Generics among the children were a distinct constellation of physical abnormalities, growth retardation, central nervous system damage, and prenatal alcohol exposure (Kalberg & Buckley, 2006). It was determined that all of these children had suffered teratogenic damage as a result of maternal alcohol consumption during the gestational period. Subsequently, the term FAS was introduced and these children were assigned the diagnosis.

Exposure to alcohol in utero is considered to be the leading cause of developmental disabilities of known etiology. FAS, is characterised by a distinct constellation of characteristic facial anomalies, growth retardation, and central nervous system (CNS) dysfunction (Jacobson & Jacobson, 2002; Kodituwakku, Kalberg & May, 2001). Some individuals with prenatal alcohol exposure (PAE) do not meet the full criteria for FAS, but instead are diagnosed with partial FAS, alcohol related neurodevelopmental disorder (ARND), or alcohol related birth defects (ARBD). The entire continuum of effects from PAE to ARBD is increasingly being referred to under the umbrella term of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) (Warren, Floyd & Calhoun, 2004). An extensive body of research has documented major cognitive, behavioral, adaptive, social, and emotional impairments among individuals with FASD Kalberg, May, Blankenship, Buckley, Gossage & Adnams, 2013). Brain damage is the most serious aspect of FASD. This damage is permanent; it can be accommodated through intervention programmes but not reversed (Bryanton, Gareri & Boswall, 2014).

### *1.6.3.1 How Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) impacts on learning*

Kalberg and Buckley (2006), highlight the point that sufficient information exists about areas of deficit which include: general intelligence, language, executive function, memory, attention, gross and fine motor skills and relative potential strengths that offer a base for development of appropriate interventions. In studies conducted in South Africa (May, Brooke, Gossage, Croxford, Adnams, Jones, Robinson & Viljon, 2000; Viljoen, Gossage, Brooks, Adnams, Jones, Robinson, Hoyme, Snell, Khaole, Kodituwakku, Asante, Findlay, Quinton, Marais, Kalberg & May, 2005; May, Gossage, Marais, Adnams, Hoyme, Jones, Robinson, Khaole, Snell, Kalberg, Hendricks, Brooke & Stellavato, 2007), the researchers found that children with FAS are impaired not only in verbal and non-verbal Intelligence Quotient, but also in tasks that measured fundamental language skills such as grammar comprehension and memory.

Carpenter (2011) described the learning challenges of FASD learners as: “Here today! Gone tomorrow!” He highlights that retention and over learning are poor features of the learning pattern of the child with FASD. These children; however, require more repetition, less distracting environments, more specialized techniques, and more encouragement. They are often highly motivated to please teachers, but may have difficulty relating to teachers who do not give clear commands or who are inconsistent (Streissguth, 1997). Research done by Carpenter (2011) with ten preschoolers with FASD showed deficits in verbal performance, language, behaviour, and motor skills, but failed to show deficits in visual perception or memory skills.

### *1.6.3.2 How Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) impacts on emergent literacy*

Children with FASD particularly struggled with language skills – speaking, writing and basic understanding of words (Urban, Chersich, Fourie, Chetty, Olivier & Viljoen, 2008). Learners with FASD with executive functioning difficulties have trouble holding information in memory for later use, (working memory), in solving novel problems, planning a task’s trajectory, and maintaining attention to complete a goal. In the classroom this deficit may manifest itself in the child’s inability to follow directions, retain information previously presented, generalize information from one situation to another, or organize events into a logical sequence or timeline. In the early years of schooling, it may be very difficult for that child to grasp that most words to be mastered at this emergent literacy level contain a beginning, middle, and an end. In addition,



working memory deficits interfere with academic skill acquisition. The tools necessary for academic readiness thus often progress much more slowly for children with FASD. As a result, foundational concept acquisition such as shapes, letters, and words present more of a challenge for these children than other learners (Kalberg & Buckley, 2006).

## **1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

The purpose of this research study is to determine the emergent literacy profile of learners with FASD in a Grade One classroom.

The research question that will focus this research study is: What is the emergent literacy profiles of learners with FASD in a Grade One classroom?

### **1.7.1 Mixed Method Research Approach**

Most of the studies on the learning profile of learners with FASD are quantitative in nature. Adnams, Sorour, Kalberg, Kodituwakku, Perold, Kotze, September, Castle, Gossage & May (2007) investigated the efficacy of a classroom language and literacy intervention in children with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. The study results confirm the hypothesis that children with FASD can improve in specific skills in response to targeted cognitive interventions. There are no direct studies on the emergent literacy profile of Grade One learners with FASD that utilized a mixed method approach.

The baseline assessment of the learners will give me a clear indication of the early literacy profile of the learners with FASD within a Grade One classroom. As the purpose of the assessment is not to look at the product, (results), so much, but rather at the emergent literacy profile of the participants. Using a mixed method research paradigm provided me with a framework which mediated the generation of scientific data sets, and allowed me to provide thick and rich descriptions of participants' socio-economic environments which might also present itself as a strength in the families.

### **1.7.2 Research setting**

The school, that was used for this study is situated in the Uitenhage District, in the Eastern Cape in a town called Humansdorp. The Grade One learners range between

the ages of 6 and 8 years and come from the same ethnic, socioeconomic, language, and educational background. The socio-economic milieu of learners places them at a disadvantage in that many of them come from single parent households. In the Eastern Cape, farming communities are still plagued by alcoholism today. Inexpensive inferior wines which the poor can afford are readily available and the popular cheap wine that is sold in a foil bag is known as a 'papsak'. Shebeens and taverns, (they are informal bars situated in houses which sell alcohol), are often open 24 hours a day and are situated throughout the community. The unrestrained use and abuse of alcohol has led to huge social problems, fostering violence, dysfunctional families and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum (Landsberg, Krüger & Nel, 2005; May, *et.al*, 2005). In many instances the parents are victims of FAS themselves. The learners end up in the same dysfunctional communities and in some instances the only stable structural influence in the learner's life is the school (Malbin, 2002; Streissguth & Kanter, 2002; Donald, Lazarus, Lolwana, 2004).

### **1.7.3 Participants**

For this study purposive sampling was used for selection of which four Grade One learners formed one sample group. The names used for the participants are pseudonyms. They have been selected on the basis that they are all in the same Grade One registered classroom where the researcher is the classroom teacher.

Participants range between the ages of 6 and 8 years, three boys and one girl. All of them come from the same ethnic, socio-economic, language, and educational background. These learners have been diagnosed by a multidisciplinary team as having FASD. The socio-economic milieu of the learners places them at a disadvantage in that many of them come from single parent households.

My second group of participants are the mothers of these four learners who form an integral part of this study as they will respond through interviews and drawings relating to their respective children. Interviews were held with these mothers to determine and establish socio-economic elements that may contribute to barriers in the families of learners with FASD that contribute to the possible emergent literacy problems. These mothers were the participants for research questions 2 and 3.

#### **1.7.4 Data collection methods and tools**

Struwig and Stead (2010:40) state that data collection methods should adequately provide information that will solve and assist in interpreting a problem. Three main data collection methods will be used, namely baseline assessment; interviews and drawings.

##### *1.7.4.1 Baseline assessment*

In order to provide each learner in the class with the appropriate level of scaffolding to ensure development within his or her own zone of proximal development, teachers need to know each learner's level of development. Having a precise understanding of a learner's current level of language and literacy proficiency is especially critical for at-risk learners with FASD in order to provide individual and personalized support where indicated (McGee & Richgels, 2003:34).

The researcher assessed young learners with limited exposure to formal test situations who might be unfamiliar with task requirements. Additionally, the learners' language proficiency and cultural background may not be supportive to their early literacy development. This would need to be carefully considered before any conclusions can be drawn about abilities or the need for intervention. Effective and appropriate literacy assessment needs to be carefully planned, keeping in mind the purposes of assessment as well as the cultural and linguistic appropriateness, validity and reliability of assessment instruments (McGee & Richgels, 2003:35). Johnston and Rogers (2002:378) propose that early literacy assessment should be part of a larger discourse about children, literacy and learning. Literacy, learning and assessment are fundamentally discursive practices involving ways of knowing, believing, valuing, relating, behaving and representing, and assessment is thus fundamentally interpretive, influenced by values, beliefs and language.

An initial screening assessment by the beginning of the first term of Grade One will provide the teacher with baseline information against which she can identify those learners whose growth trajectories might lag behind their peers.

#### 1.7.4.2 *Interviews*

Marshall and Rossman (2011: 137) define interviews as one of the essential methods of generating information when doing qualitative research. Hesse–Biber and Leavy (2011: 19) state that comprehensive interviewing and written interpretations of experiences are used by researchers who employ phenomenology as the research design. In addition Kvale and Brinkmann (2009: 2) cited in Marshall and Rossman (2011:142), and Mason (2002:62) define an interview as the occurrence where two or more individuals interactively discuss a specific shared topic. Paul, Kleinhammer-Tramill, & Fowler (2009: 267) further describe interviews as discussions to gain and clarify essential information. In agreement, Hugh-Jones (2010:77) states that an interview takes place to gain specific knowledge and to understand other individuals.

In this study the mothers of the four learners in the sample were interviewed to gather information about the linguistic background and literacy development of the participants, the parents' background with regards to literacy and reading as well as reading practices in the home environment. I used a semi-structured interview format to elicit personal experience and home environment specific insight narratives from this group of participants. In this interview format I set an agenda with questions aimed at acquiring situated narratives on particular topics (Barbour, 2007; Fontana & Frey, 2008), (See Appendix 2).

Brynard and Hanekom (2006:40) state that the usefulness of interviews in stimulating thoughts cannot be sufficiently stressed. Conducting interviews in this manner will afford me the flexibility to ask probing questions and follow up on responses that were not clear. Participants will be given ample time and freedom to speak their minds without restriction, yet I will guide them through follow-up questions to stick to the issues under discussion. Patton (2002:344) claims that a guide provides a framework within which an interviewer would develop questions, sequence those questions, and make decisions about which questions to pursue at greater length.

#### 1.7.4.3 *Drawings*

According to Yildiz (2012: 623), drawings are a highly efficient medium of expression. It is presented as a medium through which thoughts and experiences can be expressed. Davidson, Dottin, Penna and Robertson (2009: 10) refer to drawings as a

“reflective process”, a way through which the abstract can be communicated without verbal representation. Building on this argument, Pepin-Wakefield (2009: 310) comments that drawings are a form of “communication through images”. It is therefore a way of expressing experiences, emotions and feelings without the spoken word being used. In this particular study it also provided valuable insights into the inner world of participants and their home environment.

## **1.8 DATA ANALYSIS**

The quantitative data generated from the baseline assessment will be inspected statistically to seek patterns or contradictions between participants in relation to their emergent literacy development. The qualitative data generated consists of preparing and organising the data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes, and finally representing the data in figures, tables and or a discussion. The participants’ responses to the assessment will be scrutinized and categorized. Esterberg (2005) describe qualitative analysis as a process of constructing sense or meaning. Therefore the second group of participants’ interviews and drawings data will be inspected and interrogated in an attempt to identify trends and/or themes in terms of their background to literacy and reading, reading practices, etc.

The data will be evaluated and compared using triangulation in an attempt to ensure trustworthiness of the data.

## **1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The Chambers Concise Dictionary, as cited in Struwig and Stead (2010:66), refers to ethics as a “system of morals, rules or behaviour.” They further explain that research ethics provides researchers with a code of moral guidelines on how to conduct research in a morally acceptable way.

McNiff and Whitehead (2006:34), articulate that ethical clearance is an essential part of the research, because it involves other people and participants and possible sources of data. Firstly, I applied for ethic approval from the Faculty of Research, Technology and Innovation Committee of Education (ERTIC). Throughout the research process, I will ensure that all participants remain anonymous and that all

information shared will be confidential. Cresswell (2009:87) advocates that researchers need to protect their research participants, develop a trust with them, promote the integrity of research, and guard against misconduct and impropriety that may reflect on their organisations and institutions. My research deals with children, and as such needs to be conducted within stringent ethical parameters. Consideration has to be given to how the learners in my study are taught, the level of honesty and openness in my study, the openness afforded to the parents of my learners, and the manner in which results will be treated (Mertler, 2006:26). I will therefore negotiate permission to do research from the following persons:

- The principal of the school at which I am teaching
- The Department of Basic Education
- The parents of the learners involved in the research
- The learners involved in the research

This research was conducted keeping the essential ethical criteria in mind. According to McKernan (1996), any researcher must take note of the following ethical criteria: All those affected by the research study have a right to be informed, consulted and advised about the object of the inquiry:

- The researcher should not proceed unless permission has been obtained from those concerned.
- The researcher is responsible for the confidentiality of the data.
- Researchers are obliged to keep efficient records of the research and make these available to participants and authorities on demand.
- The researcher will be accountable to the school community who impact on the research.
- The researcher has a right (suggestion: an obligation?) to report the research fairly.
- The researcher must make the ethical contractual criteria known to all involved.

## **1.10 PROPOSED OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS**

In Chapter One, the background to the study will be introduced and the problem will be stated. The objective with this report and the research design will be discussed briefly.

Chapter Two will deal with the literature review and the necessary information about the topic will be given in detail. Different authors and writers will be quoted expressing their views and opinions on the subject under discussion.

Chapter Three will focus on how the researcher will decide to conduct her research, how she will chose the method of research, and detailed information on the gathering of data will be provided in this chapter.

In Chapter Four, the researcher will analyse and interpret the collected data. In doing so, the researcher will ensure that any evidence and facts that will be provided become the solution to the problem at hand. The data and evidence provided answers to the research question in order to support the purpose of the research.

In Chapter Five, the researcher will summarise important issues, draws conclusions and provide a sound basis for the implications of the study. It is assumed that this will be a coherent research report as it responds to basic conventions by comprising of a title, introduction, theoretical framework, intentions and literature review, design methods, ethical considerations, conclusion and bibliography.

This proposed timeframe schedules ample time for writing up results, the process of which can be extremely time-consuming. It is however, a suggested timeframe and changes may occur due to unforeseen circumstances.

## **1.11 CONCLUSION**

In Chapter 1 I attempted to introduce the research project. I gave some background to the social marginalisation of at-risk groups and the current responses to this; I will elaborate further on these issues in my literature review. The research aimed to explore ways of working within an already established cluster group of socially marginalised youths considered by their school to be at risk of delinquency. It proposes to work within the already established group dynamic and, through collaborative

practices, explore with the participants ways of transforming the group culture so that it is supportive of the strengthening of self-efficacy practices among its members. The chapter also introduced my research design and methodology, discussed various ethical issues as they pertained to my study and addressed the issue of quality assurance. I concluded the chapter with an overview of the areas that will be addressed in the various chapters.

The following chapter will present the literature review.



## CHAPTER TWO

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING EMERGENT LITERACY PROFILE OF THE FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER (FASD) LEARNER

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Landsberg, Krüger and Nel (2005:80) point out that teachers cannot only focus on the child and his/her needs. They argue that teachers have to facilitate the environment in which the child lives in order to ensure the holistic development of the child. They emphatically state that families play an integral part in the lives of children and especially in emergent literacy. I fully support the aforementioned authors when they state that the broader community, in which the child lives, plays a major role in the emergent literacy profile of learners with FASD.

A literature review was used to explore the concept of FASD and how it impacts of the emergent literacy profile of a learner with FASD. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010:85) a literature review establishes important links between existing knowledge and the research problem being investigated. Almost every question about doing new research can be answered by knowing what others have done and reported. It is a critique of the status of knowledge of a carefully designed topic and enables a reader to:

Refine the research problem;

- Establish a conceptual or theoretical framework;
- Establish how a meaningful contribution can be made to existing knowledge or practice;
- Identify methodological limitations;
- Identify contradictory findings;
- Inform the research design of the study.

In order to achieve the above, the sources consulted included professional journals, reports, quarterly reviews, scholarly books, government documents, dissertations and

theses as well as electronic resources such as websites. This provided a framework for the ensuing quantitative and qualitative inquiry.

The concept of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and all its related limitations and challenges needs to be examined against the background of emergent literacy opportunities in order to grasp the full extent of what it entails. This necessitates a closer look at a theoretical framework and its influences on the learners. Also an understanding of the socio-economic elements that may contribute to possible emergent literacy needs to be investigated from the experiences of the mothers of these learners with FASD. As well as an understanding of the strengths in the socio-economic environment of these families that can be used to support learners with FASD.

## **2.2 BRONFENBREMMER'S ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS APPROACH**

Henning (2004: 25) defines a theoretical framework as being "like the lenses through which you view the world". She furthermore states that it refers to the point of departure that the researcher intends to take when engaging in the research study.

The theoretical framework that forms the core of this qualitative research study is Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory of human development model. Bronfenbrenner (1979: 21) explains the interaction and interrelatedness between an individual and the different contextual settings in which a person moves and develops.

Bronfenbrenner (1979: 21- 22) elaborates on his ecological model by stating that an individual's environment is not static, but is continuously changing since development and adaptation form part of the milieu in which he exists. Because the interaction of an individual and the environment is characterized by mutual change through shared accommodation for one another, this relationship is interchangeable. Bronfenbrenner clarifies that the various settings an individual moves in, are interconnected and influence one another. These various settings are also affected by numerous external factors. Swart and Pettipher (2011: 10) interpret Bronfenbrenner's model as the influence and interrelatedness of different systems on an individual's life. The occurrences in one system have a direct effect on all the other related systems.

Landsberg, Krüger and Nel (2005:80) and Wortham (2010:53) both agree that Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems approach recognises the vital influential factors and relationships in the environment and how these factors influence the development of the child. They also concur that the bio-ecological model (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) acknowledges that a learner's individual characteristics and experiences also contribute and shape the child's future development. They further point out that the influence between environment, child and the family are reciprocal, because the child and the family are both affected by the environment.

Wortham (2010:53) points out that Bronfenbrenner believes that the holistic development of any human must be explained within the influence of the family, school, community, state and national governments. Bruce (2012:17) emphasises that it takes a whole village to bring up a child. He further points out that parents need encouragement and support but they also need to be empowered to help attain the objective of eliciting the best from the child. Bronfenbrenner's socio-cultural view of development proposes that there are multiple ecologies that form systems around the child. He points out that the child is at the centre of the systems with widening concentric circles that represent systems of influence titled the microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems and macro systems.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological model implies that when considering a learner in the class, all systems should be taken into consideration as the learner must be looked at holistically in his environment and not seen in isolation or existing in a "bubble" (Huitt, 2010: 36). Bronfenbrenner's model is promoted by Beaty (2006:37-38) who urges individuals to consider a learner's environment and all contexts when engaging with a learner, as the learner and the different systems are all integrated.

### **2.2.1 MICROSYSTEMS**

The Microsystems consist of the family, extended family and playmates/friends in the immediate environment (Wortham, 2010:54). Bronfenbrenner (2005: 148) states that the other individuals involved in the interconnected communication in the microsystems, also have their own personality traits, characteristics and values. He goes further and highlights certain lengthy processes with which individuals are involved. These processes enable an individual, and provide a framework to

eventually engage in them individually or with others. These processes over time provide the skills, understanding and insight, incentive and ability needed in completing them successfully. Bronfenbrenner mentions a few of these processes and includes reading, learning new skills, problem solving, performing complex tasks and acquiring new knowledge as mentioned in Chapter 4 (See 4.4).

A learner with FASD, interacts in a context with his specific intellectual, emotional and social traits, as well as physical characteristics (Beaty, 2006: 35). These traits and characteristics influence his interaction with his immediate environment because the interrelatedness between the individual and the context are reciprocal. Beaty (2006: 35) further mentions that when individuals in a context are supportive, then the connection will be worthwhile and enriched. The learner builds up a repertoire of performances, insight and data through experiences in the various microsystems, (Knowles & Lander, 2012). These performances, insight and data create a platform for assisting the learner to construct his confidence and self-image, because it directs the learner when dealing with new and unfamiliar experiences and contexts.

The features in the microsystems can be either inviting or uninviting to allow or prohibit engagement and participation in these contexts (Bronfenbrenner, 1994:39). Bronfenbrenner (2005:5) states that the engagement in the various settings are emotional and encouraging as feelings of like and dislike and happiness and unhappiness are experienced. He further emphasises the value of experiencing the different feelings by saying that these feelings can contribute profoundly in developing the individual in the future.

The mesosystem, just like the microsystem, also has an impact on the child.

### **2.2.2 MESOSYSTEM**

The mesosystem, according to Donald, Taylor, Johnson, Cooper, Cartwright & Robertson (2005:40), focuses on what the child experiences in everyday life (reality), the neighbourhood, the school and religious organisations and how they in turn, interact with one another. This implies that what happens in the family or peer group, can influence how children respond at school and vice versa. Marotz (2012: 75) points out that stressful situations such as poverty, unrealistic adult demands, chronic illness

and unsafe neighbourhoods can have a serious impact on children's emotional state. Miller and Pound (2011:152) add that children and their families need to feel a sense of belonging, especially in their neighbourhood. They also emphasise that children's learning emerges from cultural goals with the guidance of community practices and expertise (See Chapter 4. 4). As a Foundation Phase teacher, I discovered that learners understand the world through their own experiences in their neighbourhood and the wider community.

The mesosystem refers to the interconnectedness and links between two or more contexts or microsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979:25). For the purposes of this study it comprises the interconnectedness between home and school. The interconnectedness in the mesosystem extends to formal and informal relations with other individuals involved in the contexts and the perceptions and understanding of one context towards the other. The relationships between the teacher, parents and learner in the mesosystem are all interconnected and have an influence on one another as mentioned by Beaty (2006:36). When the relationship between the teacher and learner is strained, and vice versa it will have an influence on the learner's relationship with his parents and teacher.

Against this background I am led to the next system, to unpack the exosystem and its influence on the learner.

### **2.2.3 EXOSYSTEM**

The exosystem, according to Wortham (2010:54), refers to the level that includes other systems in which the child is not directly involved, but which influences the people who have direct relationships with the learner, for example parent's workplace, recreational facilities, local industry and social services. Jacobs, Vakalisa and Gawe (2006:122) accentuate that the socio-economic environment in which the child develops and grows has important implications for the child's academic achievement and attitude toward school, as well as the level of aspiration and motivation in this regard.

Marotz (2012:28) infers that unemployed parents or those working for a low salary scale play a vital role in the development of a child, as it influences their type of lifestyle. Huddleston-Cass, Charnigo and Simmons (2009) point out that economic problems and high unemployment may leave families jobless and homeless. I echo

their statement, because the joblessness of parents spills over to impoverishment, which has a huge impact on the quality of children's lives and their holistic development. Marotz (2012:28) further emphasises that learners who grow up in a violent and disadvantaged environment, are not facing challenges only at home, but also at school.

The Department of Basic Education, Strategy on Screening, Assessment, Identification and Support (SAIS) (2014:14) recognises the need to provide support to address the barriers which may negatively affect the learner, such as poor and violent home environments, poor parenting and a lack of teacher knowledge of the new curriculum and curriculum differentiation. SAIS emphasises that some sources of support, such as physical, human and material, apart from those within the school and the home, can therefore start to be located in the local community.

The school system falls within the exosystem. The Department of Education (2011), also prescribes CAPS as national curriculum to be implemented in schools. The teacher needs to adhere to the Department of Education (2001) in implementing White Paper 6 and CAPS in her classroom.

SAIS (2014) embarks on the following services to see to the learners' different needs:

- Department of Health Services: These include all primary health care units attached to hospitals, clinics, community centres, as well as all other services involved in material and child health, rehabilitation and school health. Community based rehabilitation workers are a valuable source of information and support, particularly in rural communities.
- Department of Social Development Services: It includes social workers working with the local communities and providing support to families and communities. In the case of children disability, and support needed in relation to the financial status of the family, social welfare grants are available to families that are affected by unemployment and poverty.
- Non-governmental/Non-profit Organisations (NGOs or NPOs): They refer to national or local organisations that represent the rights of people with disabilities.

- Early Childhood Development (ECD): This consists of a range of service providers such as public centres, community or home-based services. Most of the support services are familiar with children and provide useful information to the receiving schools regarding strategies that can be used in supporting the child in an educational setting.

As a Foundation Phase teacher in Grade One, I concur that every child deserves the best possible start in life, as well as the necessary support to fulfill their maximum potential. Nutbrown (2011:53) emphasises that the environment plays a major role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. This brings me to the macro level that also plays a role in influencing the life of the learner.

#### **2.2.4 MACRO LEVEL**

Wortham (2010:54) points out that this level is influenced by the larger society. The ideology and beliefs of the national society may also influence the child. Landsberg, Krüger and Nel (2005:80) view macro systems as the broad ideological demographic patterns of the culture and subculture that serve as the blueprint for the development of a child. They further point out that families that live in poverty in specific geographic areas pose great challenges to early childhood intervention practices. They also emphasise that many of these families have great difficulties in providing children with adequate environmental circumstances in which to develop successfully.

Many young children have to grow up in difficult and devastating conditions. These conditions are outlined in the micro-, meso- and exosystems levels. The macro level refers to the organisation and responsibility of the functionaries in the Central Ministry of Education in South Africa. Department of Education, The National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996 of Section 3 states that the education system contributes to the full personal development of each learner and the moral, social, cultural, political and economic development of the nation at large. Against this background, I am prompted to investigate the emergent literacy profile of Grade One learners with FASD to reach their potential and to be productive citizens in South Africa.

### **2.2.5 CHRONOSYSTEM**

A fifth system was added by Bronfenbrenner (1994:40) to his ecological model, namely the Chronosystem where the milieu extends into a third element. This entails the adjustment or steadiness over time, including the duration of time of a person or the milieu in which he resides. Over years the world started advocating for inclusive education and greater parental involvement, to follow the principles of the inclusion of all learners in order to combat the practice of exclusion. The Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) was acknowledged worldwide to ensure inclusive education and the South African Department of Education followed the worldwide trend with the implementation of the White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001). Teachers are expected to implement the principles of inclusive education in the classroom and accommodate all learners, including learners with FASD.

### **2.3 UNDERSTANDING THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR EMERGENT LITERACY PROFILE OF THE LEARNER WITH FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER (FASD)**

Bronfenbrenner's ecological model implies that the presence of FASD in a learner will have an effect on multiple aspects of the learner's life, because all aspects of the learner's life are interconnected and do not exist in isolation. Therefore, although the presentation of the problem is within the learner and of an academic nature, it also has an emotional impact on the learner through different systems of his life and will affect multiple relationships in his life.

The family plays a vital role in the learner's life because their acceptance of the learner with FASD has an influence on the learner's relationship with emergent literacy (Swart and Pettipher, 2011:10). If the family stimulates emergent literacy practices and accepts the learner with his diverse needs, they will have a strong relationship, characterised by mutual respect and trust (Gordon, 2005). The interaction of the learner with his/her parents will form a frame of reference and foundation for the relationships with his teacher and in developing emergent literacy. If the parent(s) do not stimulate emergent literacy practices at home, to the learner presented with FASD, the teacher-learner relationship will be strained and the learner will be anxious and



unwilling to engage in this relationship (Bronfenbrenner, 1979:25). This will not support the emergent literacy development of the learner (Bracken & Fischel, 2010).

Mothers form an integral part of the context and culture in which they live. The influences of the social context within which the mothers live is dynamic and as stated by Donald *et. el.* (2005:44) it's constantly moving, shifting and interacting. Bronfenbrenner's ecological model is suitable as the theoretical framework for my study because I am doing research on a specific sample, namely learners with FASD in a Grade One classroom. The mothers of the participants shared their experiences regarding the socio-economic elements that contribute to barriers within the families of these learners. FASD cannot be seen in isolation because it affects all aspects of the individual learners' lives. The effect of FASD are evident in all the systems of Bronfenbrenner's ecological model.

## **2.4 BASELINE ASSESSMENT**

Assessment forms an integral part of learning and teaching and a daily component of classroom activities as highlighted by Tompkins (2010: 28-29). A variety of procedures are used by teachers to monitor the progress of learners in order to prepare appropriate lesson plans that will cater for the different abilities of the learners. Pienaar and Raymond (2013:115), emphasise that teachers should use a variety of assessment tools to assess the progress of their learners. Tompkins (2010) advises teachers to observe the learners as they participate in activities and to record the performances of their learners.

Pienaar and Raymond (2013:115-117), state that different forms of assessments can be conducted to collect information on the progress of learners. Curriculum-based and criterion-referenced assessment (CBA/CRT) are informal measures of student learning. Assessing curricular knowledge/skills as taught or of other developmentally important skills in addition to monitoring learner achievement following instruction. CBA/CRT assessments are used for conducting baseline assessment of a learner's knowledge, skills or behavior prior to an instructional unit. A baseline assessment looks at cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects and is conducted at the beginning of a new grade to determine what learners know. The different purposes of a baseline assessment are: to identify the level of learners in order to inform planning; to identify

learners with special needs; to compare the result with the learners' progress later, especially in determining the emergent literacy profile of learners with FASD (Mahlo, 2011).

The criteria for baseline assessment should include clear objectives, accurate and reliable recording of information (Wolfendale, 1995: 42-43) mentioning, that the information obtained from the assessment activities must be of practical value for future planning and intervention programmes.

#### **2.4.1 Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDE) Grade One baseline assessment strategy**

The ECDE (2009) baseline assessment document as a resource material is based on the 2007 Grade One Baseline Assessment Programme (BAP) of the Western Cape Education Department (WCED), in preparation for implementation in the schools of the Province of the Eastern Cape in 2010. Grade one baseline assessment was developed to determine the prior knowledge of learners in terms of the Grade R Literacy, Numeracy and Life Skills criteria (ECDE, 2009). The programme stretches over ten day and provides an exemplar Lesson Plan Framework for an initial assessment in Grade One in Literacy, Numeracy and Life Skills and consists of different activities. The class teacher administers the baseline assessment to learners in the second week of the school year. Teachers are advised to use the recording sheet, provided by the ECDE, as a checklist to record what activities learners were able to do and where intervention and support are needed. However, to simplify this checklist, as a school we developed our own.

## **2.5 LITERACY**

Initially, 'literacy' is regarded as being easily comprehended. However, when analysed, it is a difficult term to understand. But at the same time, literacy as a concept has proved to be both complex and dynamic. Traditionally literacy has been defined as the ability to read and write at a level of proficiency that is adequate for communication. More recently literacy has taken on several meanings such as using the basic cognitive skills required by reading and writing in ways that contribute to socio-economic development and to develop the capacity for social awareness and critical reflection as a basis for personal and social change (UNESCO, 2006:147). A

definition of literacy incorporates concepts of technological literacy, information literacy, mathematical literacy, scientific literacy and visual literacy. These are just a few examples as stated in the Education for all Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2006:150).

Thus, views of literacy have shifted from a narrow focus on reading and writing toward a more encompassing definition that seeks to capture literacy's social and cultural aspects, individual characteristics and immediate contexts. Taking into account the evolving debates, critiques and approaches to literacy, literature makes reference to four discrete understandings of literacy:

- Literacy as an autonomous set of skills: The most common understanding of literacy is that it is a set of tangible skills, particularly the cognitive skills of reading and writing, that are independent of the context in which they are acquired and the background of the person who acquires them. Scholars continue to disagree on the best way to acquire literacy (UNESCO, 2006:148).
- Literacy as applied, practiced and situated: This understanding evolved as scholars reasoned that the ways in which literacy is practised vary by social and cultural context (UNESCO, 2006:151). Literacy is thus described as both a natural or informal occurrence seen in everyday situations and experienced in home, family and community life, and (the more common view), as a formal occurrence in the context of organized instruction in the classroom (Wasik & Hermann, 2004:4).
- Literacy as a learning process: According to this approach literacy is seen as an active and broad-based learning process, rather than as a product of a more limited and focused educational intervention (UNESCO, 2006:151). According to Wasik and Hermann, (2004:4) people adopt "ways with printed words" within different socio-cultural practices for different purposes and functions and that these "ways with printed words" are always integrally integrated with ways of talking, thinking, believing, knowing, acting, interacting, valuing and feeling.

- Literacy as text: Lastly, to understand literacy is to look at it in terms of the “subject matter” and the nature of the texts that are produced and consumed by literate individuals (UNESCO, 2006:148).

In this study, reference to literacy includes all four understandings.

### **2.5.1 Emergent Literacy**

Emergent literacy development, according to Nutbrown (2011:43), refers to ways in which children acquire understanding. He further points out that skills and knowledge directly relate to aspects of emergent literacy such as using books, early writing, using environmental print and aspects of oral language. Bruce (2012:115) defines emergent literacy as complex skills of writing and reading that stem from children’s earliest communications, drawings, encounters with stories and books and interest in print in the environment. This inference prompted me to investigate what the emergent literacy profile of learners with FASD in a Grade One classroom will manifest.

According to Parette, Hourcade, Dinelli and Boeckmann (2009:356) best practices in emergent literacy instruction in early childhood settings include strategies that support skill development in five key emergent literacy areas: phonemic awareness, word recognition, concepts about print, alphabetic principles, and comprehension. Effective emergent literacy programmes seek to incorporate these concepts and practices. If children have this knowledge at school entry it seems reasonable to assume that they have acquired it in their families. If they do not have it, (and if it is desirable that they should), there is a strong case to pose the question: What are the socio-economic elements that may contribute to barriers in the families of learners with FASD that contribute to the possible emergent literacy problems?

Makin and Whitehead (2004:13) reason that emergent literacy is best supported when young children have the opportunities to learn about a variety of things including literacy as a part of their environment. They should also read continuously, and have many opportunities to develop their oral language, whilst getting to know and enjoy songs and rhymes, as well as learn to identify environmental print such as logos and shop signs. They should also develop knowledge of the mechanics of print, for example, that you read from left to right and top to bottom. In addition to this, they

should also have the opportunities to play with letters and the sounds they make. Lastly, they should also be introduced to a very important visit to the community library.

With my twenty years as an experienced Foundation Phase teacher, I echo Makin and Whitehead (2004) that it is vital to support learners from a young age and to give them opportunities to engage with emergent literature to develop the necessary skills and abilities to read and write. John, Loescher and Bardzell (2003:5) reiterate the complexity of early reading that demands and make use of a remarkably diverse set of skills, experiences and awareness. The previously mentioned authors and I mirror their view regarding the importance of phonemic awareness and the ability to sound out unfamiliar words. They are of the opinion that children must have well-developed vocabularies, strong oral language comprehension and an awareness of the social nature of reading to have phonemic awareness and an ability to sound out unfamiliar words.

Ramsberg (1998:1-2) communicates that from the growing body of research on emergent literacy development, Clay's (1966) concept on the topic has evolved to include several elements:

- Literacy development begins before children start formal instruction in primary school (Teale & Sulzby, 1986 as cited in Ramsberg, 1998). For example, by age 2 or 3 many children can identify signs, labels and logos in their homes and in their communities even if they cannot read yet.
- Reading and writing develop at the same time and in an interrelated way in young children rather than sequentially. Literacy involves listening, speaking, reading and writing abilities, (aspects of both oral and written language).
- The functions of literacy, (such as knowing that letters spell words and knowing that words have meaning), have been found to be as important a part of learning about reading and writing during early childhood as the forms of literacy, (such as naming specific letters of words).
- Children have been found to learn about written language as they actively engage with adults in reading and writing situations; as they explore print on

their own; and as they observe others around them engaged in literacy activities (Teale & Sulzby, 1986 as cited in Ramsberg, 1998).

- Children have been found to pass through general stages in literacy development in a variety of ways and at different ages (Teale & Sulzby, 1986 as cited in Ramsberg, 1998).

Bruce (2012:159) further advises that literacy from earliest infancy to the end of the reception year should be implemented as follows:

- Create opportunities for toddlers to enjoy a rich experience of music, singing, dancing, clapping and rhymes for finger and toes.
- Provide material for babies that are appealing and tactile, (wet, dry, sand, mud, water, etc) and support their experimental touching.
- Use a range of appropriate signs and movements in your interactions with non-verbal infants when we talk with them.
- Allow youngsters to have access to the materials for marking, drawing and writing
- whilst creating opportunities and ensuring that children see other people reading
- and writing for real purposes, so they can emulate them. It is called vicarious
- learning.

Children must be encouraged to read and write with adults.

Creating special places indoors and outside where children can read in comfort and find materials they need for marking and writing, would be advisable to encourage and motivate a love for print and reading.

Book collections with stories and relevant play materials for enjoyment and enrichment, should always be increased and enlarged.

Bruce (2012:157) emphasises that the complex skills of writing and reading emerge out of children's earliest communications and interventions at home and society. She further reiterates that it is essential to create positive, enjoyable and meaningful associations with making marks and writing and ensuring open access to the widest possible range of natural and created materials. Bruce points out that the real basics of early writing include a powerful human drive to communicate and share meanings and messages. It also encompasses an equally powerful drive to make marks and create signs, as well as an exposure to all kinds of print, signs and symbols. This also involves creating opportunities to watch older children and adults drawing, writing, printing and sending messages, including opportunities to investigate, use and play with many different markers, brushes, paints, water surfaces, malleable materials, printing devices and computer programmes.

Bester, Meyer and Evans (2013:176) refer to the emphasis of handwriting as a skill the young learner must acquire to master handwriting techniques. Davin (2013:186) articulates that the Grade R-3 teacher needs opportunities to develop perceptual skills that are important for writing which include gross motor coordination, fine motor coordination, eye-hand coordination, visual foreground and background discrimination, visual memory and body orientation. The concepts can be explained as follows:

Gross motor coordination occurs when toddlers climb on a jungle gym, kick and throw a ball, or any action or exercise or movement with his arms where the larger muscles are developed.

Fine motor coordination involves finer and more complex movements that mainly use the hand, finger and wrist muscles. This skill is necessary for the correct pencil grip and the manipulation of the writing instrument. Eye-hand coordination is the ability to execute movements with the hands that are led by the eyes. Visual foreground and background discrimination refers to the ability to see an object against a background and to distinguish the important objects from the unimportant. Visual memory helps the learners to remember how to form letters. Body orientation includes concepts such as body image, laterality awareness of direction and lateral dominance. It is important that learners become aware of their bodies and what bodies are capable of doing.

This prompted me to see how an emergent literacy profile for the learners with FASD in a Grade One classroom will manifest.

Wortham (2010:343) explains that children need extensive reading experiences to master the reading and writing process. He further emphasises that children need a balance between narrative and expository reading. Crosser (2007:15) adds to this by emphasising that when children grow up in a nurturing environment where parents and teachers read to them regularly and use good quality literature to teach reading, they gain skills that will serve them for a lifetime. In the light of this, I need to investigate the factors that influence emergent literature.

### **2.5.2 What are the factors that influence emergent literacy?**

South Africa is still endeavouring to access early childhood development to make learning accessible to all young learners. Pretorius & Currin (2010) explain that milieu deprived neighbourhoods are often neglected and unattractive residential environments, characterised by poverty, overcrowded households, crime, violence, alcoholism, drug abuse and low social, cultural and economic standards.

Browne (1996:189) reiterates that before embarking on teaching, there are factors that influence emergent literacy. The following factors are often cited as contributing to failure at learning to read: Physical factors often lead to visual impairments, such as hearing problems, language delay or disorder or ill health resulting in prolonged or frequent absence from school. Environmental factors manifest in high adult expectations and pressure as well as absence of books at home, and unfavourable home circumstances. Personal characteristics that are evident are anxiety, lack of motivation, short attention span and poor self-image. The above-mentioned author points out that difficulties at home result in emotional trauma, such as those accompanying a separation or bereavement.

Pretorius (2000:365) explains that family factors that have a huge impact on emergent literacy are: Family conflicts in a vulnerable nuclear family often characterised by very high conflicts. The members of the family depend on one another and the relationships are intense, intimate and emotional (See 2.2). Conflict and disturbed relationships in the family develop to interpersonal aggression and conflicts. Stress is one of the



factors that works negatively on relationships of parents due to job problems, financial needs or large families. Evidence of any form of abuse implies an important dysfunction in parenthood. The abusive parent acts aggressively towards the child, because he/she feels frustrated.

The Department of Education (DOE) (2001) points out that it is very important to identify certain factors that may influence the learners' education. According to the Department, these factors must be identified and addressed before the situation becomes irreparable. Rossi and Stuart (2007), cited from Davin (2013:92), emphasise that many learners in the reception year are at a disadvantage when they enter school, because their developed skills and attitudes expected of learners in the first grade are not properly developed due to their circumstances. The DOE (2001:4) stresses that all learners come to school with their own characteristics and identities that will have an influence on their academic progression. They further state that all learners have the ability to learn and that all learners will reach a stage where they will need some kind of support. It is therefore essential for me as Foundation Phase teacher, to investigate the socio-economic elements that may contribute to barriers in the families of learners with FASD that contribute to the possible emergent literacy problems?

Children need to be able to focus their attention on their teacher, complete tasks in the context of many distractions, and inhibit impulsive thinking and behavior. They also need to remember instructions and be able to complete tasks without forgetting critical information. In order for learners to perform complex cognitive operations such as reading, they need both short-term and working memory. Research has demonstrated that several different facets of memory predict academic skills (Raghubar, Barnes & Hecht, 2010; Savage, Lavers, & Pillay, 2007).

Perception refers to the process of taking in, organizing, and interpreting sensory information. Perception is multimodal, with multiple sensory inputs contributing to motor responses (Fahle, 2010). Sekuler and Blake (2002: 15) are of the opinion that perception involves a sequence of interrelated events that mutually influence each other. Whilst Dednam (2011: 390) emphasises that visual, auditory and tactual-kinaesthetic perceptions are the most crucial perceptions that enable adequate scholastic performance.

Wildschut (2015) highlights that Visual Processing is the mind's ability to interpret or give meaning to what is seen with the eyes (WCED, 2007). She further mentions that Visual processing skills (VPS) must be learned by all sighted children prior to learning to reading. It is not enough for the eyes to send the correct images produced by the retina at the back of the eye, to the brain. The brain must make sense of those images. For example, the retina sends an inverted picture of an apple to the brain, and the child knows what it is. But when that child sees the word 'apple", then the retina will send the image of the word as code which has to be correctly decoded to give meaning, to represent an apple. The mind must receive visual training in a range of VPS to learn how to decode words and phrases. All the visual aspects of the words, such as their overall shape and the patterned sequence of their letters need to be correctly perceived, and connected to what the mind has previously processed, in order to produce meaning. Individual VPS work in unison and the following visual processing skills enable learners to master their schoolwork: visual discrimination, form consistency, visual closure, visual analysis and synthesis, visual sequence, spatial orientation, visual figure-ground perception and visual memory (WCED & CAMI Education, 2009).

Auditory perception can be defined simply as "what the brain does with what the ear hears" (Florida Department of Education, 2001: 2). As sound travels through the ear it causes structures inside the ear to vibrate. These vibrations are then changed into electrical energy. The electrical energy travels through nerves in the central auditory nervous system to the brain. In the central auditory nervous system sound is interpreted, recognised and processed; this is called Central Auditory Processing (La Trobe University, 2010). Auditory processing involves the interpretation and analysis of what you hear and includes the process of meaning-making to information received aurally.

Efficient auditory processing results in a number of auditory abilities that are vital in the listening and communication process, these include: auditory discrimination, auditory analysis, (segmentation), and synthesis, (blending), auditory memory, auditory figure-ground, auditory closure, and phonological awareness. Auditory processing disorder (APD) is the inability or reduced ability to discriminate, recognize or understand auditory information. APD adversely affects listening, comprehension,

language and learning (Florida Department of Education, 2001). To learn one needs to listen to, attend to, and identify the important auditory signals over all other competing noises at school and at home.

Motor development can be defined as the gradual acquisition of control and/or use of the large and small muscle masses of the body, (neuromuscular coordination). Motor development is also often referred to as “perceptual-motor development” and/or “physical or motor coordination”, in part because both the brain/nervous system and the muscles interact in intricate ways to allow the child to move the body skilfully in manipulating objects and exploring the physical world around him/her (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

According to Gallahue and Ozman (2006), perceptual and motor development is interrelated as all voluntary movement involves an element of perceptual awareness resulting from sensory stimulation while perceptual skills are influenced in part by movement. The above mentioned researchers define perception as “to know” or “to interpret” information and the process whereby incoming information is organised together with stored information. They describe perceptual-motor development as the assimilation of more skills and functional abilities by making use of sensory input, sensory integration, motor interpretation, movement activation and feedback. Gabbard (1998) indicates that good perceptual-motor development contributes to school readiness skills such as listening skills, reading skills, writing and language skills and self-confidence, which are required by the child when they enter the formal school system. According to Fredericks, Kokot and Krog (2006) movement is essential to learning and can be regarded as the door to learning. Whilst Van Zyl (2004) is of the opinion that basic learning skills are associated with normal educational development in mathematics, reading and writing is also related to perceptual-motor processes.

### **2.5.3 Emergent literacy in low socio-economic context**

Landsberg, Krüger and Swart (2013:30) state that poverty in South Africa manifests in unfavourable factors such as ill health, undernourishment, a deprivation of privileges, backlogs in education, unsupportive environments, (informal settlements and squatter camps), and communication and language deficiencies. According to the aforementioned authors, these adverse conditions are created by factors such as

inadequate education, low wages, over-population, conflicts, violence, crime, substance abuse and psychological degradation.

Prinsloo (2002), as cited in Van Wyk and Lemmer (2002:65), Marais (2005:103) and Khanya (2008), emphasise that the lifestyle of poor families in South Africa shows visible signs of the demoralizing influences of the deprivation they suffer. They also state that it resulted in a negative academic self-concept, an accumulated scholastic backlog, creativity that is alien to the school situation, social awkwardness and discomfort in the school situation. These factors, according to my experience in the education system, contribute to failure in school and in early school-leaving and resultant joblessness.

Massetti (2009:556) stresses that children from low income backgrounds do not receive exposure to literacy enhancing activities in the home setting. She further points out that children reared in poverty circumstances represent an important challenge to our understanding of literacy acquisition. Administration for Children, Youth and Families (2003), cited from Massetti, explain that children from low income families are at a distinct disadvantage with regard to language ability, phonological sensitivity and knowledge of print.

As a teacher in Grade One, it is evident that learners' background plays a vital role in their scholastic performance and the high unemployment and other contributing factors and influences in the emergent literacy in the early years of the child. The DOE (2014) highlighted that learners from poor communities may experience emotional stress, express a lack of attention, have poor memory skills and poor concentration.

People living in poverty are vulnerable, powerless and isolated. Malnutrition, an opportunity deprived existence, overpopulation, disadvantageous surroundings, conflict, violence, crime, substance abuse, and psychological degradation threatens the sound early development of most South African children and reinforces an ever-increasing cycle of deprivation (Prinsloo 2002:65). These poor socio-economic conditions often imply lack of early stimulation that compromises children's cognitive development and later school performance (Statistics South Africa, 2013:14). Poor and vulnerable families have very little or no money for books or even newspapers (Mulgrew 2012), and have little or no time to read.

The acquisition of literacy is entrenched within the family and how emergent literacy is supported by having adults creating opportunities to engage in reading and writing activities and modelling reading and writing behaviours in the preschool years (Pretorius & Machet, 2008:262,263). They further highlight that:

*“Many children who come from disadvantaged environments are at a major disadvantage when they start school, as they have never encountered a book before and have no knowledge of how books work”.*

For many children from disadvantaged communities their early literacy experiences are only likely to occur in the context of child-care centres or formal schooling (Pretorius & Machet, 2008:286).

## **2.6 PARENT-CHILD ACTIVITIES THAT SUPPORT READING ACQUISITION**

Early reading acquisition is strongly related to young children’s phonological sensitivity (Wendy, 2007). In addition, it has been claimed that children’s knowledge of the alphabet at the beginning of formal schooling is one of the best predictors of school reading achievement (Adams, 1990). Wendy (2007), found that children’s increased knowledge of phonological sensitivity was related to parental involvement in literacy activities in the home, such as the frequency of parents reading for pleasure. It has also been claimed that young children learn these skills, (i.e., letters of the alphabet, phonemic awareness), by observing and participating in different print literacy activities that are an important part of their own communities (Purcell-Gates, 2004). The frequency of children’s experiences with genres of literacy in their environment, such as shared book reading or parents reading newspapers in the child’s presence, as well as oral language use, (mealtime conversations, true story telling), related to children’s language and literacy development in the early grades (Leseman & Van Tuijl, 2006). This suggests the importance of these early experiences for children’s school literacy achievement.

Hannon and Bird (2004:30) identified four key roles for parents whereby they can provide opportunities, recognition, interaction and a model of emergent literacy namely:

- Parents provide opportunities for literacy: giving children pens and paper, joining the library, making a space in the home where literacy can take place, placing books and writing equipment in an accessible place.
- They can show recognition of the child's achievements: displaying some writing, discussing with the child what they have achieved, e.g. "Well done, you found all those letters yourself.", and praise them.
- Parents can share times of interaction with the child in literacy activities: reading a book together, playing an alphabet puzzle, writing a letter.
- Parents can provide a model of a user of literacy in everyday life: reading a recipe, writing a shopping list etc.

## **2.7 WHAT IS FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER (FASD)?**

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996, the Bill of Rights, emphasises that everyone has a right to a basic education. It therefore prompted me as an educator to mediate learning in a manner which is sensitive to the diversity of learners, including those with barriers to learning. According to the South African Council of Educators Act 31 of 2000, it is important for me as educator to:

*"Respect the dignity, beliefs and constitutional rights of learners whilst simultaneously acknowledging their uniqueness and individualities".*

For decades, South Africa has endured an epidemic of FASD that requires immediate and decisive public health attention (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Children with prenatal alcohol exposure have also been found to exhibit significant deficits in daily functional skills or adaptive behaviour. This phenomenon is rapidly on the increase in my school community. Richter and Dawes (2008) outlined the prevalent alcohol abuse rates of more than 40 cases per 1000 children in Western Cape and the Northern Cape provinces and more than 20 cases per 1000 children in Gauteng province. These statistics represent some of the highest rates of FASD in the world. The Department of Health Provincial Administration (2000) mentions that FAS affects all races and cultures in South Africa.

In an attempt to define FAS, the following researchers, Kalberg and Buckley (2006), Kodituwakku (2007) and Adnams, *et. al* (2009), conclude that FAS is comprised of three groups. The first group entails a growth deficiency which reflects in the poor growth in length, head circumference and weight which starts in the womb and continues after birth. The second group comprises those with a central nervous system that reflects in learning barriers, poor school performance, short concentration span, poor memory, hyperactive behaviour and poor judgement. The last group includes facial features that reflect in the characteristic features.

Kodituwakku (2007) argues that affected school entrants have poor language ability, problems with fine motor activities and poor hand coordination. He further points out that there is no specific treatment for FASD. These children will require special care all their lives, such as schooling and interventions to help with the coordination and problems with motor activities.

Seaver, Odle and Davidson (2007:15) mention that FAS is the most severe form of a range of FASD, affecting individuals whose mothers consumed alcohol during pregnancy. The above-mentioned authors note that learning and emotional problems are very common in the lives of learners with FASD. Mkosi, London, Adnams, Morojele, McLoughlin and Goldstone (2008:49) are of the opinion that FASD learners are active, distractible, have poor fine motor coordination, attention deficit and a poor short-term memory. Kodituwakku, Kalberg and May (2001:192) point out that most children with FASD fall in the category of mild intellectual disability and remain in the mainstream education in South Africa in spite of the fact that they may have significant disabling behavioural, attentional and executive functioning problems.

For the purpose of this study, I will make use of the term Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). De Beer, Kritzinger & Zsilavec (2010) argue that the term 'spectrum' is currently preferred to 'syndrome', since it is more realistic to describe the condition as a range of disorders that vary from mild to severe, than 'syndrome' which only refers to a collection of co-occurring symptoms; 'spectrum' is therefore more descriptive than 'syndrome'. FASD is an umbrella term describing the range of effects that can occur in an individual whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy.

Kalberg and Buckley (2006:65) agree:

*“The school environment can be very difficult for the children with FASD and schooling may become a negative experience”.*

I echo this as I witness daily how these learners find schooling very challenging due to their intellectual abilities and teachers inability to create learning opportunities for them at the sample school. I experience them as uncooperative, difficult to manage and disruptive in class and because of their small stature they are easy targets for bullying by peers. Against this background, I have become more determined to investigate the emergent literacy profile of FAS as a biological problem that influences the emergent literacy profile of learners with FASD in my classroom.

## **2.8 FASD AS A BIOLOGICAL PROBLEM**

Blackburn, Carpenter and Egerton (2010:139) clearly state that FASD operates as an umbrella term for a set of disorders caused by the consumption of alcohol by a mother while pregnant. They further point out that alcohol is a teratogenic compound, (a substance that interferes with the normal development of the embryo or foetus), which crosses the placenta. Kalberg and Buckley (2006:58) maintain that learners with FAS have physical abnormalities, growth retardation and central nervous system damage. It is very evident that these learners, according to the above-mentioned authors, suffered teratogenic damage as a result of maternal alcohol ingestion during the gestational period. They further point out that the developmental outcome of children exposed to alcohol prenatally is dependent on a wide range of factors including the quantity and timing of alcohol exposure, maternal age as well as the nutritional status of a mother.

According to Cone-Wesson (2004:281), fetal alcohol exposure is one of the leading causes of mental retardation. She further points out that parental alcohol use before, during and after pregnancy is also associated with stressors, such as economic instability, physical and emotional neglect, and an increase in family violence and abuse. Carpenter (2011:37) adds that alcohol exposure can also cause a range of alcohol related birth defects and neurodevelopmental disorders. De Beer, Kritzinger & Zsilavec (2010) are of the opinion that since FAS was first described in 1973, it has become evident that it is complex; affected people display a wide range of expression,



from severe growth restriction, intellectual disability, birth defects and characteristic dysmorphic facial features to normal growth, facial features and intellectual abilities, but with lifelong deficits in several domains of brain function.

## **2.9 DIAGNOSIS OF FASD**

An early diagnosis is critical to allow access to interventions and resources that may alleviate the development of subsequent “secondary disabilities”, (e.g., unemployment, disrupted school experience, etc). Additionally, it will allow appropriate intervention, counselling and treatment for the mother and may prevent the birth of affected children in the future. It may also prompt caregivers such as the extended families to seek diagnosis and support for previously undiagnosed siblings.

This school within which the setting of this research took place is identified as a Full-service / Inclusive School (DBE, 2010). It is a mainstream educational institution that provides quality education to all learners by supplying the full range of learning needs in an equitable manner. FASD requires a medical diagnosis in the context of a multidisciplinary assessment. Learners in my classroom who have been identified as learners with FASD by a multidisciplinary team, (consisted of a medical doctor, clinical psychologist, social worker and occupational therapist), are inattentive and have short term memory problems. The sample for this study was diagnosed on the basis of the following criteria:

**Table 2.1: Diagnostic criteria**

Diagnostic terminology	Diagnostic characteristics	Description
a) Fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) (all 4 diagnostic characteristics required for diagnosis)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prenatal and/or postnatal growth deficiency</li> <li>• Central nervous system (CNS) impairment</li> <li>• Cluster of craniofacial dysmorphology</li> <li>• Confirmed prenatal alcohol exposure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Height or weight less than the 10th percentile for gestational age at birth or later in life</li> <li>• Evidence of structural, functional or neurological brain impairment</li> </ul>
b) Partial fetal alcohol syndrome (PFAS) (only 3 diagnostic characteristics required for diagnosis)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth deficiency</li> <li>• Cluster of craniofacial dysmorphology</li> <li>• CNS impairment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small palpebral fissures (eye slits), thin upper lip, smooth philtrum</li> </ul>
c) Alcohol-related neurodevelopmental disorder (ARND) (only 2 diagnostic characteristics required for diagnosis)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CNS impairment</li> <li>• Confirmed prenatal alcohol exposure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reliable evidence of maternal alcohol consumption. If evidence not obtained, it is not deemed necessary if the cluster of facial features is fully present</li> </ul>

**Source: Carmichael Olson, Jirikowic, Kartin & Astley, 2007.**

## **2.10 HOW FASD IMPACTS ON LEARNING**

Children affected by FASD will present a unique set of learning needs that is dependent on the nature and extent of damage caused to the brain for that individual (Carpenter, 2011:139). The afore-mentioned author mentions a few challenges that have a huge impact on learning: Learners with FASD experience Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) that has an influence on their attention ability. They also have a problem with their listening skills and cannot concentrate or focus on the lesson or task. These learners have erratic mood swings. They also have poor memory skills that are caused by their brain damage. Learners with FASD also have a lack of social skills and experience auditory/vocal processing and decoding of words in addition to having problems with visual sequencing. They experience sensory

integration difficulties, (particularly lack of coordination), and have a poor retention of task instruction and experience mathematical difficulties.

Mkosi *et al.* (2008:54) point out that due to their poor scholastic performance and other contributing factors, including their family and social environments, many children drop out of school. Zieff and Schwartz-Bloom (2008:46) emphasize that memory difficulties are very common with learners with FASD. They are often unable to retrieve specific information when needed. The above-mentioned authors state that learners with FASD have learning difficulties and memory deficits which cause them to learn one day, but forget the next day. Kalberg and Buckley (2006:61) point out that learners with FASD experience executive functioning difficulties. The above-mentioned authors further explain that deficits in this area interfere with successful completion of some of the simplest tasks of daily living, academic achievement and problem solving.

“FASD is a devastating developmental disorder that is associated with a wide variety of neurobehavioural deficits in language, motor, learning, and visuospatial functioning.”(Mattson and Riley, 1998:291). However, despite this growing understanding of the breadth of possible impairment in children with FAS, no clear pattern of neurobehavioral deficits has yet been identified. Accordingly, diagnosis is difficult, many children are not appropriately diagnosed and thus any learning problems are often misunderstood due to a failure to understand that learners with FASD emergent literacy challenges stem from organic brain damage.

Pretorius (2000:295) states that the type of upbringing that the child receives in the family co-determines his development. Cone-Wesson (2004:282) stresses that prenatal alcohol exposure can cause structural and functional brain abnormalities that leads to children with FASD demonstrating a delay in language and expressive language acquisition. Browne (1996:185) adds to this by mentioning that poor language implies not only their language deficit, but that their lives are also similarly impoverished. He further points out that their ability to learn is limited due to their social and economic conditions that spill over to the school.

Furthermore, research by Kodituwakku (2007) confirms the evidence of language impairments in learners with FASD, voxel-based morphometry data showed

anomalies in the temporoparietal cortices in the left hemisphere, which are the critical areas for language processing.

## **2.11 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter I reviewed relevant literature related to my research area and to my research questions in particular and developed a framework within which to conduct the investigation. In addition, I presented thoughts, theories and experiences from various researchers in the field of FASD, I discussed assessment and in particular, the ECDE Grade one baseline assessment, literacy and language.

Chapter 3 will focus on research design and methodology.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter describes and justifies the philosophical underpinnings of this study, the theoretical perspectives behind the methodology, and the methods of data collection and analysis. Henning, Van Rensburg and Smith (2004) state that a theoretical framework is a constant process of reflection and consideration of the bigger picture, as well as the structure of the entire research enterprise. The pragmatic approach has been adopted; thus positivism and interpretivism are discussed as distinct paradigms. Quantitative and qualitative methods are interrogated before presenting an argument for using a mixed-methods approach. Thereafter, the research design is discussed, the data generating instruments are described, and the data collection and analysis techniques are explained. Lastly, the validity of the research and the ethical considerations for the research are also considered in this chapter.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGMS**

Denzin and Lincoln (2006) summarize the meaning of paradigm as a set of beliefs that guide action; and specifically in the research context, reflect the researcher's worldview that is composed of four sets of philosophical beliefs: axiology (ethics), epistemology (knowledge), ontology (reality), and methodology (inquiry). Ontological assumptions concern the nature and form of reality and determine what constitutes "legitimate", researchable questions. Epistemological assumptions deal with the nature of knowledge and what counts as knowledge. Methodological assumptions deal with the procedures researchers use to investigate what they believe can be known, and the rationale behind these procedures. Assumptions about the elements are interdependent; that is, assumptions about the nature of reality, (ontological assumptions), are logically related to assumptions about the nature of knowledge, (epistemological assumptions), which are logically related to assumptions about procedures for investigating what can be known, (methodological assumptions). Therefore, each paradigm contains a set of assumptions that are logically related in a unique manner and have practical implications for the conduct, interpretation and utilisation of research (Schnelker, 2006:44). For the purpose of this study the term

paradigm is defined as “shared beliefs among members of a speciality area” (Morgan, 2007, p. 53). He goes on to say that: “Without nominating a paradigm as the first step, there is no basis for subsequent choices regarding literature, methodology, methods, or research design”.

As described above, paradigms refer to a worldview that guides decision making, encompassing one’s views on the nature of reality and of knowledge, its origins and foundations. Greene (2007) viewed paradigms as primarily philosophical, however, Bliss (2008) argued that paradigms include a researcher’s practical experiences and subjective predispositions. Despite the difference, both authors agree that paradigms dictate a comprehensive worldview that guides decision-making.

For the purpose of this study a number of theoretical paradigms are discussed in the literature, namely, positivist, interpretivist and pragmatic. The use of different terms in different texts, and the varied claims regarding how many research paradigms there are, might lead to confusion (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). However, in this study no one paradigm was used exclusively. Subsequently, a mixed-method approach was used which incorporated the quantitative dimension of positivism and the qualitative dimension of interpretivism. The positivism and interpretivism are discussed as separate and distinct paradigms before explaining the pragmatic positioning of this study.

### **3.2.1 Positivist Paradigm**

In principle, empiricism or positivism uses traditional scientific methods in an endeavour to establish “the truth” about human behaviour. Underlying this method is an assumption that “the truth” is out there just waiting to be proven or discovered. This “truth” is also referred to as knowledge. Sullivan, (2001:47) reiterates this argument when they hold that empiricists are of the opinion that the world exists independently of people’s perceptions of it and that new discoveries are made through objective scientific techniques. The researcher is of the opinion that human beings can be studied in terms of behaviour that can be observed and recorded using objective scientific techniques. Positivist philosophy suffers from several limitations, especially when applied to social sciences. Firstly, this approach, based on the inductive statistical method, generalises a universal statement of truth from the observation of

a certain number of positive instances. The strict inductionist approach is often inappropriate, because speculation and creation of a priori hypothesis is essential for a systematic procedure of theory building (Robson, 2002). Secondly, the empiricist approach is based on the notion of pure observation, which is impossible in research, especially in social sciences, since observations are always subject to measurement errors (Kaplan, 2004). Finally, this approach assumes that knowledge is derived from an objective interpretation of assumptions, without any of the subjective biases or a priori knowledge of the scientist coming into play. Thus, the empirical approach emphasises rigour and holds that all sciences must imitate the methods that have led to progress in the mathematical and natural sciences.

The positivist approach has very little bearing on what is going on in schools within the South African context in general and within my classroom specifically. The positivist paradigm requires strict discipline and procedures to satisfy academic expectations with little relevance to emergent literacy profile of learners and in particular, learners with FASD. Positivistic science has its place and purpose pertaining to objectivity, generality, replication of research and falsification of competing hypotheses and theories.

### **3.2.2 Interpretivist Paradigm**

Sullivan (2001:48-49) states that interpretive approaches view social reality as having a subjective component. They also see social reality as an occurrence arising from social interaction. Interpretivists argue that the objective, quantitative approaches of empiricism tend to ignore the very natural, subjective and personal human experience that individuals attach to themselves and their actions. Empiricists also see reality as an emergent component flowing out of the creation and exchange of social meanings through social interactions (Neuman, 2006:75). Interpretivists, on the other hand, do not see reality as separate from human perceptions; they see it as created out of human perception and the interpretation of meaning. Kock (2011) claims that interpretivist researchers should attempt to understand “the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it”. Creswell (2003) agrees with Schwandt and states, “the researcher tends to rely upon the participants’ views of the situation being studied and recognises the impact on the research of their own background and experiences”.

As Vine (2009) states, “A perspective has the power to make sense out of the rawness of experienced life, even though it cannot be „proven“ or absolutely established”. In this school of thought there is no ultimate truth; post-modernism embraces a more interpretive approach to knowledge. In this approach there is no right or wrong, but an acceptance that there are multiple representations of truth. This then leaves space for questioning and personal preference to surface. In this process, a space is created in which all stories are valid and there is a shift in focus from asking, “What is truth?” to asking “Whose truth?” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007:31). Any study then that hopes to create a platform for participants voices and experiences to be honoured, needs to “respect the ways in which participants construct their knowledge of the world they live in, the way in which they see „truth“ and how their social processes of language sustain this knowledge” (Vine, 2009).

The strengths of interpretive research include a strong understanding of context, rich detail, and flexibility to address emerging issues. Interpretive research is commonly considered to be well suited for exploratory research, especially uncovering the “how” and “why” of phenomenon. Mertens (2004) is of the opinion that the researcher and the researched are interlocked in an interactive process, with each influencing the other. The researcher is a passionate participant who interacts with the respondents to construct the outcome. The interpretivist therefore opts for a more personal, interactive mode of data collection (Mertens, 2004). Krauss (2005) suggests that the interpretivist will most likely rely on qualitative data collection methods and analysis, or a combination of both quantitative and qualitative data, (mixed-methods). Quantitative data is usually utilised in a way that supports or expands upon qualitative data and effectively deepens the description (Creswell, 2003). However, in this study a mixed-method approach was adopted wherein the qualitative data supports, expands on and explains the quantitative data.

### **3.3 MIXED METHOD APPROACH**

It is important that our social research methodologies be sensitive to communities that may be marginalized. Such sensitivity is especially found within qualitative research in which the politics of inquiry, the emphasis on values, and the goal of social justice holds center stage (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). As new methodologies surface in social research, embracing these ideals can help to shape a more equitable society in South



Africa. One new methodology that has become increasingly visible and used by social scientists is mixed methods research (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). It is new in the sense that in the past 20 years writers have viewed it as a stand-alone research methodology shaped by distinct research designs for procedures, a nomenclature to describe it, and visual models to present the complexities of the designs (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Mixed methods research can be defined as the collection, analysis, and integration of quantitative and qualitative data in a single study of inquiry (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

Philosophically, the mixed-method approach makes use of the transformative paradigm (Mertens, 2010). The mixed-method approach, which emerged in the last two decades, (1990s onwards), as a research movement with a recognized name and distinct identity (Denscombe, 2008), is advocated by writers such as Creswell, Plano Clark, Greene, Tashakkori, Teddlie, Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Morgan. It has now evolved to the point where it is “increasingly articulated, attached to research practice, and recognized as the third major research approach or research paradigm, along with qualitative research and quantitative research” (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, 2007, 112).

It may be defined as “the collection or analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study in which the data are collected in a sequential model for this study (Creswell, Hanson, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, & Morales-Escoto, 2007, 212). Using both forms of data, for example, allows researchers to simultaneously generalize results from a sample to a population and to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of interest which is the emergent profile of learners with FASD.

Mixed-method work originates across many disciplines which include information systems (Petter and Gallivan, 2004), education (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) etc. The common themes among these scholars are that the mixed-method approach incorporates a distinct set of ideas and practices that separates it from the traditional qualitative and quantitative approaches (Denscombe, 2008). The above-mentioned writers have offered defining characteristics of the mixed-methods approach, which involve the use of:

- quantitative and qualitative methods within the same research project,

- a research design that clearly specifies the sequencing and priority that is given to the quantitative and qualitative elements of data collection and analysis,
- an explicit account of the manner in which the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the research relate to each other, with heightened emphasis on the manner in which triangulation is used (Denscombe 2008, p. 272).

Mixed-method researchers' postulate that the majority of research questions generally cross transformative paradigms and cannot be adequately addressed using exclusively the positivist or interpretivist paradigms (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Du Plessis and Majam (2010) elucidate that a mixed-method approach is similar to including a quantitative mini-study and a qualitative mini-study in one overall research study. Creswell (2003) expounds that a mixed-method approach is one that involves both numeric information, (e.g. tests), as well as text information, (e.g. interviews), so that the final database represents both quantitative and qualitative information.

In this study the quantitative initial baseline assessment (February 2015), from Group One provided the researcher with baseline information against which the researcher can measure the emergent literacy profile of learners with FASD against the qualitative data generated from Group Two participants' interviews to increase the validity and trustworthiness of the research results. The use of a mixed-method assisted in providing a clearer understanding of the data generated (Creswell, 2003). The mixed-method approach can therefore be seen as an expansive and creative form of research, and not a limiting form of research (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

### **3.3.1 Rationale for using a mixed-method approach**

A number of factors have contributed to the evolution of mixed methods research. The complexity of this research problem: the emergent literacy profiles of learners with FASD in a Grade One classroom, calls for answers beyond simple numbers in a quantitative sense or words in a qualitative sense. A combination of both forms of data can provide the most complete analysis of the problem. Researchers can situate numbers in the contexts and words of participants, and they can frame the words of participants with numbers, trends, and statistical results. Both forms of data are necessary today and for this study in particular. In addition, qualitative research has

evolved to a point where writers consider it a legitimate form of inquiry in the social and human sciences, (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Denscombe (2008: 272) amalgamates five main rationales why researchers use mixed methods:

- to improve the accuracy of their data,
- to produce a more complete picture by combining information from complementary kinds of data or sources,
- as a means of avoiding biases intrinsic to single-method approaches – as a way of compensating specific strengths and weaknesses associated with particular methods,
- as a way of developing the analysis and building on initial findings using contrasting kinds of data or methods,
- as an aid to sampling with, for example, questionnaires being used to screen potential participants for inclusion in an interview program.

Feilzer, (2010) emphasises that an advantage of using this method is that it is oriented toward solving practical problems in the “real world” rather than on assumptions about the nature of knowledge. Furthermore, a mixed method approach can also manage a broader and more complete range of research questions because the researcher is not confined to a single research approach or method. The use of a mixed method can also provide stronger evidence for a conclusion through convergence and validation of findings. By combining qualitative and quantitative approaches, or triangulating, the researcher's claim for validity of his or her conclusions are enhanced if they could be shown to provide mutual confirmation (Bryman 2004). Mixed methods can also add insights and understanding that might be missed when only a single method is used (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004) and a combination of methods could also increase the ability to generalise the results compared to a qualitative study (Bryman 2004). Qualitative and quantitative approaches used together produce more complete knowledge necessary to inform theory and practice (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

However, there are also barriers or challenges to using mixed method research. One barrier to the mixing of methods is that the researcher has to learn about multiple methods and their internal logic in order to mix them accordantly, defend the use of them and also be able to use them in a professional manner. It is often more simple to focus on a single method or approach. Another weakness highlighted by both Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004) and Bryman (2004) is that methodological purists argue that a researcher should always work within either a qualitative or a quantitative paradigm and not mix the two. However, qualitative and quantitative research approaches complement this study because they support each other either as a sequential process (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

I chose a mixed method research design because it allowed me to conduct a case study whereby I implemented and adjusted the ECDE Grade One Literacy Baseline Assessment Programme (2009), supported by Olivier (2009), Hodgskiss (2007), (Willenburg (2004), drawings and interviews. This process enabled me to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. A case study is an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context. It also enabled the researcher to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life situations (Yin, 2009:2). McMillan and Schumacher (2006: 316 – 317) state that the data analysis in a case study design focuses on one phenomenon that was selected by the researcher, to get an in depth understanding, regardless of the number of sites or participants. They also mention that the processes of purposive sampling, data collection and partial data analyses are intertwined rather than sequential in a case study design. In line with case study design, I used multiple methods of data collection: Baseline Assessment of learners with FASD (Group One participants), interviews and drawings with and of mothers of learners with FASD (Group Two participants).

### **3.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In this section, the study aims to orientate the reader on the research methods which were followed in order to arrive at the findings. This section will elaborate on what was done, to whom it was done, and how it was done during the investigation. According to Schwandt (2007:133), methodology is the theory of how an inquiry should proceed. It involves an analysis of assumptions, principles and procedures in a particular approach to inquiry, (which in turn governs the use of particular methods). In addition,

Ritchie (2003:34) maintains that the use of mixed methods will be heavily influenced by the aims of the research and the specific questions that need to be answered.

Likewise, De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, & Delport, (2014:120) summarise research methodology as including “information on the population and the sample of the study, giving a description of the specific techniques to be employed, the specific measuring instruments to be utilized and the specific series of activities to be conducted in making measurements and a discussion on validity and reliability, whilst also detailing the ethical considerations employed during the investigation”.

### **3.4.1 Research Setting**

The term setting can be used synonymously with site selection. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 397), “a site is selected to locate people involved in a particular event”. The criteria for site selection are essential and related to answering the research question. As this study aimed at determining the emergent literacy profile of learners with FASD, one school in the Uitenhage District Office was selected as a population, (see Chapter 2.9). The researcher’s actual classroom setting was selected for the purpose of accessibility, simplicity, unobtrusiveness and as gaining permission is easier.

### **3.4.2 Population**

Welman, Kruger & Mitchell (2005) state that the population of the study consists of individuals, groups, organisations, human products and events, or the conditions to which they are exposed. A research problem therefore relates to a specific population and the population encompasses the total collection of all units of analysis about which the researcher wishes to make specific conclusions. On the other hand, Sapsford and Jupp (2006:27) claim that the first step in sampling is to define the population of interest clearly and accurately. They define a population as the total collection of elements actually available for sampling. A useful discipline for the researcher is to bear firmly in mind precisely which elements are available in the intended population and which are not, and to use this information to limit the extent of the claims he/she makes about the generalisation of the results.

In this study, the target population comprised of a primary school in the Uitenhage District of the DBE in the Eastern Cape Province. This is due to the fact that I am employed by the Uitenhage District of the DBE, and chose to work with the school at which I teach.

### **3.4.3 Sample**

In this section I discuss the participants for this study and how they were selected. I also justify the participant selection methods used.

Gibson and Brown (2009: 56) define sampling as “the points of data collection or cases to be included within a research project.” Whilst Bloomberg and Volpe (2012: 69) explain that when using qualitative research, there are certain specific criteria employed in selecting individuals, procedures and methods.

Creswell (2009: 178), Marshall and Rossman (2011: 107) and Maxwell (2013: 94) highlight the correlation between mixed method research and purposeful sampling. They explain that the selection of the participants should be to aid the understanding of and insight into the phenomenon. Several authors argue that the participants should have a wealth of information and an interest in the research phenomenon (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012: 80; Henning, 2004: 71; Patton, 2002: 169; Struwig and Stead, 2010:122). Other authors argue that all individuals who are chosen should be pertinent to the research study (Gibson and Brown, 2009: 56).

To conduct this inquiry, the researcher selected two groups of participants: Group One and Group Two using purposeful sampling.

#### **Selection of Participants**

It is impossible for an entire population to be included in a study (Maree & Pietersen, 2007: 172) and for this reason researchers make use of sampling. Sampling is when a few people of a population are selected to be representative of the entire population (Maree & Pietersen, 2007: 172). There are various ways to select a sample for a study (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 79), and for this study purposeful sampling was considered the most suitable method. When using purposeful sampling, the researcher selects participants because they hold the necessary knowledge for the researcher to gather

suitable and rich data (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 79). The researcher has to establish criteria according to which the participants are selected to result in the collection of accurate, appropriate, and meaningful data (Maree & Pietersen, 2007: 178).

For this study, the following criteria had to be met in order for a member of the community to be a suitable participant to the study:

- The participants had to be a Grade One Foundation Phase classroom.
- The participants with FASD had to be diagnosed by a multidisciplinary team
- The participants had to be at a public school in a specific town in the Eastern Cape Province.
- The participants had to be in a particular registered classroom of the researcher. The reasons for these criteria were that participants would already have established relationships of trust, and that it was convenient.

When choosing the participants, I also took the following aspects into consideration:

- **The location of the school:** The school I chose was the school at which I as the researcher teach for convenience and practicality of the research study.
- **Time and availability of the biological mothers:** The meetings were held at times suitable to the mothers and our meetings took place at the school, avoiding transportation problems.

For this study the researcher used two groups of participants:

Group One – Consisted of forty four learners from a registered Grade One classroom. Permission was granted by forty parents for the learners to form part of this study. Eight learners were diagnosed as FASD however by a multidisciplinary team (See Table 3.1), only four parents gave permission for their children to form part of this study (See the column below: Names used are according to numbers as per learners on the class list for the participants. They have been selected on the basis that they are all in the same Grade One classroom and are identified with FASD.)

Participants range between the ages of 6 and 8 years, three boys and one girl. All of them come from the same ethnic, socio-economic, language, and educational background. These learners have been diagnosed as FASD by a multidisciplinary team (See Chapter 1.1). The socio-economic milieu of the learners places them at a disadvantage in that many of them come from single parent households.

**Group Two Participants:**

The four mothers of the four learner participants formed an integral part of the study. They will be the participants for research questions 2 and 3.

**Table 3.1 Participants’ Information**

Name	Number of Siblings	Mother’s pseudonym	Family construction	Employment Status	Age	Highest level of Schooling Completed by Parent
Learner 5	1	Sara	Both parents	Unemployed	25	Gr 10
Learner 13	2	Maria	Single parent	Unemployed	21	Gr 6
Learner 15	2	Nieta	Single parent	Unemployed	21	Gr 5
Learner 24	2	Susan	Single parent	Unemployed	22	Gr 6

**3.5 DATA COLLECTION METHODS**

The researcher decided on the most appropriate instruments for data collection which enable her to gather useful and usable data (Gibson & Brown, 2009). Quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments differ from each other. However, the mixed-method research approach enables the data collected by quantitative and qualitative research instruments to be compared and contrasted (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Creswell (2009:178), mentions that data collection steps include setting the boundaries for the study, collecting information through unstructured or semi-structured observations and interviews, documents and visual materials, as well as



establishing the protocol for recording information. In addition, Bogdan and Knopp-Biklen (2007:35) argue that “methods” is a term that refers to the specific techniques employed by a researcher, such as baseline assessment, interviews, and drawings – the more technical aspects of the research. They further claim that in good research, methods are consistent with the logic embedded in the methodology of the particular study.

### **3.5.1 Baseline Assessment as part of the quantitative data collection**

The South African Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) upholds Resolution No. 7 of 1998 to emphasise the duties and responsibilities of all teachers. The Resolution states that all teachers are responsible for many different practices in the school, including assessment. Brookhart (2013:105) asserts that Baseline Assessment is essential in determining the knowledge and skills which the learners already possess. He further proposes that Baseline Assessment give an indication of the learner’s potential and interest and also gives direction as to which interventions and plans can be made.

Gotch & French (2014:17) claim that Baseline Assessment takes place before learning commences. They further add that Baseline Assessment is used to determine what learners know and can do. It also informs the teacher where to start the teaching and learning process. McMillan (2011:29) purports that the knowledge the learners already have and understand plays a very significant role as to whether or how well they can learn something new. He further declares that the background knowledge and personal experience can be used as existing knowledge or as a foundation for new learning.

The researcher made use of Baseline Assessment to assess the forty four learners in the class including the four with FASD for whom permission was given to form part of this study. All the learners are from the same socio-economic background as a starting point to commence the teaching and learning process. The Baseline Assessment suggested learners’ prior knowledge which gave me a clear indication of the developmental process of early literacy of learners with FASD within a Grade One classroom.

The Emergent Literacy Assessment Battery (Eastern Cape Department of Education, (ECDE), 2009), that was used for this study focused on the multiple components of comprehensive instruction, (i.e., phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, as well as writing and emergent literacy), and identifies research based practices that address and support learning in each of these areas for learners. This battery was supported by the original version (ECDE, 2009) whereby, as a school, we developed our own assessment activities and used our own baseline assessment programme which was relevant to our context. The ECDE Grade One baseline assessment programme (ECDE, 2009) is a written document which consists of the following sections: an introduction, Section A (recording sheets), Section B (exemplar work schedules for the baseline assessment programme), and Section C (Lesson Plans: Days 1 to 10) – only section A forms part of this study.

Table 3.2: Baseline Assessment recording sheet with learners' number as substitute for learner names and admission numbers

Van & Naam	DEPARTMENT VAN ONDERWYS: PORT ELIZABETH DISTRIK AFRIKAANS HUISTAAL FORMELE ASSESSERING RECORDING SHEET GRAAD 1: KWARTAAL 1										Finale Viak					
	Luister en praat			Klanke		Lees				Handskrif			Skryf			
	Prat oor persoonlike ervaring, byvoorbeeld, wêreld, reis, sport, ens.	Daar gegelies en sprake voor en voor die vertal.	Plaas praat in 'n egte konteks en funksioneel deur die leses in volgende oortel.	Bestryf voorwerp as gelang van leure, woorde, ens.	Finale Viak	Identifiseer die letter, klank, woorde van sonante, vokale, konsonante, s, l, j, m, n, p, t, k, g, v, w, z, x, y, h, b, c, d, f, g, k, l, m, n, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, v, w, x, y, z.	Waar moet 'n klank 2 vokale en 3 vokale kom?	Waar kom 'n klank 2 vokale en 3 vokale kom?	Waar kom 'n klank 2 vokale en 3 vokale kom?	Waar kom 'n klank 2 vokale en 3 vokale kom?	Waar kom 'n klank 2 vokale en 3 vokale kom?	Waar kom 'n klank 2 vokale en 3 vokale kom?	Waar kom 'n klank 2 vokale en 3 vokale kom?	Waar kom 'n klank 2 vokale en 3 vokale kom?	Waar kom 'n klank 2 vokale en 3 vokale kom?	Finale Viak
Learner 1	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Learner 2	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Learner 3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Learner 4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Learner 5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Learner 6	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Learner 7	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Learner 8	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Learner 9	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Learner 10	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Learner 11	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Learner 12	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Learner 13	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Learner 14	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Learner 15	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Learner 16	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4



**DEPARTMENT VAN ONDERWYS: PORT ELIZABETH DISTRIK**  
**AFRIKAANS HUISTAAL**  
**FORMELE ASSESSERING RECORDING SHEET**  
**GRAAD 1: KWARTAAL 1**

Van & Naam	Luister en praat				Klank				Lees				Handskrif				Skryf			
	Prat oor persoonlike ervaring, byvoorbeeld vertelrus	Die gedigtes en rympies voor en naer die bewegings uit	Plaas grante in 'n ogse volgordte en herinner deur die riles in volgorde oor te vertel	Deur 'n voorwerp se gefang van haur, groot, vrom en hoeweheld deur die korrekte woordskat te gebruik	leerleer die letter-klank-verbinding van soorte ekeletters by, l, n, h, m, a, b, k, g	Daar moet ten minste 2 unieke en 5 Norm kort woorde met die klank wat alreeds aangeleer is byvoeg word a-v-1	leerleer die klank-verbinding van soorte ekeletters by, l, n, h, m, a, b, k, g	leerleer die klank-verbinding van soorte ekeletters by, l, n, h, m, a, b, k, g	leerleer die klank-verbinding van soorte ekeletters by, l, n, h, m, a, b, k, g	leerleer die klank-verbinding van soorte ekeletters by, l, n, h, m, a, b, k, g	leerleer die klank-verbinding van soorte ekeletters by, l, n, h, m, a, b, k, g	leerleer die klank-verbinding van soorte ekeletters by, l, n, h, m, a, b, k, g	leerleer die klank-verbinding van soorte ekeletters by, l, n, h, m, a, b, k, g	leerleer die klank-verbinding van soorte ekeletters by, l, n, h, m, a, b, k, g	leerleer die klank-verbinding van soorte ekeletters by, l, n, h, m, a, b, k, g	leerleer die klank-verbinding van soorte ekeletters by, l, n, h, m, a, b, k, g	leerleer die klank-verbinding van soorte ekeletters by, l, n, h, m, a, b, k, g	leerleer die klank-verbinding van soorte ekeletters by, l, n, h, m, a, b, k, g	leerleer die klank-verbinding van soorte ekeletters by, l, n, h, m, a, b, k, g	
Learner 17	4	4	5	5	5	6	5	6	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	
Learner 18	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Learner 19	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Learner 20	3	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Learner 21	5	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Learner 22	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Learner 23	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	
Learner 24	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Learner 25	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	
Learner 26	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Learner 27	7	7	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
Learner 28	6	6	5	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
Learner 29	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Learner 30	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	
Learner 31	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Learner 32	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	



DEPARTMENT VAN ONDERWYS: PORT ELIZABETH DISTRIK  
AFRIKAANS HUISTAAL

FORMELE ASSESSERING RECORDING SHEET

GRAAD 1: KWARTAAL 1

Van & Naam	Luister en praat				Klanke				Lees				Handskrif				Skryf				Finale Viak	
	Prak oor persoonlike omvangs, byvoorbeeld, vertel my	Dra gedigtes en rympleë voor en voor de bouwerge uit	Flas praat in 'n Engelse informele en kennisskryf deur die flase in volgende oore	Vertel	Bestryf voorwep na gang van keur, goed, van en horekeld deur die kortste weerdkele gebruik	Finale Viak	Identifiseer die letter-klank-verhouding van sommige enkelwore by 'n, j, m, n, s, y, z. Daar moet ten minste 2 woorde en 5 vorm kort woorde met die klank wat alreeds sang deur te byvoegkeel moet	Finale Viak	Voorspel die versoon van die rorke na jaalidite van Driete: lees amentekke klank en en besprek die streef/lek wat woordeleste	Les Klank: lees met die onderwyser, woordeleste soos godge, plabak, woordeleste en klankreus wat tydens gedeele erp/wer/ontwikkele	Lees Barop uit die boek bydens Grepbegelede lees saam met die onderwyser	Finale Viak	Oden eerste peodod en byr terre te ranteer	Teken puaone: neetale en ofpke, en sig-sig, sild, getfante, atekle (hoogsal), woordeleste en horekeldite woordeleste	Wore korekte klankreus: toe rantele 2 woorde en 2 korekante woorde korekale in	Skryf na en skryf de naam, kort woorde en klankreus van die byrbood, plabak, en	Finale Viak	Teken puaone om 'n horekeldite oor te dra	Skryf eenvoudige lyskete vir 'n tekering/wer	Skryf 'n sie of nuus korek van die boed/leer		Finale Viak
Learner 33	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Learner 34	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Learner 35	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Learner 36	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Learner 37	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Learner 38	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Learner 39	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Learner 40	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Learner 41	6	5	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Learner 42	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Learner 43	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Learner 44	6	5	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6

As a school, and in particular the Foundation Phase teachers, we collectively decided that we would:

- combine the listening component of the ECDE checklist with the speaking component on the checklist, both components were assessed during the same assessment activities.
- change the terms “reading and viewing” to “emergent reading”
- change the term “writing” to “emergent writing” (Wildschut, 2015)

The process enabled the Foundation Phase schooling programme within this school to ensure consistency with the Grade R CAPS concepts of emergent literacy development (Department of Basic Education, 2011: 31 - 35). Furthermore, to ensure coherence in the assessment procedure we combined the “thinking and reasoning” as well as the “language structure and use” categories of the ECDE checklist with the “listening and speaking” as well as the “emergent reading” categories in the adapted checklist as proposed by Wildschut (2015). The categories have been combined on the premise that “thinking and reasoning” and “language structure and use” categories have been integrated with the listening and speaking, emergent reading and emergent writing categories of the CAPS Home Language Programme (South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2011: 8). Learners’ emergent literacy competence was therefore evaluated in terms of three categories; listening and speaking, emergent reading and emergent writing.

- The listening and speaking category of the baseline assessment, assessed the abilities of the learners to listen attentively to stories for enjoyment, respond to questions, follow instructions, participate in games and songs, match colours, share information and to use language appropriately. The seven activities were conducted in the listening and speaking category of the baseline assessment.
- The emergent reading category assessed the abilities of the learners to recognise words in the environment, interpret pictures, recognise the sound symbols of the alphabet. The learners were involved in six different activities in order to assess their emergent reading skills.

- The emergent writing category assessed their abilities to manipulate their writing tools, use letters to represent writing, directionality, the ability to write on a page, use colour in their drawings and to convey a message about their drawings. Six emergent writing activities were conducted in this category.

The emergent literacy test comprised of four components administered through six sub-tests.

**Table 3.3: Emergent Literacy Assessment Battery Subtests as cited by Willenberg (2004) and Olivier (2009) and adapted to the context.**

	<b>Subtest</b>	<b>Description</b>		
Listening and Speaking	Sounds in words	A phoneme matching task where children are expected to match two (out of three) words that have either the same initial or final phonemes.  Example: cat – ball – mat  Presented to the learners visually.	Phonological Awareness	Mason and Stewart, (1989)
	Rhyme Recognition	Children are expected to identify two (out of three) words that rhyme.  Example: (kat, mat, hond)	Phonological Awareness	Willenberg, (2004)
	Word Recognition	Children are expected to identify two (out of three) words.	Alphabet Knowledge	Willenberg, (2004)

	<b>Subtest</b>	<b>Description</b>		
Emergent reading	Concepts about Print	Concepts such as the front and back of the book, print direction and orientation, and literacy-related terminology such as word, letter or page are assessed.	Concepts about Print	Adapted from Clay (1991)
	Fictional Narrative	The ginger bread boy consists of four coloured pictures that are presented. Children are expected to formulate a narrative based on these pictures.	Oral Language	Snow, Tabors, Nicholson and Kurland, (1995)
Emergent writing	Emergent Writing and Spelling	An adaptation of the Primary Spelling Inventory. Children attempt to write their own names	Invented Spelling and Name Writing	Bear, Templeton, Invernizzi and Johnston, (2000)

### 3.5.1.1 Procedure

The forty four learners were tested during Week 4 of their Grade One year. These learners were assessed by the Head of Department (HOD) of the Foundation Phase because their registered class teacher was the researcher. This was a conscious decision taken on the part of the researcher to contribute to the reliability of the assessment. The sub-tests were conducted in the learners' home language, Afrikaans. The learners were shown seven pictures of known, (contextually relevant) items for eg pot, mat, cat etc, asked to name them, say the beginning sound of the word. The learners are expected to recognise and name some letters (in their own name), If they could not name the picture, they were told the name, and if they could not say the beginning sound, the sound was provided for them. The learners were expected to use beginning, middle and end sounds. The learners were not assessed on their knowledge of all of the letters. Ten letters were selected, (seven consonants – c, b, m,



s, t, w, r), (translated to Afrikaans: k, b, m, s, t, r), these letters were the beginning sound of the pictures shown.

**Table 3.4: Content and Scoring Procedures of the Baseline Assessment**

Subtest	Description	Scoring Procedures
Sounds-in-Words	<p>A phoneme matching task in which children were expected to match two (out of three) words that had either the same initial or the same final phonemes. Picture cues were provided in order to minimize the effect of auditory memory.</p> <p>Example: cat – mat - dog (translated kat mat, hond) see Figure 4.2</p>	<p>Each correct response was credited with one point</p>
Rhyme Recognition	<p>Learners were expected to identify two (out of three) words that rhymed. They were given “onset” being the beginning sound and “rime” being the end sound of a word. Picture cues were provided in order to minimize the effect of auditory memory.</p> <p>Example: Translated to Afrikaans: wip, wol, wit</p>	<p>Each correct response was credited with one point</p>
Letter Recognition	<p>Children were provided with alphabet chart with lower case letters randomly displayed and they were expected to name all the letter names they knew, see Figure 4.3</p>	<p>Each correct response was credited with one point.</p>
Word recognition	<p>Learners were provided with sentences within context. They had to complete the sentence by filling in a word. Picture cues were provided in order to minimize the effect of auditory memory, see Figure 4.4.</p>	<p>Each correct response was credited with one point</p>
Concepts about Print	<p>This subtest was based on the original Concepts about Print test (Clay, 1991) and utilized The ginger bread boy as stimulus. Concepts such as the front and back of the book, print direction and orientation, and literacy-related terminology such as word, letter or page were assessed.</p>	<p>Each correct response was credited with one point</p>

Subtest	Description	Scoring Procedures
Fictional Narrative	Learners were given four pictures. The ginger bread boy and were expected to arrange it in a specific sequence and formulate a narrative based on these pictures, see <b>Figure 4.6</b> .	Narratives were audio-recorded and directly transcribed so that the transcription could be verified later.
Emergent Writing and Spelling	Children had to attempt to write their own name as well as the following words: pot, rot mot, tol.	Attempts were coded as follows: 1=approximate spelling of name; 2=name correctly spelled; 3=correct spelling of at least one sight word of the child's choice; 4=partial letter-sound correspondence of one or more phonetically regular words; 5=correct spelling of one or more phonetically regular words.

### 3.5.1.2 *Participants' emergent literacy baseline assessment scripts*

Each learner's baseline assessment scripts were kept in plastic sleeves; their names were written on each activity page, which facilitated the identification of the learners. The HOD collected all the baseline assessment scripts after the completion of the baseline assessment process which was conducted over ten days and handed it over to the researcher. The baseline assessment scripts was examined and the findings were recorded in the literacy assessment checklist by indicating the challenges that the learners experienced with an 'X'. The written assessment scripts provided information regarding the written literacy baseline assessment activities of the participants which thus enabled me to determine the literacy skills of the learners using table 3.4 as a guide. This enabled me to identify and statistically describe the different performance and challenges that emerged.

### **3.5.2 Interviews as part of the Qualitative data collection**

Interviewing comprised an important data gathering technique in this study. According to Klein (2012:21) interviews are particularly suited for studying people's understanding of the meanings in their lived world, describing their experiences and self-understanding, and clarifying and elaborating their own perspectives on their lived world.

Hunter, Emerald and Martin (2013:89) mention that many researchers discovered that while interviews may be useful, they may not offer in-depth information. However, open-ended questionnaires encourage more detail, but often participants are unwilling and unable to express themselves in-depth. Interviews therefore depend on the purpose of the inquiry as well as the characteristics of the participants being interviewed.

The interviews according to Seidman (2013:22) "allow for the discovery of new aspects of the problem by investigating in detail some explanations given by the participants". For the above-mentioned author "the wealth and quality of the data collected are strongly dependent on the skill of the interviewer, the confidence they are able to awaken in the participants, the type of questions which are asked, and the encouraging comments which are made at the correct moment". The researcher, chose as part of the qualitative collection interviewing to capture the complexities of the participants' individual feelings, perceptions and emotions.

The setting in which the interviews took place allowed the participants to be very relaxed and co-operative because the school is a familiar environment for them. I strongly agree with Fontana and Frey (2008:645), entrée to the internal world of our fellow human beings, and the information gathered through interviews are interpreted and how these experiences affect their thoughts and feelings about their experiences (as interesting / fascinating or rewarding?).

During the interview process the following should be kept in mind:

- The questions must be clear. The interviewer must make it clear to the respondents what is being asked. This is partly to build rapport with the interviewee; the question should also be focused.

- The questions should be open-ended. These type of questions will allow the participants, (the mothers), to respond on the questions on their own terms.
- An interview is not a dialogue but must allow the participants to give as much detail as possible to gain a better understanding of the socio-economic problems the mothers of the learners with FASD within this study experienced.
- Sensitivity should be conveyed. It is the responsibility of the interviewer to convey that some questions may cause sensitivity in the participants.
- Use of language. It is important to conduct the interview in the home language of the participants. In this case the language used was Afrikaans as translated by the researcher from the interview schedule, Appendix 2a (Patton, 1987:23). This translation ensures that the participants are comfortable in expressing themselves comfortable and that language should not be a barrier to hamper their participation.
- Do not interrupt a good story when the participant is expressing their feelings or story, rather write the question down if you want to ask something and go back to it later.
- You need to keep your participants focused on the questions you pose to gain maximal information (Jarbandhan & Schutte, 2006:674).

Kvale and Brinkman (2009:1) emphasise qualitative interviews as “attempts to understand the world from the participants’ point of view, to unfold the meaning of the people’s life experiences”. I chose a qualitative interview to gain better understanding through my questions to give a story type of information regarding my research questions as documented in Chapter 1.4.

The researcher conducted an interview with each mother who participated in the study after the baseline assessment during the second week of March using a flexible interview schedule (see Appendix 2a and Appendix 10). The goal of the interviews with the mothers was to obtain understanding of firstly, the socio-economic elements that may contribute to barriers in the families of learners with FASD that contribute to the possible emergent literacy problems. Secondly, to highlight the strengths present

in the socio-economic context of these families that can be used to support learners with FASD.

### *3.5.2.1 Procedure for conducting interview*

Prior to conducting the actual interviews, the researcher arranged a time and venue suitable to each of the four participants. Also double-checked with them a day or two before the scheduled date to confirm their availability. Open-ended questions were used for the individual interviews as included in Appendix 2a.

On the day of the interview, the researcher saw to it that she reached the venue early, and ensured that my voice recorder was in good working order. Before each interview, she again asked each participant whether he/she was comfortable with the interview being recorded. Nobody objected to their interview being recorded. Field notes were also taken to record the verbatim responses of the participants as well as non-verbal communication during the interview, which facilitated data analysis (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 355 - 356).

The interviews took place at the school where I teach. All the interviews were held after school, during the second week of March the researcher made it clear that ethical considerations dictated that she would not impose on participants' time during normal teaching hours.

Before the researcher started with each interview she explained again the purpose of the study, confidentiality and how the results would be used to enhance the understanding of the emergent literacy profile of learners with FASD. To guide the collection of data in a systematic and focused manner during the interviews, the researcher drew up an interview guide (see Appendix 2a) that included a list of possible questions to be addressed in the interviews with all the participant mothers. However, she regarded the interview guide as extremely flexible.

### **3.5.3 Drawings**

The visual methodology of drawings will primarily be used to determine perceptions and skills of participants (De Lange, Mitchell & Stuart, 2007:2-3). Drawings were also

be used as a powerful technique to establish opinions and beliefs of participants (De Lange & Stuart in Wood & Olivier, 2008:132-133).

Fetterman (1998) in Hunter, *et al.* (2013:91) emphasises that structured interviews entail the use of a specific set of questions in such a way that the interviewer does not deviate from the wording or sequence of questions. The questions do not differ from one participant to the other, irrespective of responses. They further point out that these types of interviews have specific objectives and are often verbal in nature.

Chu (1993:3) in Hunter, *et al.* (2013) argues that the informal semi-structured interviews tend to have a specific objective at eliciting certain information from the participants. He further states that semi-structured interviews use general questions, such as those in a checklist of topics to cover during the interview process. The order of questions can vary to keep the flow of discussion. As an interviewer, the researcher can encourage more information by going beyond the general questions.

Zweifel and Van Wezemael (2012) are of the opinion that by introducing drawing as an activity into the qualitative interview method, we not only change the materiality of interview settings, we also give the interviewees the chance to escape the linearity of the spoken or written word. Moreover, drawings are a good tool for gathering information about situations, as they allow the simultaneous perception of different actors and relationships, making complex strings of effects visible and tangible (Berg & Pooley, 2011). Researchers wishing to make sense of complex experiences often begin by interviewing the individuals at the centre of those experiences. Visual methods, such as drawings, in combination with interviews, are beginning to show promise for designing research that taps into the difficult-to-tell, by exploring tacit knowledge and perceptions of complex situations in the lives of the mothers of learners with FASD.

In order to collect the data needed to complete the study, participants will be expected to make a drawing depicting the socio-economic elements that may contribute to barriers in the families of learners with FASD that contribute to the possible emergent literacy problems. This drawing will be a representation of how these elements impact on the emergent literacy profile of the child with FASD. Once again there is no right or

wrong drawing. It is also expected that the drawing be supported with a written or oral (which was recorded) explanation which would give further insight into the depiction.

### 3.5.3.1 Procedure

The drawing acts as a tool in facilitated discussions around topics or experiences, which the participants may have found particularly challenging to articulate. No artistic talent was required and participants were provided with a range of drawing materials from which to choose. Drawings were done as individuals. From the outset I emphasised that we would be looking at the story depicted in the drawings. I informed the participants that they would have the option to share what they had drawn with the researcher or not, and that they would also be allowed to take the drawings with them if they chose to. The participants were informed of their right not to have their drawing included in the data set and were reminded that any identifying information would be concealed if any of their drawings were used as part of the final dissertation.

### **Drawing prompt for mothers**

#### **"Make a drawing of how you see yourself as a mother of a child with FAS"**

- We are not aiming for the artistic beauty of the drawings, but the portrayal of how you see yourself. So, any drawing is welcome.
- When you are done with your drawing, please write an explanation of why you chose the particular depiction and what it means to you.
- Prepare to share your drawing with the interviewer, but share only those aspects that you feel comfortable with.

## **3.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY**

Research studies must present insights and conclusions that ring true to readers. Validity and reliability can be approached by paying careful attention to a study's conceptualisation and the way in which the data are collected, analysed and interpreted (Merriam, 2009: 210). Content validity refers to how accurately a research instrument actually measures the construct it purports to measure. In other words, to what extent do the items included in the research instrument accurately represent the

construct being measured (Creswell & Clark, 2011: 210)? The ECDE Baseline Assessment Programme of 2009 is based on the 2007 Grade One Baseline Assessment Programme (BAP) of the Western Cape Education Department (WCED). In preparation for implementation in the schools of the Province of the Eastern Cape in 2010, the BAP was piloted in 46 schools in the Province of the Eastern Cape in 2009 to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the programme. Recommendations for adaptations received from teachers and curriculum advisors have been included in this revised Baseline Assessment Programme which is offered to schools as a resource document to strengthen teaching and learning in the early grades. It is therefore assumed that, as an official ECDE assessment instrument, much expertise and skill went into the formulation of this tool. Therefore, the process in formulating the ECDE Grade One baseline assessment instrument has enhanced its content validity. The changes that I made to the instrument have been discussed above in this chapter (see 3.5.1).

The most common scenario for baseline assessment involves administering one test to all learners at one time point. Methods used to estimate reliability under this circumstance are referred to as measures of *internal consistency* (Wells and Wollak, 2003). In this case, a single score is used to indicate a learner's level of understanding on a particular topic. However, the purpose of the assessment is not simply to determine how many items learners answered correctly on a particular test, but to measure how well they know the content area. To achieve this goal, the particular items on the test must be sampled in a way as to be representative of the entire domain of interest. It is expected that learners mastering the domain will perform well and those who have not mastered the domain will perform less well, regardless of the particular sample of items used on the assessment. Furthermore, because all items on the assessment tap some aspect of a common domain of interest, it is expected that students will perform similarly across different items within the test.

Lincoln and Guba in Merriam (2009: 210) judge validity and reliability from a perspective that corresponds with the philosophical assumptions of the qualitative paradigm and name these concepts credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Rich descriptions of the case study and context within which the participants live, contribute to quality and trustworthiness of the case study and helps



to establish the credibility. Thick descriptions furthermore promote reader-determined transferability. The term transferability is used as an alternative for generalizability in qualitative research (Rule & John, 2011: 107 - 108). Transferability refers to the applicability of the findings to other situations under similar conditions (Merriam, 2009: 225). Thus, I used mixed-method data collection strategies in order to enhance the validity and reliability of this research. A discussion on the validity and reliability in both qualitative and quantitative data will follow.

Creswell (2009) contends that the level of validity that can be attained is one of the strengths of qualitative research. He recommends certain validity strategies such as; using rich, thick descriptions to convey the findings, using an external auditor to review the project objectively, and triangulation. In this study, the qualitative data in the form of interviews with the mothers of the participants as well as their drawings and field notes provided appropriate descriptions, and an external auditor who was not familiar with the researcher or project provided an objective assessment. Triangulation was achieved by corroborating the quantitative and qualitative data.

### **3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Sarantakos (2000:20-21) articulates that research should be premised on trust from both sides. There should be acceptance, cooperation, promises and well-accepted conventions and expectations between the researched and researcher. Babbie (2010:27) mentions that the basic ethical rule of social research is that it must bring no harm to the researched. He further points out that participants can be harmed in a physical or emotional manner. Everything we do in life can possibly harm someone; therefore, researchers should be aware that there is always risk involved when doing research. The importance of the project should be balanced against the possible risk of the researched (Babbie, 2010:27).

Creswell (2003:64) claims that the researcher has an ethical obligation to protect the researched within reasonable limits, from any form of discomfort or harm which may emerge from the research. The afore-mentioned author further states that emotional harm to participants is often more difficult to predict than the physical harm, but often has more harmful consequences for the researched. He is of the opinion that participants should therefore be thoroughly informed about the possible harm of the

investigation. This will afford the researched the opportunity to withdraw if they so wish.

Rubin and Babbie (2005:71) assert that participation should always be voluntary and no one should be forced to participate in the research project. Hakim (2000:143) reiterates that written informed consent is an option rather than compulsory. He further emphasises that focus should be placed on accurate and complete information, so that participants fully understand the details of the investigation. Participants should resultantly be able to make a voluntary, yet thoroughly reasoned decision about their possible participation in the research project. Henning (2004:73-74) reports that the researcher should ensure that the signed consent form is treated with utmost confidentiality. He further proposes that the researcher remains responsible for the ethical quality of the research project.

Morris (2006:246) suggests that the participants have the right to privacy and it is up to them to decide when, where, to whom and to what extent information about them will be revealed. He further argues that principles can be violated in many ways and it is important that researchers be reminded of the significance of protecting the privacy and anonymity of participants. Researchers, according to Morris (2006:246), ought to act with the necessary integrity where the privacy of subjects is concerned.

The researcher heeded the advice of previously-mentioned authors, and therefore sought the written consent of learners parents, the mothers as participants, the school principal, the Department of Basic Education (see Appendix 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7). The researcher assured the participants of confidentiality and anonymity. All the necessary consent forms were completed and signed before the research was initiated.

### **3.8 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter the researcher presented her methodological considerations, research approach, research design and research paradigm. This process included Baseline Assessment of learners diagnosed with FASD, interviews and drawings with mothers of the participants and engaging with the literature regarding ethical considerations, data gathering and quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

In the next chapter, the researcher will analyse the data collected.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The analysis of the findings of my case study, which was conducted to determine the emergent literacy profile of Grade One learners with FASD during the Grade One literacy baseline assessment programme, will be presented in this chapter. Information regarding the performances of the Quantitative data from the participants will be presented on a checklist. A narrative account of how the baseline assessment activities were conducted will also be presented. It will also highlight the themes which emerged from the Qualitative findings from the drawings and interviews with the four mothers' whilst elaborating on each individual theme. Furthermore this chapter categorises the different sub-themes emanating from each principal theme.

Subsequently the chapter will endeavour to describe in detail what the data analysis process entailed.

#### **4.2 DATA ANALYSIS**

The data for this research was gathered by: examining the four learner participants' activity sheets and conducting interviews with the mothers of the four learners as well as their drawings. The data was analysed in order to answer the research question: What is the emergent literacy profile of learners with FASD in a Grade One classroom in a selected rural farming community?

In a mixed-method research approach, the data is analysed separately; quantitative data is analysed using quantitative analysis and qualitative data is analysed using qualitative analysis (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Six steps are proposed by Creswell & Plano Clark (2011) for both quantitative and qualitative data analysis namely:

1. Organising and preparing the data for analysis,
2. Exploring the data,
3. Analysing the data,

4. Representing the data analysis,
5. Interpreting the results, and
6. Validating the data and results.

The afore-mentioned researchers are of the opinion that these steps unfold in a linear fashion in quantitative research but are often implemented both simultaneously and iteratively in qualitative research. A discussion on the quantitative and qualitative data analysis for this study follows.

#### **4.2.1 Quantitative Data Analysis**

The information in Table 4.1 (Literacy assessment checklist) was used to organise the frequencies of the emergent literacy challenge for each activity as well as each category, (listening and speaking, emergent reading and emergent writing). Participants' performances were analysed statistically (see Appendix 9), the percentages were calculated which enabled the researcher to identify the different performance patterns that emerged. The data was summarised and the information was used to describe the emergent literacy profiles of the participants.

The researcher attempted to gain a deeper understanding of the topic under investigation and continually refined the interpretations throughout the analysis namely:

1. What is the emergent literacy profile of learners with FASD in a Grade One classroom in a selected rural farming community?

#### **4.2.2 Presentation of Literacy assessment checklist**

Table 4.1 presents the Literacy assessment checklist (See Table 4.1) that was used to record the results of the literacy baseline assessment activities administered to the whole class. The performances of the FASD learners are described under the following categories: listening and speaking, emergent reading and emergent writing. Each category included a number of skills that a learner had to demonstrate during the baseline assessment activities. The FASD learners' performance gave an indication of his or her literacy skills and barriers as indicated in the Literacy assessment checklist (Table 4.1).

The literacy assessment checklist was colour coded by the researcher according to the barriers that the FASD learners had experienced during the assessment of the literacy skills to assist in identifying the literacy barrier themes. The literacy challenges are indicated in the following manner: green indicates listening and speaking, blue indicates emergent reading, yellow indicates emergent writing, and purple indicates barriers with motor development.

To assess whether the subscales formed a reliable scale, Cronbach's alpha was computed. This measure indicated the consistency of a multiple-item scale. The score Listening and speaking was .80, for emergent reading .78 and emergent writing .72 which indicated that the items for the subscales have reasonable internal consistency reliability. The statistical index of Cronbach's alpha measurements ranged from 0 to 1.00, with values close to 1.00 indicating high consistency. As reflected in Appendixes 9 the results indicated a high reliability coefficient which was a requirement for standardized tests because they are administered only once and the score on that one test is used to draw conclusions about each learner's level on the trait of interest. It is acceptable for classroom assessments to have lower reliabilities because a learner's score on any one assessment does not constitute that learner's entire grade in the course. Usually grades are based on several measures, including multiple tests, homework, papers and projects, labs, presentations, and/or participation however, the researcher only focused on the baseline assessment (Wells & Wollack, 2003).

Table 4.1: Literacy assessment checklist

Grade One Baseline Assessment																							
Van & Naam	Luister en praat				Finale Vlak	Klanke		Finale Vlak	Lees				Finale Vlak	Handskrif			Finale Vlak	Skryf			Finale Vlake	Afrikaans Huistaal Vlak	
	Praat oor persoonlike ervaring bv vertelnuus	Luister na storie en beantwoord vraagies om volgorde van storie te kan voltooi	Plaas prente in n logiese volgorde en kommunikeer om idees in logiese volgorde oor te	Beskryf voorwerpe na gelang van kleur, grootte, vorm en hoeveelheid deur die korrekte woordeskat		Identifiseer die klank, letter verhouding van sommige enkel letters bv. K, m, s, l ens	Vorm kort woorde met die klanke wat alreeds aandeleer is		Voorspel die verloop van die storie na afleiding prente	Luister na en bespreek die storie wat voorgelees was	Lees die storie saam met die onderwyseres	Lees hardop uit eie boek tydens groepbegeleidende lees saam met die onderwyseres		Oefen om die potlood en die kryt korrek te hanteer	Tekenpatrone	Vorm klanke en konsonante volgens leerplan vir klanke		Skryf die naam, kort woorde en sinne van plakkaart af	Teken prente om n boodskap oor te dra	Skryf sinne of nuus korrek van die bord/kaart af			Skryf eenvoudige byskrifte vir n tekening of prent
Learner 1																							
Learner 2																							
Learner 3																							
Learner 4					X	X			X														

Learner 5	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X			
Learner 6																								
Learner 7																								
Learner 8										X														
Learner 9																								
Learner 10																								
Learner 11																								
Learner 12																								
Learner 13	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X			
Learner 14	X		X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X							X		X			
Learner 15	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X			
Learner 16																X				X				
Learner 17																								
Learner 18	X		X			X																		
Learner 19																								
Learner 20	X		X			X	X		X	X	X	X												
											X				X									
Learner 22																								
Learner 23																								
Learner 24	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X			

Learner 25																							
Learner 26	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X		
Learner 27																							
Learner 28																							
Learner 29																							
Learner 30																							
Learner 31																							
Learner 32																							
Learner 33	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X		
Learner 34																							
Learner 35	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X		
Learner 36	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X		
Learner 37																							
Learner 38																							
Learner 39																							
Learner 40	X		X			X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X		
Learner 41																							
Learner 42																							
Learner 43																							
Learner 44																							



Cronbach's Alpha statistical index (See Appendix 9) and Literacy assessment checklist (Table 4.1) provided a measurement of the extent to which the items on the baseline assessment was utilized to determine the emergent literacy profile of learners with FASD in a Grade One classroom in a selected rural farming community from the data collected. Also the information gathered from Table 3.3. Recording sheet was used to answer the first research question in the section that follows.

#### **4.2.3 What do the Grade One FASD learners' literacy baseline assessment performances indicate about their emergent literacy profile?**

What is the emergent literacy profile of learners with FASD in a selected rural farming community?

In order to answer the first research question, ECDE Baseline Assessment Programme was supported using Willenberg's (2004) Emergent Literacy Assessment (ELA) battery to measure learners' performance on six emergent literacy subskills. These particular skills were identified as being strongly related to later literacy achievement and covered the four general domains of emergent literacy: (i) Oral Language, (covered by the subtests on receptive vocabulary), and Narrative Ability and Word Definitions, (ii) Phonological Awareness, (covered by Sounds-in-Words and Rhyme Recognition), (iii) Print Knowledge, (covered by Letter Recognition and Concepts of Print) and (iv) Emergent Writing and spelling (see Table 3.4).

I examined the activity sheets of the learners which provided the researcher with sufficient information to evaluate the literacy skills that were assessed. The finding from the analysis of the data were discussed under the following headings: Listening and speaking skills, Emergent reading and emergent writing.

##### *4.2.3.1 Ability to listen attentively and to respond to questions*

The head of department with whom these tests were done prepared her classroom for the baseline assessment by displaying a variety of books on the Ginger Bread Boy written in different languages namely: English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa. Flashcards were also displayed next to pictures of the different characters in the story. The forty four learners in the class sat on the mat in front of the classroom during story-telling sessions. To stimulate learner participation the HOD started to asked questions about

the cover of the book, introduced the title, explained the meanings of the author and the illustrator. During the story she showed them the pictures and after the story she asked questions about the pictures, events and characters. The four FASD learners that I observed, sat on the mat.

The researcher observed the four FASD learners during this exercise to record their ability to listen attentively to the story of the Ginger Bread Boy and to respond to questions posed by the HOD on this story. Learner 5 was sitting very quietly and seemed very distracted. Looking around the classroom and not concentrating on anything the teacher read. Whilst Learners 13, 15 & 24 were restless and showed no interest in the story at all.

Learners' ability to answer questions during this session were also recorded. All four FASD learners did not respond to the questions on the stories. They just stared at the teacher as if she was not talking to them.

#### *4.2.3.2 Ability to follow instructions and communicate confidently*

The ability to follow instructions and to communicate confidently were assessed at the same time by the researcher and field notes were recorded. Learners had to rearrange the pictures of the Ginger Bread Boy in logical sequence and retell the story (See Figure 4.1 Ability to follow instructions). Each participant was given a worksheet, learners were expected to identify objects in the pictures and to identify and discuss the activities in the pictures as well as what the different characters were doing.



**Figure 4.1: Ability to follow instructions**

All four the FASD participants did not respond and only looked down at their worksheet. They were also unable to respond orally to the questions posed on the story of the Ginger Bread Boy.

#### *4.2.3.3 Ability to describe objects based on its colour, shape, size and quantity*

The teacher displayed a number of objects on the blackboard which learners needed to identify. At first learners were asked to tell the class about their family members. The teacher had to continuously pose questions directly at the four FASD learners because they did not volunteer information nor did they respond by answering the teacher's questions she used to probe them. Learners were also asked to identify the objects, its shape and colour, they were also asked to count the number of objects in the picture. Two of the participants were just fiddling with their fingers smiling without giving and response. The other two learners were just silently sitting without uttering a single word.

#### *4.2.3.4 Summary of listening and speaking findings*

The learners' ability to listen to instructions were tested and the FASD learners were unable to satisfactorily demonstrate those skills. They could not match colours, share information and use language appropriately. Learner 5 was repeating the instructions but could not follow through. The data from the baseline assessment as indicated in

Table 4.1 assisted the researcher in making this finding. The other participants when isolated and expected to communicate totally went off the topic under discussion.

The learners were involved in listening and speaking activities for an assessment of their abilities to: listen attentively to a story, respond to questions about the story and to follow instructions in order to participate in building sequence within the story.

The findings indicated that participants who were unable to listen attentively to a story or answer questions during story time thus were also unable to follow instructions in order to form a narrative based on the pictures used to tell the story of the Ginger Bread Boy. Receptive language is the ability to understand the spoken language and involves the learners' listening skills. This includes the ability to understand the directions, instructions and explanations of the teacher. In addition, receptive language enables learners to remember details of a story and to understand words, and sentences in a story (Levey, 2011: 4).

The findings indicated that these learners may have experienced receptive language barriers due to barriers with attention and memory. The data from the results of the listening and speaking activities as organised in the literacy assessment checklist in Table 3.4, assisted the researcher in identifying possible barriers with: receptive language.

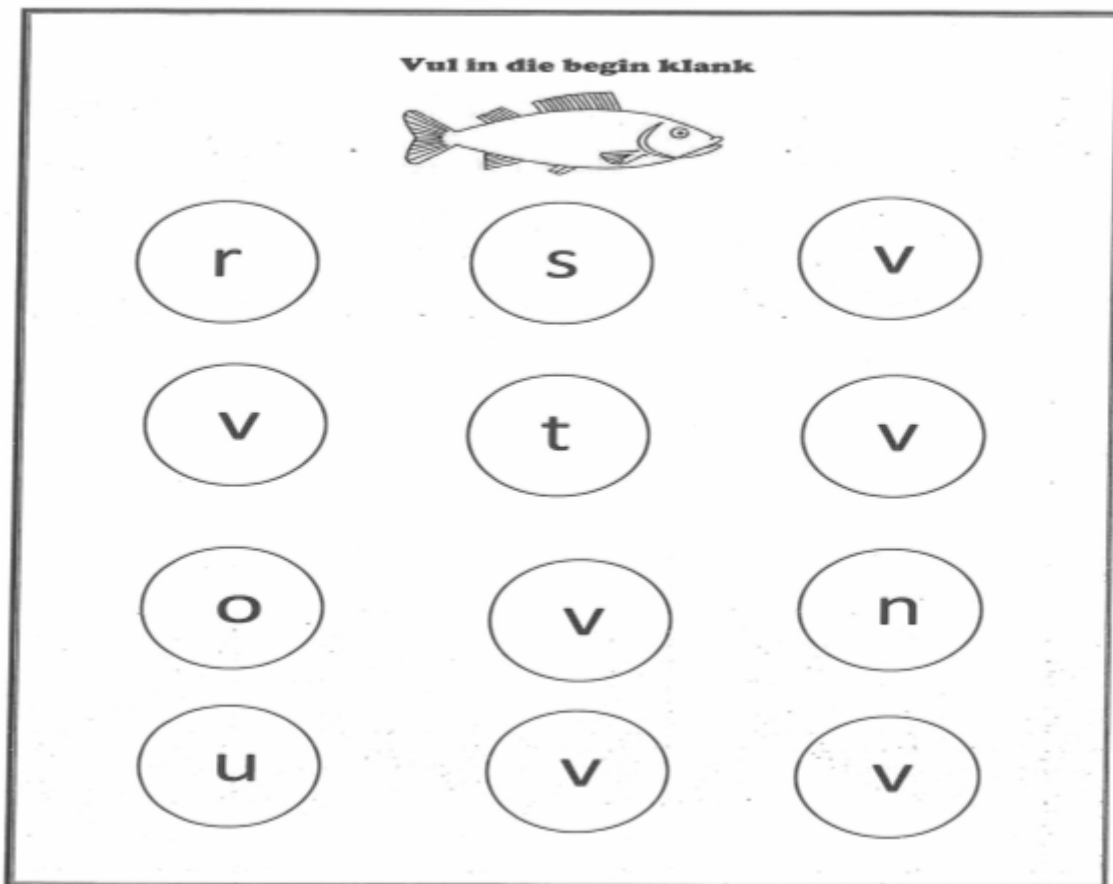
### **4.3 EMERGENT READING**

The following emergent reading skills of the FASD learners were assessed: recognise words, book handling skills, interpret pictures (as discussed above), identify sound symbols and recall letters.

The participants had to recognize letters (see Figure 4.2 Letter recognition). Their activity sheets were also examined to assess their abilities to identify the correct letter. Choate (2004:70) purports that phonics consist of the association of the speech sounds of letters with their written symbols. Lapp, Flood, Brock and Fischer (2007:135) agree that phonics is a skill needed to produce fluent reading. Nel *et al.* (2012:91) reiterate that the learner must be capable of hearing and identifying symbol sound correspondence as well as distinguishing between sounds that are similar and hearing

their correct sequences. These authors further state that it is necessary for the learner to say and comprehend the meaning of the sound.

**Figure 4.2: Letter recognition**



The researcher concurs with this viewpoint as her classroom experience highlights the fact that many of her Grade One learners with FASD struggled to master the art of sounding and understanding specific words. Brooks (2007:52-55), holds the opinion that phonics skills are comprised of letter identification, segmenting and blending rhyme words. It also includes alliteration, hearing and sounding the beginning sound in the words and knowing which letters represent the sounds. All this includes phonemic awareness to help the child to learn to read and spell.

The researcher discovered that the Grade One learners with FASD had difficulty in applying phonics in their oral and written work. This was evident in formal assessment done by the researcher. Nel *et al.* (2012:93) note that word recognition is the process whereby individuals match the written words with their sound and spelling using their

memory. Walpole and McKenna (2007:49) state that reading entails the ability to recognise words. They further state that word recognition requires skills such as visual and auditory discrimination, memory and phonemic awareness, all of which are involved in identifying words. Chaote (2004:64) adds to this by explaining that when instructing auditory discrimination, the teacher commences with beginning sounds. The aforementioned author points out that auditory memory includes encoding, (that is hearing accurately), retention, (that is storing sounds), and retrieval, (to get the sounds out of the storage).

Wyper and Rasmussen (2011:365) assert that learners with FASD language problems include hearing impairments, denofacial abnormalities and overall cognitive impairments. They further stress that the majority of learners with FASD suffer from central hearing deficits which negatively impact on language development, comprehension and academic achievement. When most of the Grade One learners with FASD struggled in word recognition, phonological decoding and phoneme awareness it became evident in their reading abilities. The researcher also discovered that the four learners with FASD find it very difficult to convert words into phonemes and to identify the rhyming of words. The reading problems of most of these learners may also be attributed to too much dependence on the decoding of the word. This was very evident in their incoherent, slow and inaccurate reading and poor comprehension.

Three of the Grade One learners with FASD in the class of the researcher showed little or no interest in the letter-sound relations as they could not identify or hear most of the letters or sounds. They were not able to relate the sounds to the letters, because they could not distinguish between the letters visually or verbally. Learners 5, 13 and 24 also found it very difficult to recognise and analyse consonants and vowels. In addition to this difficult barrier mentioned previously, Learner 15, also failed to put words into phonemes and morphemes. The participants struggled to match pictures to spoken words, and accurately describe the meanings of commonly used words.

The researcher examined the activity sheets of the learners which provided her with sufficient information to evaluate the emergent reading skills. A discussion of the assessment of the emergent reading activities follow:

#### **4.3.1 Ability to recognize letters, words, identify sound symbols and recall letters.**

Letter knowledge is a necessary foundation for learning to read and write and plays an important role from the earliest stages of literacy development (Ehri, 2005; Stuart, Masterson and Dixon, 2000). The pattern that emerges from this very limited sample, (Participant Group A) is that the sample group have a very limited early letter knowledge. This is partly due to learning problems, socio-economic challenges and literacy practices. In 1991, Carney and Chermak (1991), examined language development in ten children with FAS who displayed significant deficits on all subtests.

The data from the results of the emergent reading activities as organised in the Literacy assessment checklist in Table 4.1, assisted the researcher in identifying possible barriers with receptive language.

- Phonological awareness

The researcher found that all four of the learners with FASD in Grade One do not have the ability to encode words due to their lack of phonic awareness. Nel, Nel and Hugo (2012:90) assert that the child comprehends and is exposed to the smallest sounds, (phonemes), which forms the spoken word. They further point out that phonemic awareness can be defined as spoken words consisting of phonemes arranged chronologically, (speech sounds that influence meaning), and blended together. Levey and Polirstock (2011:39) concur that phonological awareness is the knowledge of words comprising of sounds. These authors further contend that the term phonological awareness refers to the segmentation of words into basic units or phonemes. Phonological awareness can also be defined as the phenomenon by which words are composed of individual sounds.

In view of the requirements stated by the authors mentioned previously, the researcher came to the conclusion that the Grade One learners with FASD were unable to *inter alia*:

- Determine differences and similarities in words and sounds (Walpole & McKenna, 2007:35).

- Grasp the concept of a letter representing a sound (Chaote, 2004:66).
- Identify rhyming words.

Levey and Polirstock (2011:152) are of the opinion that phonological awareness is a metalinguistic skill that allows the typical developing child to manipulate the sound structure. The aforementioned authors also emphasise that the learner must be able to map individual speech sounds onto their corresponding letters; it is the ability that enables learners to write the written word. All the participants struggled to master the individual speech sound required to match the corresponding letters.

Wyper and Rasmussen (2011:364) concur that learners with FASD have a fundamental deficit in phonological awareness that may also contribute to language and literacy problems. The researcher found that all the participants experienced difficulty in encoding the word due to their lack of phonic awareness. The aforementioned authors add that language deficits found in most learners with FASD, include hearing impairments. The researcher echoes the previously mentioned statements by the above-mentioned authors, by stating that the majority of the learners with FASD in the Grade 1 class struggled to hear sounds. It was revealed during daily interaction with learners that they fail to say what they heard. For example, they had to circle the rhyming words wip, wol, wit.

All these findings indicated (see Table 4.1) emphasized that the Grade One learners with FASD had severe challenges as far as phonemic awareness was concerned. All phonological awareness tasks require holding acoustic information in phonological short-term memory while the central executive performs some type of working memory operation on the phonological information. Children's phonological awareness competencies are associated with their memory capacities, independent of general cognitive ability. Adnams, Sorour & Kalberg. (2007), suggest that a fundamental deficit in phonological awareness may also contribute to language and literacy problems in children with FASD.

- Phonological processing

Levey and Polirstock (2011:42) cited Wagner and Torgesen (1987) and are all of the opinion that phonological processing alludes to the consciousness of phonological



data in writing and speaking. Levey and Polirstock (2011) defined phonological processing as a cognitive process entailing the recognition, comprehension, storage, retrieval and production of language codes, combined with the ability to manipulate the sounds in the words.

The researcher discovered that the Grade One Learners with FASD failed to grasp the following concept:

- Phoneme isolation: Learners 5, 13, 15 and 24 were also unable to determine the first sound in the word vis - recognizing the v sound.

By Term Three of Grade R, learners are expected to be able to recognise “aurally and visually some initial consonant and vowel sounds especially at the beginning of common words” (Department of Basic Education, 2010: 5), and by the fourth term, they should be able to recognise “aurally and visually, an increasing number of initial consonant and vowel sounds especially at the beginning of common words”. The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS, 2011) for Foundation Phase, includes similar guidelines.

However, all the learners were able to recognize their own name on different objects for example on name tags and the cover of their writing books.

#### **4.3.2 Book handling skills**

Learners were allowed to choose a book from the reading corner to assess their book handling skills. The researcher assessed their abilities to hold the book in an appropriate manner and to turn the pages appropriately. Learners 13 and 24 showed no interest in their books whilst Learners 5 and 15 were unable to hold their book nor turn it appropriately.

#### **4.3.3 Summary of findings in relation to emergent reading**

All four participants performed unsatisfactory in all the emergent reading activities.

#### **4.4 EMERGENT WRITING**

The following emergent writing skills of the learners were assessed: manipulation of writing tools, drawing of patterns and pictures, writing of sentences and coping of words.

The assessment activities show significant difference between the FASD and the rest of the class with pencil task manipulation, pattern formation needed for handwriting, copying of consonants and writing of their names. All four the participants held the pencil in their right hand.

#### **4.5. QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS**

According to Creswell (2009:148), data analysis in qualitative research consists of preparing and organising the data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes, and finally representing the data in figures, tables and or a discussion. From the literature review conducted, this is the general process that researchers use.

Creswell (2009:148) further cites Madison, Huberman and Miles as all commenting on the central steps of coding the data, (reducing the data into meaningful segments and assigning names for the segments), combining the codes into broader categories or themes, and displaying and making comparisons in the data graphs, tables and charts. These, they state, are the core elements of data analysis. Beyond these elements, these authors present different phases in the data analysis process. Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014) provide more detailed steps such as writing marginal notes, drafting summaries of field notes, and noting the relationships between the categories. Creswell (2009), however, introduces the need to create a point of view; a stance that signals the theoretical perspective taken in the study, whilst Wolcott (1994) discusses the importance of forming a description from the data, as well as relating the description to the literature.

According to Merriam. (2009), the first step in analysing qualitative data involves organizing the data. The first thing to do in organising is to reduce the data, which is done through a process called coding. Field notes, transcripts and other qualitative data are categorised. The most common approach is to read and reread all the data

and sort them by looking for units of meaning – words, phrases, sentences, subjects’ way of thinking, and events that seem to appear regularly and that seem important. The classification of similar ideas, concepts, activities, themes, settings and so on, represent a category. The researcher’s interests and style and the research question influence the chosen categories to a great extent. Likewise, Babbie (2010:394) claims that the key process in the analysis of qualitative social research data is coding – classifying or categorising individual pieces of data, coupled with some kind of retrieval system. Together, these procedures allow one to retrieve materials that may be of interest later.

The researcher attempted to gain a deeper understanding of the topic under investigation in trying to answer the following research questions:

- What are the socio-economic elements that may contribute to barriers in the families of learners with FASD that contribute to the possible emergent literacy problems?
- What are the strengths present in the socio-economic environment of these families that can be used to support learners with FASD?

The following themes emerged from the qualitative analysis:

**Table 4.2: Themes that emerged from the qualitative data**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Category</b>
a) Socio-economic elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poverty and unemployment</li> <li>• The lack of parental involvement</li> </ul>	– Alcohol abuse
b) Support structures: internal and external	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended family and literacy practices</li> <li>• The pastoral group</li> </ul>	

A detailed description of the themes that emerged from the findings of the qualitative data will be discussed in detail.

#### **4.5.1 Socio-economic elements**

Zweifel and Van Wezemael, (2012) are of the opinion that drawing allows an in-depth and less linear insight into complex situations, (such as Fetal Alcohol Spectrum), if compared to speech alone. Having interviewees draw models of themselves as a mother of a child with FAS allows them and the researcher to develop a new, multi-scale and more complex understanding and thus to harness the complexity of real-life situations differently.

Woolfolk (2014:75) asserts that context can be defined as the total situation which surrounds and interacts with an individual's thoughts, feelings and actions in shaping development and learning. The author further argues that children are raised in families and are members of a particular ethnic language, religious and economic environment. These children exist in neighbourhoods, attend schools and are members of classes, teams or extramural clubs. These programmes together with government policies and other socio-economic elements, affect the children's lives. Louw and Louw (2014:28) add to the aforementioned notions by stating that most psychologists agree that the environment forms an integral part of the child's development.

These direct influences play an important role in children's lives. However, in the contextual perspective as stated in Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic perspective (2005) they simply form a minor part in a much larger system where one element of the system impacts on all the other elements. The larger system consists of family, friends and teachers as well as institutions which have a bearing on the learner's development such as school, workplace and the church. Together these people and institutions constitute the learner's social environment.

The researcher discovered, through interviews and drawings, with the parents of the participants, the various socio-economic elements that form the environment, and their relationships. This allows researchers, (and the individuals), an in-depth view of their perceptions. It also revealed relationships and explanations that were often not explicitly spoken about before. The researcher expressed the opinion that it seemed that it becomes easier for interviewees to explain relationships and processes, to

remember all the present factors and to explain reasons for certain actions when they visualize them.

These socio-economic factors include the lack of parental involvement, poverty, unemployment and substance abuse, to mention but a few elements that negatively influence the development of the FAS learner.

#### *4.5.2.1 Poverty and unemployment*

The first theme that was evident, not only in what participants said and drew, but also mirrored in the disheveled look of the child, was that of poverty. The investigation highlighted the fact that all four of the participants' parents were unemployed, they lacked a fixed income normally provided by jobs and salaries. In my classroom, participants to this study came to school without any food to eat due to their social economic status. Louw and Louw (2014:142) maintain that poverty is much more than an insufficient lack of income. These authors further state that it affects the physical and psychological development of individuals. The aforementioned authors emphasized that poor children tend to suffer more from various illnesses due to inadequate healthcare. During the interview sessions with the participants' parents the researcher discovered that all of the participants were reluctant to adhere to necessary immunization processes, with the result that children are more vulnerable to diseases. This is evident in the fact that learners with FASD in the Grade One class of the researcher, tend to stay absent more frequently due to illness resulting from weak immune system originating from failure to attend clinic dates.

**Figure 4.3: Overcrowded home environment, Participant 1, Sara's drawing**



Lack of income and resources led to participants living with many other persons in the same house, in squalid conditions. Nita mentioned that:

*“All four of us sleep on the same bed. I feel so incapable in providing my child with what he needs. It just feels as if nobody cares about us. I feel a lot of anger and frustration. Sometimes I suffer from depression because I cannot make a way for my child. Then I just drink more. It is easier to get wine than food. I know this is an escape but I have no hope. Just look around you, you only see shacks, homelessness, unemployment, poor infrastructure and lack of access to basic services. My child is hungry, I am unable to access health care, in this community we lack the facilities of safe drinking water and sanitation, and I cannot afford quality education for my child”.*

According to Maria:

*“The area that she lives in Shebeens are easily accessible and very populated during the day or night because the high number of unemployment in this area. The house she lives in is very small with only bedroom however, it is very overcrowded because a few generations are living there”.*

The other participants shared the same stories of how crowded and overpopulated their homes are.

Donald *et al.* (2010:175) argue that poverty is often associated with inadequate resources. This is visible during interaction with participants when they are required to bring pictures, magazines and other materials to the classroom. In most cases the learners with FASD and their parents do not have the financial means to acquire these resources. Woolfolk (2014:175), argues that poverty starts even before birth. The author further adds that impoverished families have less access to good prenatal and infant health care. The researcher echoes this statement because of the nonchalant attitude they've shown during the interview towards the children's health conditions. Cone-Wesson (2004:280) encapsulates that those exposed to poverty have very little access to prenatal care or treatment, and these conditions spill over to poor nutrition and a lack of prenatal care which in turn lead to high-risk conditions for the infant, including premature birth with low birth weight.

During the interview session it was very evident to the researcher that 'Nieta'\* was neglected and unemployed. She also had a nonchalant attitude towards her poor socio-economic circumstances. She dropped out of school in Grade 5 due to circumstances being worsened by her unstable mother. She moved from one family member to another which hugely impacted on her dream to become a teacher one day. Her poverty-stricken lifestyle spilled over to the abuse of alcohol from the age of fourteen. A lack of income and resources led to her living with many other people in the home which she inhabited in squalid conditions.

Landsberg *et al.* (2005:28) mention that unemployment is associated with malnutrition and opportunity-deprived existences, technological challenges, over population, disadvantaged environments, conflict, violence, crime and substance abuse. Lemmer (2009:65) supports this statement by asserting that these elements extend and aggravate the culture of unemployment, therefore resulting in an increasing cycle of deprivation. The researcher echoes these statements as it emerged in her investigation that unemployment attributed to her participants suffering from malnutrition, intellectual challenges, lack of concentration and psychological degradation.

The aforementioned author asserts that a lack of job opportunities motivates individuals to immigrate from rural to urban areas. This implies that children are now left in the care of the remaining parent and/or extended family members. This situation

increases the financial burden of the family as it brings about extra expenses relating to accommodation, transport and other necessities. The impact of these situations is evident in most of the participants coming to school hungry, often dirty and lacking the necessary parental involvement and support. These situations led the researcher to the conclusion that the daily struggle for survival gives rise to academic achievement being placed low on the priority list of those parents struggling to make ends meet. Thus, the children of these parents, in this case the learners with FASD, were deprived of parental support and displayed a lack of interest in their scholastic achievement as parents were too busy trying to keep their heads above water.

Maria mentioned:

*“The area that we live in, is one of the most dangerous areas in Humansdorp. The houses and shacks are poorly built and conditions are extremely pathetic. People in this specific community are living in poverty and are vulnerable, powerless and unemployed. The area is overpopulated and the surroundings are squalid. These overpopulated contexts in which the participants find themselves are characterised by factors such as crime, substance abuse and violence”.*

The learners with FASD in this sample are disadvantaged by these circumstances. The mothers of FASD learners are poor, unemployed and lack the means to buy basic resources such as books, clothes and food. The children constantly seek love, attention and care. Although the government provides a grant to reduce poverty, it is still not enough to meet the basic needs. Much more needs to be done to accomplish a transformed social order in our communities.

- Alcohol abuse

What the data shows is that the participants were all experiencing symptoms of FAS as children themselves in school and this makes sense to them now.



One of the participants, Sara, mentioned:

*So many things have been happening to me that I could not explain. E.g. I would get a new job and I knew what the expectation was in terms of starting time. I always end up late. This compromises my relationship with the employer which resulted in me being unemployed. Even though I passed Grade 10, I still can't read and write, nor am I able to do maths. This always bothered me. Why I'm not able to do these things. Everything in my head is just so "deurmekaar",*

An alarming discovery made by the researcher and validated by research done by Musher-Eizeman, Holub and Arnett (2003), is that alcohol abuse is often genetically transferable. This implies that children of alcohol abusers are normally at risk of becoming abusers themselves. This finding is supported by the responses of two parents who stated in interviews with the researcher that their own parents were alcohol abusers themselves. Substance abuse negatively affects individuals' physical and mental state. The authors as mentioned above go further by stating that one of the major disadvantages of substance abuse is that it not only negatively impacts the abuser, but also those in his or her immediate environment.

Bronfenbrenner (1977) refers to the environment as a "set of nested structures that influence the development of the child". It was very evident during the interview that 'Learner 5's' mother, Sara and family members are binge drinkers.

*Alcohol plays a big role in my life and is an important factor in her poor socio-economic context. This is how I cope with all the drama in my life. Family members play a vital role and I won't be able to cope without the support from my mother and the other older kids in the family.*

Participant 4, Susan, indicated that she has been introduced to alcohol from a very early age. *I use to empty the bottles in my home whilst my mother was "sleeping" after she had too much to drink. I remember hiding away for the friends my mother use to bring to our home.* McKinstry (2005:1097) claims that research shows that mothers of FASD children often come from parents who were heavy drinkers themselves. This statement indicates a familial pattern of drinking, which is passed from one generation to the next. The researcher agrees with the previous statement and a similar view is taken by Viljoen, Croxford, Gossage, Koditwakku and May (2002:7) who cite "studies

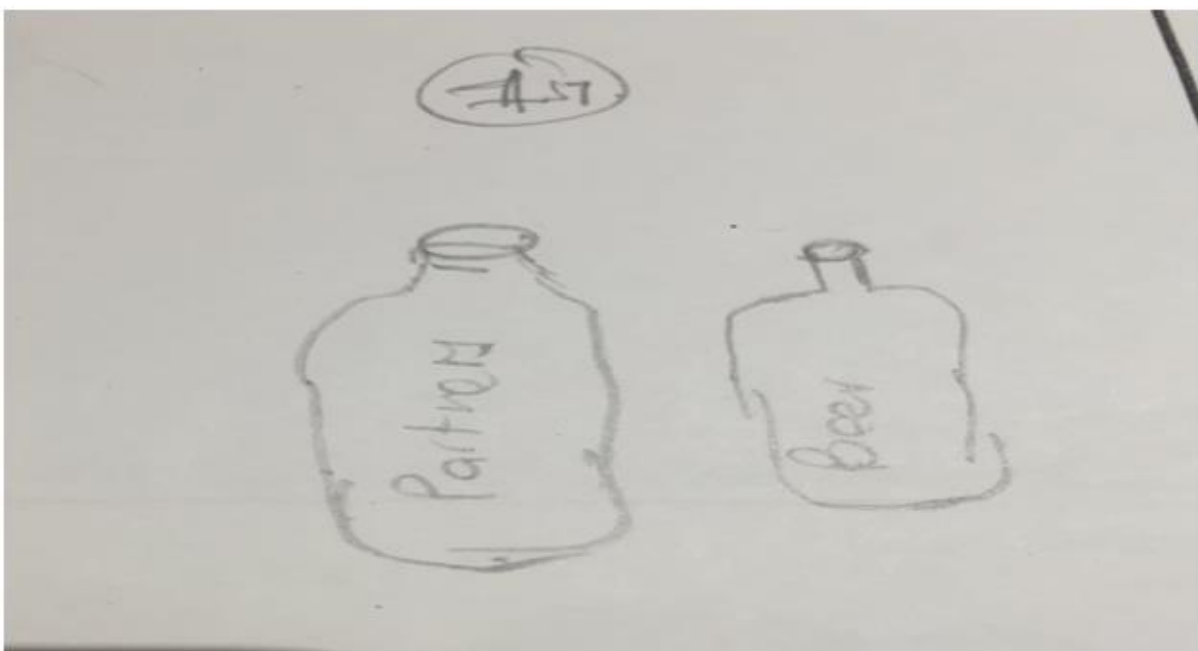
of alcohol dependence and alcohol misuse have reported that these behaviours do run in families, therefore implying heritability or a genetic influence...”.

It is imperative to understand, listen and observe learners with FASD within their different contexts. In addition to this, the researcher is of the opinion that a collaborative relationship between the school and the family, based on mutual understanding, is also significant. The school strives to form a healthy relationship with vulnerable learners. The learner support agent referred one of the researchers’ participants to the social worker to place a child in the care of her aunt, due to the instability of the mother.

#### 4.5.2.2 *The lack of parental involvement*

Neaum (2012:61), asserts that most children learn their language in the environment in which they grow up. The researcher echoes these statements, because she believes that children need parental guidance and support. Parents are the fundamental key partners in their children’s education. The researcher discovered during the interview sessions that the majority of her participants’ parents do not play the key role in their children’s development, (See Figure 4.2) as depicted in a drawing done by Sara.

**Figure 4.4: My Partner**



She goes further to say:

*These are my partners.*

“**Partner and Beer**” are the self- adopted names of cheap forms of alcohol. But it also describes Maria’s relationship with it.

The aforementioned author concurs that alcohol abuse of parents impacts negatively on parenting behaviour displayed towards children. In addition to this statement, the previously mentioned author also mentions that punitive parenting practices and inadequate parental involvement play a negative role in the development and maintenance of the child. Responses during the interviews showed that some of these parents use violence as a form of corrective measure to address behavioural challenges.

Blackburn, *et al.* (2010) add to this by stating that most FAS children are more vulnerable due to negative environments and situations. He further states that children are dependent on their parents, especially learners with FASD. However, due to alcohol abuse by parents, these FAS children are neglected, instead of being protected, nurtured and supported. The interview also brought to light the fact that parents of participants failed to protect, nurture or support their children, mainly due to substance abuse, especially during weekends.

In addition to this, Woolfolk (2014:78) describes uninvolved parents as being nonchalant towards their parental role. The abovementioned authors also emphasise that FAS children are mostly part of blended families, with stepbrothers or stepsisters who move in and out of their lives. These children can also be part of extended families headed by an aunt, grandparent or even guardians. One of the learners that was part of the sample was legally adopted by an aunt due to instability in her home environment.

The researcher’s interaction with parents during interviews and drawings revealed that lack of parental involvement can be ascribed to the following factors:

- Cyclic alcohol abuse which has been passed down from one generation to the next.

- Denial of the fact that you, as a parent, have a drinking problem and probably need professional intervention. This might lead to negligence, lack of nurturing and lack of support of the FAS child.
- Low self-esteem due to the parents' inability to be self-sustainable – either economically or otherwise. These participants' parents are often dependent on their parents to make a livelihood. This might give rise to anger, resentment and even depression, resulting in the parent ignoring the child's emotional and other needs.

These findings will enable the researcher to make recommendations with regard to parents of learners with FASD playing a more vital role in the children's development.

#### **4.5.2 Support structures: internal and external**

The research question: What are the strengths present in the socio-economic environment of these families that can be used to support learners with FASD? This question stands in sharp contrast to what the participants are used to because they are accustomed to focusing on the negative perception that the community was very poor with limited resources as explained by the following participant:

*Susan: "I thought I had nothing...now I think I have a lot to be grateful for."*

##### *4.5.2.1 Extended family and literacy practices*

Neaum (2012:129) emphasizes that children develop the initial interest, knowledge and skills to enable them to become literate and they learn through interaction with others in their environment. De Witte (2014:108) points out that a child learns the language that is spoken in his environment, that is, the language of his parents and extended families. She further states that his language reflects his educative milieu.

Maria mentioned in her oral narrative:

*Due to a lack of financial support I am unable to maintain my own household. I took refuge in my mother's home. In this way we are able to pool the little resources we have to make ends meet.*

Two of the four participants reported:

*We receive tremendous support from our mothers who are very religious women.*

Susan emphasized that:

*Every evening my mother has a prayer and scripture reading hour. This includes reading from the Bible and singing from the hymn book. These are the only reading material in our home. The children participate in these activities and sing from the hymn books even though they cannot read.*

Nieta, also mentions that:

*The only reading resources the grandmother has, are the hymn book and the Bible used during evening prayer meetings.*

Neaum (2012:122) encapsulates that a literate environment requires that children are surrounded by talk, reading and writing that is embedded in everyday activities and interactions that are part of the children's everyday lives at home. Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory systems (2005) highlight that within the mesosystem both families and teachers play a vital role in children's literature development. Nel *et al.* (2008:220) draw the attention to the relationship between families and school and how they work together in supporting the learning and development of children.

It is not only the grandparents that offer strength in low socio-economic environments in supporting learners with FASD but also young family members who are also schooling in higher grades. One of my participants, Sara, made mention of the role that her niece plays in accompanying Learner 33 to the local library on a regular basis.

*She also reads stories from the books she collects at the library. I often see her talk to him about the characters in the books, and help him with his homework.*

During the interview session, Nieta also displayed some gratitude to her cousin who helped 'Learner 15' with his reading problems and for accompanying him to the library. 'Nieta' was also acutely aware of his learning barriers and confessed that she abused alcohol during her pregnancy. Pienaar and Raymond (2013:50) draw our attention to the value of the extended family members who become primary caregivers who form

a mutual support system in which children are raised. From the information above it would appear that mothers perceive the extended family to be the major player in their children's literacy experiences and practices.

In addition to the family support structure other external support structures play a vital role in supporting the FAS learner, especially the pastoral support group as mentioned by the participants.

#### 4.5.2.2 *The Pastoral Group*

The pastoral group, depending on the severity of the case, provides spiritual guidance and support in the form of counselling. 'Toni's'\* mother was recommended through the pastoral group of the school to form part of a group of mothers to join The South African Teen Challenge. The objective was to help her become a survivor of her addictions. This involvement influenced 'Learner 5'\* life, because he had to cope without his mother for six months.

Although she was not always a 'good mother', he really loved her irrespective of who she was. The dramatic absence of his mother influenced his behaviour at school and at home. He became very moody and started to bully other children. The sudden and radical changes in his life-pattern made him very aggressive. Stress and uncertainty resulted in all kinds of learning and behavioural problems. Many families in our communities are faced with the problem of opposing values between home and school. This is a reflection of the exosystem which refers to the environment in which the learner is not directly involved as an active participant. According to Landsberg *et al.* (2008:11) however, it is the environment that influences the lifestyle of the participants in that context.

The chronosystem refers to a time frame which occurred through interactions with individuals (see 2.2.5). After the six months during which 'Nieta'\* attended The South African Teen Challenge, she displayed different characteristics. She conquered her drinking habits and is now a reliable and responsible mother who takes care of 'Learner 15\*'. She is trying to pick up the broken pieces of her life.

## **4.6 CONCLUSION**

This chapter initially focused on the findings and the themes which emerged from the quantitative and qualitative data collected. Findings and Themes that emanated from the information gleaned from drawings and interviews coupled with results of the baseline testing were identified and categorised. Common trends that emerged out of the themes were grouped together.

The next chapter will elaborate on the recommendations, limitations as well as the general overview of the study will also form part of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter allowed the researcher to give a detailed account of the findings of this particular study, after having done an analysis of the data collected during the investigation. Although limited, the results provide a profile of the emergent literacy of learners with FAS in a Grade One classroom and in a particular context in South Africa. Participating parents expressed their views on the socio-economic elements that may contribute to barriers in the families of FAS as well as the strengths present in the socio-economic environment of these families that can be used to support learners with FASD.

Findings in this study indicated that learners with FASD all lacked the same in-depth understanding of phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, print awareness, oral language and reading skills. According to the “Matthew principle” (as cited in Murray, 2006: 4), children who begin school with little phonological awareness have trouble acquiring alphabetic coding skill and thus have difficulty recognising words. Reading for meaning is greatly hindered when children are having too much trouble with word recognition. When word recognition processes demand too much cognitive capacity, fewer cognitive resources are left to allocate to higher level processes of text comprehension and integration. Trying to read without the cognitive resources to allocate to understanding the meaning of the text is not a rewarding experience. Such unrewarding early reading experiences lead to less involvement in reading and related activities. Lack of exposure and practice on the part of the less-skilled reader further delays the development of automaticity and speed at the word recognition level. Thus, reading for meaning is hindered, unrewarding experiences multiply, practice is avoided or merely tolerated without real cognitive involvement, and the negative spiral of cumulative disadvantage continues.

Conversely, learners who quickly develop efficient decoding processes find reading enjoyable because they can concentrate on the text. They read more in school and, of equal importance, reading becomes a self-chosen activity for them. The additional



exposure and practice that they get further develops their reading abilities. Thus, the increased reading experiences of these children have positive feedback effects that are denied the slowly progressing reader. They are in what Cunningham and Stanovich (2003: 4) describe as a “positive feedback loop, a reciprocal effect in which reading increases their ability to read.”

Furthermore, the learners with FASD in this sample demonstrated clear challenges with handwriting legibility across consonants and sentence tasks. The researchers concluded that children with FASD present with functional handwriting challenges and may have diminished motor skills with increased difficulty as task complexity increases. I noticed that during their writing exercises learners found it extremely difficult to keep their posture stable. They constantly moved around in their chairs, fall off their chairs and avoid sitting. They would be leaning on their arms on their table whilst standing on their feet.

## **5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It becomes apparent from the literature review and the findings of this study that FAS Grade One learners have severe challenges as far as phonemic awareness is concerned. This may also contribute to language and literacy problems. A small case study does not allow for generalisation. However, it does create the opportunity to point the direction for further research on a larger scale.

### **5.2.1 Recommendations for baseline assessment**

In the following section the researcher will discuss the recommendations for teachers using baseline assessment.

Assessment should be used to give information that can be utilised by teachers to modify the teaching methodology and learning activities in which they are engaged, to meet the necessary needs of most of the learners. Dreyer (2012:19) points out that feedback of the baseline assessment to determine the emergent literacy profile of learners with FASD in a Grade One classroom is an excellent tool to accomplish this afore-mentioned aim. The previously mentioned author emphasises, and the researcher concurs with him, that feedback is a most significant opportunity to influence, shape, direct and improve the learning process.

Through the research process, the researcher discovered that the learners with FASD displayed an array of learning deficits. Their lack of phonological awareness, words and sentences were evident in their baseline assessments and their emergent literacy profiles. This prompted the researcher to implement different teaching methodologies to suite her learners' needs. It was very evident in the participants' literacy profiles that they experience various learning barriers. Thus, baseline assessment is extremely important to:

- Determine the prior knowledge of the learner.
- Identify grey areas or areas of competence that can be built on.
- Monitor learners' growth.
- Initiate interventions to help the learner with their learning barriers.
- Evaluate the strengths of learners (ECDE, 2009).

In the next session, the researcher will discuss recommendations for the teachers, parents and for further studies.

### **5.2.2 Recommendations for teachers**

- Teachers need to be equipped with skills and knowledge and need to practice teaching to support their learners with significant literacy difficulties.
- Teachers must make sure that the teaching and learning of phonics are given appropriate priority in the teaching of beginner readers, and especially to learners with severe learning barriers in the classroom.
- Aspiring teachers should be equipped with a high quality of skills and knowledge of learners with FASD to understand their barriers and how to assist them.
- Teachers and aspiring teachers should be exposed to different kinds of learning deficits to experience the value of planning and working together, sharing their ideas and helping each other with the different challenges pertaining to education.

- The teacher must give additional support to learners who experience learning barriers in the class.
- Additional training and professional development opportunities must increase teachers' knowledge to assist learning with various learning barriers.

In the following section I will make recommendations for parents to help their children with emergent literacy practices.

### **5.2.3 Recommendations for parents**

Levey and Polirstock (2011:147) conclude that learners from poor socio-economic backgrounds enter the pre-school having not learned nearly as many different words as children from higher income families. This was very evident in the Emergent Literacy Profiles of the Grade One Learners with FASD. Due to their poverty-stricken environment and poor literacy-resourced home environment, the parents' main priority is to prepare their children to develop physically and socially for school entry. In this study, lack of parental involvement is identified as a socio-economic factor which contributes to the barriers in the families of learners with FASD which in turn contributes to the possible emergent literacy problems.

Parents are rich resources in the development of emergent literacy practices in learners with FASD through:

- Conscious effort of communication initiated by the parent with the child to develop a large vocabulary in their vernacular.
- Parents need knowledge on how to assist the child, therefore it is important for parents to attend class visits to be informed of the performance of the learner and how to help and assist the child.
- Parents need to become more involved in the educational journey of their children.

Considering the findings in the study, parental involvement in the emergent literacy profile of learners with FASD is important irrespective of whether they are educated or not. Therefore the partnership between home and school needs to be strengthened.

#### **5.2.4 Recommendations for further studies**

From my interpretation of the findings that came to light in this study, recommendations for further studies are:

- More research needs to be done on learners with FASD in South Africa to change the minds and perceptions of teachers that “all learners can learn”.
- More research needs to be done academically to equip the teachers with the necessary knowledge on how to deal with learners with FASD in practice teaching.
- Further research needs to be done to revise the prescribed CAPS curriculum regarding the overload syllabus that creates negativity amongst teachers – a more streamlined version needs to be designed.

I believe these recommendations will be beneficial in creating a better learning and teaching environment for all stakeholders, (especially learners at a disadvantage such as the learners with FASD).

In the next session the limitations and contributions of this study will be discussed.

#### **5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study was focused on four learners and the four mothers of these learners as participants and the purpose of this research study was to determine the emergent literacy profile of learners with FASD in a Grade One classroom. The data generated in this study were based on only four participants’ emergent literacy profiles as well as the socio-economic elements that may contribute to barriers and strengths that are present in the socio-economic environment of their respective families that can be used to support learners with FASD. The data that were gathered may be considered as very limited due to family conditions being very similar.

Many people may think of school as the initial place where children experience literacy. However, an implicit instruction of literacy skills begins years before children set foot in a classroom. Home is, for many children, where the foundations of language and literacy skills are fostered. Yet for many learners, especially in this study as the findings

show, home environments in low socioeconomic families may be lacking in texts and parental involvement. However, these homes do have strengths they can draw on in the form of extended family, alternative text etc. which the families might not have considered as such.

#### **5.4 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the objectives of the study were met and all research questions answered; the respondents gave feedback on what they thought the socio-economic elements are that may contribute to barriers in the families of learners with FASD that affect the possible emergent literacy problems. They also identified the strengths present in the socio-economic environment of these families that can be used to support learners with FASD. This research aimed to determine the emergent literacy profile of learners with FASD in a Grade One classroom in a selected rural farming community. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory provided a theoretical framework understanding the complexity of influences, interactions and interrelationships between the FAS learner and various other systems that are linked to the learner. It sought to shed light on grandparents and extended family members as strengths in low socio-economic environments in supporting learners with FASD.

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Appendix 1: H15-EDU-ITE-011 Dr D Geduld-Ms M Geswint 20 Aug2015



• PO Box 77000 • Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University  
• Port Elizabeth • 6031 • South Africa • [www.nmmu.ac.za](http://www.nmmu.ac.za)

Chairperson: Research Ethics Committee (Human)  
Tel: +27 (0)41 504-2235

Ref: [H15-EDU-ITE-011 /Approval]

Contact person: Mrs U Spies

20 August 2015

Dr D Geduld  
Faculty: Education  
06-LG-20  
South Campus

Dear Dr Geduld

**EMERGENT LITERACY PROFILES OF LEARNERS WITH FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME IN A GRADE ONE CLASSROOM: A SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT**

PRP: Dr D Geduld  
PI: Ms M Geswint

Your above-entitled application served at Research Ethics Committee (Human) for approval.

The ethics clearance reference number is **H15-EDU-ITE-011** and is valid for three years. Please inform the REC-H, via your faculty representative, if any changes (particularly in the methodology) occur during this time. An annual affirmation to the effect that the protocols in use are still those for which approval was granted, will be required from you. You will be reminded timeously of this responsibility, and will receive the necessary documentation well in advance of any deadline.

We wish you well with the project. Please inform your co-investigators of the outcome, and convey our best wishes.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "C Cilliers".

**Prof C Cilliers**  
Chairperson: Research Ethics Committee (Human)

cc: Department of Research Capacity Development  
Faculty Officer: Education

## Appendix 2a: Open-ended questions for parent interview schedule

### Parent interview schedule:

1. Storytelling when is it done at your home?
2. By whom is it done?
3. In which language is it done?
4. When your child plays in the home or around which languages does he/she use to play in?
5. Do you read at home?
6. How often do you read at home?

Often	Sometimes	Never
-------	-----------	-------

7. Do you value reading and writing?
  - 7.1 In which ways?
  - 7.2 Do you draw up a shopping list when you send your child to the shop?
  - 7.3 Do you fill out forms at home?
  - 7.4 Do you communicate with your child's teacher? How do you communicate?
8. What are on the wall of your home?
9. What are around your house that your child can read?
10. Who helps your child with his/her homework?
  - 10.1 When your child struggles with his/her homework what do you do?
  - 10.1 How often do you check your child's homework book?

Often	Sometimes	Never
-------	-----------	-------

11. What kind of text do you engage with at home?

Reading from the bible/koraan/hymn books etc.
12. When you attend church or any gathering what kind of texts are engaged with?

## Appendix 2b: Data Analysis

The next set of questions are about your CHILD.

This is the response of ALL four mother participants

	Often	Sometimes	Never
Storytelling when is it done at your home			✓
Do you read at home?			✓
How often do you read at home?			✓
Do you draw up a shopping list when you send your child to the shop?			✓
Do you communicate with your child's teacher			✓
How often do you check your child's homework book?			✓

	Myself	Partner	Extended family
Reading at home, by whom is it done?			✓
Who helps your child with his/her homework?			✓
When your child struggles with his/her homework what do you do? I send my child to .....	Nothing		✓

	Bible	Koraan	Other
What kind of text do you engage with at home?	✓		

## Appendix 3: Permission from Department of Education



Province of the  
**EASTERN CAPE**  
EDUCATION

STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY RESEARCH AND SECRETARIAT SERVICES  
Steve Vukile Tshwete Complex • Zone 6 • Zwelitsha • Eastern Cape  
Private Bag X0032 • Bhisho • 5605 • REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA  
Tel: +27 (0)40 608 4773/4035/4537 • Fax: +27 (0)40 608 4574 • Website: [www.ecdoe.gov.za](http://www.ecdoe.gov.za)

Enquiries: B Pamla

Email: [babalwa.pamla@edu.ecprov.gov.za](mailto:babalwa.pamla@edu.ecprov.gov.za)

Date: 28 November 2014

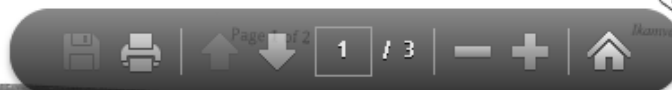
Mrs. Mildred Geswint  
P.O. Box 683  
Humansdorp  
6300

Dear Mrs. Geswint

**PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE A MASTERS RESEARCH: EMERGENT LITERACY PROFILE OF FAS LEARNERS IN A GRADE ONE (1) CLASSROOM – A SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT**

1. Thank you for your application to conduct research.
2. Your application to conduct a research in Graslaagte Primary School of the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) is hereby approved based on the following conditions:
  - a. there will be no financial implications for the Department;
  - b. institutions and respondents must not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation;
  - c. you present a copy of the written approval letter of the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) to the Cluster and District Directors before any research is undertaken at any institutions within that particular district;
  - d. you will make all the arrangements concerning your research;
  - e. the research may not be conducted during official contact time, as educators' programmes should not be interrupted;
  - f. should you wish to extend the period of research after approval has been granted, an application to do this must be directed to Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation;
  - g. the research may not be conducted during the fourth school term, except in cases where a special well motivated request is received;
  - h. your research will be limited to those schools or institutions for which approval has been granted, should changes be effected written permission must be obtained from the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation;

building blocks for growth



- i. you present the Department with a copy of your final paper/report/dissertation/thesis free of charge in hard copy and electronic format. This must be accompanied by a separate synopsis (maximum 2 – 3 typed pages) of the most important findings and recommendations if it does not already contain a synopsis.
  - j. you present the findings to the Research Committee and/or Senior Management of the Department when and/or where necessary.
  - k. you are requested to provide the above to the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation upon completion of your research.
  - l. you comply with all the requirements as completed in the Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the ECDoE document duly completed by you.
  - m. you comply with your ethical undertaking (commitment form).
  - n. You submit on a six monthly basis, from the date of permission of the research, concise reports to the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation.
3. The Department reserves a right to withdraw the permission should there not be compliance to the approval letter and contract signed in the Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the ECDoE.
  4. The Department will publish the completed Research on its website.
  5. The Department wishes you well in your undertaking. You can contact the Director, Ms. NY Kanjana on the numbers indicated in the letterhead or email [nelisakanjana@gmail.com](mailto:nelisakanjana@gmail.com) should you need any assistance.



**NY KANJANA**  
**DIRECTOR: STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY RESEARCH & SECRETARIAT SERVICES**  
**FOR SUPERINTENDENT-GENERAL: EDUCATION**

**Appendix 4: Principal's permission**

# GRASLAAGTE PRIMÊR/PRIMARY

HOOF / HEADMASTER

Mr. R.R. Geswint

Tel. : 042 2951891

Fax : 042 2911039

Email: [graslaagteprim@gmail.com](mailto:graslaagteprim@gmail.com)  
[rgeswint@mweb.co.za](mailto:rgeswint@mweb.co.za)



Posbus / P.O.Box 89  
Humansdorp  
6300

06 June 2014

**To whom it may concern**

On behalf of Graslaagte Primary School and the Governing Body, I hereby give consent to Mildred Geswint (student number: 208100655) to do her research at our school.

We wish you good luck in your future endeavours and that you will make a success of your studies.

Yours sincerely

.....  
R.R.Geswint  
Principal



## Appendix 5: Informed assent form for learners

Original letter to the participating learners requesting their consent to the research

Hi A,

I am trying to be a good teacher and I hope I will learn what the best way for you to learn is. I will have to use your baseline assessment in my writing.

Can I use your assessment?

Can I tell your parents, other teachers and other people about our work together?

Thank you,

Mrs.M. Geswint

<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>FROM</b> _____	
<b>DATE</b> _____	

## **Appendix 6: Informed consent form to parent(s) or legal guardian of participating learners requesting consent to the research**

Dear Parent(s) / legal guardian

You are being asked to give permission to participate in this research study. We will provide you with the necessary information to assist you to understand the study and explain what would be expected of you (participant). These guidelines would include the risks, benefits, and your rights as a parent in this study subject. Please feel free to ask the researcher to clarify anything that is not clear to you.

To participate, it will be required of you to provide a written consent that will include your signature, date and initials to verify that you understand and agree to the conditions.

You have the right to query concerns regarding the study at any time. Immediately report any new problems during the study, to the researcher. Telephone numbers of the researcher are provided. Please feel free to call these numbers.

Furthermore, it is important that you are aware of the fact that the ethical integrity of the study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee (Human) of the university. The REC-H consists of a group of independent experts that has the responsibility to ensure that the rights and welfare of participants in research are protected and that studies are conducted in an ethical manner. Studies cannot be conducted without REC-H's approval. Queries with regard to your rights as a research subject can be directed to the Research Ethics Committee (Human), Department of Research Capacity Development, PO Box 77000, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth, 6031.

If no one could assist you, you may write to: The Chairperson of the Research, Technology and Innovation Committee, PO Box 77000, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth, 6031.

Participation in this research is completely voluntary. You are not obliged to take part in this research at all. If you do consent to partake, you have the right to withdraw at



any given time, during the study without penalty or loss of benefits. However, if you do withdraw from the study, you should return for a final discussion in order to terminate the research in an orderly manner. If you fail to follow instructions, or if your medical condition changes in such a way that the researcher believes that it is not in your best interest to continue in this study, or for administrative reasons, your participation may be discontinued. The study may be terminated at any time by the researcher, the sponsor or the Research Ethics Committee (Human).

Although your identity will at all times remain confidential, the results of the research study may be presented at scientific conferences or in specialist publications.

This informed consent statement has been prepared in compliance with current statutory guidelines.

Yours sincerely

---

Mrs Mildred Geswint

(0729373413)

Researcher

15 March 2015

---

Dr D. Geduld

(041 5042375)

Supervisor

15 March 2015

I \_\_\_\_\_ state that I freely and voluntarily participate in the interviews and drawings related to your research. I understand that all data collected will be strictly confidential and used only for research purposes.

Signature of participant's parent: \_\_\_\_\_

Full name in print: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 7: Informed consent form to mothers requesting consent to the research**

Dear mother

You are being asked to give permission for your child to participate in a research study. We will provide you with the necessary information to assist you to understand the study and explain what would be expected of your child (participant). These guidelines would include the risks, benefits, and your rights as a parent in this study subject. Please feel free to ask the researcher to clarify anything that is not clear to you.

To participate, it will be required of you to provide a written consent that will include your signature, date and initials to verify that you understand and agree to the conditions.

You have the right to query concerns regarding the study at any time. Immediately report any new problems during the study, to the researcher. Telephone numbers of the researcher are provided. Please feel free to call these numbers.

Furthermore, it is important that you are aware of the fact that the ethical integrity of the study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee (Human) of the university. The REC-H consists of a group of independent experts that has the responsibility to ensure that the rights and welfare of participants in research are protected and that studies are conducted in an ethical manner. Studies cannot be conducted without REC-H's approval. Queries with regard to your rights as a research subject can be directed to the Research Ethics Committee (Human), Department of Research Capacity Development, PO Box 77000, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth, 6031.

If no one could assist you, you may write to: The Chairperson of the Research, Technology and Innovation Committee, PO Box 77000, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth, 6031.

Participation in this research is completely voluntary. You are not obliged to allow your child to take part in this research at all. If you do allow your child to partake, you have

the right to withdraw him/her at any given time, during the study without penalty or loss of benefits. However, if you do withdraw your child from the study, you should return for a final discussion in order to terminate the research in an orderly manner. If your child fail to follow instructions, or if his/her medical condition changes in such a way that the researcher believes that it is not in his/her best interest to continue in this study, or for administrative reasons, his/her participation maybe discontinued. The study may be terminated at any time by the researcher, the sponsor or the Research Ethics Committee (Human).

Although your child's identity will at all times remain confidential, the results of the research study may be presented at scientific conferences or in specialist publications. This informed consent statement has been prepared in compliance with current statutory guidelines.

Yours sincerely

---

Mrs Mildred Geswint

(0729373413)

Researcher

15 March 2015

---

Dr D. Geduld

(041 5042375)

Supervisor

15 March 2015

## Appendix 8: Ethic Application Form



D/496/05: APPLICATION FORM: ETHICS APPROVAL (HUMAN)

### APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL NMMU RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HUMAN)

TO BE FILLED IN BY A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE FACULTY RTI COMMITTEE:					
Application reference code:	<b>H</b> HUMAN	..... YEAR	..... FACULTY	..... DEPARTMENT	..... NUMBER
Resolution of FRTI Committee:	<input type="checkbox"/> Ethics approval given (for noting by the REC-H) <input type="checkbox"/> Referred to REC-H for consideration (if referred to REC-H, electronic copy of application documents to be emailed to <a href="mailto:Kirsten.Longe@nmmu.ac.za">Kirsten.Longe@nmmu.ac.za</a> )				
Resolution date:					
Faculty RTI representative signature:					

1. GENERAL PARTICULARS	
<b>TITLE OF STUDY</b>	
a) Concise descriptive title of study (must contain key words that best describe the study): <b>Emergent literacy profiles of learners with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder in a Grade One classroom: A South African context</b>	
<b>PRIMARY RESPONSIBLE PERSON (PRP)</b>	
b) Name of PRP (must be member of permanent staff. Usually the supervisor in the case of students): <b>Dr. D.C. Geduld Faculty of Education Room 020 Building 6 NMMU South Campus</b>	
c) Contact number/s of PRP: <b>041 504 2375</b>	
d) Affiliation of PRP: Faculty <b>Select Faculty Education</b> Department (or equivalent): <b>School for Initial Teacher Education</b>	
<b>PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATORS AND CO-WORKERS</b>	
e) Name and affiliation of principal investigator (PI) / researcher (may be same as PRP): <b>Mildred Geswint Gender: Female</b>	
f) Name(s) and affiliation(s) of all co workers (e.g. co-investigator/assistant researchers/supervisor/co-supervisor/promoter/co-promoter). If names are not yet known, state the affiliations of the groups they will be drawn from, e.g. Interns/M-students, etc. and the number of persons involved: <b>Supervisor: Dr. D.C. Geduld</b>	
<b>STUDY DETAILS</b>	
g) Scope of study: <b>Local</b>	h) If for degree purposes: <b>Master's</b>
i) Funding : <b>No specific funding</b> Additional information (e.g. source of funds or how combined funding is split) <b>Not applicable</b>	
j) Are there any restrictions or conditions attached to publication and/or presentation of the study results? <b>No</b> If YES, elaborate (Any restrictions or conditions contained in contracts must be made available to the Committee): <b>Not applicable</b>	

<p>k) Date of commencement of data collection: <b>2016/01/30</b> Anticipated date of completion of study: <b>January 2017</b></p>
<p>l) Objectives of the study (the major objective(s) / Grand Tour questions are to be stated briefly and clearly): <b>To determine the emergent literacy profile of learners with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder in a grade 1 classroom in a selected rural farming community</b></p>
<p>m) Rationale for this study: briefly (300 words or less) describe the background to this study i.e. why are you doing this particular piece of work. A few (no more than 5) key scientific references may be included: My own context brought me to the realization that a vulnerable group, learners with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder has often been neglected with regards to literacy development and in many cases fail due to an inability of teachers to address their literacy needs adequately within the mainstream classroom context. When I initiated research to investigate this claim, I discovered a gap in research relating to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and literacy development within my school context. According to Inan (2010), the term "emergent literacy" was first used by Teale and Sulzby (1986), whilst Marie Clay is known for pioneering the concept of emergent literacy (UKLA, 2007). Davidson (1996) defines emergent literacy as the process of developing an awareness and control of print language, which occurs before young children begin reading conventionally. Such perspective emphasizes that children's knowledge and use of written language emerge over time (Christie, 2003).</p>
<p><b>METHODOLOGY</b></p>
<p>n) Briefly state the methodology (specifically the procedure in which human subjects will be participating) (the full protocol is to be included as <i>Appendix 1</i>): This research constitutes an in depth investigation into the emergent literacy profile of learners with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder in a grade 1 classroom. The research design used was mixed method and I will select two groups of participants. Group One will consist of four participants within the researcher's registered Grade One classroom whose parents (mothers) agreed to allow their children to participate in this study and who have been identified as learners with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder by a multi-disciplinary team. Group Two participants will consist of the biological mothers of the four learners who also gave their consent to participate in this study. Purposive sampling according to Merriam (1998) is a technique that provide an information rich sample. Creswell and Clark (2011, p. 173) refer to sampling in qualitative research as "purposive sampling." Here, the researcher purposefully selects participants "who have experienced the central phenomenon or the key concept being explored in the study" to form his or her sample. To conduct this inquiry I will use Baseline assessment (testing) of the learners to give me a clear indication of the emergent literacy profile of the learners with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder within my registered Grade One classroom. As the purpose of the assessment is not look at the product (results so much), but rather at the developmental processes involved. I will use interviews to gather information about the linguistic background and literacy development of the participants, the parents' background with regards to literacy and reading as well as reading practices in the home environment. The mothers will be interviewd on separate occasions in the classroom in the afternoon after school. The third technique used to obtain information-rich data was making use of drawings. Haney, Russell, Michael and Bebell (2004, p. 241) contend that drawings have been used for "decades and are markers and mirrors of personal identity." They further claim that drawings offer a "unique window on events and their meanings". The introduction of drawings into the qualitative research study, not only changes the way in which the information needed for the study is presented, but it also affords the interviewee the chance to "escape the linearity of the spoken or written word" (Zweifel &amp; Van Wezemael, 2012, p. 2). See <i>Appendix 1</i></p>
<p>o) State the minimum and maximum number of participants involved (Minimum number should reflect the number of participants necessary to make the study viable) Min: <b>learners with FASD 4 and mothers 4</b>    Max: <b>learners with FASD 4 and mothers 4</b></p>

## 2. RISKS AND BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY

- a) Is there any risk of harm, embarrassment or offence, however slight or temporary, to the participant, third parties or to the community at large? **Yes**  
If YES, state each risk, and for each risk state i) whether the risk is reversible, ii) whether there are alternative procedures available and iii) whether there are remedial measures available.  
**1, Yes, 11, No, there are not any alternative procedures, 111, The remedial measures available are that the researcher has contacted FAMSA and made arrangements to refer the children or mother participants to them should any need arise during the course of the study and her interactions with the study participants.**
- b) Has the person administering the project previous experience with the particular risk factors involved? **No**  
If YES, please specify: **Not applicable**
- c) Are any benefits expected to accrue to the participant (e.g. improved health, mental state, financial etc.)? **No**  
If YES, please specify the benefits: **Not applicable**
- d) Will you be using equipment of any sort? **Yes**  
If YES, please specify: **I will be using audio recorder for interview with the parents**
- e) Will any article of property, personal or cultural be collected in the course of the project? **No**  
If YES, please specify: **Not applicable**

## 3. TARGET PARTICIPANT GROUP

- a) If particular characteristics of any kind are required in the target group (e.g. age, cultural derivation, background, physical characteristics, disease status etc.) please specify: **Group One Participants' age, (6-8 year old grade one learners of which four has been diagnosed by a medical doctor as FAS learners) gender (3 males and 1 female) and cultural deprived background. Group Two Participants's age, (21-25) gender (4 females) and cultural deprived background**
- b) Are participants drawn from NMMU students? **No**
- c) If participants are drawn from specific groups of NMMU students, please specify: **Not applicable**
- d) Are participants drawn from a school population? **Yes**  
If YES, please specify: **Group One participants - Four Grade 1 learners they range between the ages of 6-8 years, three boys and one girl. These learners have been diagnosed as FASD by both a medical doctor and educational psychologist. The socio-economic milieu of learners' places them at a disadvantage in that many of them come from single parent households. Group Two participants - The mothers of these learners will be the participants for this group.**
- e) If participants are drawn from an institutional population (e.g. hospital, prison, mental institution), please specify: **Graslaagte Primary School**
- f) If any records will be consulted for information, please specify the source of records: **School Assessment**
- g) Will each individual participant know his/her records are being consulted? **Yes**  
If YES, state how these records will be obtained: **Permission be asked from the participants' parents, the school principal and Department of Education. Permission would be requested on the informed Consent Form.**
- h) Are all participants over 18 years of age? **No**  
If NO, state justification for inclusion of minors in study: **Grade One learners in the Foundation Phase**

## 4. CONSENT OF PARTICIPANTS

- a) Is consent to be given in writing? **Yes**  
If YES, include the consent form with this application [Appendix 2].  
If NO, state reasons why written consent is not appropriate in this study. **Type response here**

b) Are any participant(s) subject to legal restrictions preventing them from giving effective informed consent? <b>No</b> If YES, please justify: <b>Not applicable</b>
c) Do any participant(s) operate in an institutional environment, which may cast doubt on the voluntary aspect of consent? <b>No</b> If YES, state what special precautions will be taken to obtain a legally effective informed consent: <b>Not applicable</b>
d) Will participants receive remuneration for their participation? <b>No</b> If YES, justify and state on what basis the remuneration is calculated, and how the veracity of the information can be guaranteed. <b>Not applicable</b>
e) Which gatekeeper will be approached for initial permission to gain access to the target group? (e.g. principal, nursing manager, chairperson of school governing body) <b>School principal</b>
f) Do you require consent of an institutional authority for this study? (e.g. Department of Education, Department of Health) <b>Yes</b> If YES, specify: <b>Department of Education – Uitenhage District</b>

### 5. INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS

a) What information will be offered to the participant before he/she consents to participate? (Attach written information given as [Appendix 3] and any oral information given as [Appendix 4])
b) Who will provide this information to the participant? (Give name and role) <b>Mildred Geswint    Researcher</b>
c) Will the information provided be complete and accurate? <b>Yes</b> If NO, describe the nature and extent of the deception involved and explain the rationale for the necessity of this deception: <b>Not applicable</b>

### 6. PRIVACY, ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY OF DATA

a) Will the participant be identified by name in your research? <b>No</b> If YES, justify: <b>Not applicable</b>
b) Are provisions made to protect participant's rights to privacy and anonymity and to preserve confidentiality with respect to data? <b>Yes</b> If NO, justify. If YES, specify: <b>Anonymity will be ensured through the use of pseudonyms for the participants. Any information about you will have a number on it instead of your name ethical consideration will be clearly explained to all participants, hard-copy informed consent forms and interview transcripts/observation notes will be stored separately, in a safe in the PRP's locked office, and electronically on the PRP's password protected computer. In order to ensure the protection of personal information is properly addressed.</b>
c) If mechanical methods of observation be are to be used (e.g. one-way mirrors, recordings, videos etc.), will participant's consent to such methods be obtained? <b>No</b> If NO, justify: <b>Not applicable</b>
d) Will data collected be stored in any way? <b>Yes</b> If YES, please specify: (i) By whom? (ii) How many copies? (iii) For how long? (iv) For what reasons? (v) How will participant's anonymity be protected? <b>(i) Dr Deidre Geduld, (ii) one, (iii) five years, (iv) for validation and audit purposes, (v) Anonymity will be ensured through the use of pseudonyms for the participants, ethical consideration will be clearly explained to all participants, hard-copy informed consent forms and interview transcripts/observation notes would be stored separately, in a safe in the PRP's locked office, and electronically on the PRP's password protected computer (See Appendix 1). In order to ensure protection of personal information is properly addressed.</b>
e) Will stored data be made available for re-use? <b>No</b> If YES, how will participant's consent be obtained for such re-usage? <b>Not applicable</b>

f) Will any part of the project be conducted on private property (including shopping centres)? **No**  
If YES, specify and state how consent of property owner is to be obtained: **Not applicable**

g) Are there any contractual secrecy or confidentiality constraints on this data? **No**  
If YES, specify: **Not applicable**

## 7. FEEDBACK

a) Will feedback be given to participants? **Yes**  
If YES, specify whether feedback will be written, oral or by other means and describe how this is to be given (e.g. to each individual immediately after participation, to each participant after the entire project is completed, to all participants in a group setting, etc.): **Written and oral feedback will be given to each mother participant at the end of the study**

b) If you are working in a school or other institutional setting, will you be providing teachers, school authorities or equivalent a copy of your results? **Yes**  
If YES, specify, if NO, motivate: **Copy of M Ed Thesis to be given to the school principal as well as an executive summary.**

## 8. ETHICAL AND LEGAL ASPECTS

The Declaration of Helsinki (2000) or the Belmont Report will be included in the references: **No**  
If NO, motivate: **Not applicable**

(A copy of the Belmont Report is available at the following link for reference purposes: <http://www.nmmu.ac.za/documents/rcd/The%20Belmont%20Report.pdf>)

a) I would like the REC-H to take note of the following additional information:  
**None**

## 9. DECLARATION

If any changes are made to the above arrangements or procedures, I will bring these to the attention of the Research Ethics Committee (Human). I have read, understood and will comply with the *Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in Research and Education at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University* and have taken cognisance of the availability (on-line) of the Medical Research Council Guidelines on Ethics for Research (<http://www.sahealthinfo.org/ethics/>).

All participants are aware of any potential health hazards or risks associated with this study.

**I am not aware of potential conflict(s) of interest which should be considered by the Committee.**

If affirmative, specify: **Not applicable**

30 August 2016

SIGNATURE: **Dr DC Geduld** (Primary Responsible Person)

Date

30 August 2016

SIGNATURE: **Mildred Geswint** (Principal Investigator/Researcher)

Date

## 10. SCRUTINY BY FACULTY AND INTRA-FACULTY ACADEMIC UNIT

This study has been discussed, and is supported, at Faculty and Departmental (or equivalent) level. This is attested to by the signature below of a Faculty (e.g. RTI) and Departmental (e.g. HoD) representative, neither of whom may be a previous signator.



NAME and CAPACITY (e.g. HoD)	SIGNATURE	Date
NAME and CAPACITY (e.g. Chair:FacRTI)	SIGNATURE	Date

### 11. APPENDICES

In order to expedite the processing of this application, please ensure that all the required information, as specified below, is attached to your application. Examples of some of these documents can be found on the Research Ethics webpage (<http://www.nmmu.ac.za/default.asp?id=4619&bhcp=1>). You are not compelled to use the documents which have been provided as examples – they are made available as a convenience to those who do not already have them available.

#### APPENDIX 1: Research methodology

Attach the full protocol and methodology to this application, as "Appendix 1" and include the data collection instrument e.g. questionnaire if applicable.

#### APPENDIX 2: Informed consent form

If no written consent is required, motivate at 4a). The intention is that you make sure you have covered all the aspects of informed consent as applicable to your work.

#### APPENDIX 3: Written information given to participant prior to participation

Attach as "Appendix 3". The intention is that you make sure you have covered all the aspects of written information to be supplied to participants, as applicable to your work.

#### APPENDIX 4: Oral information given to participant prior to participation

If applicable, attach the required information to your application, as "Appendix 4".

#### APPENDIX 5, 6, 7: Institutional permissions

Attach any institutional permissions required to carry out the research e.g. Department of Education permission for research carried out in schools.

**Appendix 9: Cronbach Alpha reliability test**

6	7	6	6	7	7	7
6	6	6	6	7	7	6
4	4	4	4	5	5	4
4	4	4	4	3	3	4
1	1	1	1	1	1	1
7	7	7	7	7	7	7
6	6	6	6	6	6	6
4	5	5	4	5	5	4
3	4	4	4	4	4	5
5	4	5	5	5	4	4
6	6	6	6	6	6	5
4	4	5	5	5	5	4
3	2	2	3	3	2	2
3	4	3	3	3	3	3
1	1	1	1	1	1	1
4	5	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	5	5	5	6	5
3	4	3	4	3	4	4
4	4	5	4	4	4	4
3	4	3	4	3	3	3
5	5	4	5	4	4	4
3	4	4	4	5	5	5
6	7	7	7	7	7	7
1	1	1	1	1	1	1
7	7	7	7	7	7	7
3	3	3	3	2	2	2
7	7	6	6	7	7	7
6	6	5	6	6	6	6
4	4	4	4	4	4	4
7	7	7	7	7	7	7
4	3	4	4	5	5	5
7	7	7	7	7	7	7
1	1	1	1	1	1	1
7	7	7	7	7	7	7
2	2	2	2	2	2	2
2	3	3	2	3	3	3
4	3	4	4	4	4	4
7	7	7	7	7	7	7
5	5	5	5	6	6	6
3	4	3	3	3	3	3
6	5	6	6	6	6	6
5	4	5	4	5	5	4

7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
6	5	6	6	5	5	5	5

Anova: Two-Factor Without Replication

<i>SUMMARY</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
Row 1	17	112	6.58823529	0.25735294
Row 2	17	108	6.35294118	0.24264706
Row 3	17	77	4.52941176	0.26470588
Row 4	17	65	3.82352941	0.15441176
Row 5	17	17	1	0
Row 6	17	119	7	0
Row 7	17	102	6	0
Row 8	17	78	4.58823529	0.38235294
Row 9	17	68	4	0.25
Row 10	17	73	4.29411765	0.34558824
Row 11	17	100	5.88235294	0.11029412
Row 12	17	82	4.82352941	0.15441176
Row 13	17	37	2.17647059	0.15441176
Row 14	17	57	3.35294118	0.24264706
Row 15	17	17	1	0
Row 16	17	67	3.94117647	0.18382353
Row 17	17	92	5.41176471	0.75735294
Row 18	17	69	4.05882353	0.43382353
Row 19	17	69	4.05882353	0.18382353
Row 20	17	63	3.70588235	0.59558824
Row 21	17	72	4.23529412	0.44117647
Row 22	17	73	4.29411765	0.34558824
Row 23	17	118	6.94117647	0.05882353
Row 24	17	17	1	0
Row 25	17	119	7	0
Row 26	17	42	2.47058824	0.26470588
Row 27	17	115	6.76470588	0.19117647
Row 28	17	101	5.94117647	0.05882353
Row 29	17	68	4	0
Row 30	17	119	7	0
Row 31	17	80	4.70588235	0.34558824
Row 32	17	119	7	0
Row 33	17	17	1	0
Row 34	17	119	7	0
Row 35	17	34	2	0
Row 36	17	47	2.76470588	0.19117647

Row 37	17	70	4.11764706	0.23529412
Row 38	17	119	7	0
Row 39	17	98	5.76470588	0.19117647
Row 40	17	47	2.76470588	0.31617647
Row 41	17	101	5.94117647	0.05882353
Row 42	17	79	4.64705882	0.24264706
Row 43	17	119	7	0
Row 44	17	80	4.70588235	0.72058824
Column 1	44	196	4.45454545	3.50951374
Column 2	44	200	4.54545455	3.41649049
Column 3	44	200	4.54545455	3.36997886
Column 4	44	201	4.56818182	3.32082452
Column 5	44	205	4.65909091	3.71828753
Column 6	44	205	4.65909091	3.81131078
Column 7	44	200	4.54545455	3.602537
Column 8	44	198	4.5	3.8372093
Column 9	44	200	4.54545455	3.64904863
Column 10	44	202	4.59090909	3.78224101
Column 11	44	207	4.70454545	3.65486258
Column 12	44	208	4.72727273	3.69133192
Column 13	44	205	4.65909091	3.71828753
Column 14	44	206	4.68181818	3.66384778
Column 15	44	203	4.61363636	3.63794926
Column 16	44	205	4.65909091	3.57875264
Column 17	44	204	4.63636364	3.49260042

#### ANOVA

<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Rows	2512.65642	43	58.4338702	309.460061	0	1.39741032
Columns	4.08823529	16	0.25551471	1.35318089	0.158918	1.65822222
Error	129.911765	688	0.18882524			
Total	2646.65642	747				

#### Cronbach's

Alpha

0.99676857

value very close to 1.00 indicating high consistency

## Appendix 10: Transcription of Interviews

Date of the meeting 23/03/2016

Participants: 4

Length: 1hour

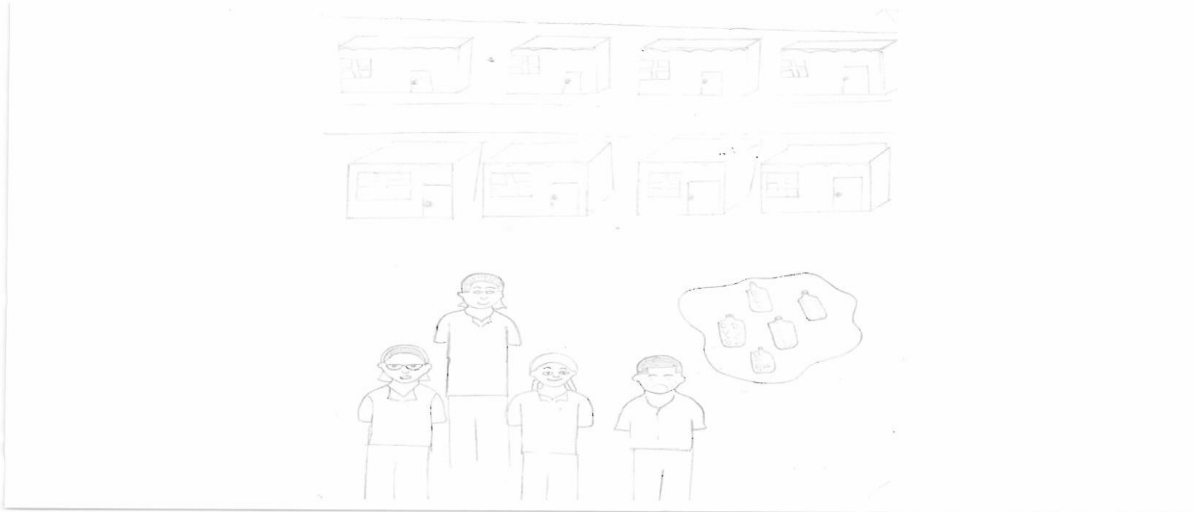
Speakers	Responses
Researcher	<p>Good afternoon everyone. My name is Mildred Geswint. I am a Master's in Education student from the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in Port Elizabeth. I am doing my Master's in Barriers to Learning and I studied Foundation Phase education. My study focuses on Emergent Literacy Profile of FASD learners.</p> <p>The goal of the interviews are to obtain understanding of firstly, the socio-economic elements that may contribute to barriers in the families of learners with FASD that contribute to the possible emergent literacy problems, Secondly, to highlight the strengths present in the socio-economic context of these families that can be used to support learners with FASD.</p> <p>Uhm, well, before we start, I have to ask you if it will be fine that I record our sessions and I am going to transcribe them do analyse the data for my studies. Is that fine with you? You can also withdraw at any point without any consequences. I will also not make your or the school's identity known. This is a safe space in which we can work together.</p>
Participant 2 Participant 4 Other participants	<p>I'm fine with it (giggles) I don't like the sound of my own on a recording Yes Nod their heads positively.</p>
Researcher	Does storytelling happens in your homes and when does it happens if it does?
Participant 4 Participant 3 Participant 2 Participant 1	<p>Storytelling is done in the early evening after supper, by my niece who reads to my son. I am still at my "partner's" place at the time. My cousin takes my son to the library and told me she reads to him there</p> <p>I do not see the need to be telling stories to my children they can listen to the television but most of the time our electricity is off. We have illegal electricity connections but we use it basically for cooking.</p> <p>I'm too busy trying to make ends meet. I do not have time for storytelling because if I don't find something to eat who will?</p>

Researcher	In which language are stories told if and when they are told
Participant 1	My teacher always told us that when you speak a language you must not mix it with other languages. When I speak to my child only speak in one language which is Afrikaans. My kind praat te veel daarom hou ek hom mond stil deur nie nog stories te vertel nie.
Participant 2	Ek praat somer in enige taal, want as my “boyfriend” saam is dan praat ek in isiXhosa, (I speak in any language when my boyfriend is with I speak in isiXhosa). My vriendin is “English speaking” (indicates in inverted commas) sy vertel somer n storie in English. Met my kind praat ek in enige taal.
Participant 3	Ek vind English makliker as Afrikaans, die witmense maak Afrikaans so moeilik. (I find speaking in English easier, these white people makes Afrikaans sound so difficult)
Participant 4	Just my mother tongue. Afrikaans is the thing
Researcher	Do you read at home?
Participant 3	Maar ek lees nie, want as ek begin lees dan lag almal groot of klein ek hou maar liewers my (indicates with hands zipped mouth) styf toe. (But mmmhhhh I don’t read because when I do old or young start to laugh I keep my mouth
Participant 2	I don’t read at home to my kids because if I do and I read the way my teacher did then my husband says I keep myself better than him. So I prefer not to read because I think my husband can’t read he learned slowly at school.
Other participants	All shake their heads indicating no
Researcher	Do you draw up shopping lists when you send your child to the shops?
Participant 2	Life is too short to be writing all the time. And you cannot write everything that you need. I will just say go buy ..... because with my little or no money I can just buy one thing at a time. I also can’t let my husband see I write a list of things I would want to use the money and think that I have a lot.
Other participants	All agree that they don’t write.
Researcher	Do you communicate with your child’s teacher and how?
Participant 4	I don’t have time to write little notes for my child’s teacher. Because I would have to do it all the time. She just complain, complain, complain all the time. So I rather stay out of her way. She pushes my blood pressure up. I can’t read and write neither am I able to do maths.
All other participants	Indicate that they don’t communicate with the teacher

Researcher	What are on the walls of your house
Participants 3	We don't have anything on the walls of their homes. No pictures nothing.
Researcher	When your child struggles with his/her homework what do you do?
Participant 4 Participant 1 Other participants	I do not do any homework with my child. I don't know why the teacher still send work home and why she doesn't do her job? As I said earlier my niece helps him with his homework because she likes to play school-school and thinks she's a teacher. She has a real cane too and when they can't answer right she hits them. I like a strict teacher.
Researcher	What kind of text do you engage with at home?
Participant 2 Participant 3 Other participants	My mother reads from the bible to the children all the time. I do not know if she thinks she will get into heaven. She has home cell every week and all the children have hymn books that she got from the white pastor. Reading is much more difficult now than when I was at school. We did easy reading. Now all the words look the same. I don't read from the bible my mother does. Nod in agreement on the bible reading.

## Appendix 11: Visual data and narratives collected

### Participant Sara



My ouers het op in plaas gely. Ons was daar  
geboore en groot geword. Op 'n dag het hulle  
besluit om ons toe te trek. Ek het daar  
skool gegaan. My ouers het baie geskink  
en labele. Die lewe was hard en het moeg  
gemaak. Ek het op die skool gaan en begin  
skink. Ek het toe iemand in my lewe ont-  
moet en saamgegaan met my lewe. Op 'n  
later stadium is ons getrou en twee kinders  
is uit die bewolkte geboore. My ouers was oud  
en sieklik en oor 'n jaar was albei ge-  
stuur. Na dit het my ma begin skink en  
dit was gegaan. Ek en die kinders het nie meer de-  
staan nie. My ma is verbuig met die maatskappij  
saamgegaan. Ek het geen uiters gebel nie en  
maas begin skink. Ek het elke maatskappij skink  
sonder om te sien of die maatskappij van tyd tot  
ek is minstens of nie meer saamgegaan nie. Ek het  
die kinders verstaan en afgeskep. My ma het  
my baie verniel en is later geskink. Ek en die  
kinders het alles gely, maar nooit op die skink  
nie. My kinders het by my tante groot geword.

My tante het my baie ondersteunende saam my kinders  
om te sien. Die skool het hant word my kinders het  
in groot des probleem. My tante se dogter was 'n  
matriek, help met die kinders en neem hulle ook  
biedend in, saam met die kinders met hulle  
het ek ook in werk gelede daar saamgegaan, omdat ek  
se maatskappij.



Participant Maria



### **Participant 1: Sara**

Swaarkry, swaarkry het my na drank gedryf. Ek kon nie meer nie. Ek het iemand ontmoet en later getrou. Hy was life vir my maar, my baie geslaan toe ek pregnant was. Hy was baie jaloers. Ek kon dit nie meer hou nie en meer en meer gedrink. Drank was my toe vlug. Ek het een dogter en het deur n moeilike tyd gegaan. My man het my ook nie meer geld gegee nie. Ek kon nie meer kos koop nie. Daar was niks om tee et nie.

Later het ek na my ma toe getrek. My kind was n senuwee wrak ek moes net weg kom van die abuse. Daa by my ma hulle was dit oorvol ek het nie n ander keuse gehad nie. Haar suster bse kinders en haar twee broers het ook daa gebly in die 2 room.

Daar het so baie dinge met my gebeur wat ek nie kon verduidelik nie. Bv Ek sou 'n nuwe werk kry en ek het geweet wat die verwagting was in terme van aanvangstyd. Ek eindig altyd laat. Dit kompromieer my verhouding met die werkgewer, wat meegebring het dat ek werkloos is. Al het ek graad 10 geslaag, kan ek nog steeds nie lees en skryf nie, en ek kan ook nie wiskunde doen nie. Dit het my altyd gepla. Hoekom kan ek hierdie dinge nie doen nie. Alles in my kop is net so "deurmekaar",

Die juffrou het my laat roep en gese die kind sukkel baie op skool met haar lees werk. My niggie bly ook by my ma sy kan goed lees. Sy help haar elke dag en neem haarv ook library toe. Oor my drinker is dit moeilik om my kind te help. Ek het te veel stress.

Alkohol speel 'n groot rol in my lewe en is 'n belangrike faktor my haar swak sosio-ekonomiese konteks. So hanteer ek al die drama in my lewe. Familielede speel 'n belangrike rol en ek sal nie alles kan hanteer sonder die ondersteuning van my ma en die ander ouer kinders in die familie nie.

### **Participant 2: Maria**

My ma het ons reg groot gemaak. Ek het die verkeerde vriende gekies en vroeg skool verlaat. Ons het baie vroeg skool gelos. Die pa het hom afgestry en my nie gesupport nie. Ek het twee kinnars. Baie keer het ons niks gehad nie om tee et nie.

Die gebied waarin ek woon in woon het maklike toegang tot Shebeens en is baie bevolk gedurende die dag of nag omdat die hoë werkloosheid in hierdie area. Die huis

waarin ek woon, is baie klein met slegs een slaapkamer, maar dit is baie oorvol omdat daar 'n paar geslagte daar woon. "

My unty het die kinnere by my gevat. Sy kyk mooi na hulle. My unty het my laat weet die juffrou soek my. Ek het skool toe gegaan en sy het gese hulle sukkel baie en gesukkel om te lees. My unty se kind wat by my ma hulle blyhelp haar ook om te lees. Sy suport haar baie met die lesery.

My kinders is baie siekerig. Hulle kry baie verkoue en die een het 'n vel probleem die kliniek is ver en ons gaan nie gereeld nie. Ek wil graag my kinders suport.

Die gebied waarin ons woon, is een van die gevaarlikste gebiede in Humansdorp. Die huise en hutte is swak gebou en toestand is uiters pateties. Mense in hierdie spesifieke gemeenskap leef in armoede en is kwesbaar, magteloos en werkloos. Die gebied is oorbevolk en die omgewing is armoedig. Hierdie oorbevolkte kontekste waarin die deelnemers hulself bevind word, word gekenmerk deur faktore soos misdaad, dwelmmisbruik en geweld.

### **Participant 3: Nieta**

Ek en my twee kinders het 'n ander mense gebly en het baie swaar gekry want ek het nie geld nie. Ek het baie gedrink en my kinnere soms alleen gelos. Ek werk nie en sukkel met ons al pay te kry. Ek het besluit om maar na my ma toe te gaan.

Al vier van ons slaap op dieselfde bed. Ek voel so nie in staat om my kind te voorsien van wat hy nodig het nie. Dit voel net of niemand vir ons omgee nie. Ek voel baie woede en frustrasie. Soms ly ek aan depressie omdat ek nie 'n manier vir my kind kan maak nie. Dan drink ek net meer. Dit is makliker om wyn te kry as kos. Ek weet dit is 'n ontsnapping, maar ek het geen hoop nie. Kyk net om jou, jy sien net hutte, haweloosheid, werkloosheid, swak infrastruktuur en gebrek aan toegang tot basiese dienste. My kind is honger, ek is nie in staat om toegang tot gesondheidsorg te hê nie. In hierdie gemeenskap het ons nie die fasiliteite van veilige drinkwater en sanitasie nie, en ek kan nie kwaliteitsopvoeding vir my kind bekostig nie.

Die juffrou het gese hulle sukkel baie op skool. By die huis is da nie baie leesboeke nie maar my ma is life om bybel te lees en gesunge te sing uit die gesung boek.

Alhoewel sy sukkel om die gesange te lees. My ma is baie geestelik en help my baie moet die kinnners. Ek kan nie altyd vir hulle gee wat ek wil nie, want dus net my ma se pensieon wat in kom. My ma help my ook nou om sasa toe te gaan om all pay te kry vi die kinnners.

#### **Participant 4; Susan**

Ek het die drank bottels in die huis leeg gemaak terwyl my ma "geslaap" het nadat sy te veel gehad het om te drink. Ek onthou hoe ek weggekruip het vir haar vriende wat my ma na ons huis toe gebring het.

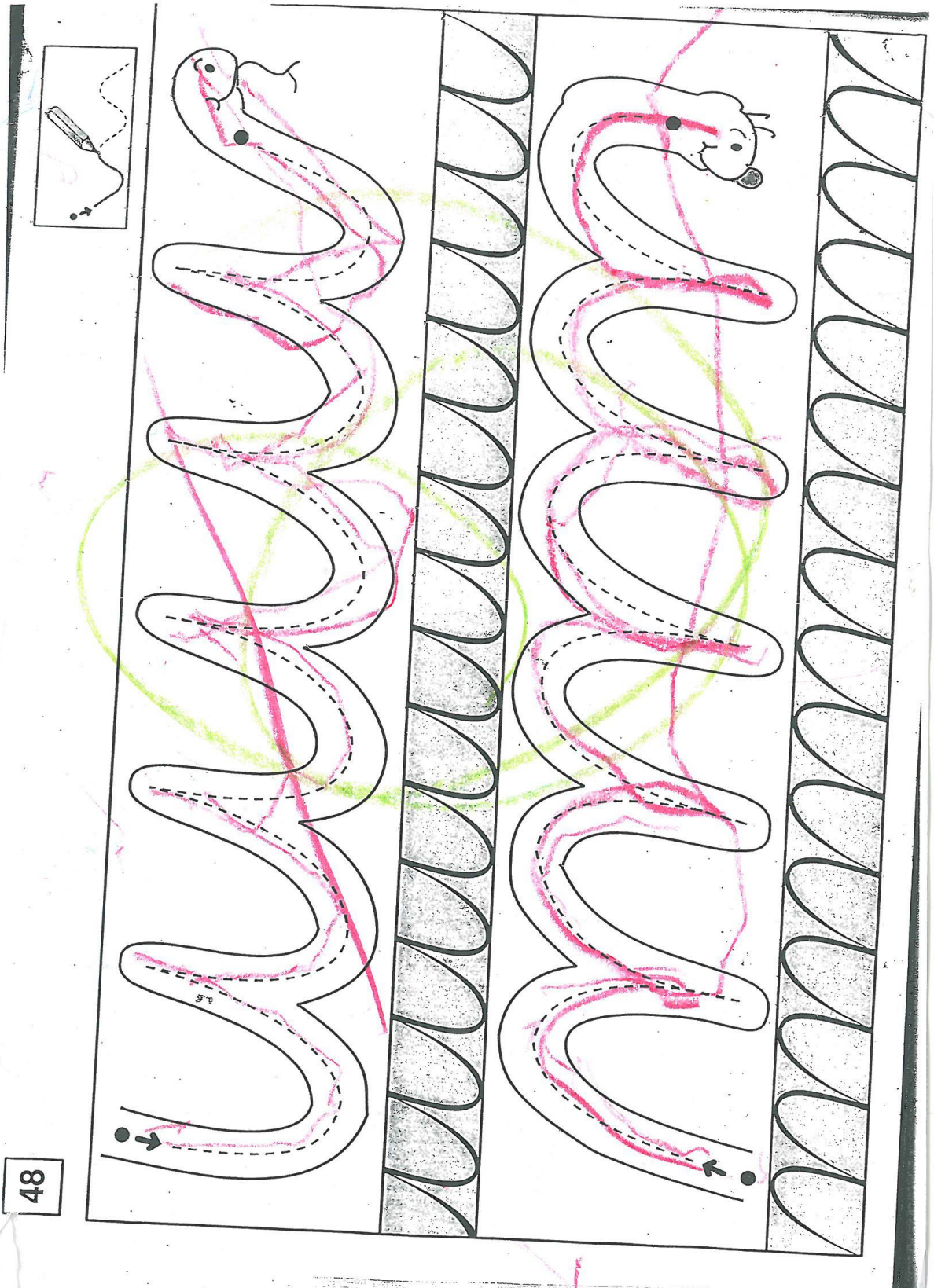
Vandag besef ek dat ek ook nie n goeie ma is nie. Die drank het my lewe verander na n slegte ma wat haar kinnners verwaarloos. Ek het ook nie support gehat van hulle pas nie. Hulle het my nie gesuport nie en het baie gesukel. Ek het geswerf met my kinnners. Die social worker het met my kom praat. Die kinnners het hulle vi my ma gegee. Die kerk se support group het my gehelp en gereeld vir my gebid. Hulle het my vir ses maande na SA teen challenge gestuur. Dis n Non-Governmental Organization wat my gehelp het om van my drank problem ontslae te raak.

Ek probeur om my lewe reg te kry. My kint is baie gestres en aggresief toe ek weg was. Ek het daar my drank problem oorkom. Ek wil nou net n goeie ma wees. My kint sukkel baie op skool en ek wil hom graag help om beter te lees.

Ek het gedink ek het niks gehad nie ... nou dink ek ek het baie om dankbaar voor te wees

Appendix 12: Evidence of Learners' baseline assessment

Learner (15)

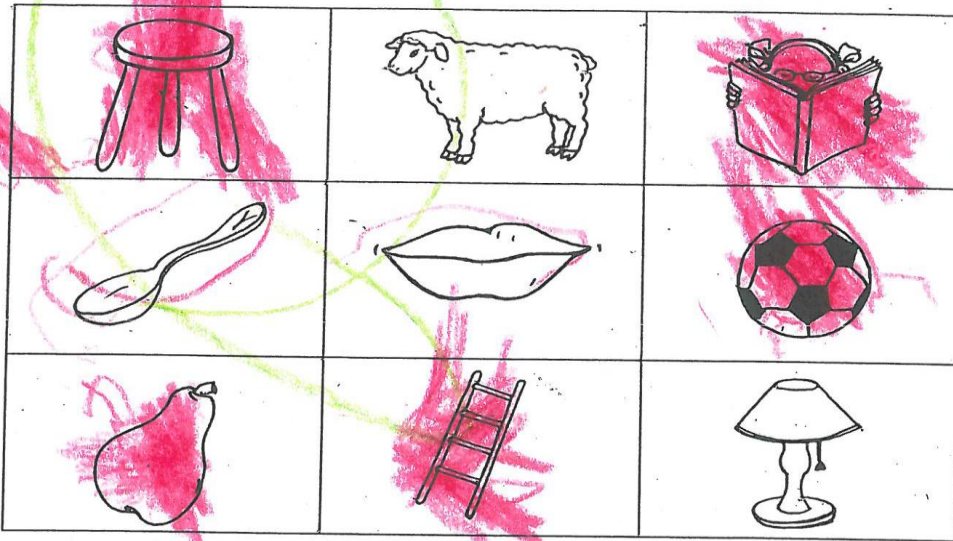


48

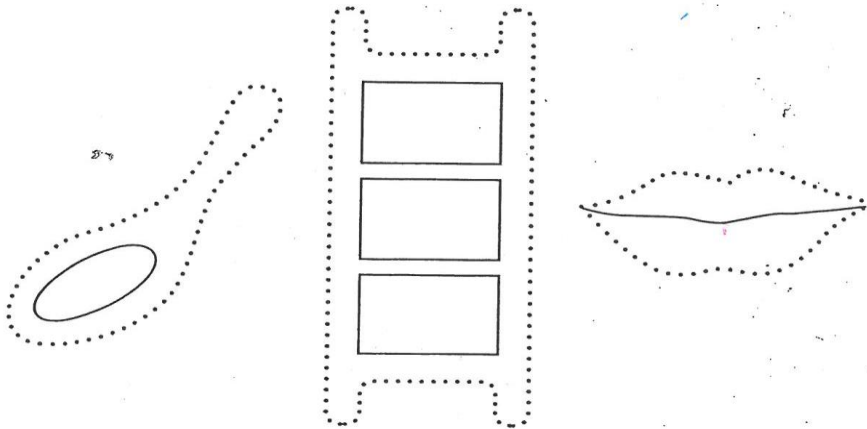
## 2 Klanke en Woordbou: l

Sê wat jy sien

1. Kyk na die prent. Sê wat jy sien. Kleur dié wat met 'n l begin in.

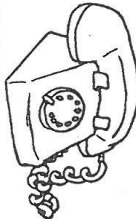







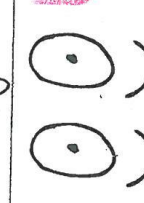



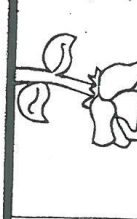




2. Verbind die kolletjies en kleur in.



Teacher Instruction:  
 Ask learners to match the item on the left with the correct sense on the right.  
 Learners trace the pattern, starting at the left and working to the right.  
 This is a fine-motor co-ordination and directionality activity.





Skruf patrone

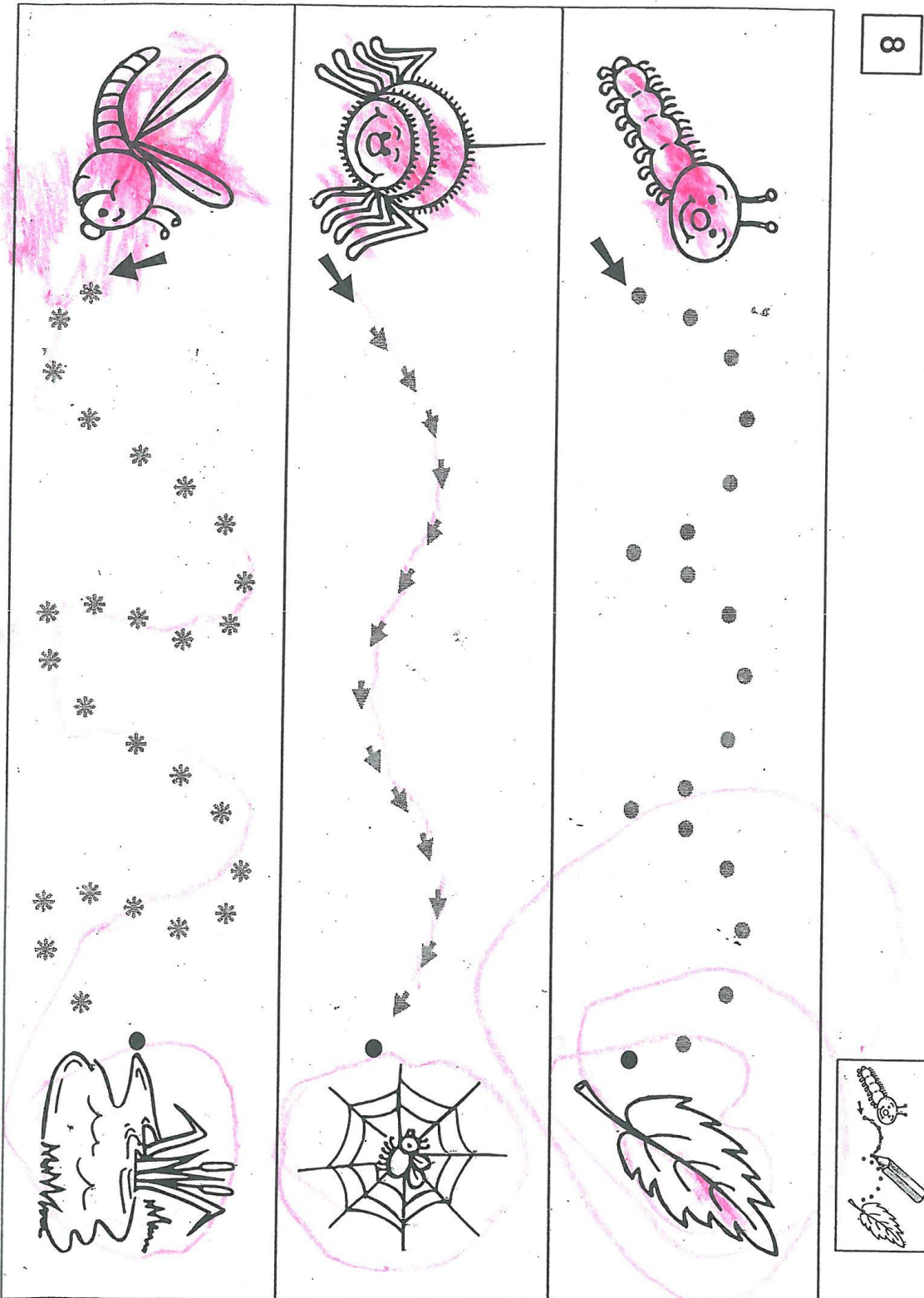
## 10 Klanke en Woordbou: o

Lees die sin

1. Kyk na die prente en voltooi die sinne.
2. Kleur die prente in.

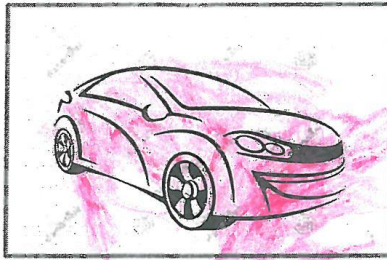
Dit is 'n r _ t.	
Dit is 'n b _ k.	
Dit is 'n t _ l.	
Dit is 'n p _ p.	





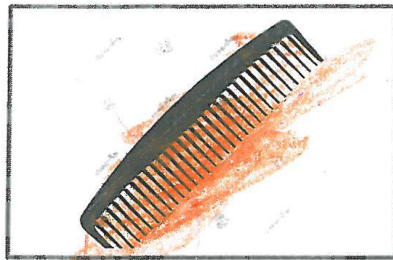
8

Kyk na die prent en kleur die  
begin klank in.



k	s	l	s	k
r	k	t	k	v
k	u	k	a	k
o	n	k	g	k

Kyk na die prent en kleur die eïnd  
klank in.



k	m	l	m	k
r	k	m	k	m
s	m	k	a	m
m	n	m	g	k

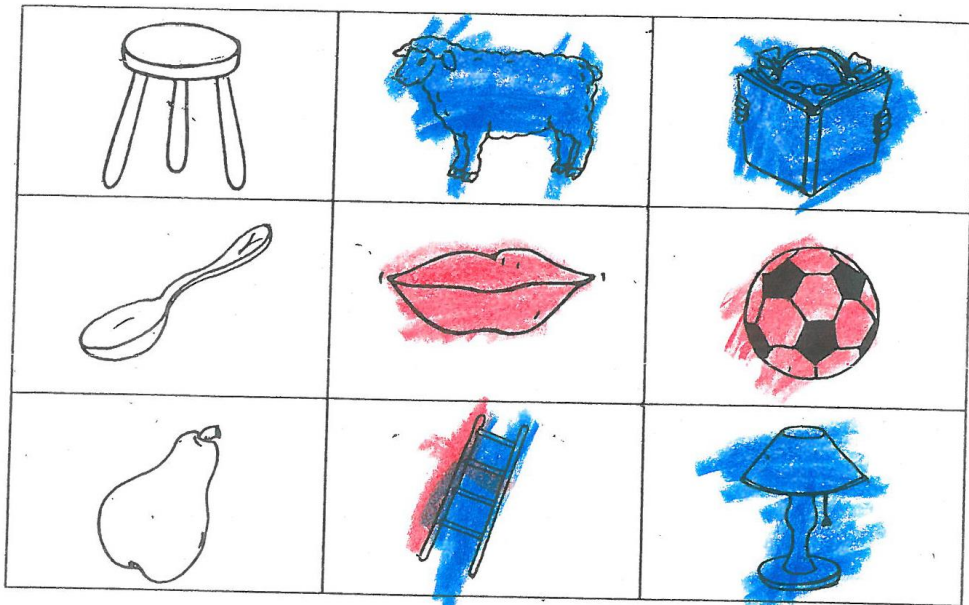
48

The worksheet contains two rows of a wavy line tracing exercise. Each row starts with a snake's head at the top. The top row features a dashed line for tracing, with a red crayon illustration and a small inset showing the tracing path. The bottom row features a solid line for tracing, with a red crayon illustration and a small inset showing the tracing path. A box with the number 48 is in the top left corner.

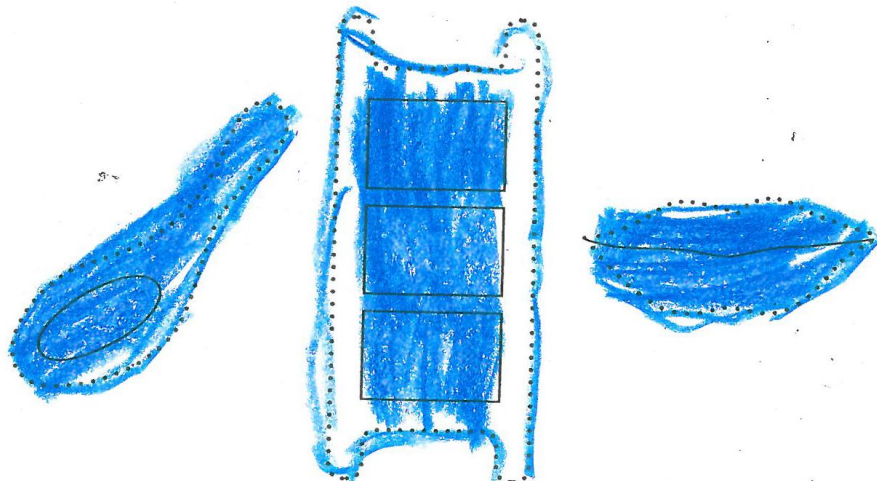
## 2 Klanke en Woordbou: l

Sê wat jy sien

1. Kyk na die prent. Sê wat jy sien. Kleur dié wat met 'n l begin in.




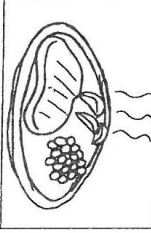
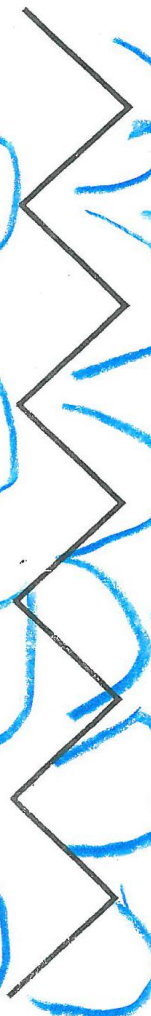
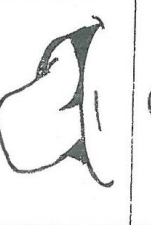

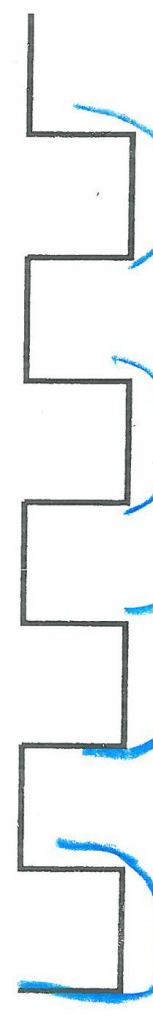
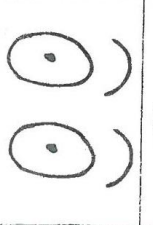
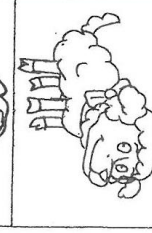


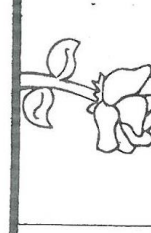
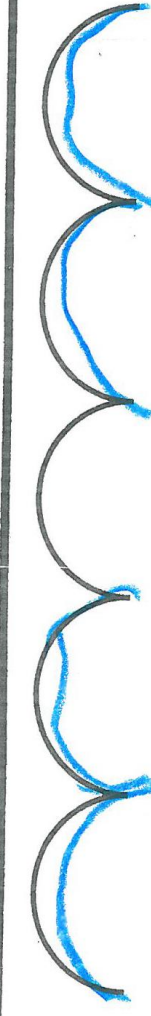



2. Verbind die kolletjies en kleur in.



**Teacher Instruction:**  
 Ask learners to match the item on the left with the correct sense on the right.  
 Learners trace the pattern, starting at the left and working to the right.  
 This is a fine-motor co-ordination and directionality activity.

**Skryf patrone**

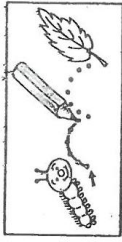
		
		
		
		
		

## 10 Klanke en Woordbou: o

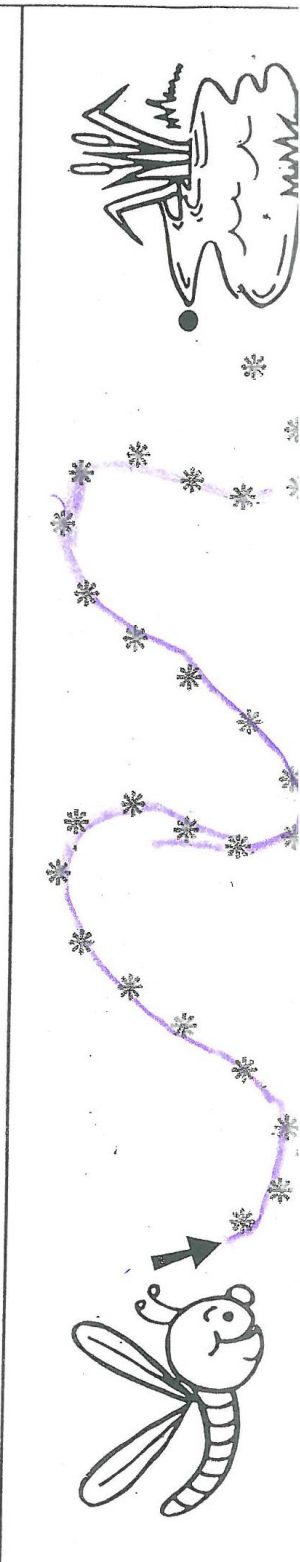
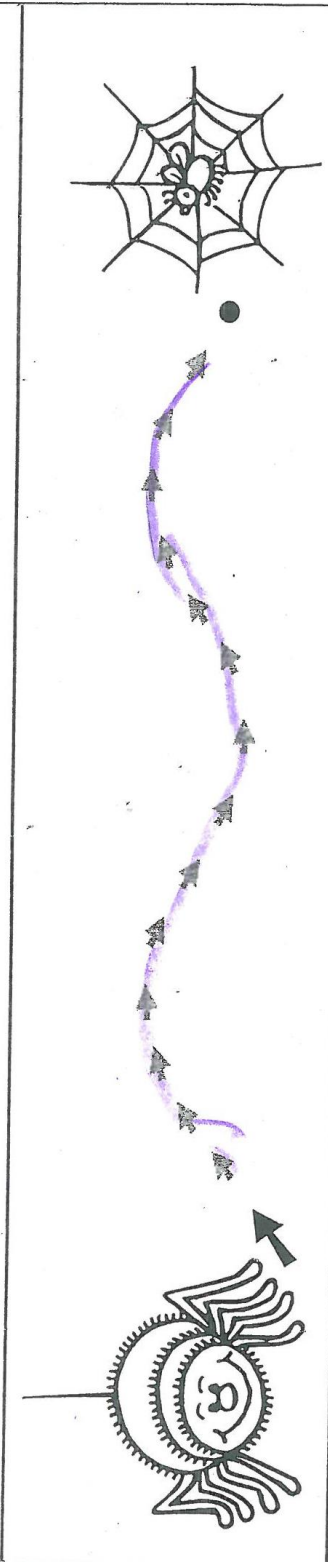
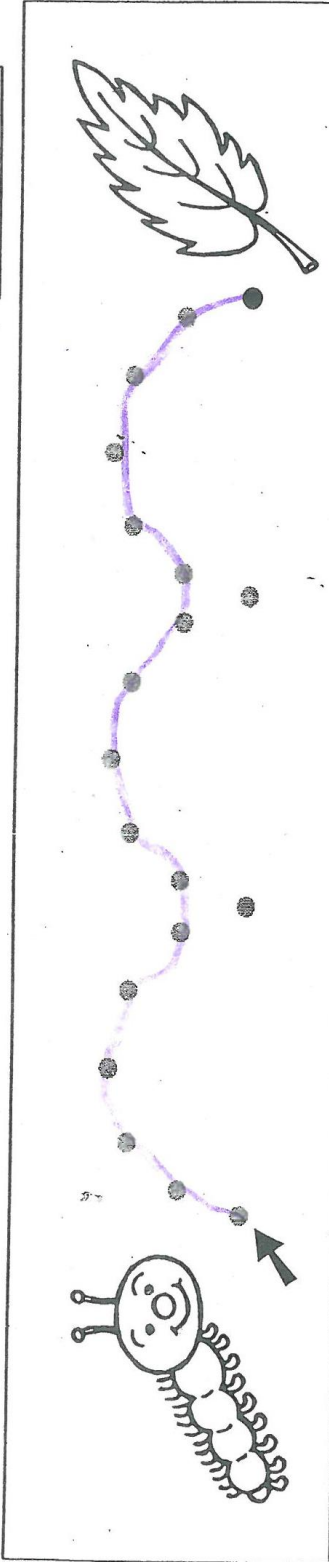
Lees die sin

1. Kyk na die prente en voltooi die sinne.
2. Kleur die prente in.

Dit is 'n r _ t.	
Dit is 'n b _ k.	
Dit is 'n t _ l.	
Dit is 'n p _ p.	

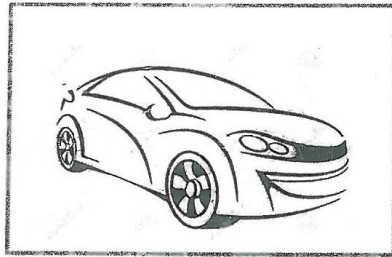


8



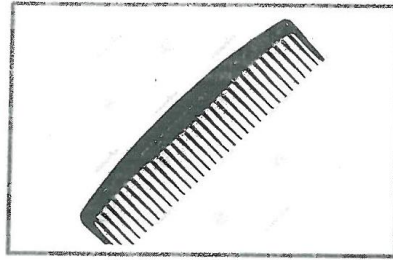


Kyk na die prent en kleur die  
begin klank in.



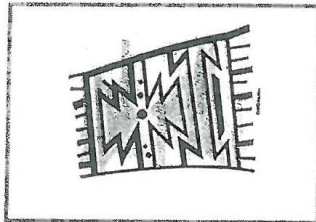
k	s	l	s	k
r	k	t	k	v
k	u	k	a	k
o	n	k	g	k

Kyk na die prent en kleur die eie  
klank in.



k	m	l	m	k
r	k	m	k	m
s	m	k	a	m
m	n	m	g	k

Kyk na die prent en kleur die  
begin klank in.



m	s	l	s	m
r	m	t	m	v
m	u	m	a	m
o	n	m	g	m



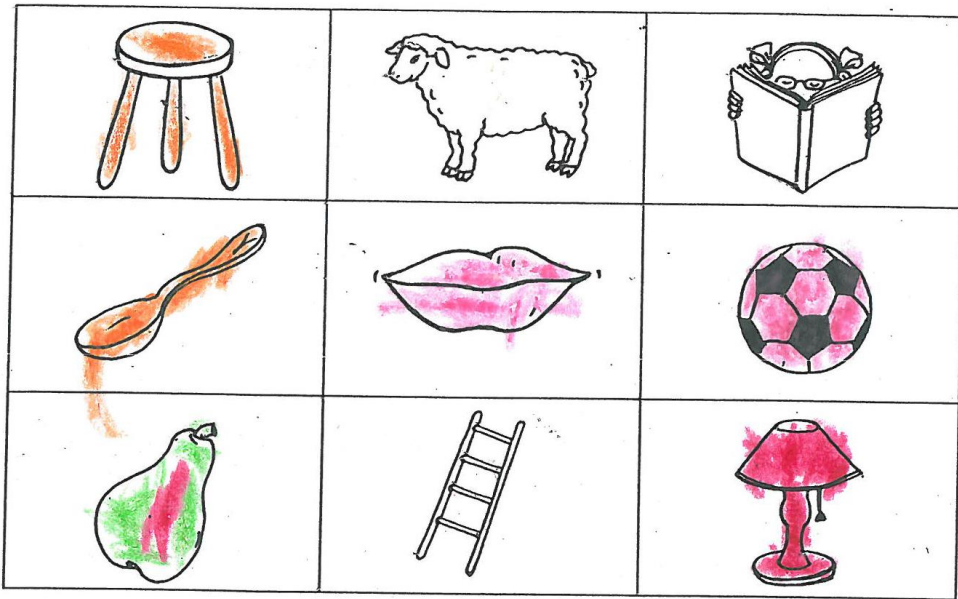
A large rectangular area for tracing, divided into two horizontal rows. Each row contains a snake-like path with a dashed line and a pink highlight, a shaded wavy line, and a solid wavy line. The top row features a snake head at the start of the path, and the bottom row features a snake head at the end of the path. Arrows and dots at the ends of the paths indicate the direction of tracing.

48

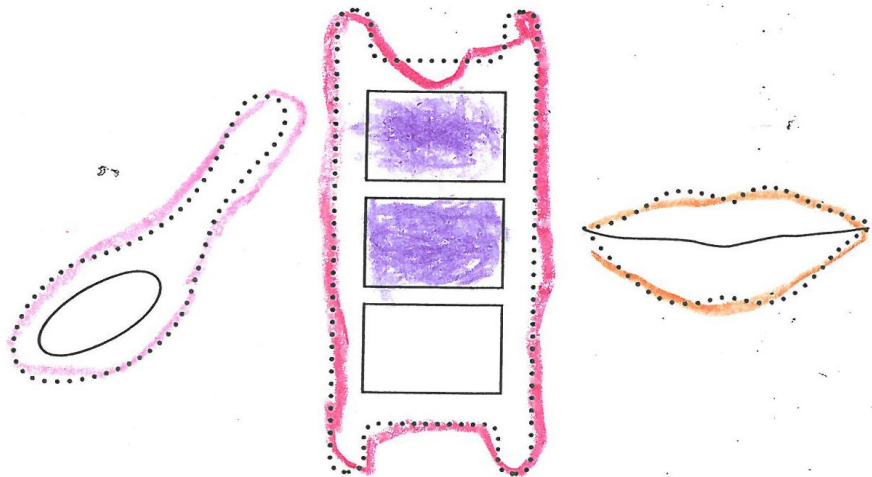
## 2 Klanke en Woordbou: l

Sê wat jy sien

1. Kyk na die prent. Sê wat jy sien. Kleur dié wat met 'n l begin in.

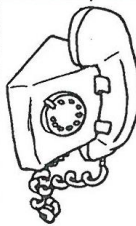



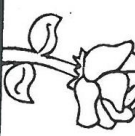


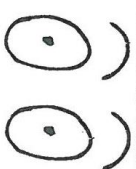




2. Verbind die kolletjies en kleur in.



**Teacher Instruction:**  
Ask learners to match the item on the left with the correct sense on the right.  
Learners trace the pattern, starting at the left and working to the right.  
*This is a fine-motor co-ordination and directionality activity.*

# Skruf patrone

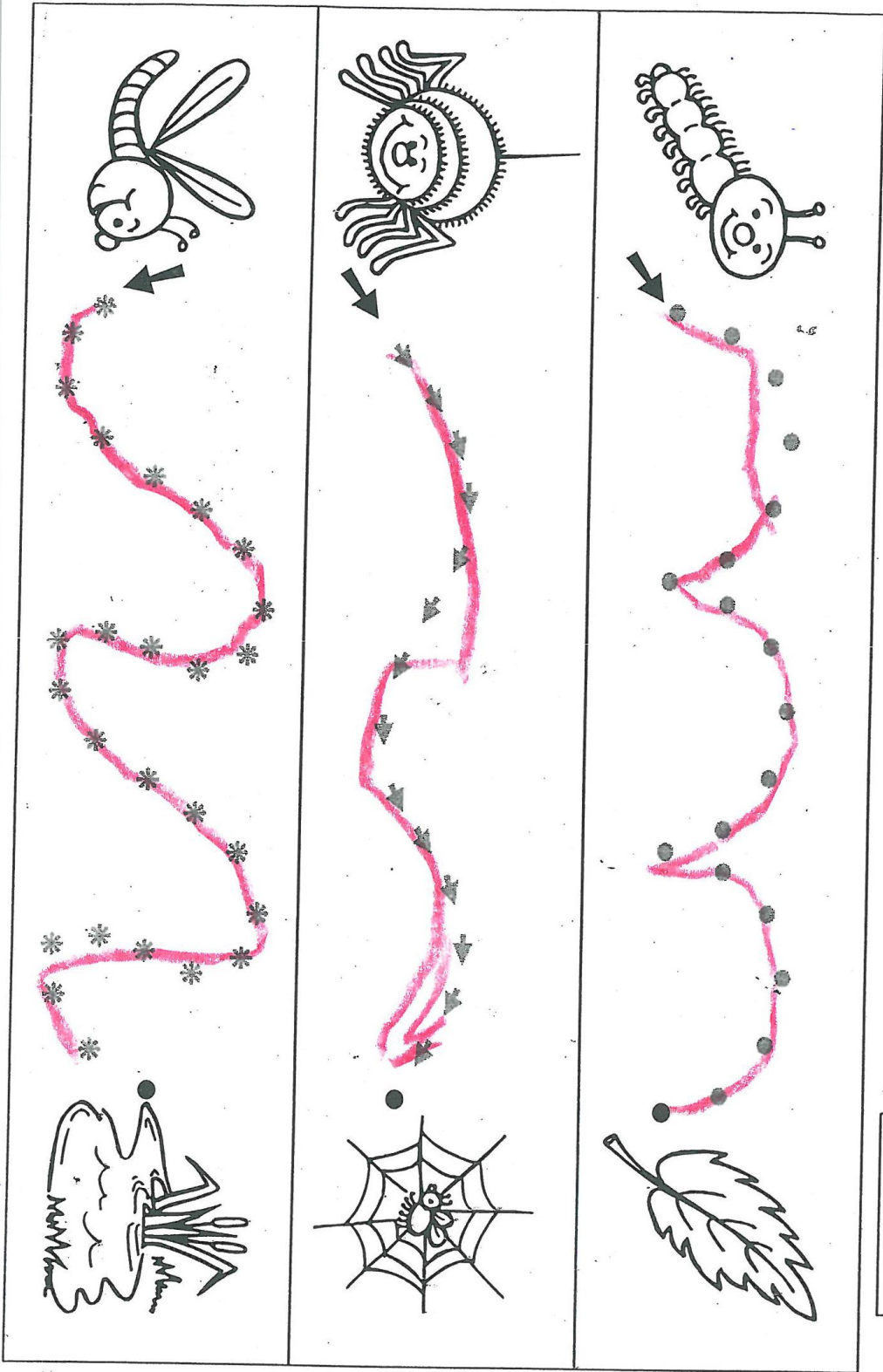
The central area of the worksheet contains three large, stylized patterns for tracing. Each pattern is contained within a scalloped border. The top pattern is a wavy line, the middle is a zigzag line, and the bottom is a series of vertical bars with pointed tops. Faint pink lines show the tracing path for each pattern.

## 10 Klanke en Woordbou: o

Lees die sin

1. Kyk na die prente en voltooi die sinne.
2. Kleur die prente in.

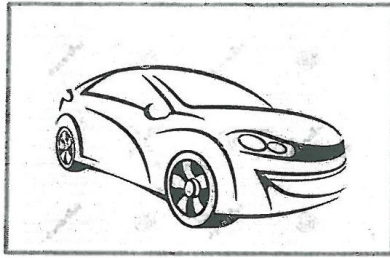
Dit is 'n r _ t.	
Dit is 'n b _ k.	
Dit is 'n t _ l.	
Dit is 'n p _ p.	



8

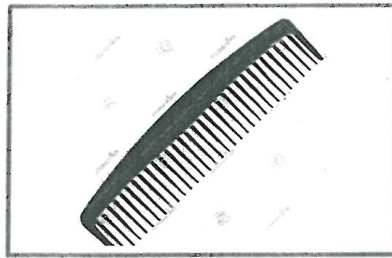


Kyk na die prent en kleur die  
begin klank in.



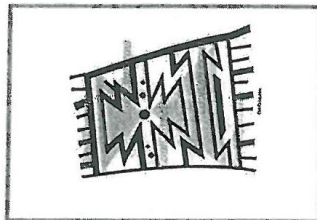
k	s	l	s	k
r	k	t	k	v
k	u	k	a	k
o	n	k	g	k

Kyk na die prent en kleur die eind  
klank in.



k	m	l	m	k
r	k	m	k	m
s	m	k	a	m
m	n	m	g	k

Kyk na die prent en kleur die  
begin klank in.

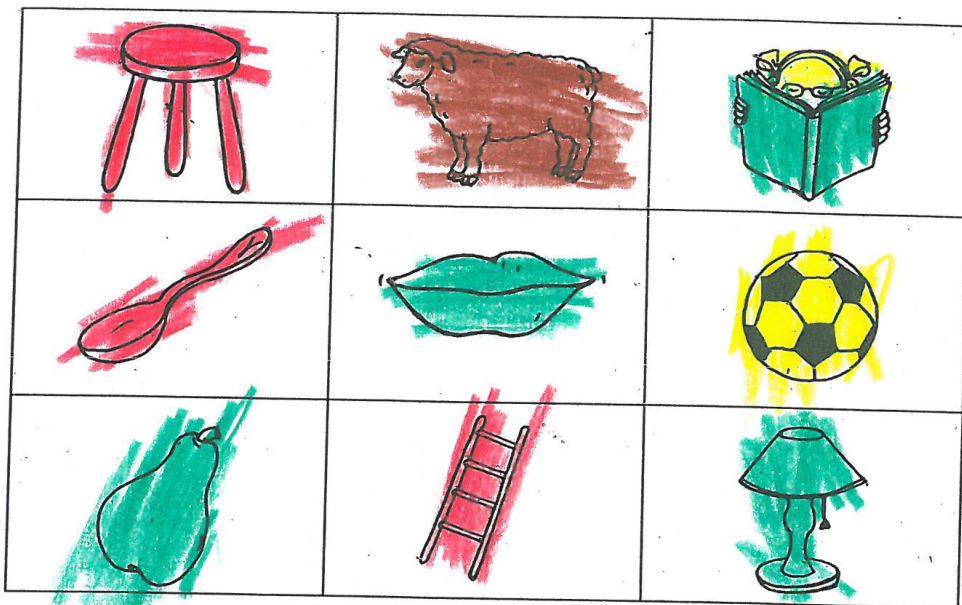


m	s	l	s	m
r	m	t	m	v
m	u	m	a	m
o	n	m	g	m

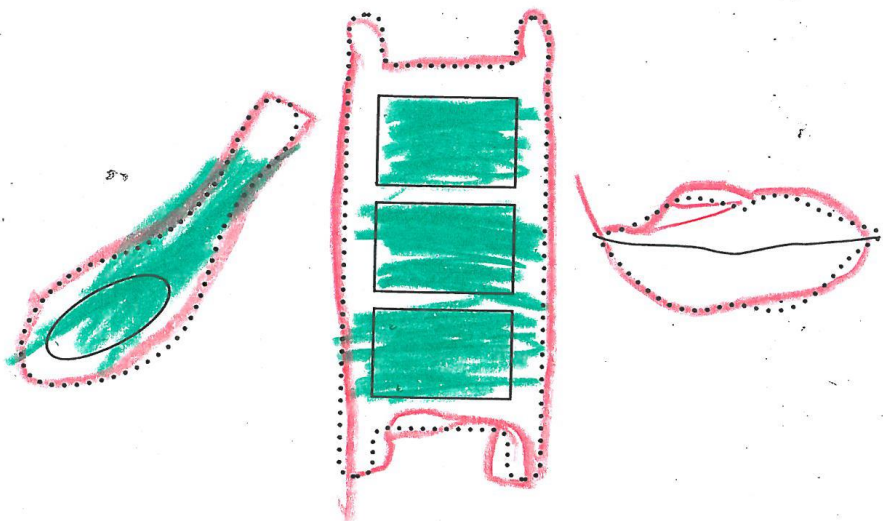
## 2 Klanke en Woordbou: l

Sê wat jy sien

1. Kyk na die prent. Sê wat jy sien. Kleur dié wat met 'n l begin in.



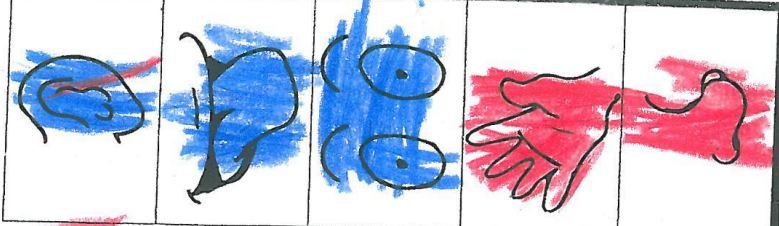
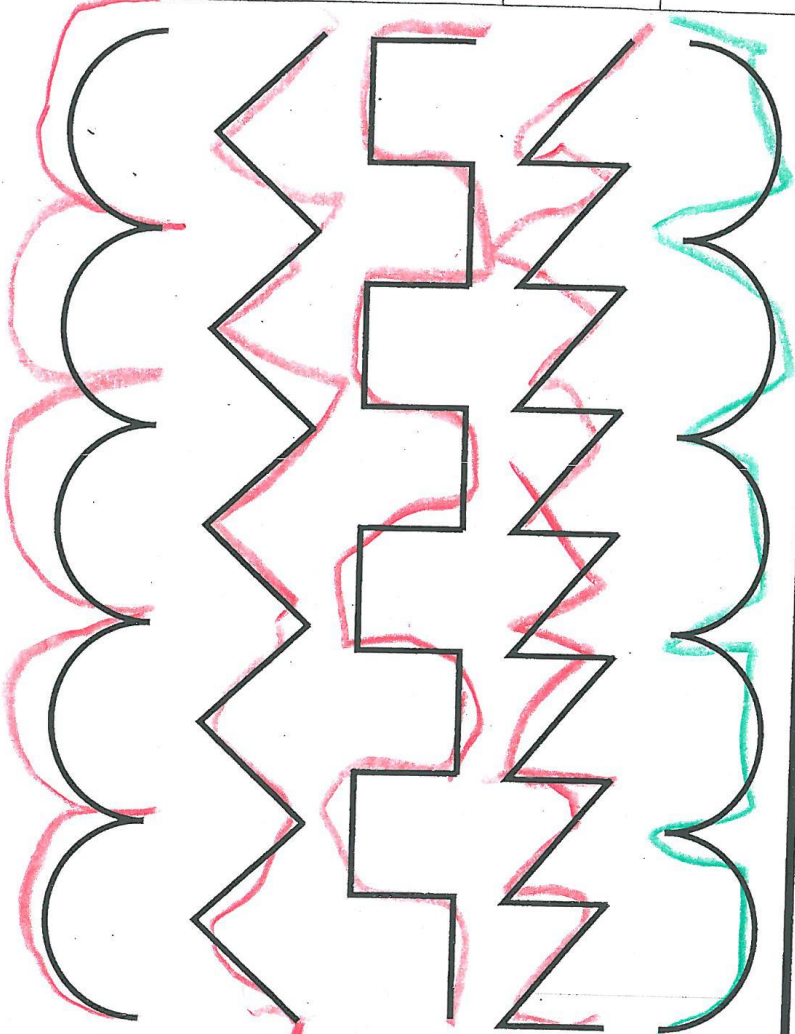
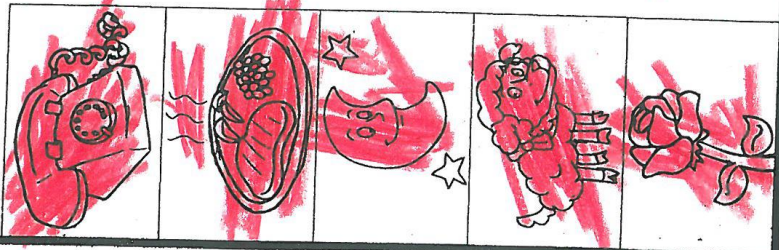
2. Verbind die kolletjies en kleur in.



Teacher instruction:

Ask learners to match the item on the left with the correct sense on the right.  
Learners trace the pattern, starting at the left and working to the right.  
*This is a fine-motor co-ordination and directionality activity.*





Skryf patrone

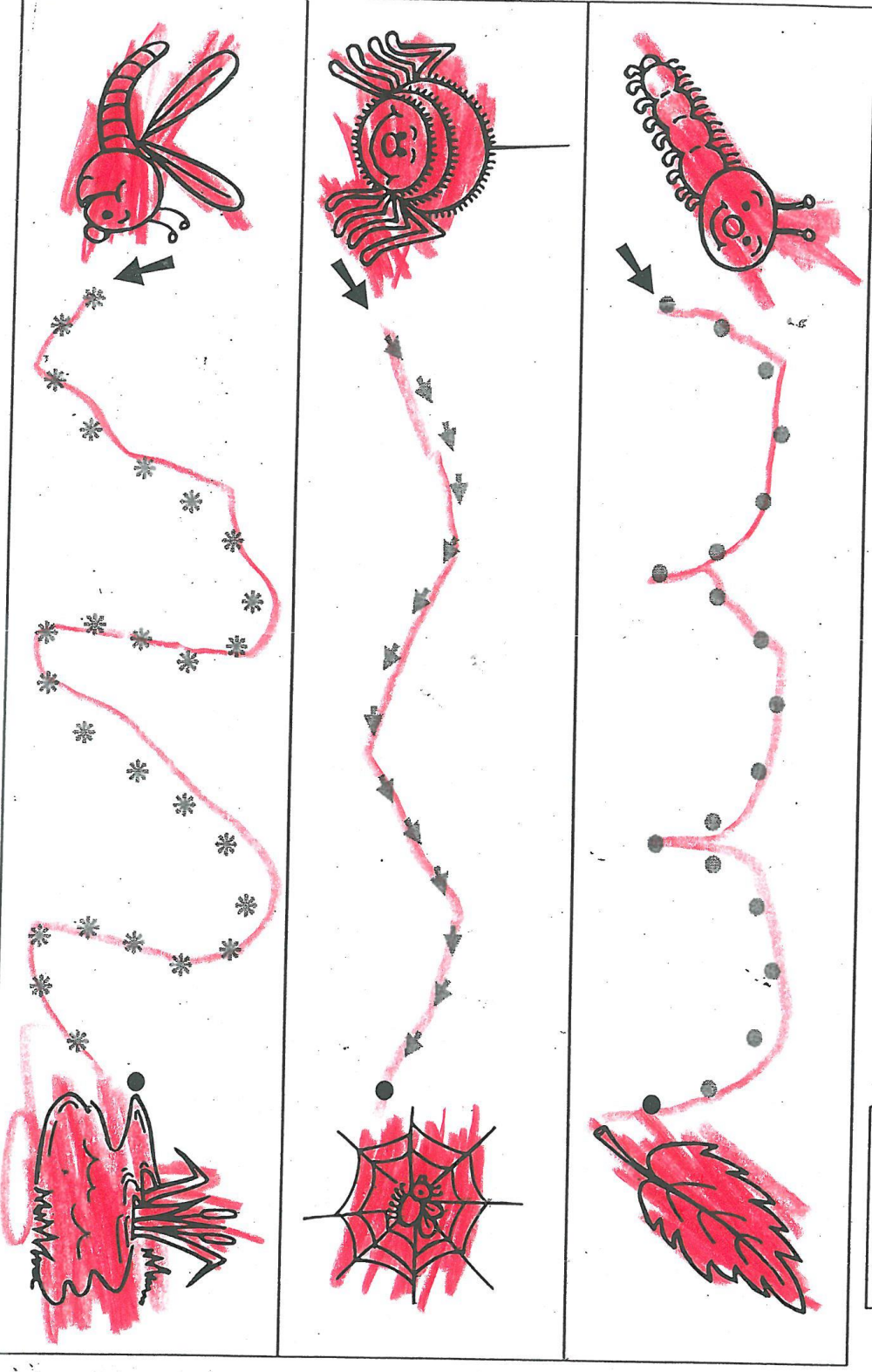


## 10 Klanke en Woordbou: o

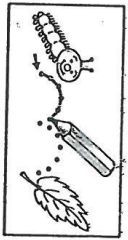
Lees die sin

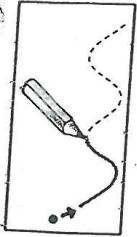
1. Kyk na die prente en voltooi die sinne.
2. Kleur die prente in.

Dit is 'n r _ t.	
Dit is 'n b _ k.	
Dit is 'n t _ l.	
Dit is 'n p _ p.	



8

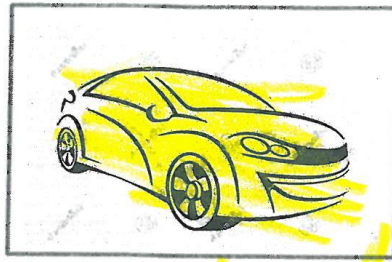




A large rectangular area containing two rows of tracing exercises. The top row features a large snake with a dashed line for its body and a red crayon stroke following the path. The bottom row features a smaller snake with a dashed line and a red crayon stroke. Below each snake is a row of wavy lines, with the top row having a red crayon stroke and the bottom row being a solid black line.

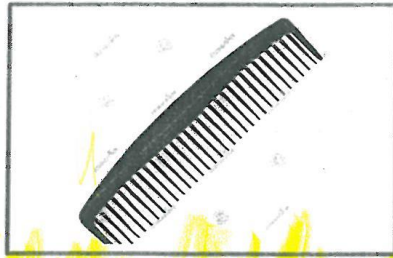


Kyk na die prent en kleur die  
begin klank in.



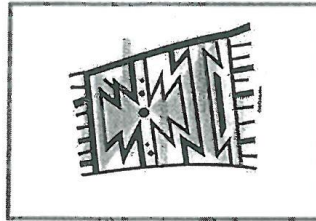
k	s	l	s	k
r	k	t	k	v
k	u	k	a	k
o	n	k	g	k

Kyk na die prent en kleur die eind  
klank in.



k	m	l	m	k
r	k	m	k	m
s	m	k	a	m
m	n	m	g	k

Kyk na die prent en kleur die  
begin klank in.



m	s	l	s	m
r	m	t	m	v
m	u	m	a	m
o	n	m	g	m