A BALANCED READING APPROACH FOR GRADE ONE AND TWO ENGLISH L1 AND EAL LEARNERS

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own work and that it has not been submitted to any other university.

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ABSTRACT

This study reports on a balanced reading approach (BRA) designed for a multi-cultural classroom , including both L1 (first language) and EAL (English additional language) Foundation phase learners .The purpose of this study is to explore how interactive reading approaches develop literacy skills for six African learners. The teacher as researcher developed a theoretical model, which informed her pedagogic practices in the balanced reading programme. She also engaged in action research to gain an insight into what teaching approaches , methodologies and resources make EAL learners learn more effectively .This information was disseminated to other educator colleagues .This study also examines parents' views on the BRA and their perceptions of the reading process. Data was drawn from the following sources : teacher observations and interactions with learners , semi-structured interviews with parents of learners , analysis of learner assessment and parental questionnaires. It was concluded that a balanced reading approach which values mother tongue instruction in a supportive learning environment enhances the self concepts and cognitive growth of EAL learners. This study has also demonstrated that collaborative active learning , extensive independent reading , language experience approach , home support , community support , high levels of intrinsic learner motivation and high teacher expectations of learners can positively impact on the EAL learners' academic progress and social growth at school.

Key words

Foundation phase
English Additional Language
Balanced Reading Approach
Additive Bilingualism
Communicative Language Teaching
Whole Language

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BRA	-	Balanced Reading Approach
BICS	-	Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills
CALP	-	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
L1	-	First Language
L2	-	Second Language
EAL	-	English Additional Language

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Children in the Foundation phase (grade 0-3) need to develop appropriate reading skills and strategies which will ensure optimal learning. Cunningham et. al (1995) see the teaching of reading and writing to high levels of literacy as a complex, long-term commitment which society must make if it is going to remain competitive in the 21st century. In the light of this long-term goal , this dissertation reports on a case study, the focus of which is the development of a reading programme designed to help both L1 and EAL children to read with confidence and motivation. EAL learners who experience motivation in the form of high amounts of external or intrinsic drive to learn , achieve higher levels of proficiency than learners with low levels of drive (Cook , 2001 ; Gee , 1999 ; Laufer and Hulstijn , 2001). Allington and Franzen (2000:137) highlight that in order to develop high levels of literacy, school choice; teacher development and mandated instructional materials must be given priority as strategies for building school capacity for teaching reading to "at-risk" learners in the new millenium.

1.1. RATIONALE

The project was initiated in response to a continuous decline in literacy standards at my school. This could be attributed to the drastic increase in the teacher-pupil ratio, enrolment of EAL learners, an increase in the number of children coming from problem backgrounds , and teacher frustrations in coping with the crises in education. Children are struggling to learn and teachers are struggling to teach. This study was prompted by a deep concern about why this was happening and what could be done about it.

1.2. AIMS

The broad aim of this study sought to improve the development of reading skills for EAL learners and to increase their motivation to read avidly. This study also focussed on developing these learners' top-down and bottom-up processing skills (see 2.4.4.) simultaneously in order to improve reading comprehension.

1.3. RESEARCH CONTEXT

This year-long , longitudinal study documents the implementation of a reading approach from September 2001 to September 2002 for the same class of learners who moved up with their teacher from grade one (2001) to grade two (2002) in a state, ex-House of Delegates, school in Pietermaritzburg. In 2002 , this research was conducted with 50 pupils ; 33 Indians and 17 Africans. Although this study was conducted with all the learners , the progress of six African children was tracked specifically.

1.3.1. THE SCHOOL AND ITS COMMUNITY

The socio-economic status of the community ranges from average to below average. In 2001 the school had a population of approximately 450 pupils. In 2002, in the Foundation phase, there were two grade one classes with 45 pupils in each. In grades two and three, there were 50 and 40 pupils respectively. Teachers in the Foundation phase were reluctant to implement an Outcomes-Based teaching perspective because of their uncertainty about the new curriculum. Taylor and Vinjevold (1999 : 127) argue that Curriculum 2005 is highly prescriptive in terms of policy and pedagogy and vague in the extreme in the area of content. Christie (1999 : 282) also argues that the policy documents of the Education Department are idealistic texts in an essentially top-down process which is not rooted in the realities of schools or responsible to conditions on the ground. These reasons could explain why these teachers still follow a "skill and drill" approach and do seatwork, instead of creating opportunities for social interaction. In the beginning reading stages in grade one, teachers spend most of their time teaching the skills of reading, with the result that very little time is actually spent on reading books.

1.3.2. RESEARCH SUBJECTS

I used convenience sampling in the choice of subjects. I had a good relationship with the parents of these children and they lived within the vicinity of the school. These six African children came from working class backgrounds and had older siblings or were living with African children who were attending the senior classes of ex-House of Delegates schools. The research subjects had attended pre-school and could speak

English at the beginning of grade one. The subjects included 3 boys and 3 girls who turned 8 in 2002. The names of the research subjects in this dissertation have been changed to protect their identities. The school management team granted permission to carry out this research as part of the school improvement plan to raise literacy standards at my school. Permission was granted by the parents of the research subjects to allow their children to participate in this research. These parents agreed to fill in questionnaires and engage in semi-structured interviews with the researcher. These parents also examined samples of their children's work and monitored the literacy progress of their children. The Junior Primary Heads of Department Forum organized and allowed me to present a workshop on the BRA to Foundation phase educators.

1.3.3. MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

In South Africa , many teachers in the Foundation phase are currently teaching African children to read in English who are at a disadvantage in comparison to their native peers since mother-tongue instruction in the initial stages of schooling ensures that learners have a firm foundation upon which to base their thinking skills (Macdonald and Burroughs, 1991). Lack of solid reading proficiency in the L2 makes it harder for these learners to compete with their English-speaking counterparts (Carrel et. al. , 1988). However, Gibbons (1993 : 6) is convinced that even though the language puts children at a potential disadvantage at school, they continue to have the same capacity for learning as all other children, provided they receive appropriate school experiences, intervention and high expectations from their teacher. Therefore , teachers in the Foundation phase need to be pro-active in providing early intervention and support in recognition of the child's learning and literacy difficulties that are language-related (Gibbons, 1993).

1.3.4. FAILURE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN BICS AND CALP

Teachers often assume that because EAL learners display conversational skills in the target language they should be able to perform as well as their native speaking counterparts. Leung (1996 :27) stresses that teachers in the Foundation phase need to make a crucial distinction between BICS (basic interpersonal communication skills) which tend to occur in everyday communication and CALP (cognitive academic

language proficiency skills) which tend to occur in decontextualised formal academic learning activities in order to assess learners more accurately. If teachers fail to make the distinction between BICS and CALP, then they could make inaccurate assessments of the learner's linguistic proficiency, thereby assuming that the child's cognitive abilities are causing inherent academic difficulties in the teaching-learning situation rather than admitting that these pupils moved into English contexts too soon (Fincham , 2000: 142). If these learners are not given the necessary contextual support at different stages in the learning process, they could develop a poor self concept in relation to their reading abilities and may not actualise their learning potential (Dubin and Olshtain, 1986 : 73). In the BRA, I gave children opportunities to develop their BICS by engaging learners in group reading projects. By means of guided reading I developed their CALP skills.

1.4. RESEARCH PROCESS

An action research, case study formed the basis of my research methodology. Robinson (1996 : 92) points out that action research is grounded in a desire to change and improve a situation. My research was mainly qualitative because I believe that in the Foundation phase, teachers need qualitative data in order to get a holistic picture of the children's language development and literacy potential . Qualitative data was collected mainly from semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, field notes and reading assessments.

1. 5. BALANCED APPROACH TO READING INSTRUCTION

Nation (2001) argues for a balanced approach to EAL learning involving meaning-focussed input, direct form-focussed instruction, meaning-focussed output and fluency development. In this study, I attempted to balance the following :

- Listening , speaking, reading and writing skills.
- Principles of natural language learning and principles of direct teaching.
- A meaning-emphasis approach to reading with a code-emphasis approach.
- Home support and school support programme.
- Home knowledge and school knowledge.

- Individual learning and collaborative learning.
- Literature based stories and graded basal readers.
- Home language and the language of teaching and learning used at school.

1.6. CONCLUSION

Teaching reading in the Foundation phase for EAL learners requires sound teaching methodologies and approaches to ensure success. The role of the teacher in action research is crucial to the design and implementation of the reading programme. A qualitative research approach can provide rich descriptive data for teachers to improve their practice. Before a practitioner attempts to design a reading programme, a theoretical framework ought to guide day to day planning and preparation. In the next chapter I will present the theoretical framework underpinning the BRA which informed my pedagogical practices in this research.

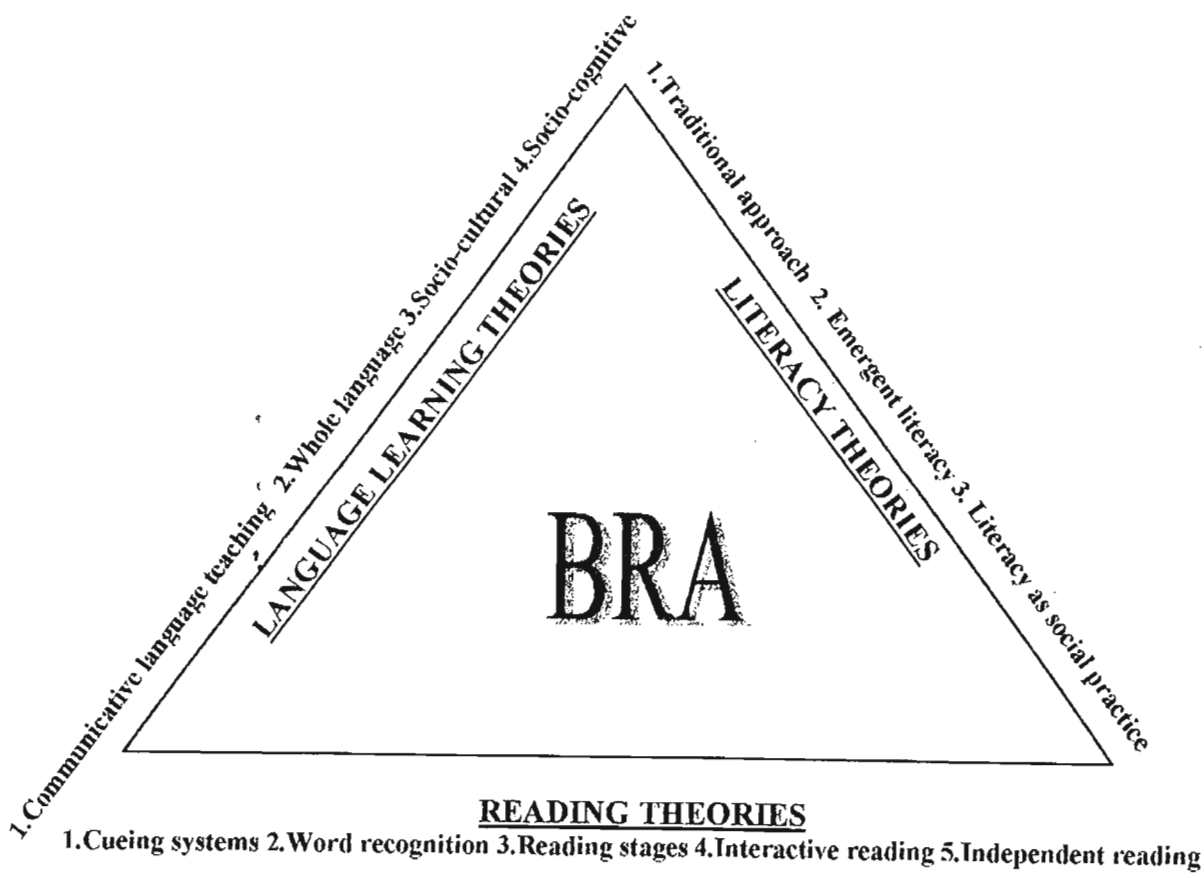
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE SURVEY

2.1. INTRODUCTION

It is evident, from recent reading research (Fitzgerald and Noblit , 2000; Hiebert and Pearson ; 2000 ; Stahl, 1998), that balanced reading instruction approaches have achieved compelling status in transforming methodologies of teaching reading to accommodate the changes of the 21st century. In this chapter, I will present a theoretical framework of my BRA (see Fig.1.) which was designed for learners in my context. My BRA was underpinned by principles derived from language learning theories (see 2.2), theories of literacy (see 2.3.) and reading theories (see 2.3.).

Figure 1. Theoretical Framework for Balanced Reading Approach



2.2. LANGUAGE LEARNING THEORIES

Gibson (1989) points out that the understanding of how to design literacy programmes for those in early grades must be derived from an understanding of the roots of language learning, of which literacy is a part. The reading approach used in this study drew on language learning theories that embedded teaching and learning practices within an interactive learning context. Skutnabb-Kangas and Cummins (1988 cited in Gibbons, 1993: 27) state that considerable research has demonstrated that interactive learning environments contribute significantly to the academic success of linguistic minority groups. The following language learning theories underpinned my BRA; communicative language teaching, whole language, socio-cultural approaches and socio-cognitive approaches. I will now discuss each of the following language learning theories.

2.2.1. CONCEPTS EMBEDDED IN A COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING APPROACH

Firstly, EAL learners learning to read in a new language need to master the linguistic system of the target language by using the language appropriately and purposefully (Richards and Rogers, 1986: 67). Cummins and Swain (1986: 27) and Gibbons (1993 : 26) emphasize the need for engaging EAL learners in meaningful communicative interaction with highly competent speakers of the language in order to respond to genuine communicative needs in realistic EAL situations. To read effectively, they need to extract meaning from the text, as learners cannot read with understanding in a language they do not know (Tiley and Goldstein, 1997). A firm foundation in listening and speaking is essential for progress in reading and writing in the target language. In South Africa, the results of the Threshold Project research have shown that the children's oral skills were poorly developed because they received very little opportunity to develop their basic interpersonal communication skills (Macdonald and Burroughs, 1991: 51). Therefore, in the BRA , I created opportunities for EAL learners to develop their conceptual , language and communicative skills (see 4.3. and 4.5). In addition, I allowed EAL learners to use their mother tongue (see 5.2.) and then gradually incorporate the EAL alongside it (additive bilingualism) so that there was no loss to the first language (Lambert ,1977 cited in Cummins and Swain,1986 :33). Robb (1995:15) stresses the importance of maintaining and developing the home language for the social ,emotional and cognitive

development of the African child. Furthermore, I supported meaning in the EAL by making English comprehensible (see 4.3.) to EAL learners by embedding messages in a rich extra-linguistic context e.g. pictures, gestures, props and role playing (Freeman and Freeman ,1994 :568 ; Krashen, 1982).

Secondly, communication of meaning is central to language learning and learners need to develop this competency to function in society. Therefore, communication of meaning places equal value on the development of grammatical competence, i.e. the ability to recognise and manipulate the phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic features of language in order to understand and produce words e.g. phonic baskets (see appendix 4-9) and sentences e.g. test item 7 (see appendix 11); socio-linguistic competence, i.e. the ability to use language appropriate to particular social contexts (see 5.2); discourse competence, i.e. the ability to understand and produce longer pieces of oral and written texts, including the meanings expressed and implied connections between individual sentences e.g. personal writing (see appendix 4-9) , and strategic competence, i.e. coping or survival strategies (see 4.3.) which fluent language users rely on to compensate for limiting factors that might otherwise lead to a communication failure (Canale and Swain, 1980; Savignon, 1983 cited in Nurss and Hough ,1992). Throughout the implementation of the BRA, I gave EAL learners opportunities to acquire these competencies by means of engaging them in activities which promoted interaction with L1 learners.

2.2.2. CONCEPTS EMBEDDED IN THE WHOLE LANGUAGE APPROACH

Whole language is grounded in the research on language learning and teaching which shows that learning is a natural part of growth and development. This development is influenced by social contexts and is mediated by others . This approach encourages children in the early years of learning to see the whole picture first and then the parts. Decontextualized learning is discouraged right from the beginning (Browne , 1998; Edelsky et.al. , 1991 ; Freeman and Freeman ,1992 ; Goodman , 1982; Goodman , 1992). From a whole language perspective , the utilisation of all the senses is necessary to develop the four modes of listening , speaking , reading and writing . Gardner (1984 ,

cited in Freeman and Freeman , 1992 : 136-137) advocates seven kinds of intelligences which should be valued by educators i.e. linguistic and logical- mathematical , spatial , musical , bodily- kinesthetic , interpersonal and intrapersonal . Harste and Mikulecky (1984 , cited in Freeman and Freeman , 1992 : 136) relate the idea of multiple intelligences to literacy by referring to the semiotic systems beyond oral and written language that have communication potential .They suggest that music , art , and language all have their own kinds of syntax and sign vehicles. Transmediation refers to the change from one system to another e.g. when students draw pictures to represent parts of a story they have read. In the BRA I further extended the EAL learners literacy skills by exposing them to language activities which extended these intelligences (see 4.4. and 4.5.).

However , one needs to be cautious about the claims that proponents of whole language make. Downing (1976 : 15) is convinced that unlike talking and listening , writing and reading are not natural processes since written language is an artificial product of civilisation . To further support Downing , Hemphill and Snow (1996) challenge the view that literacy learning proceeds in the same way as language learning does and that there is continuity between learning in the home and learning at school .They claim that not all school knowledge is natural , universal and directly accessible to different ethnic groups of children , as rules for producing extended discourse are arbitrary , language specific , community-specific and situation -specific. The EAL learner may have experienced different literacy practices at home.

Hemphill and Snow (1996 : 198) thus recommend that learners from different cultural backgrounds need to gain exposure to a variety of spoken and written language genres by means of activities which promote the children's capacities to analyse those genres in order to notice how they differ . In the BRA , I engaged in explicit teaching of the genre by using writing as a heuristic tool e.g. I modelled sentences to show children how the spoken language can be coherently represented in the written form . I analysed newspaper articles, scientific writing , story writing , people writing about their own encounters and information pamphlets (see 4.8).

2.2.3. CONCEPTS EMBEDDED IN THE SOCIO-CULTURAL APPROACH

For meaningful learning to occur EAL learners need recognition and integration of their "cultural funds of knowledge" so that school knowledge becomes easily accessible (Hiebert and Pearson , 2000). Vygotsky believed that the scientific psychology of his time needed to go beyond the behaviourists ' reductionism to the cultural context in which the mind develops' (Berninger , 1994 :25). EAL learners have a greater chance of gaining access to school knowledge if learning at school builds on their " cultural funds of knowledge" . An instructional setting which focusses on mastery of one rule or skill in sequence is incompatible with what children already know because it impedes the complexity of learning written language (Goodman, 1988 : 320). Zeichner (1992) proposes that for schools to be effective learning institutions they must not see diversity as a problem to be overcome, but rather as a resource for promoting active learning (Hiebert and Pearson , 2000 : 129). In the balanced reading approach I attempted to accommodate my learners by acknowledging their cultural knowledge and giving them opportunities to link their own experiences to the literature stories as well as re-tell the English stories in their L1 i.e. Zulu (see 4.5). By allowing these learners to act as mediators between the reading materials and elevating their status, their self esteem and self confidence increased in the eyes of their own and other learners.

2.2.4. CONCEPTS EMBEDDED IN A SOCIO-COGNITIVE APPROACH

Vygotsky believed that children's cognitive development and minds are influenced not only by biological development but stimulated by a language-rich social environment provided by society. (Chall ,2000: 45) Vygotsky (1978 :85) emphasises instruction as a powerful force in directing evolution as it determines the fate of the child's total development. Thus adults can provide scaffolds to help children to accomplish goals , as support is withdrawn gradually until such time as children are independent of adult assistance . Vygotsky (1986) proposed the "zone of proximal development " which is the distance between the child's independent problem solving- ability and the child's ability to solve problems under the guidance of adults (Berninger , 1994 :26). If instruction is tailored to this zone, then mental development moves forward.

The BRA based on the Vygotskian view takes a "literacy as a social practice perspective" because I provided supports (scaffolding) as well as appropriate levels of difficulty (see 4.3. and 4.8.). I believe that teachers , peers , parents and community members who are proficient in English can contribute to the EAL learner's language learning and foster cognitive growth. If parents themselves are not literate and the nature of assistance is limited to the child's cognitive academic growth at school , then the school has to provide the necessary and appropriate intervention for learning. The BRA attempted to provide this intervention (see 4.6.) .

2.2.5. SUMMARY OF PRINCIPLES DERIVED FROM LANGUAGE LEARNING THEORIES FOR BRA

EAL learners need :

- Classroom opportunities which encourage them to communicate and interact with competent speakers of the target language which will eventually feed into their reading comprehension.
- Learning experiences which foster meaningful whole language learning that exemplifies practices where the whole is more than the sum of its parts.
- Learning experiences which build on the social skills , values and knowledge of the home environment.
- Learning experiences which will stimulate their cognitive growth while their proficiency in the L2 is developing.
- To continue using the mother tongue while they are acquiring the L2 .

Teachers of multicultural classrooms need :

- To use diversity as a valuable resource to promote discourse and active learning.
- To keep language whole by using extra-linguistic cues in the form of comprehensible input to enrich the context and increase comprehension levels for EAL learners .
- To stimulate multiple intelligences in order to develop basic literacy skills as well as develop the child holistically.

2.3. LITERACY THEORIES

Beliefs about how children acquire literacy will influence the nature of instruction in the classroom. Whole language proponents believe that the goal of literacy instruction is to produce skilled readers and writers by guiding and supporting students in developing them to become independent readers, writers , and learners. These skills are learned through real reading and writing and not through reading and writing exercises (Edelsky et.al. ,1991 ; Freeman and Freeman,1992 ; Goodman,1982 ; Smith,1978 ; Weaver,1994). Although Whole language approaches to literacy have introduced many learners to the joy of good literature story reading , a gap still exists in the acquisition of basic literacy skills for learners at risk (Adams , 1990). In trying to bridge this gap , I believe that traditional teaching approaches to literacy have much to offer because it produced children with superior literacy skills e.g. children who developed scientific abilities that could create and launch Sputnik (Chall , 2000). Spiegel (1992 :43) emphasises that literacy standards can be raised if bridges are built between whole language and more traditional approaches to literacy instruction .

2.3.1. TRADITIONAL APPROACH

In traditional schools, the centre of gravity is outside the child and in the teacher , the textbooks etc. except in the immediate instincts and activities of the child himself (Dewey,1900 cited in Chall , 2000 :16). This approach was teacher centered and used methods such as decontextualised drill and practice. Behaviouristic psychology which is reflective of an empiricist approach to acquiring literacy, influenced by the works of Pavlov and Skinner, determined the teaching methods of repetition and practice. Learning to participate successfully in literacy activities in the traditional approach occurred as a result of shaping the individual's behaviour by providing positive or negative reinforcement to various stimuli (Lindfors, 1987 : 97).

The traditional approach to literacy treats EAL learners as passives . Learning is expected to be uniform and students are treated and tested as if they are all expected to learn the same things at the same time (Weaver, 1994 : 87). EAL learners were engaged in repetition and drills to improve pronunciation and sentence word order, since oral

language precedes the development of literacy in a second language (Freeman and Freeman , 1992 : 43). However , a whole language approach is more appropriate for EAL learning because oral and written language are acquired simultaneously in a second language (Freeman and Freeman , 1992 : 7). Using only the traditional approach for EAL learners could stifle their learning initiative and lead to de-motivation for learning. Therefore in the BRA I acknowledged the learners' prior knowledge and recycled the salient aspects from the traditional approach to literacy learning e.g. included basals and literature stories in the reading programme, discussed the meanings of words of comprehension passages and showed children how to apply their phonics skills to spell words (see 4.7). I also promoted the development of listening, speaking , reading and writing skills simultaneously.

2.3.2. EMERGENT LITERACY

This refers to the stage of the development during which children are making their fledgling attempts as emerging readers and writers prior to formal schooling (Cunningham et. al , 1995). Parents used shared book reading , pretend reading and inventive spelling to facilitate their children's literacy and language development (Gates, 2001: 2). Although Gates (2001) argues that for maximum literacy development, emerging literacy needs to focus on emerging conceptual and procedural knowledge of written language instead of developing children's oral language, I have argued otherwise for EAL learners (see 2.3.1). Furthermore, EAL learners coming from literacy- sparse home environments need to understand the basic reading concepts. Therefore teachers in the Foundation phase may still have to follow traditional principles of teaching basic reading concepts e.g. sounds of the letters of the alphabet, phonemic awareness and shapes of letters which are crucial elements in the 'learning to read' process (Adams , 1990; Juel , 1988; Juel et. al 1986; Macdonald and Burroughs , 1991). In the BRA I catered for the environmentally deprived EAL learners by providing a stimulating environment which focussed on the direct teaching of skills through the interactive reading approach. I will now outline the salient points of this approach by Zinn (2001 : 4-5).

- Schools need to acknowledge that children do bring literacy knowledge to school, although their level of sophistication with literacy concepts varies. Therefore teachers need to help children to develop literacy practices that are facilitative of gaining access to school knowledge.
- Children should be immersed in different kinds of functional reading and writing experiences which not only show the purposes of literacy but show or model the processes of reading and writing (see 4.8.) .
- Children's progress and their gradual approximations of correct or conventional forms of reading and writing , should be accepted and celebrated (see 4.8.).
- Children should be encouraged to read and write at home , and talk to their parents , caregivers , and older siblings about their reading and writing (see appendix 4-9).

In the BRA, the home support reading programme gave parents opportunities to engage in interactive story reading with their children. I also used the interactive approach to promote reading and writing skills (see 4.3 , 4.8 and 4.9.) .

2.3.3. LITERACY AS SOCIAL PRACTICE

The way children experience language in the home and community can impact on their ability to acquire literacy skills in an EAL. Gee (1986) stresses that language and literacy acquisition are forms of socialisation into mainstream ways of using language in speech and print and that sometimes discourse practices can come into conflict with the student's initial acculturation and socialisation (Silberstein , 1987 : 33). It is possible that the EAL learner can be disadvantaged because their everyday language uses a non-standard variety or he or she has limited experience with the functions of language valued in the school (McLaughlin , 1985 : 183). Wells (1981, cited in McLaughlin , 1985 : 1830) found that children who had more experience with abstract, analytic and decontextualised uses of language in the home had an advantage in learning to read and write in comparison to their peers whose social practices in literacy were different.

In addition Heath (1983 cited in Freeman , 1992 : 77) in her study of two groups of children coming from two different communities , has shown that although children enter

school with developed sophisticated uses of language, they may not have developed the functions of language expected at school, as their home experiences of language do not help them in the new school context and thus they fall behind academically. Heath's (1983) intervention capitalised on the children's skills, values and knowledge of the home environment and then gradually incorporated the conceptual school structures. Her balanced literacy programme included play with language , vocabulary development and direct reading instruction in the content areas. Children engaged in formal and informal writing and read materials that ranged from newspapers to local history (Chall et. al , 1990 :4). Similarly, in the BRA, I attempted to help EAL learners learn unfamiliar information by incorporating some of Heath's ideas (see 4.4 and 4.9.).

Since sociocultural experiences impact on the development of cognitive skills, it would be unfair to expose children to an autonomous (traditional) model of literacy which develops abstract thinking skills that are in congruence with an elitist type of western education . Inevitably, these learners would achieve recognition literacy e.g. the ability to only recognise words at the expense of reflection literacy e.g. the ability to apply multiple intelligences (see 2.2.2) to improve reading comprehension, thereby denying them opportunities to actualise their true literacy potential as unique individuals (Hasan and Williams , 1996). They will learn to read but lack the skills to reflect on what they read , if the school promotes a different set of language and literacy experiences that is more appropriate for monolingual English- speaking students (Nurss and Hough , 1992 : 279). Street (1995) proposes an ideological model which challenges schools to examine social, literate practices of different cultures , as he argues for the teaching of multiple literacies which would give all learners an equal opportunity to meet their literacy potential. Multi-cultural schools need to expose children to a variety of literacies based on diverse social practices e.g. reciting Zulu praise songs, hymns and poems. By reading stories to EAL learners , provision is made for experience in " decontextualised language" which can eventually feed into their reading and writing . Boyle and Peregoy (1990) highlight the provision of a scaffold by unconsciously modelling linguistic and conversational patterns through social interactions with the child. Literacy scaffolds in the form of story

maps or frameworks can be applied to reading and writing activities aimed at functional, meaningful communication found in whole texts (see appendix 4-9)

2.3.4. SUMMARY OF PRINCIPLES DERIVED FROM LITERACY THEORIES FOR THE BRA.

- Children should be exposed to an abundance of reading and writing materials from the early years of schooling so that they engage in print in a variety of ways , whilst simultaneously acquiring basic literacy skills .
- Literacy scaffolds provided by the teacher can help EAL learners to enhance their reading and writing skills.
- Recognition needs to be given to the learners' 'cultural funds of knowledge' and the knowledge of the home.
- Instruction at school ought to cater equally for the development of recognition literacy as well as foster reflection literacy.
- An integrated approach to literacy which incorporates the traditional and whole language educational approaches is appropriate for EAL learners.
- EAL learners need to acquire oral and written language skills simultaneously so that they do not lag behind in developing their cognitive academic skills.
- Schools need to firstly promote literacies which are in congruence with different social practices of diverse cultures in order to maximise the literacy potential of all the learners alike , and secondly provide classroom experiences which promote "decontextualised language" for learners coming from different social class backgrounds who do not gain access to such social practices in literacy.

2.4. READING THEORIES

Theories of reading grew out of different practices i.e. traditional ('teacher driven') and natural approaches ('learner driven') . These educational approaches influenced reading practices and processes (Chall , 2000). Goodman (1976) believed that there is no hierarchy of sub-skills involved in learning to read and that the teaching of reading should begin not with letters or sounds but with whole, real , relevant natural language

(Goodman, 1982 : xxiv). However, research has shown that whole language classrooms cannot ignore the teaching of phonics (Stahl, 1998). In acquiring language, Chomsky (1965) asserted that

" Humans have an innate capacity for human language as every child is born with the universals of linguistic structure innately specified i.e. the semantic, syntactic, and phonological possibilities of human language" (Lindfors , 1987 : 104).

Reading theories emphasise that a child learning to read in any language needs to develop the three cueing systems : semantic , syntactic , and phonological- graphonic in order to attain success in the foundation phase (Gibbons, 1993 ; Weaver, 1994 : 5).

2.4.1. CUEING SYSTEMS

Semantic information refers to the study of meaning in language and is carried in the content words which create our mental pictures e.g. nouns and verbs. Semantic knowledge focuses on what readers draw on whenever they make links in interpreting new information . However , an EAL learner may have limited cognitive resources e.g. lack the ability to comprehend the content words when reading. In this sense reading is restricted in a second language , as it occurs in context rather than in isolation (Cook , 2001 : 89). Absence of the appropriate cultural background can disadvantage an EAL learner in comparison to a first language learner who has acquired a listening and speaking vocabulary of approximately 5000 words or more by the time formal instruction begins in the first language (Enright and Rigg , 1986 ; Savage, 2001). To compensate for this limitation and to improve reading comprehension Carrel (1983) recommends that the EAL learner needs to be supplied with the vocabulary that the native takes for granted (Cook , 1991: 56). This can be done by getting the students to balance the background knowledge presupposed by the texts the students read and background knowledge the students possess (Carrel and Eisterhold, 1988 : 88). By building the learner's background knowledge and activating appropriate schemata already stored in memory, a written piece of text can be interpreted e.g, pre-reading and post reading discussions and open-ended questions (Cook , 2001 : 91 ; Nurss and Hough ,1992: 307).

Syntactic information is carried in the grammatical or structure words which hold the text together and link the content words e.g. pronouns , conjunctions , auxiliary verbs , word order and morphology . For a L1 learner , the ability to predict what is going to sound right is an intuitive process. Although English speakers cannot anticipate or explain the rule , they can use it because their knowledge of rules is tacit (Edelsky et. al, 1991 : 18). In my BRA, I engaged L1 and EAL learners in collaborative work to apply grammatical structures and conventions in the target language (see 4.5.). I also used extra-linguistic cues to directly teach grammatical rules (4.9.).

Finally **phonological information** refers to the sound- symbol system of the language e.g. phonics. Learning to read means learning to pronounce and recognise words. It would appear that once rapid and fluent decoding receives priority in the early stages of reading, then comprehension will take care of itself (Bond and Dykstra , 1967; Flesch, 1955). However EAL learners need to be made aware of the meaning potential of words in a sentence as well as master phonic skills. For this to happen effectively, they need explicit phonics instruction to be able to encode and decode words taught in meaningful contexts .

Research into reading instruction has clearly demonstrated that explicit phonics instruction gives L1 and EAL learners a better start in learning to read than those who were not taught phonics (Adams, 1990; Stahl, 1998). However Smith opposed the systematic phonics approach in various publications because of the following reasons : the link between the letters and sounds cannot always be uniquely specified ; rote learning and drilling interferes in the learning to read process ; the many rules and exceptions to the rules the child is expected to master leads to confusion (Smith , 1994 ; Smith, 1999) . Although Smith (1985) vigorously attacks the phonics approach, he mentions that whenever readers come across an unknown word , they may firstly skip it, secondly guess its meaning and , finally , use phonics as a last strategy to recognise words. If the last strategy can, at times, help children to solve their reading problems, then I believe that carefully-considered phonics instruction cannot be totally ignored for English additional language learners. Phonics does help these learners to identify and

recognise a vast number of words with speed. Savage (2001 :94) recommends that phonics be embedded in the context of a total reading language arts program which links children's genuine efforts to read and write. In my BRA I motivated EAL learners to become strategic and independent in their use of phonics (see 4.4).

2.4.2. WORD RECOGNITION

Adams (1990) points out that the ability to read words, quickly, accurately, and effortlessly, is crucial to skilful comprehension. She is convinced that by the end of grade three all learners need to display some level of competence in word recognition. If these learners enter the intermediate phase with limited reading abilities, then no amount of school intervention in terms of remedial or special programmes could compensate for this limitation (Adams , 1990). McLaughlin (1987, cited in Nurss and Hough , 1992) identifies three important tasks that limited English proficient students need to master to become fluent in word recognition : the rules governing sound -symbol correspondence in English ; ability to use these rules and decode them in a progressively automated way, and complex set of skills that allows for rapid processing of incoming material and comprehension of meaning. In addition, Moyle (1982) encourages the learning of whole words on flashcards and the use of contextual clues to improve word recognition. In the BRA I flashed words in meaningful contexts in order to reinforce high frequency words (see 4.3.).

2.4.3. READING STAGES

Stahl (1998) and Ehri (1995) point out that readers go through different stages as they develop efficient word recognition abilities. The first stage refers to the **awareness stage** where children developed a conceptual knowledge of the nature of written language and its relationship to speech . The second stage is the **pre-alphabetic phase** where beginners remember words and their pronunciations or meanings and store these associations in memory. The third stage is the **partial alphabetic phase** where readers need to know the relevant letter- sound correspondences and they need to be able to segment initial and final sounds in words. In this accuracy stage , children use various strategies to identify a word e.g. visual cues and sounding out the initial or final sounds of a word . The fourth stage is the **full alphabetic phase** where beginners remember how to read sight words by

forming complete connections between letters seen in the written forms of words and phonemes detected in their pronunciations . Children in this phase can decode words never read before, that is, to transform unfamiliar spelling of words into blended pronunciations. In this automaticity stage , children can recognise a vast number of words quickly and accurately. The fifth stage is the **consolidated alphabetic phase** where children operate with multiletter units where graphemes and phonemes have been analysed and bonded . This gives the learners an opportunity to concentrate fully on the text. EAL learners need support to consolidate their learning at different stages because slow word recognition can interfere with comprehension . Cook (1991) states that in a second language, memory span is reduced. It would appear that overlearning of new words would lead to automaticity. Therefore the BRA caters for periodic repetitive reading of familiar texts so that the EAL learner has ample opportunities to master high frequency words. In addition, I allowed periodic drilling of flashwords and phonics in meaningful contexts (see 4.4.).

2.4.4. THE INTERACTIVE MODEL OF READING

The interactive model of reading is a cognitive model that acknowledges the crucial importance of top-down (reader- driven theory which emphasis what readers bring to the text) and bottom-up approaches (text-driven theory which emphasis the ways in which readers produce written language by breaking up the text into the smallest possible linguistic units) processing skills (Jackson , 2000: 156-157). The interactive approach to reading includes reading techniques such as shared reading, guided reading and the language experience approach. I will now discuss each of these techniques.

2.4.4.1. SHARED READING

Routman (1991 :32) defines shared reading as any rewarding reading in which a learner or group of learners see the text , observe an expert (usually the teacher) reading with fluency and expression , and are invited to read along.

- **THE 'BIG BOOK ' IS AN IMPORTANT RESOURCE THAT PROMOTES INTERACTIVE READING**

The 'Big book' (an enlarged version of a storybook) which uses a shared book experience approach originated from the home observations of children's interactions

with bedtime stories . In shared reading the teacher and the children read the "Big Book" several times (Cunningham et.al , 1995 : 30). It was discovered that children learn to read by reconstructing meanings or story content (Gibson , 1989 : 29-30). Although this research was done with L1 learners, it can be used for EAL learners. The "Big Book" can be used to expose learners to rich literacy-level language of storybooks (Clay, 1991; Cunningham et. al , 1995 ; Gibson , 1989 ; Routman ; 1991).

- **SHARED READING PROMOTES READING CONFIDENCE**

Reading aloud in pairs, with a competent reader, or small groups encourages the participation of students who lack the confidence in their reading ability (Routman , 1991: 35). When English additional language learners read with their partners they may take risks and guess at words which they may not do in front of a teacher . By reading in unison , the less proficient reader can join in whenever he or she wants to or echo a more proficient reading "buddy" (Weaver, 1994 : 96).

2.4.4.2. GUIDED READING.

In guided reading , the teacher and a group of children , or sometimes an individual child, can talk, think and question their way through a book of which each have a copy. The teacher asks the children what questions to ask of themselves as readers, as they read through the text . In this way each child's competencies , interests , and experiences are challenged as the teacher supports learning rather than directs learning (Mooney, 1990, cited in Routman , 1991 :38). Although reading and thinking aloud presents a very high cognitive load for EAL readers , it does help them to become strategic readers (Janzen , 1996).

2.4.4.3. LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE APPROACH BASED ON CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES.

Weaver (1994 : 97) points out that the child gets ownership over writing when he / she dictates his/her experiences because meaningful and personal writing is easier to remember when re-reading (see 2.4.4.).

In the BRA I thus used the EAL learner's responses to probing open- ended questions in order to model and scaffold sentences in sequential order .

Shanahan (1988 : 639) states that

" The language experience approach gives children the opportunity to see the process through which ideas get translated into text and it provides basic information about technical aspects of writing e.g. spaces between words, directionality, what to do at the end of a line . It demonstrates the planning, drafting and revision stages of writing, and it gives children valuable experience in the sustained monologue required in writing."

In South Africa , the Molteno project (1975 –1996) focused on developing literacy skills in the mother tongue for Foundation phase learners. This project included the "breakthrough to literacy" programme, a language experience approach to teach reading and writing in 9 indigenous South African languages (Kingwill , 1998). Pioneering work in this project set the foundation for acquiring literacy in a second language . In the BRA I used the language experience approach to simultaneously integrate and teach the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing (see 4.8). Recently in South Africa, Kenyon and Kenyon (1996) have used traditional African stories in English to effectively teach scientific concepts. They focused on detailed and accurate knowledge of the environment to subtly create cognitive spaces for work and talk. Although I did not use traditional African stories, I encouraged learners to link aspects of their environment to the stories (see 5.2.). In addition, the first language learners became knowledgeable, patient and tolerant toward African culture and language.

2.4.5. INDEPENDENT READING.

Independent reading is a further step towards empowerment of the child. Children choose their own reading materials and read at their own pace according to their abilities, purposes, and interests. Elley and Mangubhai (1983) did extensive research in Fijian schools known as the "Book Flood" programme. This programme involved learners being exposed to 250 high interest storybooks which led to a noticeable improvement in

reading comprehension. Elley further reviews nine studies of the acquisition of English as an additional language undertaken in elementary schools in the South Pacific and South East Asia. She discovered that children acquired a second language more successfully if they were exposed to these books and were encouraged to interact with books in functional ways-reading, writing, discussing and acting (Elley, 1994 : 331, Weaver, 1994 : 310). Students on the "Book Flood" programmes did better on almost all standardised measures of reading (including word identification, phonic skills, and application of grammatical structures) in comparison to EAL learners who followed the traditional teaching method. In addition EAL learners developed positive attitudes towards books. Elley based her "Book Flood" programme on the principles of natural language learning. In the BRA I incorporated some of her ideas to boost reading confidence and motivation (see 4.3. and 4.6.). I accomplished this by giving learners opportunities to use the EAL and engage in literacy events in meaningful contexts (see 4.3 and 4.6).

2.4.6. SUMMARY OF PRINCIPLES DERIVED FROM READING THEORIES FOR MY BRA.

- Explicit basic phonics instruction needs to be taught in meaningful contexts instead of decontextualized drill and practice.
- The activation of background knowledge is crucial to reading comprehension.
- Children need ample opportunities to consolidate their word recognition abilities at different stages of the "learning to read" process.
- Reading instruction needs to cater for the development of top-down and bottom-up processing skills simultaneously in order to maximise reading comprehension.
- Children need to engage in extensive independent reading of high-interest reading materials. They need to engage in these stories in functional ways in order to bridge the gap between L1 and EAL contexts.
- The language experience approach can be used to promote reading and writing skills by means of teacher modelling .
- EAL learners need to read their texts aloud in collaboration with their competent peers in order to develop their reading fluency and improve word accuracy.

- EAL learners need guided reading to promote reflective reading as they transact with their texts. By responding to teacher questions and predictions these learners acquire word analysis skills and comprehension skills .
- The shared book experience as a social activity exposes EAL learners to the conventions of written language in the target language.

2.5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK UNDERPINNING THE BRA.

My BRA has been informed by three major theoretical areas : language learning theories, reading theories and literacy theories all of which formed the pillars of the reading approach used in this study. Firstly , my approach drew from language learning theories which led to the following principles :

- **THE LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAMME NEEDS TO PROVIDE THE EAL LEARNER WITH MEANINGFUL WHOLE LANGUAGE LEARNING EXPERIENCES WHICH FOSTER COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCIES.**

EAL learners need to learn the skill of listening, speaking, reading and writing in whole meaningful contexts. This can be attained by actively interacting with competent speakers of the target language and engaging in activities which promote these processes. Secondly, my approach drew from literacy theories which enhanced the theoretical framework.

- **SCHOOLS NEED TO FIND WAYS TO SUPPORT THE EAL LEARNER TO REALISE THEIR LITERACY POTENTIAL SUCCESSFULLY.**

The learner, the parent and the teacher need to work together in order to maintain high literacy levels. Schools need to promote literacies that further extend social literacy practices of the home culture of the EAL learner to promote reading competence. Mother tongue speakers should be encouraged to work collaboratively to reconstruct meaning in the L1 and EAL. Thirdly reading theories also gave direction to my BRA.

- **BLENDING WHOLE LANGUAGE AND SYSTEMATIC DIRECT INSTRUCTION IS VITAL TO PROMOTING LITERACY AND LEARNING.**

Interactive reading approaches stemming from whole language principles can promote opportunities for rich language learning for EAL learners e.g. shared reading, guided reading and the language experience approach. Independent reading can also promote reading success. However , there needs to be a balance with direct skill tutoring .

2.6. CONCLUSION

The principles derived from the theoretical model of the BRA show that the revolutionizing of reading programmes is largely in the hands of elementary teachers since they come into contact with EAL learners at a very crucial stage in their literacy development. Gibson (1989) urges schools to focus on ways to converge between how teachers teach and how children learn. In order to develop greater insight into the processes and products of EAL reading, I think it is vital that teachers engage in action research so that they can theorize from practice and practise from theory (Ramani, 1987). By collecting valuable data on learner responses to classroom instruction, teachers can become knowledgeable and reflexive in their day to day practices. The following chapter, therefore, examines the data collection methods and research processes used in this research.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.

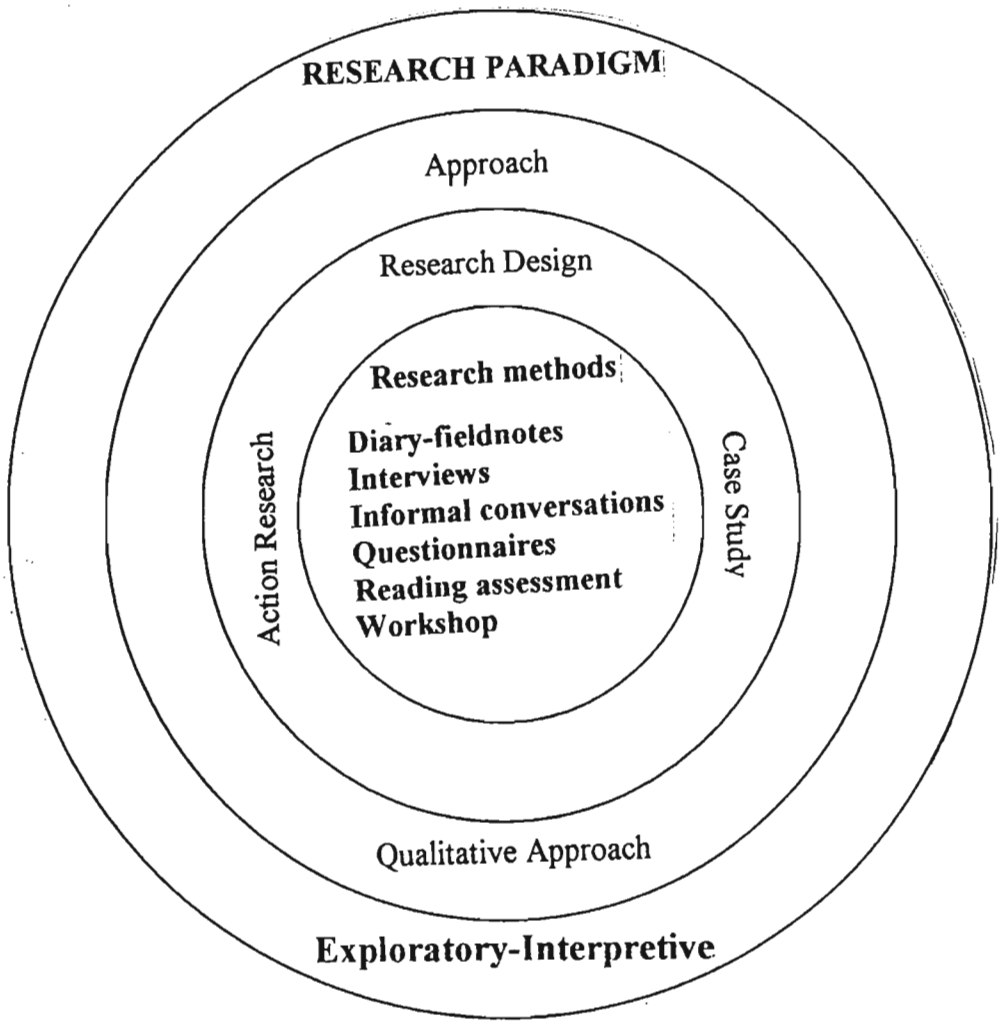
3.1. INTRODUCTION

The goal of this chapter is to provide a clear and concise description of the specific steps used in this research. According to Grotjahn (1987), in order to carry out and analyse an actual research study, it is necessary to take into consideration the method of data collection (whether the data has been collected experimentally or non-experimentally), the type of data yielded by the investigation , (qualitative or quantitative) and the type of analysis conducted on the data (whether statistical or interpretive). My research belongs to the research paradigm referred to as exploratory- interpretive, where I identified a reading problem and attempted to solve it by utilising a non- experimental method, which yielded qualitative and quantitative data . This was followed by an interpretive analysis of that data (Nunan, 1992 :3). The purpose of this chapter is to contextualize the data collection process and explain the research approach and procedure used. I will also make explicit the limitations of this research.

Data in this research was collected from the following sources :

- Naturalistic and descriptive observation of the learning behaviours of the cases under study before and after the implementation of my programme
- Samples of the children's written work
- Informal conversations with the research subjects
- Semi-structures interviews with parents of the research subjects
- Parental questionnaires
- Semi-structured interviews with Foundation phase educators
- Reading assessments
- Interactions with Foundation phase educators at the workshop

Figure 2 . Visual representation of research paradigm , research approach and research design.



3.2. RESEARCH PARADIGM

The interpretive approach was appropriate to my topic since the aim of my research was not to conduct extensive standardized tests in order to measure reading performance, but rather, to collect qualitative data which would indicate to me how the children were progressing and developing matured reading competencies. Athey (1983) points out that we need to extend our research beyond the experimental and quantitative into the realm

of the naturalistic and qualitative in order to understand fully the nature of reading as a thinking process. In grade one, my data collection relied heavily on field notes regarding the reading behaviours of six African children during collaborative learning activities (see 5.2.). However, in grade two, I exposed these children to formal assessment because they were more mature physically, mentally and socially (see appendix 11). Strickland (1989: 143) states that assessment of children's oral and written language development is done primarily through observational procedures and the collection of performance samples (see 5.2. and appendix 4-9).

Interpretive research is rooted in hermeneutics, a theory which uses the researchers' subjective experiences to interpret qualitative data where the whole is more than the sum of its parts. This involved rich, ' thick detailed descriptive data' of the phenomenon under study, as it occurs, which describes in detail everything that the researcher experienced and witnessed in the form of words and observable actions of the participants of this phenomenon (Blanche and Kelly, 1999 : 134; Neuman, 2000:70-73). In this regard , I used narrative writing to describe my reading approach and report on the data collected in this research.

3.3. RESEARCH DESIGN

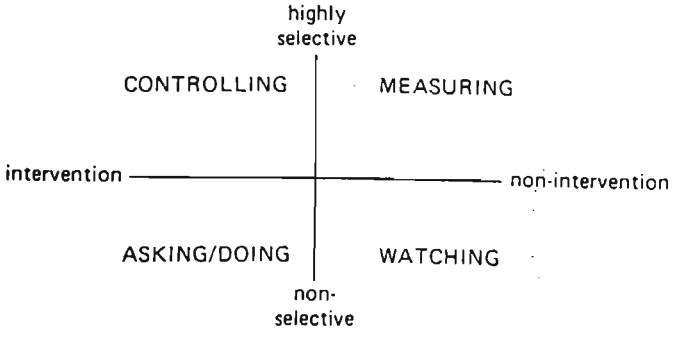
My research design was underpinned by action research and a case study approach. Nunan (1992 :18) points out that action research does not have to be collaborative or concerned with change. It can be a descriptive case study of a particular classroom or a group of learners if it is initiated by a question, supported by data and interpretation , and is carried out by a practitioner investigating aspects of his or her own context and situation. Due to personal and practical reasons, I was not able to do collaborative action research . However, I attempted to solve a reading problem at my school, using the action research case study approach .

In my research design I used two of Stenhouse's (1983) typologies of case studies referred to as "evaluative case study" and "classroom action research" (Nunan ,1992 :7). I evaluated the effect of the BRA on the research subjects by analysing the following

data : condensed fieldwork , reading assessments and samples of written work . By using the case study design, I was able to develop a more intimate and informal relationship with the cases under study . This rapport with learners helped to create understanding and empathy (Cohen and Manion, 1985 : 129; Neuman , 2000: 356). The children were quite used to me and they felt sufficiently relaxed to have informal conversations with me (see 5.4.). I engaged in classroom action research and documented the research subjects' literacy progress over an extended period of time. I tried out new teaching approaches and methodologies in order to make learners learn more effectively.

I also used Van Lier's parameters in research design to direct my data collection process. He argues that applied linguistic research can be analysed in terms of two parameters : an interventionist parameter and a selectivity parameter. Research is placed on the interventionist parameter according to the extent to which the researcher intervenes in the environment. The selectivity parameter places research according to the degree to which the researcher prespecifies the phenomena to be investigated . The intersection of these two parameters creates four 'semantic spaces' (Van Lier 1988 cited in Nunan , 1992 : 7). Figure 3 below illustrates the parameters in research design.

Figure 3. Parameters in research design (Van Lier , 1988 : 7)



I will now explain the parameters used in this research design. My research fell in the semantic space of " asking and doing" because initially there was a high degree of teacher intervention by probing and trying out different teaching methods, as well as asking for the participants'(parents and learners) views and concerns about the BRA. My research also fell towards the non-selectivity continuum because I did not focus on conducting formal experiments. Instead, I attempted to present an ethnographic portrait

of a classroom in action research. My study also fell into the semantic space of "watching" what these children were doing in the classroom as a result of my non-intervention e.g. observations made while the children engaged in interactions during group reading projects. (Van Lier 1990 cited in Nunan ,1992 :7).

3.4. RESEARCH METHODS

I used the following research methods to collect data viz. a teacher's diary, questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, informal conversations, reading assessments and feedback from teachers who attended the workshop. My reflections, in the form of personal impressions and thoughts of the BRA were recorded in a diary, which gave me opportunities to record the psychological, social and affective factors involved in teaching and language development which cannot be readily reached by experiments (Mcdonough and Mcdonough , 1997 : 135 ; Neuman , 2000 : 355).

Semi-structured interviews were held with Foundation phase teachers to find out what reading teaching methodologies were prevalent at their schools (see appendix 1). I also held semi- structured interviews with the parents of the cases under study in order to monitor their children's reading progress (see appendix 2). I needed to know the effects of the BRA on the children's reading performance. These six African parents and their children helped me to build literate life histories of the cases under study (see appendix 4-9). This information made me aware of the learning potential and culture of these learners. It deepened my understanding of how the BRA could be used to cater for the diverse needs of these learners. I met the parents of the cases under study at least twice a month to discuss the progress of their children. Semi-structured interviews were used because they made the parents feel relaxed enough to speak about their children's reading progress as these interviews mirror natural forms of interacting with people (Blanche and Kelly, 1999 :128) . Furthermore, these parents spoke very slowly as they were trying to express themselves in English. Often they used gestures and facial expressions to convey subtle messages. Throughout the implementation of the BRA I used open-ended questions during informal conversations with the children in order to gain a greater perspective on the effectiveness of the BRA (see appendix 3). Mcdonough and

Mcdonough (1997 :184) encourage the use of open-ended questions which can be cross-referenced to other data sources such as diaries to portray a more realistic picture of individuals in interpretive case study research. In reporting on the outcomes of my research I used process notes as one of the data handling procedures to describe my reactions at the various points of my study to reduce researcher subjectivity (Rudestam and Newton , 2001 : 45). I gave a description of the learners' performance before and after the implementation of BRA (see 5.3).

Once the BRA was in progress , I used a questionnaire (Weaver , 1994) to evaluate the parents' perceptions and knowledge of teaching reading by analysing numerical scores using the computer programme SPSS 11,0 (see appendix 10). The purpose of the questionnaire was to determine how the parents' knowledge of reading concepts and principles influenced the reading performance of their children. I handed out questionnaires to all 50 learners from the grade two class and told them to ask their parents to complete the questionnaire at home and return it to me as soon as possible. I explained that their parents were to ring only one number in the rating scale . I did a statistical analysis of 50 questionnaires . At the end of the reading programme I administered a series of reading assessments (see appendix 11) to the six children to measure reading progress and comprehension . Finally , I gave a questionnaire to all parents of the research subjects to gauge their perceptions of the BRA (see appendix 12). The information gleaned from this questionnaire made me aware of the crucial elements of the home support programme that had contributed to reading success. I analysed the scores and looked for common patterns and themes which emerged from the data. I also analysed data from teacher evaluation forms which were presented to Foundation phase educators at the BRA workshop (see appendix 13). The purpose of the workshop was to motivate and empower teachers to promote literacy in the multicultural classroom .The educators were to remain anonymous, as this would allow them greater freedom to express their opinions and impressions .

3.5. LIMITATIONS

- **PARENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE**

The Likert rating scale used in the parental questionnaire (see appendix 10) could confuse parents and prevent accurate scoring. Maybe some of my questions were too abstract for some parents to comprehend . I should have administered the questionnaire in Zulu . Since the children took the questionnaire home, it is possible that they could have filled it in themselves .

- **THE VALIDITY OF AFRICAN PARENTS' RESPONSES**

African parents are generally impressed that their children can read, write and speak in English. It is possible that some parents may compare this to the quality of education that they received under apartheid rule. Therefore, their subjective evaluations of the balanced reading approach may not be realised. Another possible drawback of this research is that I conducted all my parental interviews in English, making no provision for a bi- lingual translator. It is possible that the African parents themselves were limited in their responses in the interview, because they did not have the language to say what they really wanted to say.

- **THE VALIDITY OF USING INFORMAL CONVERSATIONS TO ELICIT CHILDREN'S RESPONSES**

I think children in the Foundation phase find it difficult to compare the traditional reading approach to the balanced reading approach. The children could have understood teacher acts as part of the learning process , instead of a new teacher intervention that was aimed at the end product. Cognisance ought to be given to the fact that these children in grade one learnt to read using the traditional reading approach initially. The BRA may have contributed to their reading progress because of their maturation and cognitive development, which is a natural part of growth and development.

- **MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION**

As a teacher- researcher, I could not speak or understand Zulu and, therefore, I may have disadvantaged my learners from gaining maximum benefit from my balanced

reading approach e.g. I could not ask questions in Zulu to extend the children's thinking skills. Nevertheless, I did compensate for this language barrier by getting the competent bi-lingual African children to translate, where possible. By surrendering control to learners I was empowering them to affirm and acknowledge their "cultural funds of knowledge.'' However , I could not monitor this because of the language problem.

- **READING MATERIALS USED FOR ASSESSMENTS**

The reading materials used for assessments were familiar to the children . This may have contributed to the favourable scores. However, the use of unfamiliar stories might have disadvantaged EAL learners because they needed some pre-knowledge of the stories in order to build their schemas.

- **EXCLUSION OF AFRICAN CULTURAL STORIES**

A major shortcoming of this study was to exclude traditional African stories. Since these children came from a rich oral tradition , provision should have been made for African cultural stories , as it is much easier to build on thinking skills which access the child's background knowledge . Both the Indian and African children did not receive reading materials to depict their culture or traditions. I adapted a lot of fairy-tales to suit the reading ability level of my class since these children were already familiar with some of the stories from their pre-school years. I was restricted in my choice of reading materials because our school library had a limited range of library books. For independent reading I chose the best selection of reading materials from our school library on block loan .

- **THE RESEARCH SUBJECTS CHOSEN FOR THE STUDY**

The teacher chose EAL learners who could display satisfactory knowledge of the target language and had attended an English medium pre-school. The BRA may have succeeded because these learners were already at an advantage. What about the other African children whose parents live far away from school and had no pre-school experience? Maybe a very highly-structured teacher- controlled pedagogy would be more appropriate to ensure learner progress until these learners gradually acquire conversational academic language proficiency skills in the target language.

- **MY DUAL ROLE AS TEACHER RESEARCHER**

Trying to observe children and simultaneously copy field notes during the literacy lessons was certainly very demanding. The varying ability levels of the children was complex and they needed my constant attention and assistance to maximise their basic literacy potential. At times I had to compromise my role as a researcher and tend to the immediate needs of the children. Assimilating and accommodating the new pedagogical principles of the BRA required new teaching strategies which I had to develop gradually. My personal struggles in trying to transform teaching methods in congruence with the pedagogical principles of the BRA came into conflict with my role as a researcher. The time constraints for capturing of data of teaching and learning processes impinged on the researcher's ability to engage in action research.

3.6. STEPS USED IN THE RESEARCH PROCESS

In my research process, I followed these steps in action research as stated by Nunan (1992 : 19).

STEP ONE- INITIATION- There was a reading problem in my school. EAL learners were struggling to gain fluency in their reading and they lacked the motivation to read.

STEP TWO-PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION-I spent a few months collecting baseline data on what children did in the traditional reading approach.

STEP THREE- HYPOTHESIS -After reviewing the initial data, I formed the hypothesis that the children seemed unmotivated due to the following reasons :

- Reading materials were restricted to basals which lacked "storyness" and were phonics based.
- The reading approach used , emphasized reading in a round-robin fashion.
- The reading period involved periods of isolated drill and practice of phonic sounds and flashwords , followed by extensive testing of skills taught.

- Phonic instruction was overemphasized .
- Reading books were sparse and children had to share.
- There were no supplementary readers in order to consolidate reading.
- The pre- reading phase included discussion of a limited number of words chosen by the teacher .
- Reading lessons excluded post-reading activities.
- Children were encouraged to work on their own instead of working collaboratively.
- The teacher spent a lot of time in directly teaching reading skills and hardly ever listened to what knowledge children brought with them to school.
- The children were not allowed to take their reading books home and often they did not have time to read in class because they were slow in completing the written tasks set for the day.
- Parents had limited opportunities to assist learners at home because no reading books were sent home.
- During the reading sessions children became very tense and anxious because the teacher emphasized reading accuracy.

STEP FOUR- INTERVENTION - I devised a number of strategies (see chapter 4 :BRA) to improve reading amongst the learners .

STEP FIVE- EVALUATION -Evaluation was done on a continuous basis to monitor learner progress. After and during the implementation of the balanced reading approach, I evaluated the children's reading progress , attitudes and written work by using the following sources of information:

- Examination of reading logs every fortnight.
- Word recognition skills.
- Performance on reading tasks on a daily basis.
- Ability to construct meaningful sentences based on personal experience or on selected topics.

- Ability to report on what they had read.
- Reading speed and ability to spell words.
- Learning motivation and enthusiasm.
- Pupil interaction during group reading sessions.

STEP SIX- DISSEMINATION - I held a workshop for all Foundation phase teachers from the three different grades (1-3) and their Heads of department from ex- House of Delegates schools in the Pietermaritzburg region and presented a paper on the balanced reading approach. Some educators from the ex-DET schools also attended the workshop.

STEP SEVEN -REVISION.

I decided to include traditional African stories in my revised reading programme. African learners translated the stories from English to Zulu . I included pictures in the phonic booklet to increase comprehension levels for EAL learners.

3.7. CONCLUSION

Wayne (1992) argues that research in reading instruction is not a collection of ready-made answers to instruction- related questions , but rather a resource which can provide direction and substance for making instructional decisions if it is approached with caution and purpose. Bearing this in mind , I approached the literature on reading research with queries which were sensitive to learners in my context. Research into the BRA using the qualitative, interpretive approach to research design and methodology provided a resource of alternatives rather than narrowly focussing on definite answers to solve reading problems. In the next chapter I will show how I used the theoretical framework in the balanced reading approach to encourage my learners to realize their literacy potential.

CHAPTER FOUR

BALANCED READING APPROACH

4.1. INTRODUCTION.

The principles of the BRA served as an overarching framework to guide and direct teaching and learning in my classroom. Throughout my BRA I strove to get my learners to experience reading as an active process that focussed on meaning. I did this by providing my EAL learners with a variety of activities which fostered language acquisition and learning in a balanced activities approach (Harmer , 1983 : 42).

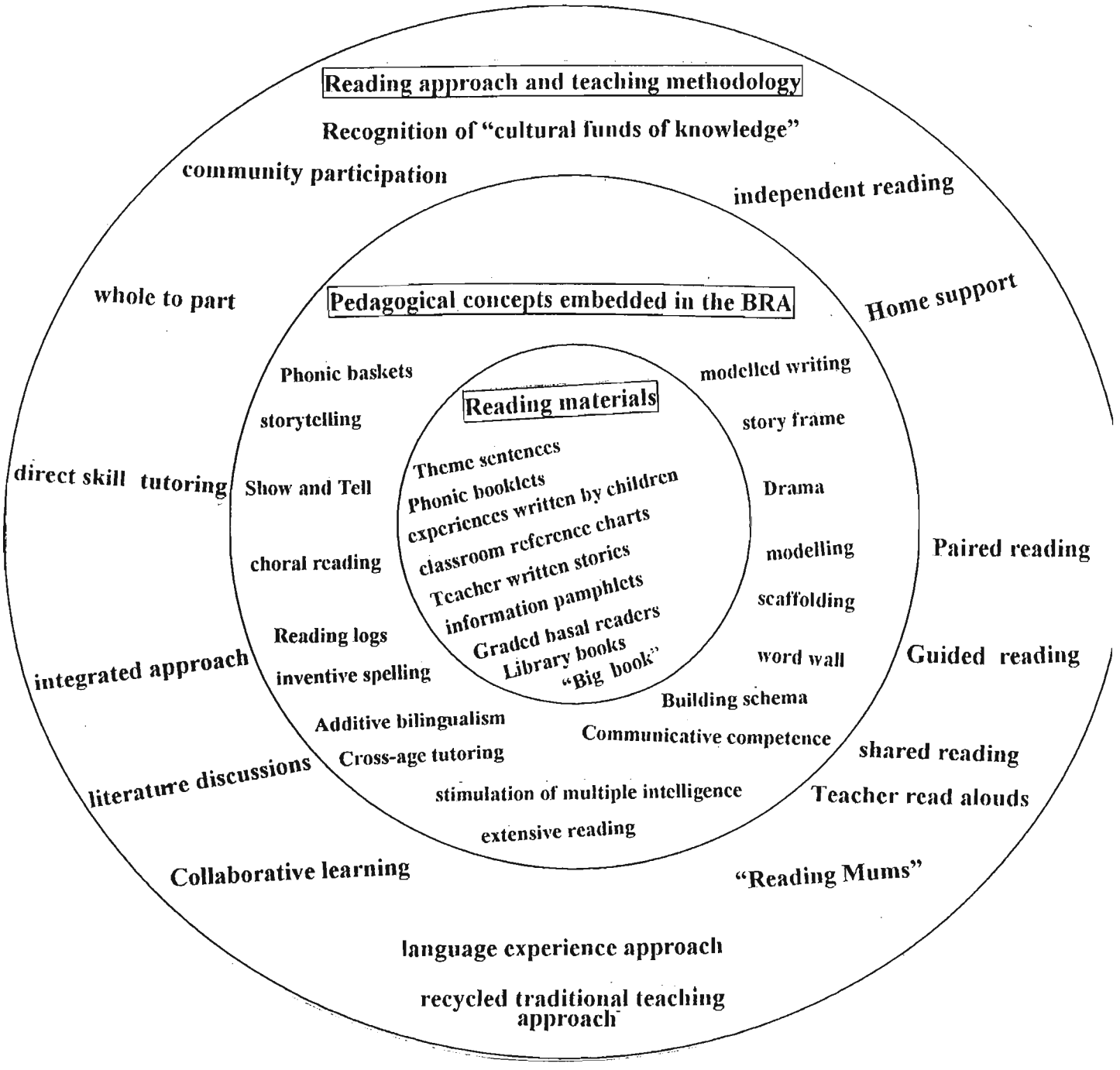
Wayman (1980) so aptly describes the rationale for my programme which conveys the intended purpose of reading when he says :

" If the words remain words and sit quietly on the page , if they remain nouns, and verbs and adjectives , then we are truly blind . But if the words seem to disappear and our innermost self begins to laugh and cry , to sing and dance, and finally to fly-if we are transported in all that we are , to a brand new world , then- only then- can we say that we can read " (Weaver, 1994 :10).

I initially stopped using basals in grade one because they lacked "storyness" and I decided to commence with literature stories to encourage contextualised learning (see 2.2.2.). These stories are appropriate for EAL learners because they educate children about fundamental human issues whilst furthering their listening, speaking , reading and writing skills (Collie and Slater , 1987 : 2-3). Literature stories provide multiple layers of meaning that nurture deep thinking which facilitates cognitive clarity instead of cognitive confusion for EAL learners (Downing , 1976 : 4, Martinez and Mcgee, 2000 : 167). On the other hand, beginner basals are undesirable and disempowering for EAL learners because stories are presented as puzzles that youngsters must piece together (Gibson, 1989 :121). In this chapter I will explain, chronologically, the sequence of my reading programme as it actually happened from grade one to grade two by showing how I incorporated the pedagogical principles of the BRA. Process notes extracted from my diary will appear frequently in this chapter to make explicit my reflections of the

implementation of the BRA. The purpose of these notes is to provide concrete evidence of how the principles of the BRA unfolded in the classroom. I will now present figure 4 which shows the relationship of the pedagogical concepts embedded in the BRA to the theory which underpinned them and to the materials that exemplify them.

Figure 4 . Concepts embedded in the BRA.



4.2. TEACHER-WRITTEN STORIES

I developed my own reading materials and bound them up with cardboard. Nation (2001 : 2) argues that meaning -focussed input cannot occur if there is an overload of unknown words. The four stories I wrote included many words the children could already recognise and comprehend. In addition, these stories had a similar genre (i.e. a problem and a complication , followed by a resolution).

Everyday, all the children listened to the story which was pre-recorded by a Zulu speaker in Zulu. She had good pronunciation of words and told the story with expression and fluency to increase comprehension . By listening to these stories, these EAL learners were thinking in their first language by building schemas , which gave recognition to their cultural funds of knowledge (see, 2.2.3). After they listened to the story in Zulu , I read the story in English from the "Big Book" and the children listened carefully and followed the print in their books. Whilst listening to these stories, the children were developing their spatial/visual intelligence (see 2.2.2) by engaging in activities to promote reading and writing skills e.g.

- They coloured pictures , traced and made models of the pictures from their storybooks.
- They underlined high frequency words that were repeated in the story.
- They ringed all capital letters and identified phonic sounds and word patterns in the story.
- They drew pictures of the different characters in the story.
- They underlined all action words, words describing the characters in the story and unknown words.

4.3. SHARED READING.

The shared reading experience (see 2.4.4.1.) was initially used with different ability groupings to promote basic reading skills. During the reading lesson all the children in a group gathered on the carpet and sat in a semi- circle . I sat on a chair holding the 'big book' and flipped through the pages . I discussed what was happening in the story with the children. I read the story aloud several times and pointed at the words as I read along. Later, I encouraged the children to join in. All the children in the class took their literature stories home everyday and their parents or older siblings read to them (see 2.2.4). Some of the uses of the "Big Book" are discussed below.

- **THE 'BIG BOOK' WAS USED AS A VALUABLE RESOURCE TO PROMOTE 'TIMED READINGS'**

I used a frame and selected chunked meaningful language in the form of sentences, phrases or words from the 'Big Book'. Children then read the words with speed which in turn improved their overall reading fluency. Eskey and Grabe (1988 : 229) propose "timed readings" for EAL learners to promote reading fluency. I flashed entire sentences, highlighting the difficult words in a different colour (see 2.2.2.). Sometimes I masked certain words or certain sections for closer study. I extended discussion on these selections from the ' Big Book'. In order to increase comprehension of new words, I used pictures , real life objects , chalkboard drawings , actions , live demonstrations , explanations and peer interaction (see 2.2.1.). The children also made their own flashcards which they stored in little plastic containers. During group lessons, children matched their flashcards to the words in the "Big book." They also played word recognition games. Sometimes, they followed the letters of the word with their fingers and sounded out the letters of the alphabet. (see 2.4.1.).

- **THE BIG BOOK WAS USED AS A VALUABLE RESOURCE TO BUILD BRIDGES BETWEEN FIRST AND SECOND LANGUAGE CONTEXTS**

Often I used pre-reading skills, such as engaging in drama, in order to create a context for the story that was to follow e.g. the children would make masks of the cat and the mouse (see 2.2.2.) or engage in dialogue where the cat and the mouse had a conversation. I asked the children to predict what the story was about. Smith (1985 : 71) points out that prediction is the natural way to make sense of the world . In trying to make sense of the story, the children who could communicate their ideas in English took turns to verbalise their thoughts (see 2.2.1.). By interacting with the children through group discussion, I began to build concepts and ideas that would increase comprehension levels (see 2.2.4.). Learners who were not as proficient in English listened attentively , but they were not forced to express their ideas. Rather, they were encouraged to participate actively through the use of teacher prompts e.g. questions and comments interpersed throughout the reading as follows :

Story : **The cat and the mouse** :
"who has seen a cat chasing a mouse..... can you describe what
the cat and mouse looked like..... where did this take place ....and now in a few
sentences tell me what happened.....and then what did you see.... Now can anyone
retell what Mary , said but in Zulu ?"

The bilingual African children did translations to help their peers understand English. However, I only allowed translations periodically, just to get African learners to get a whole sense of the ideas and concepts in order to comprehend the story (2.3.3). Wong Fillmore (1982b) warns that excessive translations can cause children to 'tune out' because they know that the same information will be given in their first language (McLaughlin ,1985 :121). I allowed African children to use the mother tongue sparingly, since they needed to think in their first language to activate their background knowledge which was linked to comprehension (Cunningham et. al 1995). Atkinson (1987 : 242) argues that at early levels a ratio of about 5% native language to about 95% target

language may be more profitable in promoting judicious use of the mother tongue. However, in grade one, I believe at least 25% of mother tongue to 75% of the target language would be of greater benefit to African learners since these learners need mother tongue instruction in order to acquire basic literacy skills in the initial stages of learning. In addition they need maximum opportunities to use and hear the target language because English is the language used for teaching and learning at school (see 2.2.1.).

- **THE BIG BOOK WAS USED AS A VALUABLE RESOURCE TO BOOST THE SELF CONCEPTS OF THOSE WHO LACKED READING CONFIDENCE**

In grade one, as the children were gaining confidence in their reading abilities , I encouraged them to read with a partner or take turns to each read a page. Competent readers read with less competent readers. The average readers read with weak readers (see 2.4.4.1.). Confident readers chose a page and read independently to me. When I felt that the majority of the children could read the story, I engaged the entire group in choral reading (see 2.2.4.) in unison in order to improve reading fluency (Zarille, 1994 : 24).

4.4. TEACHING OF PHONICS IN MEANINGFUL CONTEXTS

I incorporated some systematic phonics into my programme in grade one. I made children aware of blends and word patterns in whole words as they were reading their literature stories (see 2.2.2.). Trachtenburg (1990) recommends the teaching of phonics in association with children's literature where the whole-part-whole instructional framework integrates learning to read with real reading. Periodic drilling of "word families" by sounding and blending, instead of extensive monotonous drills, was used as a supplementary technique to facilitate the acquisition of a basic reading vocabulary (see 2.4.1.). This helped the pupils to decipher, pronounce correctly and recognise unfamiliar words, instead of being used as a method of reading instruction (Herbst, 1988 :103).

In grade one , I wrote down all the blends on a page and stuck this on each child's desk. In order to access other types of intelligences e.g. musical intelligence (see 2.2.2) I taught them the tune of .. "This old man he plays one." By using this musical tune the

children were blending the letters of the alphabet e.g./ at/et/ it/ ot/ ut/ bl/ cl /fl/ etc. We then wrote out words with these blends and copied them onto a wallchart. Using a collaborative approach , the children made sentences with the phonic-based words. Later, I made little phonic sentence booklets for home reading in order to consolidate the different reading stages (see 2.4.3.).

In grade two, I encouraged children to identify more complex blends or look for challenging word patterns in their reading materials. These patterns were written on the 'word wall' which children added to whenever they came across a word that had a common spelling pattern (see 5.2.). I tied a string from one end of the classroom to the other and pegged charts with different spelling patterns e.g. ock , eck , thr , ell , wh , ing , nk , nd , str , scr , spr , sk , oo , ee . This print- rich classroom environment gave learners opportunities to identify a vast number of words with ease (see 2.3.2.). Whenever children were reading, or whenever I wrote sentences on the board , I encouraged them to identify blends and to look for word patterns . They used their fingers to block certain letter combinations and worked out the pronunciation of the words. The phonic booklets gave learners opportunities to apply their top-down and bottom-up processing skills (see 2.4.4.). It created learning experiences that focused on vocabulary extension, improved word recognition skills and increased comprehension levels. Not only were learners gaining familiarity with the visual aspects of written language i.e. surface structure of written language (visual information our eyes pick up in their fixations in reading), but also, with deep structure (meaning) (Smith , 1985).

4.5. READING ACTIVITIES

In grade one, after the children could read a story and show some understanding of its contents, I engaged them in language activities to develop their thinking skills as well as their reading , writing , speaking and listening skills. I paired the children with partners with whom they worked well . By means of meaningful social interactions with their peers, these children were developing their cognitive abilities (see 2.2.4.). I gave them various language activities based on the story to incorporate meaning- focused output. The children engaged in open tasks (see activity a,b,d,) which gave them control of the

process and product in reading, These activities required the learners to set goals , select and organise information , choose strategies, and assess final results (Turner and Paris , 1995 cited in Gee , 1999 : 4). By means of pair work and peer teaching children were developing their interpersonal intelligence (see 2.2.2.).

a. The children had to match parts of sentences in order to complete the story and then copy these sentences into their books.
b. The children had to arrange, in chronological sequence, the main events of the story.
c. Children then completed multiple choice and true/ false comprehension exercises based on the story (why ,which ,who ,how ,when ,where).
d. The children rearranged individual words to make sentences. The first word of the beginning of the sentence was written in a capital letter so children knew how to start their sentences.
f. I also used the cloze procedure where children chose a correct word to fill in the blanks to complete the sentence.
g. Children also drew pictures to depict the main events in the story and they had to explain to their partners what they drew.
h. I also included post-reading activities into the balanced reading approach. Zulu children had to re-tell the story in English to their partners. To understand how story book language works the children used formal elements to re-tell stories e.g. "Once upon a time...." "They lived in a ....." I chose volunteers to come in front of the class and re-tell the same story in Zulu. Whenever these children got stuck, their Zulu speaking peers prompted them by helping them along. This gave other learners confidence to come out and have a go at story telling because they knew that their African peers were there to support them whenever they got into difficulty (see 5.2). By engaging in storytelling these children were extending their verbal/linguistic intelligence (see 2.2.2).
i. Children designed a book cover for the story in order to attract readers to the book .

They filled in story frames to develop their expressive writing skills (see appendix 4-9).

4.6 . INDEPENDENT AND PEER READING

Krashen (1993 , cited in Gee, 1999: 4) argues that EAL learners cannot master written language in the target language solely by direct instruction . Instead , huge amounts of input through extensive reading can promote high levels of literacy. Therefore I created opportunities for learners to engage in reading (see 2.3.). Immediately after the first break I engaged the children in 15 minutes of silent reading of many high interest storybooks.

Process notes :

In October and November 2001 I began the independent reading programme (see 2.4.5.). In just two months I was amazed at the children's reading progress. It was pleasing to note that these children were choosing books that were slightly beyond their current level of reading competence. At the beginning of grade two, in 2002, I noticed increased reading levels amongst the six African children. They were finishing their basals with speed. These children were getting better at reading by reading many books (see 2.3.).

Everyday, I read a story to the whole class in order to create an interest in the book. The African children enjoyed fairy-tales, since they came from a rich culture which valued story telling. By building on the children's home culture I attempted to gradually incorporate the conceptual school structure e.g. promoted vocabulary development of story content (see2.3.3.). The children were also encouraged to choose a book for home reading. Nation (2001: 151) points out that extensive individual reading for EAL learners improves the quality of language use, language knowledge and general academic performance . This allows learners of different proficiency levels to learn at their own level as well as follow their interests in choosing what to read , instead of being locked into an inflexible class programme which decreases motivation for learning (see 2.4.5.).

I also collected an abundance of reading material from the children themselves (comics, magazines, library books, newspaper articles , information pamphlets). These were placed at the reading corner .Whenever children finished their tasks set for the day and had free time, they engaged in pleasurable reading activities, by reading materials of their

own choice. Krashen (1982 : 165) highlights that pleasurable reading gives the learner flexibility to choose appropriate reading material in congruence with his/her reading ability levels. Interacting with reading materials in functional ways promoted positive attitudes towards reading materials (see 2.4.5.) e.g. some children came with their friends and sat on the carpet, took a book and engaged in the following behaviour i.e.

- Pointed to , and discussed, the pictures in the book with their partners.
- Read the book together with their friends.
- Traced pictures from the books. .
- Used junk material to make objects related to the story and displayed them on the skills table.

In the third term in grade two , I implemented the cross- age tutoring project which, I think, boosted the reading confidence of those who were struggling at the bottom end of the class (Cunningham,1995). The older children supported the younger children with their reading (see 2.2.4.). During the breaks the grade three children paired themselves with the grade two children and tutored them with their reading (see 2.4.4.1.).

Process notes : August 5, 2002

I think the children appreciated the older children coming to assist them during the breaks. The older children modelled good reading as the younger children listened attentively. The children themselves set targets for the week and negotiated how they would accomplish their goals. I ran the programme for 15 minutes on three days of the week. The children were very disciplined and made maximum use of every minute. Some children just listened to their partners reading to them while others decided to speak about the story and read along with their partners .

4.7. RECYCLED TRADITIONAL APPROACH

At the beginning of grade two, the children read basals on two days of the week and literature stories on three days of the week. For occupational work, the children completed written comprehension exercises based on their home reading of basals (see 2.3.1.).

Process notes : March 20 , 2002

I think the independent, extensive reading of library books as well as the reading of literature stories has increased the vocabulary and reading rate of both L1 and EAL learners because now they are finishing their basals with eagerness. Often I heard the children demanding another book ..."We finished reading the book. When are you going to give us another book ? " Mam, I know the book and I want a new book " But you promised to give us a new book today." These comments frustrated me because so many children needed books and handing out these books was time consuming and I eventually got so tired of recording who took what book that I eventually stopped recording. I needed to know whether these children could actually read these books..... so I decided to call in three 'reading mums' to assist me. These mums came to school on different days and flashed sentences and assessed the children on their reading ability and fluency (see 2.2.4). For occupational work , the children reported on what they had read. By using this approach, children were completing their basals independently, which gave me time to concentrate on my literature stories.

Process notes : August 24 ,2002.

Four of my research subjects have completed all the basals prescribed for the year. I certainly did little direct teaching of words , as these learners were getting better at reading by" really" reading (see 2.3.).

I still continued giving my weekly written spelling and comprehension assessments. In addition , children had to write sentences with new words chosen from their reading materials. I read and discussed the contents of comprehension passages e.g. I explained the meanings of content words (see 2.4.1.) before I expected them to complete their written tasks. Often, I chose scientific topics for comprehension, because I felt that it was a useful way to increase the children's general knowledge about their environment . I used this opportunity to expose learners to different literacies and other genres of writing (see 2.3.4).

4.8. LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE APPROACH

Children were asked to bring objects to school for " Show and Tell " activities. They had to talk about the object and answer questions from the class (see 2.2.3.). The African children also spoke about the objects in Zulu. Whenever the Indian children spoke about their objects , the African children did translations from English to Zulu. We spoke about the uses of the object, description, price and place of purchase etc. By means of questions, I encouraged children to extend information about the objects (2.2.4.). Together with the children , I verbalised the sentences and wrote sentences on the board leaving out high frequency words e.g. /to/ /a /from/ It/The. I left out function words in order to give children practice in developing their semantic awareness (2.4.1.). The entire class did chorus reading of the sentences by pointing with their fingers. The children then copied these sentences into their daily news books. Some children added a few sentences of their own. Cunningham et. al (1995: 19) points out that "Show and Tell" focusses the children's attention on vocabulary development as it relates to the objects the children are directly experiencing. However, Christie (1989:21) argues that the "Show and Tell" genre are not uniquely suitable for the development of oral language abilities because it promotes oral language as something independent of other areas of language development. She encourages schools to generate a range of differing activities, to enable children to master the associated range of genre types. However, I used the "Show and Tell" genre as one of the learning activities in the BRA to stimulate and extend the EAL learners abilities to listen, to speak, to read and to write (see 2.4.4.3.).

As the children gained more confidence in their reading and writing abilities in grade two, I put only the difficult words and phrases on the board and the children constructed their own sentences (see 2.2.4.). I balanced my reading programme with form -focused output. Nation (2001: 2) recommends that EAL learners develop their knowledge of the language through speaking and writing activities focussed on the information they are trying to convey. He further argues that speaking and writing are useful means of vocabulary development, because they make learners focus on words in ways in which they do not have to while listening and reading.

Process notes : June 14 , 2002

I did find reading much easier to teach than writing. I struggled with writing because I found it very difficult to correct mistakes and give remedial assistance to so many pupils. Therefore , on some days, I did modelled writing on selected topics to further enhance reading and writing skills (see 2.2.4.). The children, initially, took long to think about and express their ideas. I had a fairly good idea of each child's writing competence so I decided to set limits for each child. I put a dot in the child's book and encouraged him/her to try and write till that point. As time progressed, I raised the limits and surprisingly enough, the children stretched their limits to cope with tasks of increasing difficulty (see 2.2.4.) I also noticed they remained silent for a long period of time when they were writing . They were pausing , thinking and reading what they wrote. They often engaged in self correction of their own mistakes.

As the children were gaining confidence in their writing abilities in grade two, I encouraged them to write for different purposes e.g. to write on topics of their choice Each child had a dictionary and the words he/she could not spell I wrote into his/her dictionary. I felt it quite time consuming to give so many children words, so I made a classroom dictionary on the wall. I stuck 26 sheets of chart paper on the wall (Aa-Zz) and wrote basic words which the children used for reference purposes. Constant reference to this visual print rich environment provided the children with opportunities to read and spell words quickly and accurately (see 2.4.2.). This impacted positively on their reading comprehension and ability to produce written tasks independently (see appendix 4-9).

Process notes : August 13, 2002 .

I had very busy walls in my grade two classroom . I created a print-rich environment which the children often used for reference purposes. We had all kinds of word patterns stuck on the wall, and children added words to these charts as they discovered more words with similar spelling patterns or phonic blends (see 5.2.).

Cunningham *(1995)* states that word walls provide an immediately accessible dictionary for the most troublesome words. Learners were also encouraged to use "inventive spelling" where they sounded the letters of the alphabet and wrote out the word e.g. phonic baskets (see appendix 4-9).

Process notes : August 15 , 2002

" Inventive spelling" was a valuable resource to improve writing competence. Due to the large numbers in my class it was impossible for me to spell all the words the different children needed to complete their written tasks. So I decided to show them how to do "inventive spelling " where they sounded out the words and wrote them down. In this way the children were developing their word recognition abilities in the different reading stages (see 2.4.3.). Whenever I gave children a piece of written work, they would ask me whether they should use "inventive spelling" or dictionary spelling". I noticed the smiles on their faces when I said "inventive spelling." By using "inventive spelling" the children could concentrate on putting their thoughts down on paper without being disturbed e.g. whenever they needed a word they had to wait in a long queue in order for me to write down the word. Furthermore by accepting the children's gradual approximations of conventional forms of writing the BRA sought to motivate and stimulate writing competence (see 2.3.2.).

When learners finished their work, they had to choose a peer whose task it was to read their work and advise them on mistakes so that they could correct their work e.g. begin a sentence with a capital letter , demarcate sentences using full stops , find spelling errors, and wrong word order etc. After children corrected their work, they had to choose their best piece of written work every fortnight and paste it on the notice board outside the classroom for others to read at their leisure. Thus the children engaged in self evaluation which developed their intrapersonal intelligence (see 2.2.2.) and made them aware of their strengths and weaknesses (Christison ,1999: 11). In this way, some children gained exposure to good writing produced by their more competent peers.

Process notes: August 16 , 2002

In addition children stuck their stories, poems and artwork on the walls around the classroom. Outside the classroom they displayed their literacy projects on a skills table. Exciting activities grew out of reading tasks as children's multiple intelligences were being stimulated (see 2.2.2) . They brought resources such as big cereal boxes , old clothing from home to make their reading lessons exciting. Every child had something to contribute as he/she worked collaboratively to accomplish his/her goals. Both first and EAL language learners were cementing and building strong relationships where good team spirit prevailed. This relationship had a positive effect on the children's reading performance during paired reading sessions.

4.9. GUIDED READING

In grade two I chose more advanced literature stories for guided reading . During guided reading with the different ability groups I engaged learners in activities to strengthen their understanding and appreciation of stories by helping them to internalise the structure of stories (Strickland , 1989 : 141). At the beginning of the lesson I told the children exactly what we were going to learn in that particular reading lesson and this was followed by learner activities e.g. :

❖ **PICTURING** (see 2.2.2.)

- By looking at the pictures or main cover predict what you think the story is about.
- Picture in your mind an event or scene in the book . Write about or draw it.
- Choose one of the characters in the story and draw pictures about the story as seen through the eyes of this character.
- Divide your page into eight equal parts and draw pictures to show the different events in the story.
- Draw your favourite , sad , frightening or most interesting part of the story.

❖ **DIRECT TEACHER INSTRUCTION** (see 2.4.4.)

- The teacher instructs the learners to first read the first and last page and explain to their friend what they think is happening in the story.
- The teacher explains vocabulary and builds language concepts in the story.
- The teacher models " reading aloud " to children.
- The teacher focusses learners' attention on certain word patterns, rhyme patterns or phonic blends.
- The teacher uses inferential questioning to get children to supply the missing information in the story.
- The teacher instructs the learners to draw phonic baskets and use 'inventive spelling' to write down words with a particular blend.
- The teacher instructs the learners to read the story and write down questions with the "wh" words.

❖ **SPECULATION** (see 2.2.3.)

- If you had to change the story so that it would have a different ending, which part would you like to change and why?
- What do you think would have happened if a certain character in the story did things differently?
- If you had to meet the author of this book what would you tell him or her ?

❖ **PERSONAL RESPONSES** (see 2.2.3.)

- Did you enjoy the story or not enjoy the story ? Give a reason for your answer.
- Have you ever had a similar experience to what a character in the book experienced ?
- Have you ever known anyone like a character in the book ?
- Which character in the book did you like, or not like, and why?
- Did this story remind you of anything particular ?

❖ **PERFORMING ARTS** (2.2.1.)

- Choose two characters in the story, then you and your friend imagine that you are these two characters . Prepare and present a 2-3 minute conversation.
- Use your puppet to tell the story.
- Make a group play to show the different scenes in the story.
- Mime and see if the children in the group can guess which part of the story you are miming (adapted from Zarille , 1994 : 19).

4.10. CONCLUSION

In this chapter I described how the balanced reading approach manifested itself for the learners as a result of my intervention . By motivating and exposing my learners to extensive reading, I strove to develop the learners bottom-up and top-down processing skills which , I believe, was the highlight of this reading programme (Eskey and Grabe , 1988 : 228). In the next chapter, I will describe how the children responded to the BRA and its influence on their overall scholastic performance. Presentation of the data I collected during the research process and the results and the discussion evolving from this data will be made available in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS , RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF DATA .

5.1. INTRODUCTION.

In interpretive research, it is the researcher who is the primary instrument both for collecting and analysing the data . The guiding principle of interpretive analysis is to stay close to the data and interpret it with empathy (Blanche and Kelly, 1999). Since I was directly involved in implementing the BRA, as well as collecting and analysing data , I managed to get an in- depth , insider perspective of the research . In this chapter I will present and discuss the following data :

- Themes that emerged from the field notes by the participant observer.
- Evaluation of learner performance of the cases under study before and after the implementation of the BRA .
- Verbal reports from semi-structured interviews with the parents of the six African learners and informal conversations with the research subjects.
- My personal reflections on the BRA.
- Parental responses to questionnaire administered to all grade two parents.
- Learner performance in a series of reading assessments
- Result of the parental questionnaire administered to parents of the research subjects.
- Responses from teacher interviews and participants at the teacher workshop.

5.2. FIELD NOTES

I read through my field notes repeatedly and categorized the data according to themes, which would assist me in explaining how the learners were responding to the BRA(Blanche and Kelly , 1999). I looked for patterns or relationships and began analyses early in the research project. The results of early data analysis guided future data collection (Neuman, 2000: 219). I became very frustrated, as a researcher, trying to take down field notes whilst simultaneously trying to manage a large number of learners. As a result, I had to rely on mental notes which provided data of what transpired in the classroom. Although I did manage to capture substantial data for this research, some

detail was inevitably lost. The following themes emerged from my field notes : motivation , communicative competence , collaborative learning , writing competence and word recognition. Process notes extracted from my diary will appear in the different themes to describe my reflections of how the pedagogic principles of the BRA manifested itself for the learners.

❖ MOTIVATION

The six African children were becoming motivated learners as the reading experiences enhanced their self concepts. During independent reading sessions, these children rushed to the classroom library to choose the book that I had read to them the previous day because the story now seemed familiar to them (see 2.4.5.) Sometimes they followed me around the class with a library book and insisted I read the story aloud in class. Whenever I handed out a new reader to them I noticed great excitement in their eyes. They ran around showing the other children their new books as if to say... "See what book I am reading now ". As they were experiencing the joys and rewards of reading , extrinsic motivation transformed into intrinsic motivation.

❖ COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE.

The six children were making strides in their communicative competence. Initially, in the first term in grade one, these learners used short sentences and often hesitated as they were trying to express themselves e.g. The following observations were taken from my field notes .

" I am a girl ". ....
"My mother he works in town."
"He take my book."
" Give for me a pencil ?"
With increased exposure to my approach over one year , I noticed that the EAL learners were gaining confidence in pursuing a conversation with their English-speaking counterparts (2.2.1.). They could hold longer, more extended conversations and were quick to think of using appropriate words and phrases to sustain their conversations e.g.

- ✓ ".Suppose I move this sentence over there. Will that be right now ?"
- ✓ "Actually, I think it is better if you colour the cat and then cut it out ."
- ✓ "I think that you should bring some more string from home tomorrow. Then, maybe, we can tie the head to the body."
- ✓ "You know what , let both of us read the story to find the answers and if we get stuck we will ask somebody to help us".
- ✓ "Maybe you should read the first story in the book and then we will talk about what we read and after that we will draw all the pictures for the story."

From the above quotes it became apparent that these learners were gaining confidence in extending their sentences. They managed to accomplish this by using more than one verb in a sentence and used conjunctions appropriately.

During the post-reading activities, children went to great lengths to prepare props. They made masks, puppets and brought appropriate clothing from home for their dramatic performances. Reading to them was not just confined to the text ; it gave them opportunities to extend their creative abilities and talents, which added texture to their holistic literate development. In this way children were developing their bodily/ kinesthetic intelligence (see 2.2.2.).

Process notes : June 19, 2002

Today I was impressed by the way these two girls used their multiple intelligences (see 2.2.2.) and participated in drama , Sinesipho (cruel stepmother) and Nomalisa (Cinderella). Sinesipho became bold , brave and aggressive and spoke spontaneously to add vigour to her dialogue. Nomalisa remained submissive and spoke softly and lovingly with grace. Her emotional outbursts had an empathetic effect on the other children in the class. When these girls took the platform, the class was absolutely silent and gave these girls its undivided attention . Although Sinesipho struggled and needed support to keep pace with her reading ability group, she had an abundance of talent and poise which was unique to her. After this drama session, it became apparent that African children come from a rich oral

culture . Both these girls could narrate the story of Cinderella with fluency and accuracy in both English and Zulu. Subsequently, they were capable of putting feeling into their reading, which increased their oral comprehension and reading motivation.

Whenever these children were telling the story in Zulu , the other African pupils in class prompted them i.e. they collectively supported them in completing the sentence . Similarly, Cazden (1988) reports on how children of Polynesian descent improved their comprehension skills by means of discussion through " Talk story." It was noticeable that whenever the teacher asked questions based on the story, these children volunteered to answer collectively , often chiming in and overlapping one another's answers (see 2.3.3.). My BRA did shift power from authoritarian teacher-controlled instruction to collaborative pupil-centered learning. Cazden refers to this idea as the "balance of rights" hypothesis and suggests that it can serve as a conceptual basis for making specific predictions about the effects of social, organizational and sociolinguistic variables on academic achievement (Cazden ,1988 : 72).

❖ **COLLABORATIVE LEARNING.**

Children were sharing their knowledge and were giving and taking from each other. Some of them spoke about their own experiences and linked these experiences with the story.

Process notes : June 6 , 2002 Discussion about Cinderella's Godmother.

[Today we had an interesting discussion about Cinderella's fairy Godmother. Nomalisa spoke about praying to God through her ancestors. She spoke about a special sacred prayer place in her house. Sipho and Andiswa said that only elders were allowed to pray for them].
(see 2.2.3.)

Through literature discussions, these children were having an opportunity to talk about their religious practices, as well as appreciating how other cultures differed from their own (see 2.2.3.). L1 learners also made EAL learners knowledgeable about their cultural practices and norms. By normalising diversity and enriching the cultural experiences of

all learners the BRA sought to contribute to life-long learning. The children also engaged in paired reading where the competent readers (L1 and EAL) helped the less competent readers to gain confidence in their reading abilities. Sometimes, children brought their own reading books from home and shared these with others .

❖ WRITING COMPETENCE.

Generative moments signaled children's movement toward more mature writing competence. As the six children's reading competence improved , so did their writing competence, as they were becoming more open to writing conventions e.g. punctuation marks, such as using full stops and capital letters in sentences (see appendix 4-9). The children increased their number of sentences. In order to increase motivation for writing, the African children were given autonomy over the writing process as they chose their own topics for free writing (Hodson and Jones , 2001). They were becoming more spontaneous in expressing their ideas because spelling and grammar were not emphasized. This was evident when they wrote about their personal experiences linked to incidents from the literature stories (see appendix 4-9).

❖ WORD RECOGNITION.

The six children were deciphering unknown words by applying strategies they had been exposed to in the BRA. Most of the time, they managed to work out the word....and, sometimes, they even challenged their peers at word recognition .

Process notes : November 9 , 2001

[Today I watched Sipho and Andiswa revising their flashwords in the carpet area. Sipho emptied his flashwords from his plastic container . He picked up each card and read the words loudly. He seemed quite confident as he could recognise all 30 words. Andiswa on the other hand recognised 25 words. He, then went to the word wall and started to read the story and tried to locate the unknown words in it. Surprisingly enough, he was able to read and work out at least three of the words on his own by using context clues].

(see 2.4.2.)

Process notes : August 5 , 2002

Today Freddy really enjoyed putting up words on the 'word wall'. He found two words with the 'le' sound. I had 'table' and 'apple' on the chart. Freddy came across the words "trouble," in his reader, and "marble," in his dictionary, and added them to the chart (see 2.4.3.).

For occupational work the children made sentences with the words from this chart. Towards the latter part of my programme, I noticed that the frequency with which these children came to me for help in word recognition decreased. Whenever I wrote a sentence on the board, I noticed the children sounding out the words , blending and looking for patterns as they tried to decode and encode unknown words (see 4.4.).

Process notes : August 15, 2002.

I told Sipho to read the instruction from the chalkboard. He spoke clearly and loudly, and managed to decipher the word 'experience'. Furthermore he was asked to read and explain the English instruction written on the board in Zulu and in English. He executed his task with commitment and confidence (see 2.2.1) .

5.3. DESCRIPTION OF CASES UNDER STUDY

Before I implemented the BRA, I had a global idea of the six learners' academic performance in class. After my intervention through the year long BRA, I was able to compare and describe the literacy progress of these learners. Next to the children's names, I have indicated the reading ability group to which they belonged to in grade one and two. In grade one I had 5 reading groups in my class i.e. very good readers-group one , good readers-group two, average readers-group three , weak readers-group four and very weak readers-group five. In grade two I had 3 reading ability groups i.e. good readers-group one , average readers-group two and weak readers-group three. I will now present a description of the cases under study before implementation of the BRA (A) and a description of the cases after implementation of the BRA (B).

A. NOMALISA- READING ABILITY GROUP IN GRADE ONE- 3 .

Her reading lacked fluency and she often copied my sentences from the chalkboard. Sometimes she confused similar sounding words in her sentence construction e.g. feeling and feeding. When words were flashed, she often watched her peers' lip movement instead of focussing on the flashwords. However, she was determined to overcome her difficulties and she tried hard to learn her basal texts with accuracy. She relied on peer assistance for the words she did not know. After the meanings of words were discussed, she tended to forget their meanings and this affected her sentence construction.

B. NOMALISA –READING ABILITY GROUP IN GRADE TWO-1

Nomalisa responded very well to the interactive reading approach. She loved sharing her ideas during literature discussions and was always enthusiastic about acting in plays (see 5.2.). She developed quick thinking skills and was capable of making appropriate intelligent responses during the drama sessions, both in Zulu and in English. She was able to decode and encode many words with ease (see .4.4.). Sometimes she assisted other children in breaking up their words. With repetitive reading of the text, Nomalisa could increase reading speed. Sometimes she struggled to recognize difficult words. But when she read the word in a sentence she was able to recognize the word and its meaning. She could apply grammatical rules in context (see 2.4.1 and appendix 11.). She was now capable of writing longer sentences using conjunctions to make complex sentences. During writing sessions, she remained focussed for quite a while as she generated more ideas (see appendix 4). She often totalled her own spelling tests. She read avidly and had the ability to retell the story in a clear and concise manner (see appendix 11). Nomalisa was quick to get the gist of the story because she was able to apply skimming and scanning skills efficiently during guided reading sessions (see 4.9.).

A. DIDUZI- READING ABILITY GROUP IN GRADE ONE- 3

Diduzi was a very eager child who was always serious about learning. However, she experienced problems with decoding phonic-based basals. Her sentences were very short

and she tended to write the same sentences repeatedly. She struggled with the meanings of certain words and this was evident in her sentence construction e.g.“ I have a carry”. Her word order was often incorrect e.g. “Give for me a pencil ?”

B. DIDUZI-READING ABILITY GROUP IN GRADE TWO-1

Diduzi was an attentive listener who made remarkable progress in the past two years. When other children talked during the literature discussions , Diduzi watched them very carefully. By means of her facial expression I knew that she had some comprehension of the speaker's message. When it came to formal reading, she was very eager to show me what she could do. I noticed that immediately after the week-end Diduzi was very confident about her reading and she often said to me, “ Mam when are we going to come out for reading because I know my book”. It was evident that Diduzi had a great desire for reading and she wanted to move on (see 5.2.). I noticed that she finished her work quickly and then read or learned for her spelling test. Although I had a period set aside for independent reading , I noticed that Diduzi selected the book from the library corner in the morning and kept it on her desk . Her extensive reading in the EAL (see 2.4.5.) has certainly increased reading comprehension (see appendix 11). Although she wrote simple sentences she made very few mistakes (see appendix 5).

A. SINESIPHO-READING ABILITY GROUP IN GRADE ONE-4.

Sinesipho struggled with word recognition and reading fluency. She was often confused about what to do. She took too long to complete written tasks. Very often she was still reading her basals to gain practice and kept consulting her African peers. She lacked confidence in herself. She hardly ever got the opportunity to read library books.

B. SINESIPHO-READING ABILITY GROUP IN GRADE TWO-2

Sinesipho needed extra time with her texts in order to improve her reading as compared to the other children in her group. Although her communicative competence improved greatly, she still required remedial reading assistance in order to improve reading fluency. She was very slow in completing all aspects of her written work. She performed

excellently during drama sessions (see 5.2.). She was capable of writing a few sentences and her oral comprehension had improved. However, when it came to written comprehension, she always consulted someone. Using the "Big Book" in grade one really boosted her reading confidence (see 2.4.4.1.). I modelled reading on various occasions and encouraged her to read to me only when she was ready. I often praised her for her little reading efforts. She was able to draw, in detail , pictures about the story we were currently reading. Her pictures followed in chronological sequence. Furthermore, she was able to explain her drawing with confidence (see appendix 6). During literature discussions, she was able to help her Zulu-speaking peers to understand the contents of our discussion .Whenever these children looked puzzled and confused about certain objects or events in the story, Sinesipho was quick to do translations from English to Zulu, which made my task that much easier. Sinesipho was the real 'live wire' during my literature discussions because she was so skilful at making the connections between knowledge gained in the classroom and knowledge outside the classroom (see 2.2.3.).

A . FREDDY- READING ABILITY GROUP IN GRADE ONE - 4

Although Freddy recognized most of his flashwords , his reading lacked fluency and he made no attempts to try and work out the new words. He just took guesses. He was very easily distracted and during silent reading, when other children were busy reading, he continued having conversations with his classmates. He was extremely slow in completing written tasks set for the day. In his written work, he generally substituted words which had similar letters e.g. "I am going to town ...I my going to town."

B. FREDDY-READING ABILITY GROUP IN GRADE TWO-2.

Freddy enjoyed predicting what was going to happen in the story. He made intelligent guesses and was happy when his predictions were correct. He loved looking at pictures and talking about them in Zulu to his Zulu-speaking peers (see 2.2.1.). Often , I had to remind him to complete his written tasks set for the day first and then continue with reading. Despite several warnings, he still hid the reading book under his writing book and, sometimes, he had the reading book open and placed the library book on the side of

his desk . Sometimes, I watched him walking around the class, flipping pages and telling his friends about the book he was reading, as he discovered that books contain vital knowledge and information which were going to help him understand his world better . Although his word-recognition skills improved greatly, his reading fluency increased upon repetitive reading. He made strides in his oral comprehension. However, when it came to written comprehension he only attempted a few questions but his answers were still correct. Most of the time, Freddy did not do as well as expected in his spelling tests. Somehow, Freddy preferred doing more reading than writing (see appendix 7) .

A. SIPHO-READING ABILITY GROUP IN GRADE ONE- 3

Although Sipho could learn his flashwords with speed, his reading lacked fluency and he stumbled when he came across new words. He hardly conversed with me but he seemed to understand basic instructions in class. His aural comprehension was better than his reading comprehension. Sipho found it difficult to work independently, as he was always chatting about something in Zulu with his peers and often he accomplished very little, with regard to the written tasks set for the day. He made careless errors in his written work. He spent very little time reading in class because he was too busy trying to finish his written tasks.

B. SIPHO-READING ABILITY GROUP IN GRADE TWO-1.

Sipho developed very good word recognition skills. Many of his African peers came to him for assistance. His reading fluency improved greatly (see appendix 11). In grade two he often took library books home and finished them overnight. He became an avid reader and he enjoyed literature discussions. Although Sipho could not speak English as well as the other African children, he spoke with courage, and determination to make himself be understood. He enjoyed speaking in Zulu whenever he got the opportunity. When he did collaborative activities, based on the readers, with his English-speaking peers he seemed to contribute as much as he had gained .He did well in his written tasks set for the day (see appendix 8) and he also performed well in his spelling tests . Sipho managed his written comprehension exercises because he had developed enough vocabulary and had a

firm grasp of English grammatical conventions (see appendix 11). He, somehow, preferred reading with his Zulu-speaking peers. Sipho was shy and he did not feel comfortable in participating in drama sessions. Despite this, he really did enjoy watching other Zulu speakers acting in plays.

A. ANDISWA-READING ABILITY GROUP IN GRADE ONE- 3

Although Andiswa had the same ability to learn flashwords as the other children in his group , he still took longer to complete his reader . He needed a great deal of practice at reading and re-reading . Although he knew his phonic sounds, he did not apply them to his reading. As a result, his poor word recognition skills hampered his reading, which eventually impacted on reading comprehension. Andiswa found it difficult to complete written tasks independently. He sometimes copied the other children .

B. ANDISWA-READING ABILITY GROUP IN GRADE TWO-1

Andiswa responded quite well to my BRA. He developed enough confidence to speak with great pride in both Zulu and English. During literature discussions, he was able to talk freely and openly about his experiences and he was not afraid to speak from the bottom of his heart (see 2.2.3.) He was a great source of inspiration to other Zulu speakers, in being proud of their language and culture. Andiswa had a very good understanding of whatever he was reading and this was evident in his written comprehension. Although he seemed to know what to do, I noticed he loved to discuss his answers with his friends before he wrote them down . He constructed good, short, grammatically correct sentences (see appendix 9). Whenever someone was confused about what to do Andiswa came to their rescue by explaining precisely what was expected of them. He enjoyed writing about his own experiences and reading them to his peers. During independent reading sessions, Andiswa was always engrossed in whatever he was reading. Whenever he completed a book he told his friends about it so that they too would be motivated to choose that book the next time.

5.4. VERBAL REPORTS OF THE PARENTS AND LEARNERS IN THE CASES UNDER STUDY.

During the implementation of my BRA I captured parents' thoughts from semi-structured interviews (see appendix 2). These comments reflect the parents' satisfaction with their children's reading progress as a result of the home support reading programme. From the comments it is evident that the BRA made parents aware of their children's abilities and capabilities. The BRA did give parents opportunities to participate actively in their children's education.

Nomalisa's mother : " I am happy about Nomalisa's reading progress because now she can read fast without stopping, and she knows the big words. "

Diduzi's mother : "I see she can read all her books she brings home and she even teaches her big sister all the books you give her."

Sinesipho's mother : " I think Sinesipho is getting good now, because Sinesipho is trying and I teach her everyday and, even if I'm cooking, she comes to the kitchen and I try hard and she try hard."

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Freddy's mother : " I listen to him reading everyday and I know he is getting okay in his reading because he is working very hard, and sometimes I see he finish the book quick."

Sipho's mother : " I look at Sipho's reading books everyday and sometimes his sister she help him to read so that he can pass good."

Andiswa's mother : " Andiswa understands everything in the book ...He is good. He knows it in Zulu and in English."

In conversations with these six learners during the implementation of my BRA, I managed to capture verbal comments. These comments acknowledge that the BRA had

stimulated their multiple intelligences , increased their reading motivation and created spaces for them to celebrate their literacy progress.

Nomalisa : " After I finished reading the story, I like to tell my friend about what I know because I like to tell the story " (see 4.5.).

Diduzi : " I like when you tell us to draw pictures in our books because we can use our crayons and show how the story goes " (see appendix 5).

Sinesipho : "I like when you put me to read with someone because that person he knows to read nice and I to gonna read like him." (see 4. 6.).

Freddy : " I like the books you put in the library corner because it makes me clever and if I read lot I learn lot" (see 4.6.) .

Sipho : " I like when you show us how to find out how to say a big word. And now I can find the words in the book and write it on the wall " (see 4.4.).

Andiswa : " I like to say the story in Zulu and English because I know how it happened, and I want to show my friends the pictures in the book and see what the people in the book do to make the story " (see 4. 5.).

5.5 MY PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON THE BRA

As I reflect back on my year long programme, I did experience shortcomings and difficulties which I had to overcome e.g. classroom management, and other trials and tribulations.

- **CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT.**

➢ **SPACE AND MANAGEMENT OF LEARNING MATERIALS.**

To manage so many sentence and word strips was certainly a mammoth task. Often, children lost their sentence strips and word strips and I had to make new strips on the

spot. Due to lack of space, children had to restrict their movement. Some children preferred to work on the floor , others in the carpet area and some in the corridor.

- **DISCIPLINE**

Whenever children were working collaboratively to accomplish tasks, I found it difficult to control the noise levels .To solve this problem, I gave some of the children a numeracy worksheet. This worksheet involved solving word-problems by drawing pictures. Thus, children were applying their reading skills to numeracy by integrating the knowledge gained in one learning area with another. In this way children were developing their logical/ mathematical intelligence (see 2.2.2.). This, then, gave me a chance to continue my small group guided reading sessions with the minimum amount of disturbance.

- **MY TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS**

At times , I felt isolated in my struggles, because I was trying out something new about which no one on my staff had knowledge. Despite my frustrations, failures and successes, I had high expectations for all my learners. For me, the most difficult task was gradually moving from being a traditional teacher to being a whole language teacher. The planning and preparation was certainly an enormous task because so many activities had to be planned and managed on a daily basis. Whole language teaching demands a multitude of resources to cater for the diverse needs of the learners. In addition I had to get used to high noise levels whilst simultaneously trying to listen to the children during guided group reading sessions.

- **LIMITATIONS IN IMPLEMENTING THE BRA.**

I used the academic performance of the majority of the learners as a yardstick to dictate the pace at which the BRA teaching and learning activities moved forward. There was very little I could do to help those children who received little or no help from their home environment. I may have neglected some children who needed individual remedial tutoring . I relied on peer teaching and tutoring by the "reading mums " to help me to push the weaker learners forward. I was over-ambitious with the innovative techniques

that I was trying out, with the result that the good, the average and some weak readers made great strides in their reading development but the weakest ones were left behind.

In the BRA I discussed the literature stories in ability reading groups during guided reading sessions. The good and the average readers coped well in these sessions whilst the weaker learners struggled. I think if the class as a whole had engaged in shared reading activities of the literature stories, then more children would have experienced the joys of literacy. Also, the interactive reading approach and the activities of the BRA required much teacher intervention and supervision, with the result less time was actually spent on marking the daily written work with the children in order to help them with their mistakes. I think I did group reading with too many groups on a daily basis and neglected supervision of writing tasks. So next time I need to allocate more time in developing writing skills.

5.6. ANALYSIS OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF PARENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE (DEFORD THEORETICAL ORIENTATION TO READING PROFILE)

I used the computer software package SPSS11,0 to analyse the data collected from the parental questionnaire (see appendix 10). I used the Likert rating scale and punched the parents' scores into the scoresheet for each question. For purposes of coding the data accurately, I used the children's names and entered their parents responses for each question . I added the percentages of "strongly agree" and "agree" to form one score . I also added the "strongly disagree" and "disagree" to form one score. I then analysed the scores by looking for patterns in the parents' responses. Each number had a value . 1= strongly agree. 2= agree. 3 = neither agree nor disagree. 4 = disagree. 5 = strongly disagree. I punched in the values for each question. The computer analysed the coded data and provided the mean scores as percentages for each of the following categories: category 1-children's mean scores for each question ; category 2-Indian children's and African children's means scores separately; category 3-the mean scores of the weak, average and good readers; category 4 - the mean scores of research and non-research subjects. The purpose of dividing my analysis into these categories is to firstly get a

global picture of all the grade two parents' knowledge of teaching reading in the initial stages. Secondly, I wanted to establish if there was any significant difference in Indian and African parents' knowledge of reading. Thirdly , I wanted to find out if the parents' knowledge of reading influenced their children's reading performance in the different ability groups. Fourthly , I wanted to find out if the interactions I had with the parents of the research subjects influenced their knowledge and understanding of reading in the beginning stages. Finally, I wanted to find out what learner support materials and teaching approaches were responsible for making the BRA a success.

- **DISCUSSION AFTER ANALYSING FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF SCORES FOR ALL PARENTS OF LEARNERS**

The parents' responses suggest that they value bottom-up processing skills as a vital component of the 'learning to read' process . e.g. word accuracy . They also discourage guessing and word substitution, and encourage pre-teaching of new words. From the results, it is evident that the majority of parents discard reading practices stemming from whole language principles e.g. word substitution and guessing (see appendix 10, table 5).

- **DISCUSSION AFTER ANALYSING THE FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF SCORES FOR THE PARENTS OF THE DIFFERENT READING ABILITY GROUP S I.E. THE GOOD , THE AVERAGE AND THE WEAK LEARNERS**

From the results , the parents of good readers seem to highly rate reading practices which are consistent with the BRA i.e. fluency and expression , pre-teaching of unknown words, adhering to punctuation marks , word accuracy and phonics (see appendix 10, table 6). It is possible that these parents take an active interest in helping their children with their reading and, therefore, they can link the reading theory to practice. However, parents of average and weak readers do not highly prioritise vital reading skills e.g. phonics in comparison to parents of good readers. It is possible that the good readers come from literate backgrounds where their parents promote vital reading skills.

- **DISCUSSION AFTER ANALYSING FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF SCORES FOR PARENTS OF THE INDIAN AND AFRICAN PUPILS**

From the findings, it is evident that a large percentage of African parents believe that children's initial encounters with print should focus on meaning. It is possible that African parents realise that, because their children are receiving instruction in an EAL , reading instruction should focus on meaning first and not form. Whereas, Indian parents may prioritise the teaching of reading skills and believe that comprehension will take place automatically. Furthermore , Indian parents as pupils themselves, may have had past successful schooling experiences which followed traditional methods of learning to read .Therefore, they may want the same traditional method for their children (see appendix 10, table 7). It is possible that African parents themselves learnt to read using traditional methods and may realise that this method is inappropriate for acquiring literacy in an EAL.

- **DISCUSSION AFTER ANALYSING FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF SCORES FOR RESEARCH AND NON -RESEARCH SUBJECTS**

The findings reveal that the parents of the research subjects place high emphasis on reading comprehension , fluency and adherence to punctuation marks. They value good reading skills and may, therefore, promote this at home. Furthermore , these parents could have picked up some reading theory during interactions with the teacher. It is possible that some of the parents of the non-research subjects come from disadvantaged backgrounds themselves , and this may have influenced their perceptions on reading. We can see the results of table 8 (appendix 10) which clearly demonstrate that a high percentage of parents of research subjects value good reading skills as a necessary component of the 'learning to read' process. However, for question seven , 50% of the research subjects parents agreed and 50% of the research subjects disagreed, on whether word substitution in reading should be left uncorrected . It is possible that the BRA has changed some of these parents' reading perceptions, which may lean more towards a whole language approach to the teaching of reading.

5.7. ANALYSIS OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS FROM READING ASSESSMENTS

I assessed the children on 5 English stories (see appendix11) . These stories were adapted to suit the reading ability level of the learners. I personally administered the test with each of the research subjects in October and November 2002. The six children had a time limit of forty minutes to complete the test items for each story. I completed the test items for story one with all the research subjects before I commenced with the test items for story two. As the testing programme progressed the stories became more complex. For each story, I assessed the six children on 10 different literacy aspects by using the Likert rating scale. These aspects exemplified the reading activities the children were exposed to in the BRA. The aspects were as follows:

1. **Reading ability and fluency.**
2. **Rearranging sentences to show chronological sequence of stories.**
3. **Rearranging words to make meaningful sentences.**
4. **Matching parts of sentences.**
5. **Drawing pictures to explain what happened in the story.**
6. **Answering 5 questions based on the story.**
7. **Demonstrating the meaning of selected words from the story.**
8. **Identifying words which have selected blends or word patterns in the story.**
9. **Giving personal responses to literature.**
10. **Word extension.**

From the analysis of the learners' scores, it can be concluded that the BRA had stimulated their ability to focus on meaning , to chunk meaningful language units to improve reading fluency, to use multiple intelligences to promote reading comprehension and to use a variety of word recognition strategies to identify words with ease. I will now discuss the patterns which emerged from analysing the learners scores.

- **THE CHILDREN FOCUSSED ON MEANING.**

All the children scored 100 % on items 2 ,3,4,5, 6 (see appendix 11). These children were applying their cueing systems simultaneously to solve their reading problems (see 2.4.1 .). It can be concluded that reading comprehension for EAL learners can be improved if they are exposed to appropriate learning experiences that help them to build their schemas and activate their background knowledge. Their comprehension levels were reasonably high because they had an understanding of the whole story and, therefore, it was easier for them to put the pieces together to form the whole (see 2.2.2). The scaffolding (see 4.3.) that these children were exposed to during the BRA has impacted positively on their cognitive academic growth (see 2.2.4.)

- **READING ABILITY AND FLUENCY**

I noticed that the four good readers (Nomalisa , Diduzi ,Sipho and Andiswa) were able to chunk meaningful language and read fluently (see appendix 11) . Thus they had more time to work out the pronunciations of the difficult words by applying different word recognition skills (see 2.4.2.) . The two average readers (Sinesipho and Freedom) on the other hand read at a much slower pace because they used limited strategies for word recognition e.g. phonics. It is possible that good readers read fluently because they read extensively in an EAL (see 4.6.). This creates opportunities to chunk whole meaningful language units which impacts positively on reading fluency (see 2.2.2.).

- **CHILDREN USED THEIR MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES TO INCREASE COMPREHENSION**

Children used their pictures to talk about the different events in the story (see item 5). By using their multiple intelligences (see 2.2 2.) in the form of artwork, the children were able to organise their thoughts and consolidate comprehension of the story (see appendix 4-9). By giving EAL learners opportunities to sequence and discuss the pictures the BRA strove to simultaneously improve oral competence and reading comprehension in the target language (see 2.2.1.). By engaging EAL learners in functional reading (discussing contents of the pictures they drew) and writing

(illustrating the different events of the story in chronological sequence) the BRA sought to create opportunities for them to show the processes of reading and writing (see 2.3.2.).

- **CHILDREN USED THE TARGET LANGUAGE TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES**

The children used the target language to express their innermost thoughts and feelings e.g. responding to literature (see item 9). The BRA had developed their strategic competence to communicate their impressions with fluency and accuracy (see 2.2.1.). They were also encouraged to record their reflections which promoted their writing competence (see appendix 4-9). The children engaged in writing tasks with a specific purpose in mind i.e. reflecting on literacy instead of just recognising literacy (see 2.3.3.).

5.8. ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTERED TO PARENTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS.

This questionnaire (see appendix 12) was filled in by parents at the end of the BRA at individual interviews. I explained to parents how to go about completing it. I recorded the parents' responses for each question, according to their order of preference. I analysed the questionnaire by looking for similar responses by the majority of parents, (see appendix 12 ,table 10) and came to the conclusion that the majority of the African parents value a home support programme to enhance their children's reading skills. Furthermore, these African parents remain divided on their opinions regarding mother tongue instruction . From the data , it is evident that 5 of the 6 African parents value a home support programme which give children the opportunity to practice their reading . From analysing the data in question one , it is evident that African parents prefer a structured reading programme (basals) which reinforces learning at school and learning at home. It would appear that a whole language approach which involves extensive reading of library books to improve reading performance, may not be valued by African parents (two thirds) who prefer a tightly controlled reading environment for their children . Other factors e.g. parental assistance and children's own initiative and efforts, contributed to reading progress. It is possible that African parents, themselves, envisage

the pedagogical concepts embedded in the BRA as having different amounts of learning potential for their children.

Substantial evidence provided in question two demonstrates that some African parents' views on how their children should be taught to read goes against the basic principles of the BRA. From the findings, only 50 % of the parents of the research subjects value teaching through the medium of English. The other 50% of the parents prefer a bilingual translator or instruction in both Zulu and English . It is possible that some African parents favour a straight-for-English model, because they envisage English as the language of power which could help their children to achieve social mobility. Two thirds of African parents felt that the reading materials which their children were exposed to during the BRA helped them to understand the meanings of the stories. The other (one third) felt that the stories helped their children to learn more English words. As seen by the parental responses to question four , it seems that the majority of African parents envisage reading comprehension as a vital component of the 'learning to read' process , which is consistent with one of the goals of my BRA.

In conclusion the parents of the research subjects did respond positively to the BRA. They favoured a home support reading programme that was tightly controlled in terms of the reading materials used and the scaffolds provided in the flip-file. African parents want opportunities and guidance from the school to help their children to make rapid progress in literacy. In addition, these parents want their children to focus on the meaning of the stories. However, the mother tongue instruction issue has received mixed reactions from the parents . Whilst some parents see the value of promoting the mother tongue , others see it as a barrier to learning.

5.9. RESPONSES FROM TEACHER INTERVIEWS PRIOR TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BRA AND RESPONSES FROM TEACHERS AT THE TEACHER WORKSHOP

Before I implemented my BRA, I had telephonic interviews (see appendix 1) with six teachers from different schools .Two of these teachers were teaching at an ex-Model C school and the other four at an ex- House of Delegates school. I asked them to tell me what reading materials they used, and what method they used to teach reading to African learners. These educators were using the direct traditional reading method which focused on the teaching of flashwords and phonic sounds. All the children from the six schools were reading basals in a round-robin fashion. The well- resourced schools had a home-support reading programme. In the under- resourced schools, children only read in the classroom during the reading period. I assumed that most of the schools in the Pietermaritzburg region were using the skills- based approach to teach reading.

After I implemented my BRA, I shared my knowledge with Foundation phase educators. The purpose of the workshop was to assist them to upgrade their professional skills. Approximately 70 educators attended the workshop and I received only 50% (i.e.35) of the evaluation forms. The format of the meeting was as follows :

- Teachers were informed of what a good reader should do according to recent research
- I discussed salient points in the handout
- I reflected on what different reading researchers had to say about reading for elementary children.
- I explained that reading was meaning and supplied quotes from reading theorists
- I spoke about the positive attitudes of teachers in promoting reading at all levels
- I explained the concept" Balanced Reading Approach" and contrasted it with the progressive and traditional approaches.
- I informed teachers of the history of language education for Foundation phase African learners in South Africa.
- I explained my model of the BRA (see figure 1 , chapter 2)
- I explained the principles of the BRA.

- I described my personal experiences of implementing the approach and demonstrated how to use the "Big Book" .
- Educators filled in evaluation forms.

I read through the evaluation forms several times, and then decided to take direct quotes from the strengths and limitations of my workshop. Finally I critiqued my handout.

- **LIMITATIONS OF THE WORKSHOP**.

Some educators could understand the theory as I was explaining basic concepts , but others struggled to comprehend. It was possible that some educators were unqualified and they lacked the theory of basic teaching principles. Teachers who were not mother-tongue English speakers would also experience great difficulty because of the language problem. It was possible that some teachers did no reading for professional growth and development and , therefore, they are not up-to-date with the current trends in education. Ornstein and Huskins (1997) recommend that educators need in -service training or staff development time to feel comfortable with new programmes. I will now give quotes from the evaluation forms :

- ✓ " The teminology used was above the average educator"
- ✓ " Too much of theory at one go"
- ✓ "More time needed for explanation"
- ✓ "Could have approached it more practically"
- ✓ " Overuse of the overhead projector"
- ✓ "This workshop should have been held over three sessions"
- ✓ " The speaker was going too fast and I could not copy notes"
- ✓ "Poor seating arrangements"
- ✓ " Inaudible voice at the beginning "
- ✓ " P.A system would be of great help next time "

Verbal comments from educators :

- " I think you should have started with the practical aspects first and then moved onto the theory"

- "You should have allowed for more interaction amongst educators"

- " I think what you did towards the end of the workshop was more useful to us ...because you were showing us what you did practically. Maybe we needed more of that."

Educators could have been actively engaged in groupwork to share ideas and demonstrate activities, instead of overloading their memories with theory. Time was a major constraint, because I had to explain the theory, as well as explain my BRA, in one hour. Furthermore, the workshop was held after school and many educators were reluctant to stay in for an extra hour after school. As an educator , I have developed enough personally, and professionally, to acknowledge the gulf between theory and practice, because I understand how this integration has changed my perceptions about language teaching and learning in the classroom. It took me many months to really internalise the benefits of the theoretical principles of the BRA. These principles are embedded in the pedagogic decisions I make on a daily basis, and they will influence the way I teach in the future. To expect these educators to appreciate this and condense everything I had learned into a one hour session was certainly unrealistic. Furthermore, educators may face resistance to change because innovative teaching approaches pose a threat to their comfort zones. Whilst some educators listened attentively, others left the workshop and took the evaluation form with them.

- **STRENGTHS**

Some educators found the workshop beneficial and informative. I will now give direct quotes from the evaluation form :

- ✓ "The lady did have very valuable information to share"
- ✓ "We gained much knowledge on reading"
- ✓ " We learnt about making resources to enhance our teaching"
- ✓ "Now , I know that I must make my own readers"
- ✓ "Cutting out words was a fantastic idea"
- ✓ " I learnt that EAL learners need to know and understand 5000 words in order to process their grade 5 textbooks "
- ✓ " Very well researched. You are very confident and knowledgeable"
- ✓ " Good theory background "

I will now quote some **verbal comments** given by educators :

One teacher who is currently doing his B.ED , said :

" I really learnt a lot from your workshop. You know that the traditional method will never work for African learners ..... I think the "Big Book" was a fantastic idea ...I'm going to enlarge the books at my school."

Other comments :

- ✓ **Educator one** : "Your workshop was a real 'eye opener' to me ...and we need to have more workshops like this to remind us of things we may have forgotten. It's true! Sometimes we really teach them as if they were first-language learners and we expect the same level of work from them."

- ✓ **Educator two**: "We are teaching 95% English second language learners. Maybe you can come and have a demonstration at our school."

- ✓ **Educator three** : "We are still teaching the way we have been trained in college. We need to change our teaching methods at school to accommodate African learners."

- ✓ **Educator four** : " I'm impressed because you actually taught 50 children and you say at the end of the year at least 80% of your children were reading at a competent level."

- ✓ **Educator five** : "I think your handout was excellent and when you were speaking I could see the joy on your face and I could just imagine what levels you achieved with your children."

- ✓ **Educator six:** " We have an African teacher on our staff and we are going to get her to translate our stories ...maybe you can help us with the reading activities".

From the above data it is evident that in post-apartheid South Africa there are educators with varying levels of commitment and dedication towards transforming classroom practices. Some educators are eager and determined to overcome the barriers for effective teaching and learning at our schools. Therefore they supported what I had to say in a positive light. The comments made by teachers show that there is a need for language education workshops as a result of action research projects.

- **CRITIQUE OF HANDOUT**

I should have included a glossary of teminology used , followed by short descriptions to explain abstract terminology e.g. additive bilingualism , inventive spelling , emergent literacy theory etc. I could have chosen a story and explained exactly how I would have gone about approaching the story with my learners. This would have provided a framework and helped teachers to see more accurately how the BRA could manifest itself in the classroom. Although I did give educators some "story frameworks" for adaptation for their learners , I think I could have made a simplified framework to show how I would slowly scaffold learners to write in context-reduced settings.

5.10. CONCLUSION

From the analysis of the data it can be concluded that the success of the BRA can be attributed to numerous factors e.g. the learner's motivation, enthusiasm and attitude to reading (see 5.3. and 5.4). EAL learners who come from literacy enriched environments with stimulating pre-school experiences (see appendix 4, 5 ,8 ,9) have a better chance of integrating and mastering school knowledge (see appendix 11 and 5.3.). Their socio-cognitive experiences (see 2.2.4.) in their early years have impacted positively on reading progress. A BRA that acknowledges judicious use of the mother tongue can increase comprehension levels for EAL learners (see 5.2. and 5.3.) Furthermore, active participation by members of the children's home environment in the home support reading programme (see 5.4. and appendix 4-9). and the parents' knowledge of reading concepts and principles has contributed significantly to reading progress (see appendix 10, appendix 12 and 5.8.). Finally, the teachers innovation in providing appropriate reading resources and her determination to actualise the pedagogic principles of the BRA (see chapter 4) has attempted to narrow the gap between the frontiers of practice with theory. From some of the verbal and written comments made by Foundation phase educators (see 5.9.) it is evident that the answers to many of our teaching and learning problems lies in our ability to constantly link aspects of theory to practice. The BRA in this research has moved away from traditional monolingual norms and practices towards balanced education practices, limited bilingualism and social change (Agnihotri , 1995 : 7).

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

6.1. INTRODUCTION

This study has led to some conclusions and recommendations which could be useful for educators , language policy makers and curriculum planners who want to know about classroom realities in a typical multi-cultural South African context. The findings point to the need to enhance teacher professionalism and make provision for adequate learner support materials and resources. I will now discuss the recommendations.

6.2. RE-INVENTING THE CURRICULUM TO CATER FOR MAXIMUM LEARNER GROWTH

More time ought to be allocated to the timetable for literacy, as compared to other learning areas, for EAL learners. In my implementation of the BRA, providing learners with comprehensible input was certainly very time consuming . Kutz and Roskelly (1991 : 287) point out that in order to create new classroom communities, learners and teachers must question the curriculum and find ways to adapt it to the needs of individual classrooms. Experience and research have shown that wise and innovative teachers, who create environments in which learning can occur easily, are more successful than thosewho adhere rigidly to particular methods or materials (Allington and Franzen, 2000 ; Browne , 1998 ; May, 2001). By skilfully integrating the different learning areas , opportunities can be created for rich language learning. In my implementation of the BRA I used every opportunity to teach phonics in meaningful contexts (see 4.4.). By balancing phonics in an integrated language arts programme the learners can extend their knowledge of words. In my BRA I constantly created and provided new reading materials for the learners for independent (2.4.5.) and guided reading sessions (2.4.4.2.). EAL learners also flourish in a print rich environment , where learners read extensively. Day and Bamford (1988) state that extensive reading in a second language, accomplished by positive attitudes and strong motivation can transform learners into successful readers.

EAL learners in the Foundation phase need to be exposed to a wide variety of reading materials in different genres. Morrow (1989: 124) recommends that teachers should represent several types of literature at each reading level e.g. picture concept books, realistic literature, easy to read books, fables, folktales, informational books, biographies, newspapers , magazines and poetry available to children. In under-resourced schools, teachers need specific in-service training to develop and choose appropriate reading materials in both languages for different cultural groups. In a large class, shared reading of familiar stories with the whole class can create reading enjoyment. Guided reading activities should be done in mini-group sessions.

Although my BRA in grade one catered for oral story telling in Zulu , all the reading books were in English only. African parents do read stories to their children in their mother tongue (see appendix 7 , 8, 9) If we expect African parents to participate in a home support programme for enhancing literacy skills we need to provide bilingual readers. These books need to be provided in Zulu and English in the early years of schooling so that comprehension increases and EAL learners have access to their cultural funds of knowledge (see 2.2.3) . Furthermore , African parents could read the story to their children in their mother tongue. In a multilingual English medium class , it would be preferable to have a bilingual teacher who is competent to instruct in English and Zulu. In addition, African parents could be invited to read traditional African stories which could later be translated into English , whilst building up their schemas for comprehension. In this way the community can support multilingual and multicultural education in school (Heugh and Siegruhn ,1995 : 92). Using the straight-for English model and ignoring the mother tongue , would be to teach with less than maximum efficiency (Atkinson, 1987 :247). In addition the non-Zulu children would be exposed to multi-culturalism. Teachers need to recognize both L1 and EAL learners' enormous range of human skills and capabilities. By revolutionizing the children's capabilities and engaging in holistic learning , their multiple intelligence can be developed (see 2.2.2 and appendix 4-9).

6.3. COMMUNITY SUPPORT

A decrease in the pupil-teacher ratio could also benefit slow EAL learners who need individual skill tutoring to consolidate learning at the different reading stages (Ehri,1995; Stahl,1998). I trained parents to serve as voluntary teacher aide so that more children could get individual skill tutoring. Community support in the form of "reading mums" could ensure that children receive some adult supervision to enhance their literacy skills (see 2.2.4) . I found it much easier to teach my grade two learners who were in my class in grade one. These children were familiar with the activities used in the BRA and I was able to adapt the curriculum to address their strengths and weaknesses. It is recommended that Foundation phase teachers move up with their respective grades from grade one to grade three. This facilitates more accurate learner assessments. Furthermore, within the three years, teachers can develop a good working relationship with the parents of learners, which will impact positively on the learners' academic performance. It is imperative that parents of learners arrange regular meetings with teachers to find out how their children are performing, as well as to obtain guidance on how to assist their children with their reading and writing tasks. Early (1990) advises teachers to maximise parental involvement in order to impact positively on school achievement and social growth. Parent- child- teacher conferences can provide useful data and, collectively, make constructive suggestions to enhance learners' academic abilities . A home support programme needs to be drawn up by the school to guide parents in how to support learning at school with learning at home. Adults can provide scaffolds and models to develop the child at the 'zone of proximal development' (see 2.2.4.).

6.4. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The theoretical principles of the BRA has made me aware that a multi-cultural class requires flexible teaching approaches and methodologies to suit the changing dynamics of classroom life. I can improve my teaching if I can select, make appropriate and transform the theory on early literacy into practice. The Education department needs to constantly re-train teachers with challenging and innovative ideas, to become more

effective to cope with the demands of classroom realities in South Africa . Ramani (1987 : 3) proposes an analysis of video-taped lessons as a possible methodology for raising the theoretical awareness of teachers, by encouraging them to conceptualise their practices and strengthen their theoretical abilities, thereby narrowing the gap between theory and practice in their everyday lives.

6.5. COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

The BRA has tried to promote communicative competence through reading. By interacting with reading materials in functional ways EAL learners would learn the target language. (see appendix 11 , see appendix 4-9) Teachers need to create opportunities for EAL learners to use the target language . Research into language development, both in first and second language acquisition, support the notion of language in use as a major principle for language development . Although communicative language teaching has been criticized by Hart (2000) and McLaughlin (1985) for being western and middle class in approach, and overemphasizing the development of oral skills to the neglect of reading and writing skills, I believe that teachers can develop the different competencies advocated by a communicative language teaching approach through reading (see 2.2.1).

6.6. CONCLUSION

A BRA can be used to provide EAL learners with more routes to the goal of literacy (Cunningham , 1995 : 18). I believe the BRA is one of the most positive developments to emerge from the changing dynamics of classroom realities in post-apartheid South Africa, as it creates rich opportunities for self -empowerment of teachers (Heugh and Siegruhn , 1995 : 92).

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APPENDIX 1

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH TEACHERS IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE

1. Can you describe the reading method you use at school ?
2. How do you assess reading progress ?
3. Can you describe what L1 and L2 learners do during your reading lesson ?
4. Can you tell me about the reading materials your children use at school ?
5. Do all other educator colleagues at your school also follow the similar reading approach or are they different ? Explain.
6. If you have a home support reading programme at your school , can you briefly describe this ?

APPENDIX 2

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH PARENTS OF THE CASES UNDER STUDY

1. Can you tell me about your family ?
2. Where was "X" born and can you tell me about his / her early life before formal schooling?
3. Can you tell me about "X's" first experience with books or writing materials ?
4. Can you tell me how and when did "X" first learn to speak English ?
5. Who are the people that helped "X" to read or write and how did they go about doing this ?
6. Can you comment on your child's reading progress thus far.?
7. Is there anything that you would like to discuss about your child's reading progress ?
8. Why do you think your child is coping or not coping with her schoolwork ?
9. Are you confused about anything in the flip- file and do you want me to explain it ?
10. Does you child enjoy / not enjoy reading ? why

APPENDIX 3

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS ADMINISTERED DURING INFORMAL CONVERSATIONS WITH THE RESEARCH SUBJECTS

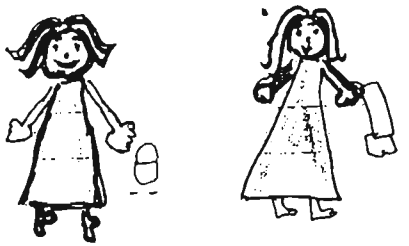
1. Can you tell me about your family and early life before you came to this school ?
2. Did anyone teach you to read and write before you came to pre-school ? Tell me about it?
3. Did you learn anything new today ? Tell me about it ?
4. I saw you reading that book today , why did you choose it ?
5. Did you find that reading activity useful/ useless ...Why ?
6. Can you explain what you just drew ?
7. Did you enjoy/ not enjoy working with your partner ....Why?
8. Are you happy / not happy with the way you now read ...Why?
9. Did anybody at home listen to you reading recently and how did they feel about your reading ?
10. Do you like reading alone or when we do group discussion and activities ....why ?

APPENDIX 4

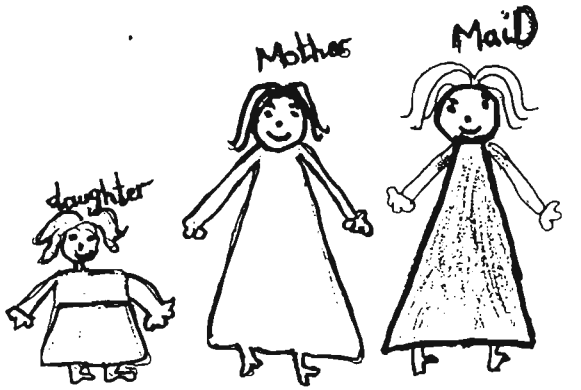
NOMALISA'S LITERATE LIFE HISTORY AND SAMPLES OF WRITTEN WORK.

Nomalisa is the only child of a single parent. Nomalisa lives with her mother, grandparents and her cousins. Nomalisa spent the early years of her life in a rural village. She played outdoor games with her Zulu-speaking mates. When Nomalisa turned four, her family moved to a predominantly Indian area (Northdale).Here she attended a nearby creche. She had an Indian teacher and many African classmates. At creche Nomalisa received a lot of educational stimulation e.g. painting , colouring, learning rhymes and assembling puzzle pieces. At the creche she also watched English programmes on "School TV ." When she got home after creche she used to play games with her Indian neighbours, Kevin and Karishma. From a very early age Nomalisa observed her elders reading. Her grandfather used to read the newspaper and show her the pictures and explain the contents in Zulu. As Nomalisa became older she pointed at English words and her grandfather used to help her to pronounce the words as well as tell her the meaning of the words. Furthermore her grandfather encouraged her to listen to the television news in Zulu and in English. Often Nomalisa asked questions and her grandfather explained what was happening on the news. She also watched her mother reading magazines. When Nomalisa turned 6 she attended pre-school in a state ex-House of Delegates school. In this class her basic communication skills in English were further enhanced. Nomalisa's mother then bought her puzzles to learn the letters of the alphabet and a chalkboard to draw and scribble. Furthermore her mother used to accompany her to the library to borrow English and Zulu books. Her mother used to read these stories and Nomalisa listened attentively. When Nomalisa came to grade one, her granny, an ex-teacher in a Zulu-medium school, used to help her to develop her reading skills. Her granny made flashcards and sentence cards from the school readers and taught her to read the cards with accuracy. She also monitored Nomalisa's written progress by marking her sentences. Futhermore , her neighbour, Lindiwe, a Zulu-speaking child in the senior class, also contributed to her progress in literacy. Everyday these girls did their homework together. Nomlaisa would read her book twice and then her friend gave her oral spelling tests of words chosen from the reader. Lindiwe helped Nomalisa to identify

words as well as told her the meanings of these words. Nomalisa cannot read and write in Zulu although she displays good oral competence in the language. At home she sometimes speaks in Zulu and sometimes in English. It is evident that Nomalisa's overall progress in literacy has been influenced by her immediate environment in the early years prior to formal schooling.

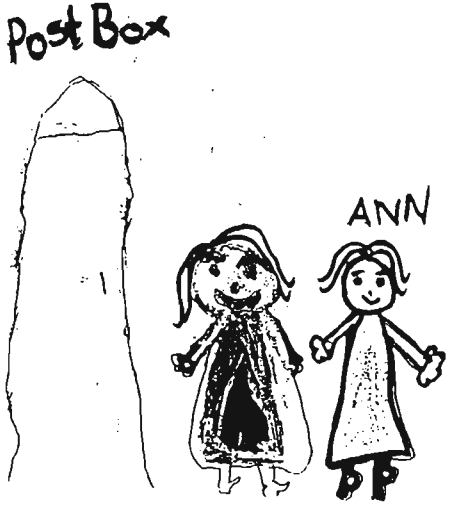


ANN Goes Shopping



This picture is about when Ann goes with her mother for shopping.

I enjoyed the part when Ann wanted to put the stamps on the envelope because she listened to her mother. I did not enjoy the part when wag stayed at home because it was not nice when he stayed.
This story reminded me when I went shoppin with my mother at Pick 'n pay. We bought a lot of things. My mother ordered surgar at the shop. I saw the postman



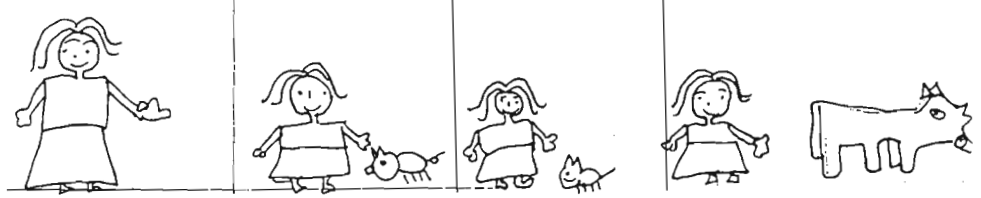
Two words I learnt from the story

ordered postman

My mother ordered surgar at the shop.
I saw the postman walking down the road.

Name of story: The woman and her Pig

when she was going	The Pig	The Dog	The ox

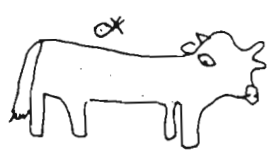


First

Then

Later

Next

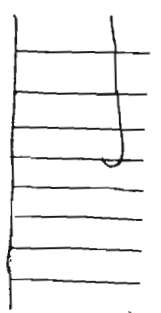


Once upon a time

There was a woman who bought a pig and the pig did not want to go over the stile.

After

Finally



The problem began when

When the pig did not want to go over the stile

In the end

The problem was solved when

When the cow gave the woman some milk.

12 August 2002

Monday

On Saturday I went to a party with my granny in Imbli. They cut two cows. We ate alot. When we got there they gave us Some sweets. Then they said we must dance. They said my friend must come and dance for all of us. They gave us the birthday packets. Inside there was a cake. I ate my cake all up plus sweets and chips. Also a whistle. We went home at 4 o' clock. My friends present was a computer game from her mum and dad

27 August 2002

Tuesday

Today is a windy day. Today we closed our windows so the wind can not come inside. The wind blew our charts down and it was falling. The leaves are falling down from the tree. The branches are falling down to. The tree is shaking. Mum is very happy so she can wash the clothes it can dry up. If it is cold the clothes can dry quickly. You must close your eyes so then dust can not come in your eyes. Your eyes will burn if you do not close them when it is windy. You must not burn the fire becaus it burn quickly. Some of the Africans put stones on the ceiling so the ceil can not fall. Some of Africans make t homes with tins and put stones on the top of the roof. Some of the Africans mak their houses of stones. The wind has a loud sound.

PHONIC BASKETS

TH

Thin Through weather thick though
thieves Thou The things those
birthday both path threw
then than smooth three thirty
faithful leather they within
them breath there everything
truth mother father sooth brother
nothing throws

Sh

dish wish mushroom shield
she hush brush crush
shell show rush fish
flash short sharp shirt
shower sheet shark shut
shack shoe shock sheep

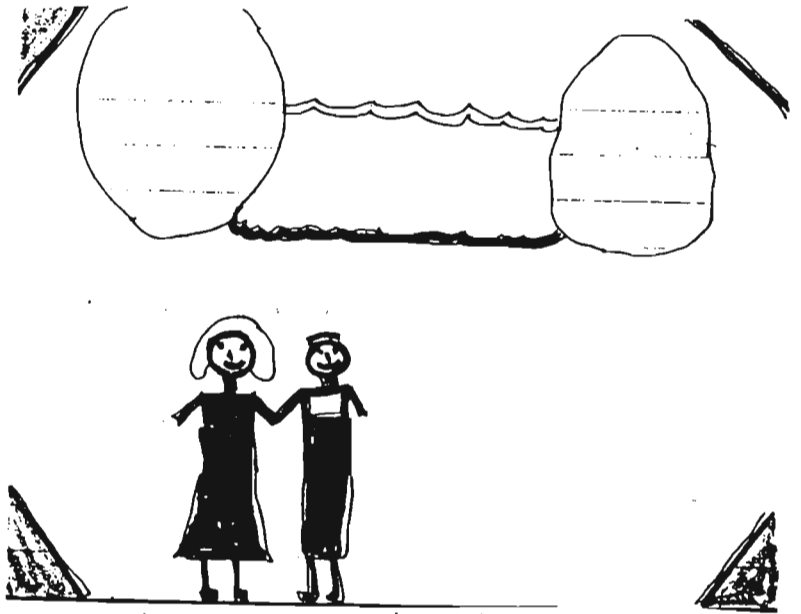
St

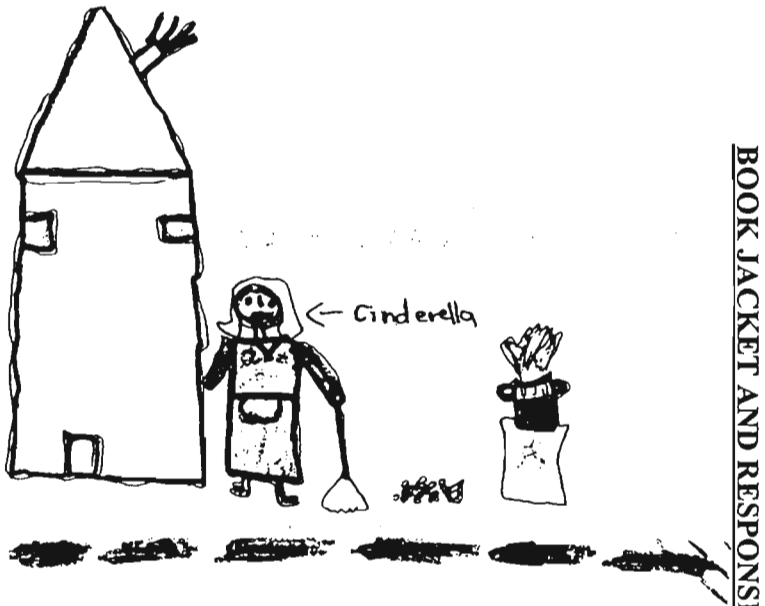
Star Strong String sting
start nest Past
best must first cost
chest fist rest dust
steel

APPENDIX 5

DIDUZI'S LITERATE LIFE HISTORY AND SAMPLES OF WRITTEN WORK.

Diduzi spent her early life in a rural village. Her parents used to take care of the animals on the farm. Diduzi played with her dolls , animal toys and teddy bears. She did not have exposure to books. When Diduzi was 4 they moved to Northdale. Her mother worked as a maid for an Indian family. Here she played with the Indian children , Ameetha and Anisha. Her elder sister also attended the local school. They stayed in the servants quarters until her father found employment as a labourer at the Department of Transport. Then they moved to the informal settlement where they rented a little house which had no electricity. When Diduzi was 5 years old she attended the nearby private pre-primary class in the community hall. Diduzi spent two years in this class. She had an Indian teacher and made lots of African and Indian friends. Her teacher used to read English stories to them. She often wrote sentences on the board and Diduzi copied them for home reading. She learnt the words " I" "went" 'home" "mother" " dog" "cat" " window." When Diduzi was in grade one her mother maintained strict discipline and often hit her when she could not recognise her flashwords. Her mother encouraged her to do repetitive reading of the same page or story. In grade two her mother used to ask her questions on the book and encouraged her to give the answers in English. Her mother also gave her a set time everyday to do revision from her flip-file.





This picture is about when cinderella went to dance.

I enjoyed the part when the fairy came to help her because the fairy made a dress and shoes for Cinderella. I did not like the part when Cinderella stayed at home because it was not nice to stay and clean the house.

This story reminded me when I went to a dance with my family and when we were dancing like cinderella.

Two words I learnt from the story.

Jealous Pumpkins

The two sisters were jealous when they saw cinderella dancing

Name of the story Briar rose

queen

wise women

King

Once upon a time

there lived a king and queen who longed for a child.

The problem began when

the queen was sad because they had no child and one day the queen went out to have a rest at the river.

The problem was solved when

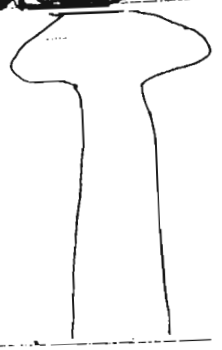
a frog creped out and said that she would have her wish at the end the queen had a child.

First

Then

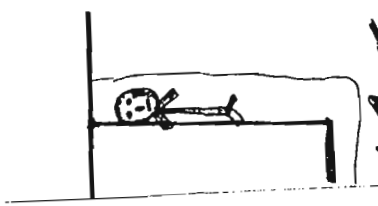
Later

Next

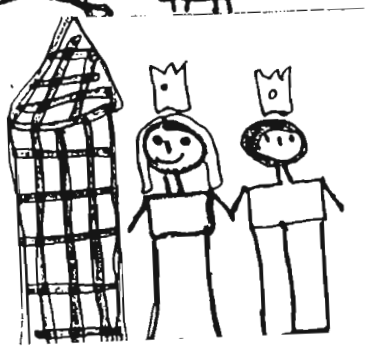


After

Finally



In the end



STORY FRAMEWORK

5 August 2002
Monday

On Saturday I went to visit my friend. We were playing house house game with One boy and five girls. After that we played Stranges and I was the Sister and the boy was the small baby. I went outside the house and the boys were Catching us. I ran and ran until I came to a river. My sister went to my other friends house. When it was 12 o' clock I went to my mothers house and I ate and my friends Sister Said that I must come and eat so we can play cards. I put my food in a plate and I went to eat by her house. After that she said that I must go and buy two chips. When I came back my friend said that I must go and buy another chips. We played porridge - porridge and when were playing my sister came and said that my mother came. When She was bathing my mother said that my sister must call me to bath so I can sleep. I went to bath and I went to sleep. When I was sleeping my mother was cooking the food. When I woke up my mother gave me food and I ate all my food and after that my mother said that I must take my chips. After eating we played with our Small boats.

29 August 2002
Thursday
On Sunday I did not go to church because NRosi's sister said that she will come and pick us. So she did not come and pick us up. We ate our breakfast and we went to play with our friends. My sister had R1,50 and we bought two packet of chips and five sweets. I was the mother and NRosi was the aunty and I had three children. There names were Jabu, Betri and my doll was pretty. We were playing so I cooked meat and putu and I put the chips around the meat and I put the putu on the other plate. We ate it all and NRosi said that she is not playing because her food was finished and Jabu said that I must go and eat so I can have a nice bath at the bathroom

PHONIC BASKETS

st (19)

string	Gestetner	stage
strong	strange	
street	castle	
stack	master	
star	post	
stand	distance	
stick	stamps	
start	stay	
stranges	postage	

sh (24)

Short	Sharp	shoot
Shut	Shirt	shot
Shell	shower	shelter
Shoe	dish	brush
Shop	fish	crush
wish	flash	flesh
Sheet	Shark	Shack
Shock	Sheep	Shield

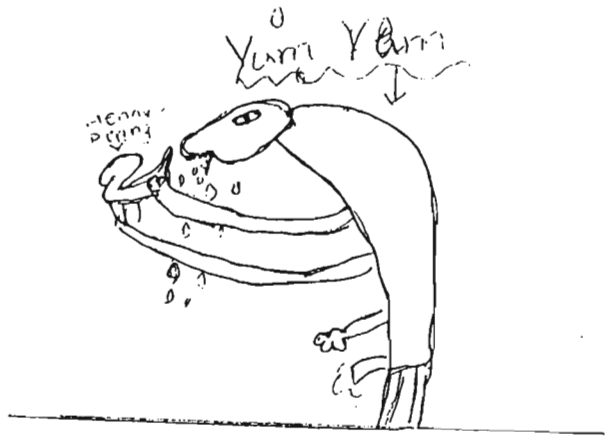
ai

rain
train
brain
grain bail
Paint gail
shai
plain
faint
sail
hai
paid
tail
fai
Stairs
wai
pai
mail
pair
raid
bai

APPENDIX 6

SINESIPHO'S LITERATE LIFE HISTORY AND SAMPLES OF WRITTEN WORK

Sinesipho spent her early life in a rural village. Everyday she accompanied her mother to the river to fetch water. Here she met her Zulu friends and they used to play clapping games. At home Sinesipho did not get exposure to reading or writing materials. However she remembers her mother telling her the story " iBhubesi. " When Sinesipho turned 6 her father got a job with the Pietermaitzburg corporation and they settled in Northdale. Her elder brother attended the local English - medium school. Sinesipho was a friendly and energetic child who enjoyed outdoor games. Sinesipho played many games with the Indian boys and girls e.g. hide and seek , house-house and cops and robbers. She also attended pre-school in the nearby English- medium school. In grade one her brother used to read the basals to her. Her mother also made flashcards and taught her to say the words with speed. She sometimes read the story with Sinesipho who pointed at the words with her fingers while she read.



This picture is about Foxy woxy Snapping Henny pennys head. He eat the head because he was hungry.

I enjoyed the part when Hennypenny thought that the Sky was falling down because she did not Know that the Sky wasn't falling down. I did not enjoy the part when foxy woxy eat henny pennys head because it is bad to do that.

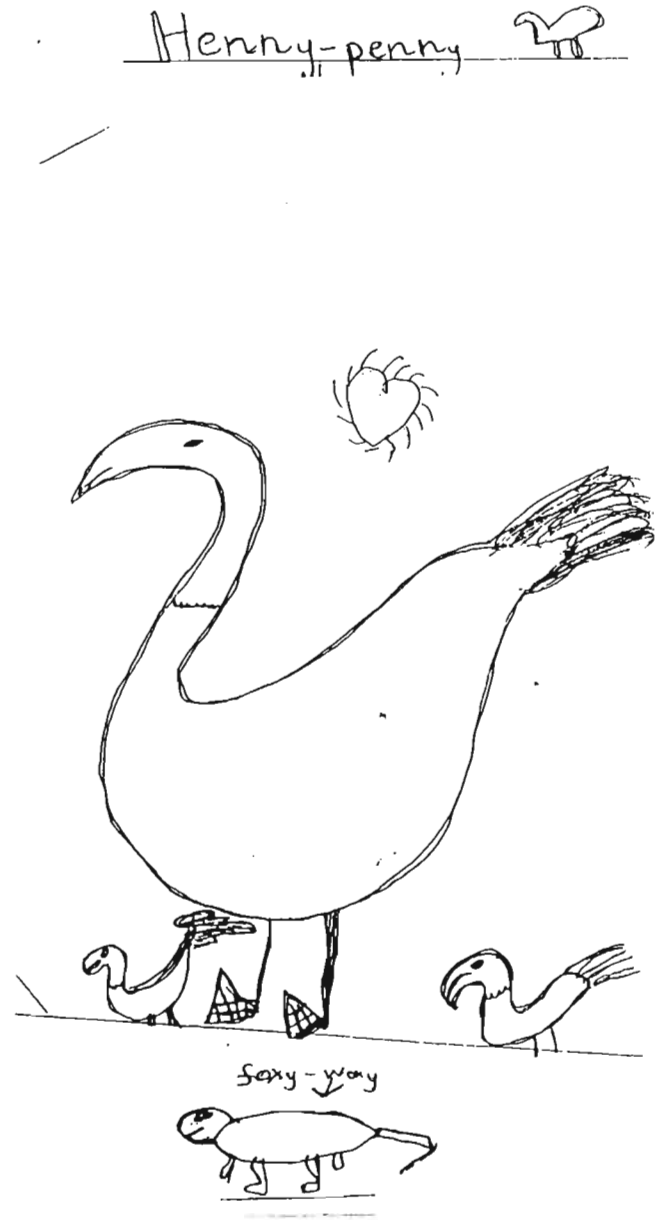
This story reminded me of when my friend sent me to the wrong way to my auntys house and the dog mist to biet me.

Two words I learnt from the story

certainly suddenly

when I was playing in my backyard Suddenly I herd a loud crash.

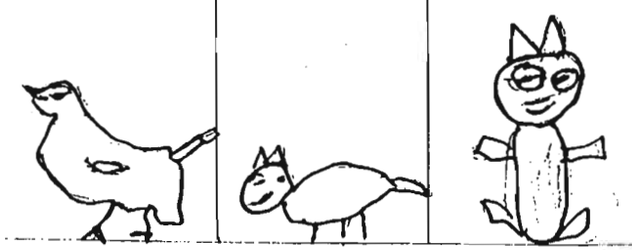
My mother certainly wanted a job.



Name of the story The Little Red Hen

Characters

Little Red hen, Sly old fox, Sly old fox's mother



Once upon a time there was a hen named Little Red hen. She wanted woods to make food for her self.

The problem began when the sly old fox wanted to eat her up.

The problem was solved when because Little Red hen had a Knife in her pocket and She cut the sack and she came out.

First

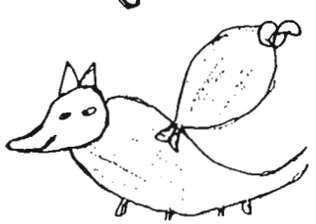
Then

Later

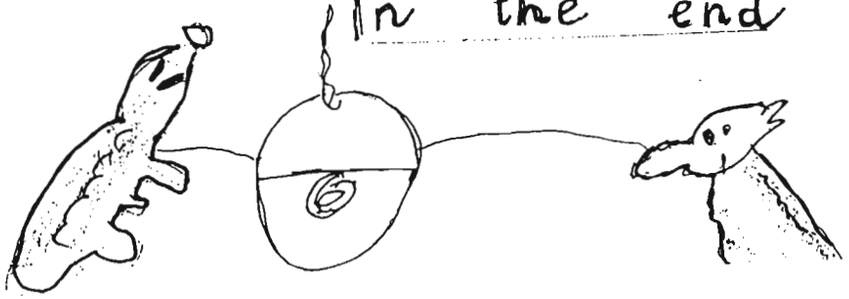
Next

After

Finally



In the end



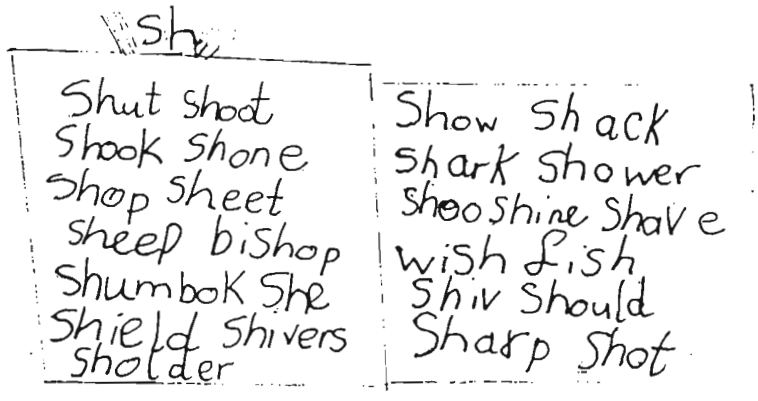
STORY FRAMEWORK

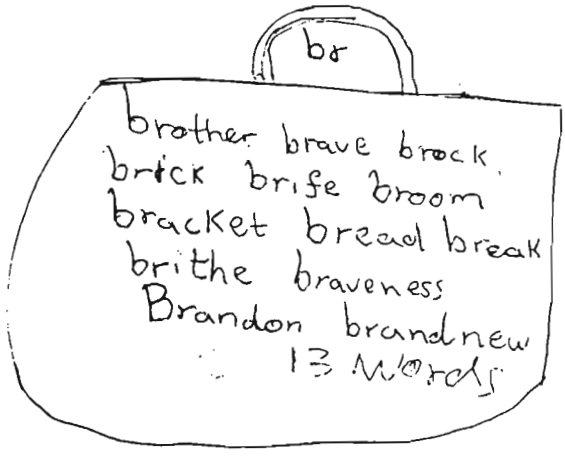
PERSONAL WRITING

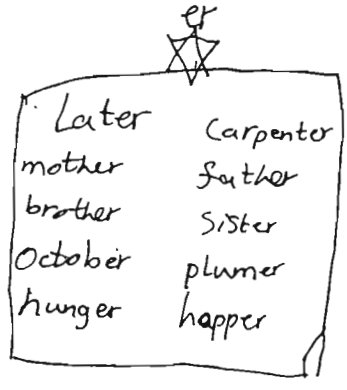
26 August 2002.
Monday
On Sunday I went to my aunty house. I went Shop with my friend. My mother phoned my father to come fetch us. We went to the play ground and we played many thing's. After that we went to Mc-Donald for some ice-cream and we came late it was in the afternoon.

29 August 2002
Thursday
On Friday my father came home. He was very ill my mother sent him to the doctor and my father came back they gave him medicine. Today he is filling much better but he is not well. He is very sick because he is thin and not eating food. Today in the morning he ate one sli of bread.

PHONIC BASKETS



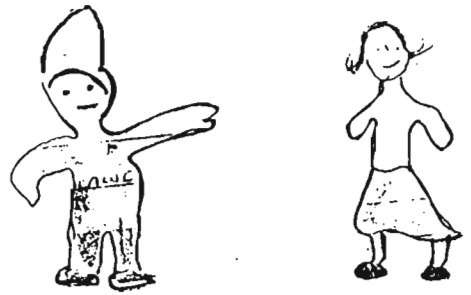




APPENDIX 7

FREDDY'S LITERATE LIFE HISTORY AND SAMPLES OF WRITTEN WORK

Freddy is the fourth son of Mr and Mrs Sfundo. He was born in Northdale. In his early years Freddy did not come into contact with reading books. However his mother used to tell him oral stories in Zulu. Whenever his mother told him the story of "Imotho ehlaza" Freddy used to take a plastic plate from the kitchen and pretend to drive a car. He would also make sounds to indicate the speed at which the car was travelling. When he was a little older he joined his twin brothers in outdoor sport. It was here that he came into contact with his Indian neighbours. Soon he started learning to pronounce English words. He played soccer, cricket and hide and seek. When Freddy turned 4 he attended the nearby creche. Here there were many African children and a few Indian children. He had an Indian teacher. It was here that he learnt his first nursery rhyme " Jack and Jill". His mother then bought him colouring books . Whenever Freddy found a piece of paper he used to scribble and make patterns. He spent two years at creche. At creche he learnt to count and identify numbers. He assembled puzzles of animals. When he was six his mother started reading the bible in Zulu to Freddy. Freddy also spent a lot of time watching English cartoons. Freddy went to pre-school in a state ex- House of delegates school when he was six years old. In the same year his brothers in the senior classes started attending Zulu classes run by a community member. His brothers then showed him some "Zulu words". When Freddy came to grade one his elder brother used to help him with his reading. He used to flash words to him and tell him the meanings of the words in Zulu. Soon the nature of the conversations at home began to change. Whenever Freddy conversed with his brothers he used Zulu and English words to express his needs and wants. His mother also played an active role in developing his reading skills. She wrote sentences in English and made Freddy read and copy these sentences. She read with him and to him.



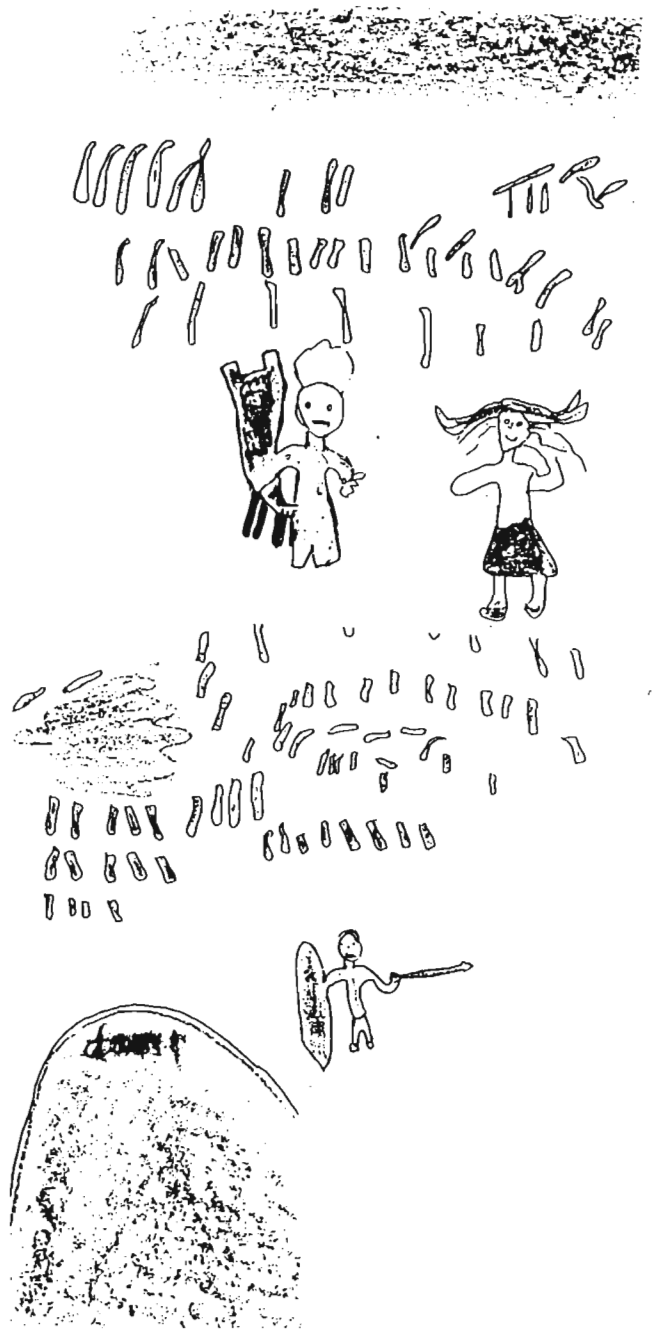
A Rainey Day

This picture is about a king and a little girl crying. She was crying because the king said She must go to the damp sell.

I enjoyed the part when The king said to the girl She mus not talk nonsenbs. I like the king not to go to spain I did not like the part when the king told the girl the cave. Because She is very small to go alone.

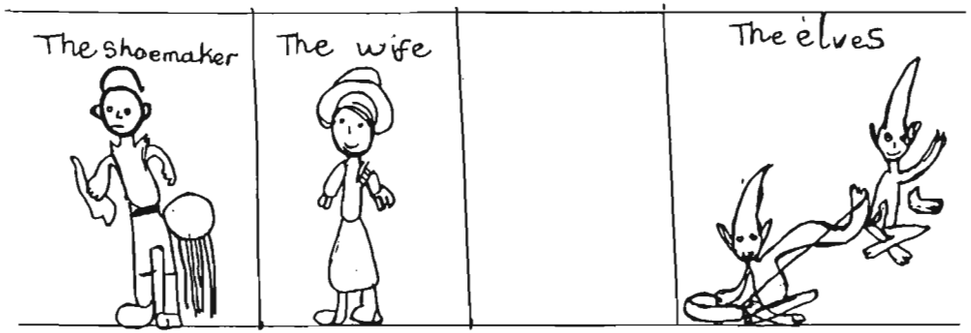
This story reminded me of the time when my mum told me to go to the rain when it was dark She told me because I was playing in the house and She got cross.

Two words I learnt from the story
marched gutters.
The people from the army marched to the helicopter



Name of the story The shoemaker and the elves

Characters



Once upon a time there was a shoemaker and his wife. They **were** very poor. The mans job was to make shoes.

The problem began when They were very poor and **had** no food to eat.

The problem was solved when the elves made shoes for **the** shoemaker.

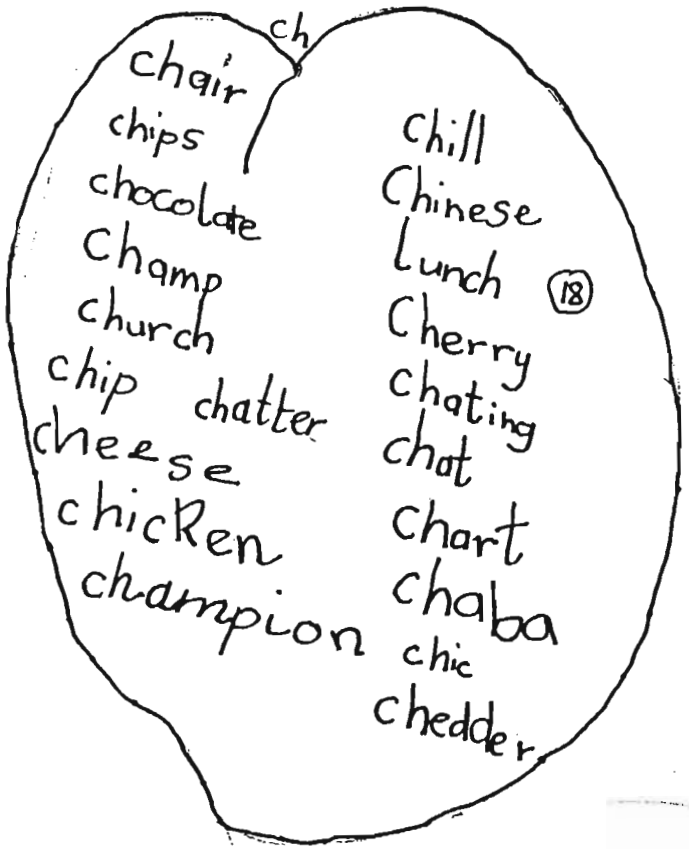
STORY FRAMEWORK

26 August 2002
Monday

Last week Saturday I went to my grand mother's house. We slaughtered the cow and we have a party. It was my Sisters's party. It was a big party the party was in the night and the aunts were baking cakes ~~and~~ we were sleeping and eating ~~and~~ playing in the night.

5 June 2002
Wednesday

On Monday I went to Durban. We went to fish for fish and I met Andy. We were swimming with Andy. Andys family had a pick nick with us. me and Andy were diving in the pool. The pool was very depp ~~and~~ I love to swim in the depp end.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lunch
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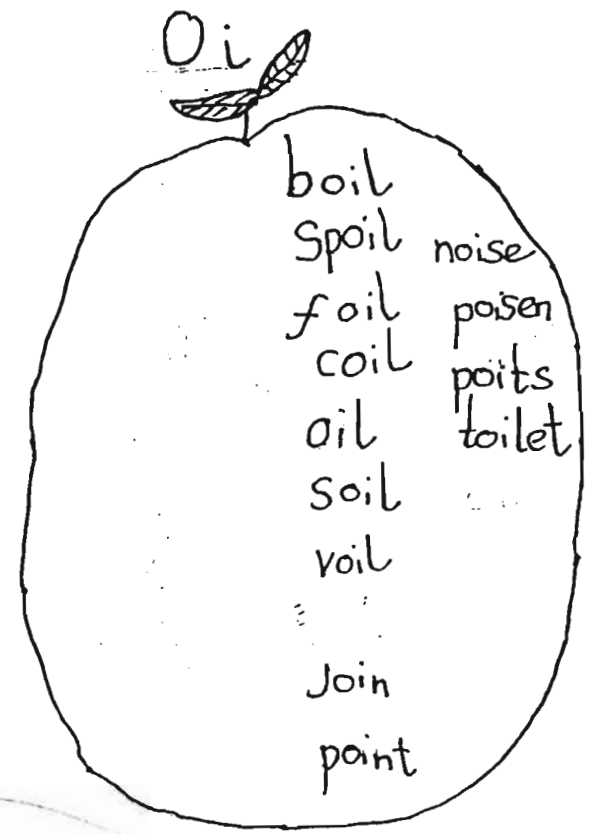
chedder
18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boil
Spoil
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oil
soil
voil
noise
poisen
poits
toilet
Join
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APPENDIX 8

SIPHO'S LITERATE LIFE HISTORY AND SAMPLES OF WRITTEN WORK

Sipho spent his early years in Imbali. Sipho enjoyed his childhood days with his African - speaking playmates. He played Zulu cultural games with his two Zulu friends , Vusi and Jabulu. His favourite game was "Amagenede " and it was here that he learnt to count stones. After 1993 , his parents moved to the Northdale area. Siphos mother decided to find employment in "Kitchen service " at the nearby local hospital so that she could afford to send Sipho to a nearby creche. Here he had an Indian teacher. At this creche there were approximately three African and twenty Indian children. Sipho enjoyed playing games with cars with the Indian boys. He also had swimming lessons once a week. The jungle-gym further developed his motor skills e.g. climbing up the ropes , crawling through the tyres and playing on the slides. His teacher stimulated his cognitive development by exposing him to puzzles of Mickey Mouse and Spiderman. He remembered working with his peers to sort out a number puzzle that ranged from one to fifty. His teacher also taught him the names of the alphabet. He completed many worksheets and although he could not read the instructions, his teacher read and used gestures to explain the instruction. Sipho also learnt to sing many English christian songs. The print- rich environment at the creche made Sipho aware of his first written words in English eg. He learnt the words " in" "out" "bat" "ball" "close" and "open." From a very early age Sipho used to cut pictures from the magazines " Bona " and Drama". He was able to turn the pages and he could identify the front and the back of the magazine. His father who worked as a clerk in the local government department taught him to read in Zulu. He used to borrow Zulu books from the library and make flashcards to help Sipho identify Zulu words. His father read to him everyday and then made Sipho read. He then asked oral questions and Sipho answered in Zulu. Sipho remembers enjoying the story "Inyokane iBhubesi ." Sipho did repetitive reading of this story and would often read it to his elders when they came to visit. His elders were proud of his reading and they celebrated his emergent literacy skills. However when Sipho turned 6 , he came to an English-medium pre-school . His elder sister borrowed English storybooks from the library. She used to read these books to Sipho and tell him what was happening in the

story. Sipho's father then started introducing him to the Zulu bible . He used to read and explain the holy scriptures. When Sipho was in grade one he encouraged Sipho to read 2-3 pages a day from the bible. In grade one and two Sipho's sister used to help him with his reading in English. She flashed English words to him and explained the meanings of these words in Zulu. Everyday after Sipho's mother finished her household chores , she listened to Sipho read in English. She often chose words and asked Sipho to spell them orally. She pointed at words randomly and Sipho read these words. Everyday Sipho did revision from his flip-file. It can be concluded that many people contributed to Siphos literate development which had an impact on his reading progress in the Foundation phase.

BOOK JACKET AND RESPONSES TO LITERATURE STORY

This picture is about teddy and golly running away from Ann because of the dolly.

I enjoyed the part when Rose Blossom said to both of them sleep down I will Reep guard on both of you. I enjoyed it because Rose Blossom said I am not going to tell Ann.

I did not Like the part when Ann dropped teddy in a bucket full of water. Because it was very cruel.

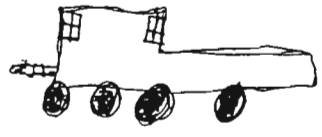
The story reminded me of when I was drowning in the pool.

Two words I learnt from the story.

journey jealous

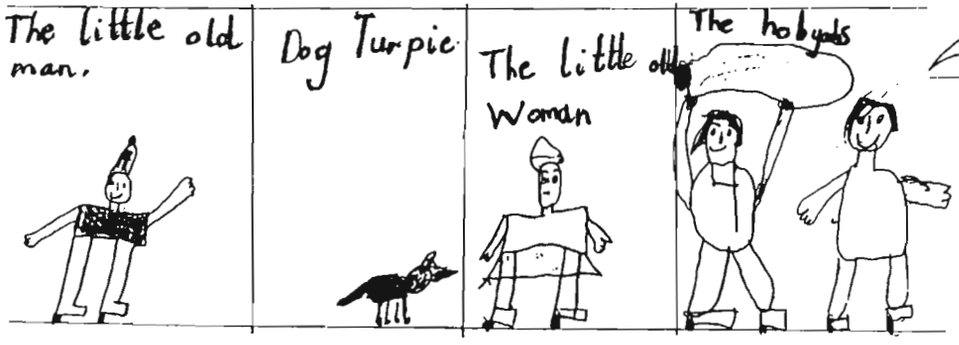
Mum and dad went for a journey to Cape Town.

I was jealous of my friend.



Teddy and Golly ran away

Name of story The hobyahs



Once upon a time there were hobyahs who woke up in the ~~nigt~~ night and slept in the day.

The problem began when the hobyahs wanted to steal the little woman and eat the man.

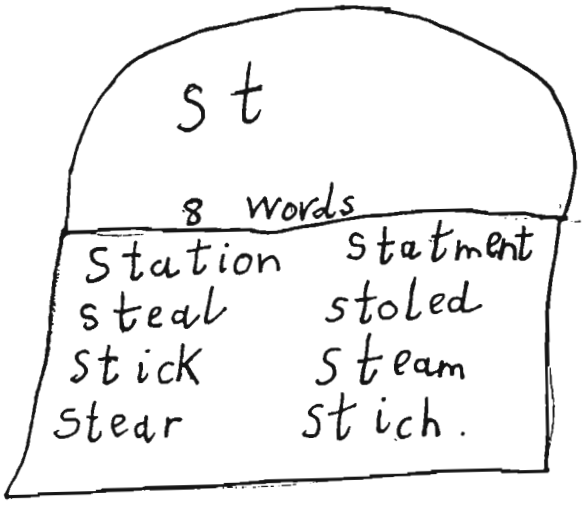
The problem was solved when the dog turpie ate up the hobyahs and now there are no hobyahs.

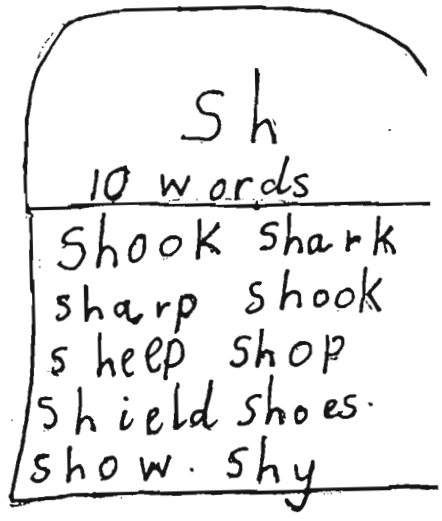
STORY FRAMEWORK

5 June 2002
Wednesday
On Friday. I went to my granny's house. I hid behind the big tree. They never saw me. When my grany was coming outside I shook the trees. I came out. She did see me. I said hay granny it is me. I said I saw you getting frighten. She said Who are you coming with? I am coming with my father and I left them behind.

12 August 2002
Monday
On saturday I went to town with my father and mother. We took a Kombi and when we were by raistop I was hungry. My mother looked at me and I told her I am hungry. My father saw I was hungry he said to me did you eat at home? I said yes I did he asked me than why are you hungry? I said I do not no then we jumped out of the kombi. My father went to pay the electrici then he went to buy me pie and coke and I was eating.

PHONIC BASKETS



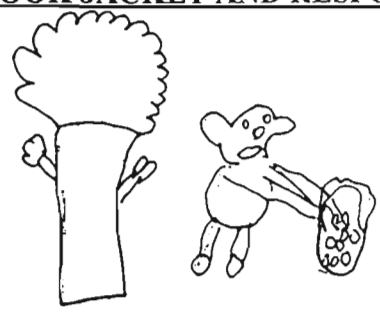


APPENDIX 9

ANDISWA'S LITERATE LIFE HISTORY AND SAMPLES OF WRITTEN WORK

Andiswa spent his early life in a rural village. Here he spent his childhood days with his Zulu- speaking mates. He made cars with wires, played hide and seek , and used cardboard to slide down the banks. It was here that Andiswa developed his fine-motor and gross- motor skills which are crucial stages in the "learning to read" process. His grandfather was a principal at the local school. He brought English and Zulu storybooks from the school library. Everyday he did repetitive reading of these books and Andiswa listened attentively. Andiswa often played games with his grandfather e.g. he would point at an English word and his grandfather used to explain the meaning of the word in Zulu. His granny used to often tell him oral religious stories in Zulu.. When Andiswa was 6, he moved to Northdale. Here he lived with his mother , brother and five cousins who were attending school in the senior classes. It was here that his mother started teaching him to write his name . He then went to pre-school in an ex-House of Delegates school. In grade one his mother taught him to read and write sentences in English. His mother also encouraged him to read words from the English magazines and newspaper. In grade two he borrowed English books from the nearby local public library. Andiswa's mother spent a lot of time with him to help him master the contents of the flip-file as well as get him to read many books in English.

BOOK JACKET AND RESPONSES TO LITERATURE STORY



This picture is about A bear stilling Pinkys cakes and honey while Pinky was gone to play.

I enjoyed the part when Pinky went home because the bear had stolen Aunt Dots honey and cakes.The part that I did not enjoy was when pinky came weeping when the bear had stole the honey and cakes.

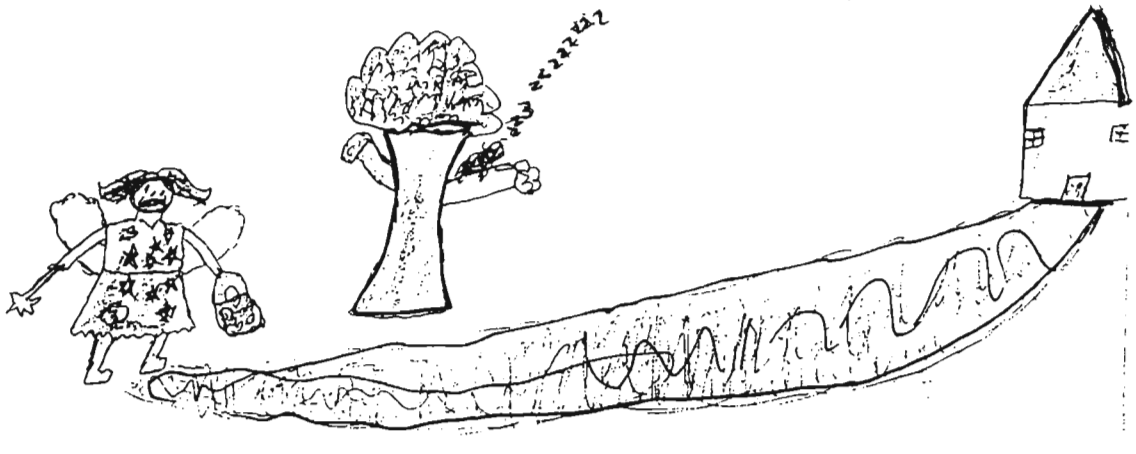
The story reminded me of when someone stole my pencil in class.

Two words I learnt from the story

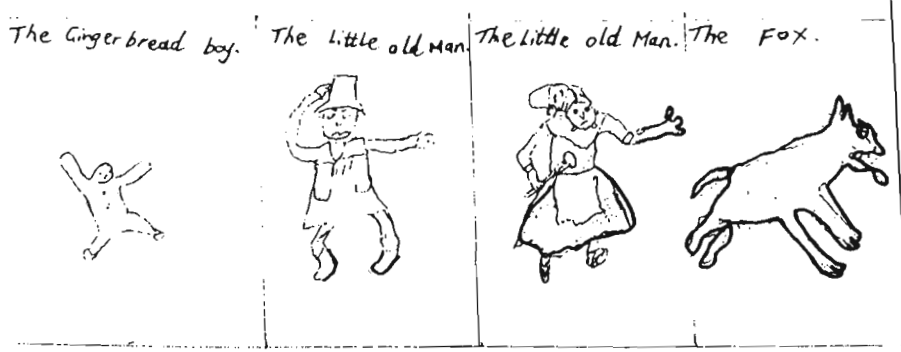
handkerchief stretched

I will use my handkerchief when I sneeze.
Baby stretched my T-shirt when she was playing with it.

The Naughty fairy



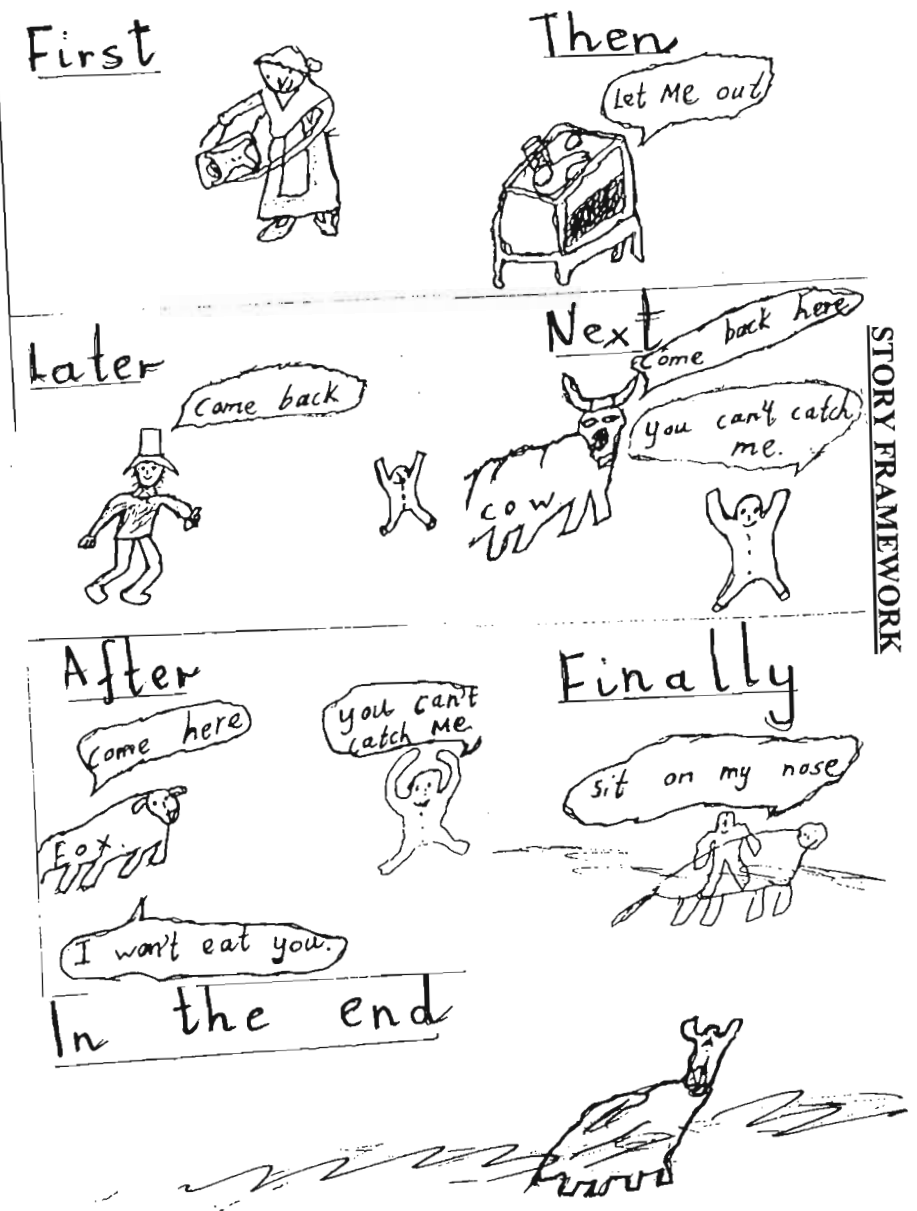
Name of story The Gingerbread boy



Once upon a time There were
A little old Man and A little old woman. one day
The little old woman baked a gingerbread boy.

The problem began when
The problem began when the gingerbread
boy ran out of the oven.

The problem was solved when
The problem was solved when the fox
ate up the gingerbread boy.



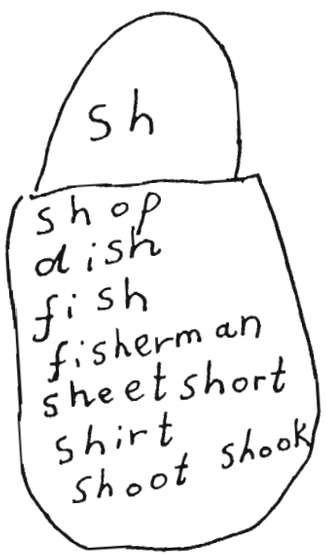
6 March 2002
wednesday
A seven year old girl was called and two boys were seriously injured when a tree fell in Cape Town. At the dark night there was a wind. Suddenly the tree fell on the girl. The girl and the boy went to the hospital.

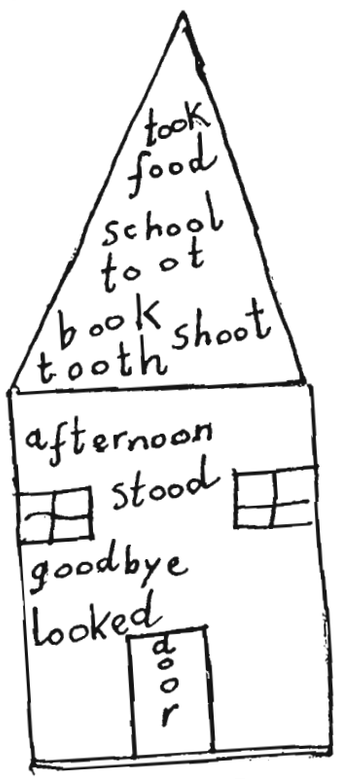
27 August 2002
Tuesday
on Friday I went to visit my aunt. My uncle came for me. On our way we saw trafficcops while we were coming forward. And I said uncle I think there is an accident and my uncle said I think so we went near and near until we reached where the accident was. And the traffic cop stoped us and showed us the way to go. And we did as the traffic cop said. He turned the car and went in another way.

5 June 2002
wednesday
Today we are taking photographs. Some of the children in our class are taking the whole pack and I am taking a photo with my friend. And his name is Visi. I am taking a photo with him because I only took a photo with sipho and Jabu last year. That is why I am taking a photograph with him. As soon as I get my photograph I will phone my father and tell him to come and see my photo.

er

weather feather shoper
lover helper teacher
father Mother brother
sister grandfather grandmother
speaker leather longer
shorter wider wilder





APPENDIX 10

PARENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE (Deford Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile) ADMINISTERED TO ALL GRADE TWO PARENTS AND THEIR RESPONSES

For each question , circle the one best answer that reflects the strength of your agreement or disagreement. **SA** means "**strongly agree**", **SD** means "**strongly disagree**".

1. Some problems in reading are caused by readers dropping the inflectional endings from words e.g. jump.....jumping walk.....walked.

1 2 3 4 5.
SA SD

2. An increase in reading errors is usually related to a decrease in comprehension.

1 2 3 4 5
SA SD

3. Fluency and expression are necessary components of reading that indicate good comprehension. 1 2 3 4 5
SA SD

4. When children do not know a word , they should be instructed to sound out its parts.

1 2 3 4 5
SA SD

5. It is a good practice to correct a child as soon as an oral reading mistake is made.

1 2 3 4 5
SA SD

6.Paying close attention to punctuation marks is necessary to understanding story content.

1 2 3 4 5
SA SD

7.When coming to a word that's unknown ,the reader should be encouraged to guess upon meaning and go on. 1 2 3 4 5
SA SD

8. If a child says "house " for the written word "home" ,the response should be left uncorrected. 1 2 3 4 5
SA SD

9.Children's initial encounters with print should focus on meaning.

1 2 3 4 5
SA SD

10.It is not necessary to introduce new words before they appear in the reading text.

1 2 3 4 5
SA SD

Table1: Frequencies and percentages for entire group of learners.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
QUESTION 1	Count	11	8	12	10	9	50
	%	22.0%	16.0%	24.0%	20.0%	18.0%	100.0%
QUESTION 2	Count	18	4	10	3	15	50
	%	36.0%	8.0%	20.0%	6.0%	30.0%	100.0%
QUESTION 3	Count	16	12	4	8	10	50
	%	32.0%	24.0%	8.0%	16.0%	20.0%	100.0%
QUESTION 4	Count	17	5	10	3	15	50
	%	34.0%	10.0%	20.0%	6.0%	30.0%	100.0%
QUESTION 5	Count	14	6	9	6	15	50
	%	28.0%	12.0%	18.0%	12.0%	30.0%	100.0%
QUESTION 6	Count	16	5	13	4	12	50
	%	32.0%	10.0%	26.0%	8.0%	24.0%	100.0%
QUESTION 7	Count	5	6	12	7	20	50
	%	10.0%	12.0%	24.0%	14.0%	40.0%	100.0%
QUESTION 8	Count	7	8	8	2	25	50
	%	14.0%	16.0%	16.0%	4.0%	50.0%	100.0%
QUESTION 9	Count	6	9	11	14	10	50
	%	12.0%	18.0%	22.0%	28.0%	20.0%	100.0%
QUESTION 10	Count	8	3	6	10	23	50
	%	16.0%	6.0%	12.0%	20.0%	46.0%	100.0%

Table 2 : Frequencies and percentages by reading ability

				Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
READING ABILITY - GROUPS	Good Readers	QUESTION 1	Count	7	6	4	5	3	25
			%	28.0%	24.0%	16.0%	20.0%	12.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 2	Count	14	1	3	2	5	25
			%	56.0%	4.0%	12.0%	8.0%	20.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 3	Count	11	8		5	1	25
			%	44.0%	32.0%		20.0%	4.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 4	Count	13	2	4	1	5	25
			%	52.0%	8.0%	16.0%	4.0%	20.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 5	Count	9	4	3	6	3	25
			%	36.0%	16.0%	12.0%	24.0%	12.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 6	Count	11	3	7	1	3	25
			%	44.0%	12.0%	28.0%	4.0%	12.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 7	Count	1	3	8	3	10	25
			%	4.0%	12.0%	32.0%	12.0%	40.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 8	Count	3	4	2	2	14	25
			%	12.0%	16.0%	8.0%	8.0%	56.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 9	Count	2	5	6	8	4	25
			%	8.0%	20.0%	24.0%	32.0%	16.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 10	Count	4	1	2	4	14	25
			%	16.0%	4.0%	8.0%	16.0%	56.0%	100.0%
	Average Readers	QUESTION 1	Count	3	1	7	5	4	20
			%	15.0%	5.0%	35.0%	25.0%	20.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 2	Count	3	3	4	1	9	20
			%	15.0%	15.0%	20.0%	5.0%	45.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 3	Count	4	4	3	2	7	20
			%	20.0%	20.0%	15.0%	10.0%	35.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 4	Count	3	3	5	1	8	20
			%	15.0%	15.0%	25.0%	5.0%	40.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 5	Count	4	2	5		9	20
			%	20.0%	10.0%	25.0%		45.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 6	Count	3	2	5	3	7	20
			%	15.0%	10.0%	25.0%	15.0%	35.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 7	Count	4	3	2	4	7	20
			%	20.0%	15.0%	10.0%	20.0%	35.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 8	Count	4	3	5		8	20
			%	20.0%	15.0%	25.0%		40.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 9	Count	4	3	4	4	5	20
			%	20.0%	15.0%	20.0%	20.0%	25.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 10	Count	4	2	3	5	6	20
			%	20.0%	10.0%	15.0%	25.0%	30.0%	100.0%
	Weak Readers	QUESTION 1	Count	1	1	1		2	5
			%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%		40.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 2	Count	1		3		1	5
			%	20.0%		60.0%		20.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 3	Count	1		1	1	2	5
			%	20.0%		20.0%	20.0%	40.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 4	Count	1		1	1	2	5
			%	20.0%		20.0%	20.0%	40.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 5	Count	1		1		3	5
			%	20.0%		20.0%		60.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 6	Count	2		1		2	5
			%	40.0%		20.0%		40.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 7	Count			2		3	5
			%			40.0%		60.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 8	Count		1	1		3	5
			%		20.0%	20.0%		60.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 9	Count		1	1	2	1	5
			%		20.0%	20.0%	40.0%	20.0%	100.0%
		QUESTION 10	Count			1	1	3	5
			%			20.0%	20.0%	60.0%	100.0%

Table 3 : Frequencies and percentages by race

				Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
RACE	African	QUESTION 1	Count	4	2	6	2	3	17
			%	23.5%	11.8%	35.3%	11.8%	17.6%	100.0%
		QUESTION 2	Count	4	1	7		5	17
			%	23.5%	5.9%	41.2%		29.4%	100.0%
		QUESTION 3	Count	4	5	3	2	3	17
			%	23.5%	29.4%	17.6%	11.8%	17.6%	100.0%
		QUESTION 4	Count	5	2	5	3	2	17
			%	29.4%	11.8%	29.4%	17.6%	11.8%	100.0%
		QUESTION 5	Count	4	2	6		5	17
			%	23.5%	11.8%	35.3%		29.4%	100.0%
		QUESTION 6	Count	6		4	3	4	17
			%	35.3%		23.5%	17.6%	23.5%	100.0%
		QUESTION 7	Count	2	2	3	4	6	17
			%	11.8%	11.8%	17.6%	23.5%	35.3%	100.0%
		QUESTION 8	Count	2	2	5		8	17
			%	11.8%	11.8%	29.4%		47.1%	100.0%
		QUESTION 9	Count	4	4	4	3	2	17
			%	23.5%	23.5%	23.5%	17.6%	11.8%	100.0%
		QUESTION 10	Count	4		4	4	5	17
			%	23.5%		23.5%	23.5%	29.4%	100.0%
	Indian	QUESTION 1	Count	7	6	6	8	6	33
			%	21.2%	18.2%	18.2%	24.2%	18.2%	100.0%
		QUESTION 2	Count	14	3	3	3	10	33
			%	42.4%	9.1%	9.1%	9.1%	30.3%	100.0%
		QUESTION 3	Count	12	7	1	6	7	33
			%	36.4%	21.2%	3.0%	18.2%	21.2%	100.0%
		QUESTION 4	Count	12	3	5		13	33
			%	36.4%	9.1%	15.2%		39.4%	100.0%
		QUESTION 5	Count	10	4	3	6	10	33
			%	30.3%	12.1%	9.1%	18.2%	30.3%	100.0%
		QUESTION 6	Count	10	5	9	1	8	33
			%	30.3%	15.2%	27.3%	3.0%	24.2%	100.0%
		QUESTION 7	Count	3	4	9	3	14	33
			%	9.1%	12.1%	27.3%	9.1%	42.4%	100.0%
		QUESTION 8	Count	5	6	3	2	17	33
			%	15.2%	18.2%	9.1%	6.1%	51.5%	100.0%
		QUESTION 9	Count	2	5	7	11	8	33
			%	6.1%	15.2%	21.2%	33.3%	24.2%	100.0%
		QUESTION 10	Count	4	3	2	6	18	33
			%	12.1%	9.1%	6.1%	18.2%	54.5%	100.0%

Table 4: Frequencies and percentages by research and non-research subjects.

				Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
RESEARCH SUBJECTS	RESEARCH SUBJECTS	QUESTION 1	Count	3	2			1	6
			%	50.0%	33.3%			16.7%	100.0%
		QUESTION 2	Count	3		1		2	6
			%	50.0%		16.7%		33.3%	100.0%
		QUESTION 3	Count	3	3				6
			%	50.0%	50.0%				100.0%
		QUESTION 4	Count	4			2		6
			%	66.7%			33.3%		100.0%
		QUESTION 5	Count	1	2	2		1	6
			%	16.7%	33.3%	33.3%		16.7%	100.0%
		QUESTION 6	Count	5		1			6
			%	83.3%		16.7%			100.0%
		QUESTION 7	Count	1	2		2	1	6
			%	16.7%	33.3%		33.3%	16.7%	100.0%
		QUESTION 8	Count	1	1			4	6
			%	16.7%	16.7%			66.7%	100.0%
		QUESTION 9	Count	2	3		1		6
			%	33.3%	50.0%		16.7%		100.0%
		QUESTION 10	Count	3				3	6
			%	50.0%				50.0%	100.0%
	NON-RESEARCH SUBJECTS	QUESTION 1	Count	8	6	12	10	8	44
			%	18.2%	13.6%	27.3%	22.7%	18.2%	100.0%
		QUESTION 2	Count	15	4	9	3	13	44
			%	34.1%	9.1%	20.5%	6.8%	29.5%	100.0%
		QUESTION 3	Count	13	9	4	8	10	44
			%	29.5%	20.5%	9.1%	18.2%	22.7%	100.0%
		QUESTION 4	Count	13	5	10	1	15	44
			%	29.5%	11.4%	22.7%	2.3%	34.1%	100.0%
		QUESTION 5	Count	13	4	7	6	14	44
			%	29.5%	9.1%	15.9%	13.6%	31.8%	100.0%
		QUESTION 6	Count	11	5	12	4	12	44
			%	25.0%	11.4%	27.3%	9.1%	27.3%	100.0%
		QUESTION 7	Count	4	4	12	5	19	44
			%	9.1%	9.1%	27.3%	11.4%	43.2%	100.0%
		QUESTION 8	Count	6	7	8	2	21	44
			%	13.6%	15.9%	18.2%	4.5%	47.7%	100.0%
		QUESTION 9	Count	4	6	11	13	10	44
			%	9.1%	13.6%	25.0%	29.5%	22.7%	100.0%
		QUESTION 10	Count	5	3	6	10	20	44
			%	11.4%	6.8%	13.6%	22.7%	45.5%	100.0%

Table 5: Conclusions drawn from analysing frequencies and percentages for entire group of 50 learners. SA/A= strongly agree, SD/D= strongly disagree.

	SA/A	SD/D
Question 7	22%	54%
Question 8	30%	54%
Question 10	22%	66%

Table 6 : Conclusions drawn from analysing frequencies and percentages of scores for different reading ability grouping ie. good , average and weak readers.

Question 3	**SA/A**	**SD/D**
Good readers	**76%**	**24%**
Average readers	**40%**	**45%**
Weak readers	**20%**	**60%**
Question 4		
Good readers	**60%**	**24%**
Average readers	**30%**	**45%**
Weak readers	**20%**	**60%**
Question 5		
Good readers	**52%**	**36%**
Average readers	**30%**	**45%**
Weak readers	**20%**	**60%**
Question 6		
Good Readers	**56%**	**16%**
Average readers	**25%**	**50%**
Weak readers	**40%**	**40%**
Question 10		
Good readers	**20%**	**72%**
Average readers	**30%**	**55%**
Weak readers	**0%**	**80%**

Table 7 ; Conclusions drawn from analysing frequencies and percentages of scores for African and Indian Pupils.

Question 9	SA/A	SD/D
Africans	47%	29,4%
Indians	21,3%	57,5%

Table 8 : Conclusions drawn from analysing frequencies and percentages of scores for research and non-research subjects.

Question 3	SA/A	SD/D
Research subjects	100%	0%
Non-research subjects	50%	40.9%
Question 6		
Research subjects	83.3%	0%
Non-research subjects	36.4%	36.4%
Question 7		
Research subjects	50%	50%
Non-research subjects	18,2%	54,6%
Question 10		
Research subjects	50%	50%
Non-research subjects	18.2%	68.2%

APPENDIX 11

READING ASSESSMENTS

STORY 1

THE THREE LITTLE PIGS

Once there were three pigs who decided that the time had come for them to set off into the wide world and find homes of their own. "Perhaps you are right , boys ," said their mother. "but remember, watch out for the big, bad wolf !" The three little pigs set off early the next morning. As they were walking along the road they saw a farmer carrying a load of straw. "With that straw I could build a strong , safe house," said the first little pig. So the first little pig bought the straw from the farmer and built the cutest little cottage you ever saw.

Meanwhile, the other two little pigs had walked further along the road when they met a woodcutter carrying a load of sticks.

"With those sticks I could build a strong, safe house," said the second little pig.

"You go on without me , brother. I will stop right here ."

So the second little pig said goodbye to his brother and bought the load of sticks from the woodcutter. He built the cutest little house you ever saw.

Meanwhile , the third little pig walked even further along the road. He met a man with a cart of bricks.

"With those bricks I could build a strong, safe house," said the third little pig. "I will stop right here."

"So the third little pig bought a cartload of bricks from the man and he
built the neatest little brick house you ever saw."

That night the first little pig slept soundly in the straw house. But at midnight there came a soft tapping on the door.

"Little pigs, little pigs , let me in ! " called a gruff voice.

The three little pigs knew at once who it was but they hugged each other and answered bravely.

"No , no , by the hair of my chinny chin chins, we will not let you in ! we will not let you in !"

"Then I'll huff, and I'll puff , and I'll blow your house down ! shouted the wolf. And he huffed and he puffed and he blew with all his might. But the house remained standing. The wolf was furious. " If they won't let me in the door, " he said to himself , "I'll climb down the chimney! "

But the third little pig heard the wolf creeping across the roof and he quickly put a huge pot of water on the fire. When the wolf jumped down the chimney, he landed with a splash in the pot and was boiled to bits. And that was the end of the big , bad wolf!

Struggled and lacked the ability to complete tasks successfully.				**Managed to complete tasks with confidence and accuracy.**
(unsuccessful) -U				**(successful) -S**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

<u>Key coding scale used in the Likert rating scale.</u>

1. **Learner's performance has not satisfied the requirement of the competence.**
2. **Learner's performance has partially satisfied the requirement of the competence.**
3. **Learner's performance has satisfied the requirement of the competence.**
4. **Learner's performance falls just short of exceeding the requirement of the competence.**
5. **Learner's performance has exceeded the requirement of the competence and outstanding ability is continuously demonstrated.**

Name _____ **Reading Assessment 1**

INSTRUCTION : Read the passage silently on your own and then read to me. Now listen carefully to my instruction and then complete the following activities.

1. READING ABILITY AND FLUENCY

INSTRUCTION : Please read the whole story to me.

U_____**S**

1 2 3 4 5

---

2. CAN REARRANGE THE SENTENCES TO SHOW CHRONOLOGICAL SEQUENCE OF THE STORY

INSTRUCTION : Please can you rearrange these sentence cards to show the order of events in the story.

- ❑ The wolf climbed down the chimney.
- ❑ The third little pig built a house of sticks.
- ❑ The wolf was boiled to bits.
- ❑ The pigs saw a farmer carrying a load of straw.
- ❑ The second little pig built a house of sticks.

U_____**S**

1 2 3 4 5

3. CAN REARRANGE THE WORDS TO MAKE THE SENTENCES COMPLETE

<u>INSTRUCTION</u> : Please rearrange these words to make the following sentences correct. Make sure you start with the card that begins with a capital letter and then end with the word that has a full stop next it.

- walked along The pigs two road. further the
- woodcutter sticks. carrying a The was of load
- met The little third pig a man cart a with of bricks.
- tapping door. on the At there midnight was a
- gruff spoke wolf The in voice. a

U _____ **S**

1 2 3 4 5

4. CAN MATCH PARTS OF SENTENCES THAT GO TOGETHER TO FORM MEANINGFUL SENTENCES

<u>INSTRUCTION</u> : These cards start a sentence. Now choose one of those cards to make the following sentences complete. Put the cards together so that you have 5 sentences.

<u>CARDS TO START THE SENTENCE</u>

The three little pigs , The first little pig , The second little pig , The wolf landed , The third little pig

<u>CARDS TO END THE SENTENCE</u>

built a house of straw ,with a splash in the pot , built a house of bricks , decided to set off to find homes of their own , built a house of sticks

U _____ **S**

1 2 3 4 5

5. CAN RETELL THE CONTENTS OF THE STORY IN ENGLISH. CAN DRAW PICTURES IN SEQUENCE IN THE BLOCKS TO HELP EXPLAIN THE DIFFERENT EVENTS IN THE STORY

<u>INSTRUCTION</u> : I want you to tell me what happened in the story in your own words. You can use the pictures you have drawn to show me what is happening in the story.

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

6. CAN ANSWER 5 QUESTIONS BASED ON THE STORY

<u>INSTRUCTION</u> : I want you to listen carefully at the questions I am going to ask you. I will first read all the questions and then I will ask you one question at a time. You can also read the questions from the card.

- Why did the pigs set off into the wide world ?
- Describe the three houses that the pig built ?
- Why was the wolf angry ?
- Who was the cleverest pig ?
- What happened to the big bad wolf ?

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

7. CAN EXPLAIN OR USE 5 WORDS IN A SENTENCE TO SHOW UNDERSTANDING

<u>INSTRUCTION</u> : I want you to give me a sentence with each of these words. If you want you can explain what these words mean.

world , chimney , boiled , climb , hugged

U_____**S**

1 2 3 4 5

---

8. CAN FIND INDIVIDUAL WORDS IN THE PASSAGE THAT HAVE THESE 5 BLENDS OR WORD PATTERNS

<u>INSTRUCTION</u> : Please can you show me a word in the story for each blend or word pattern.

- **"ld "**
- **"est"**
- **"str "**
- **"ng"**
- **" i-e"**

U_____**S**

1 2 3 4 5

---

9. CAN RELATE PERSONAL RESPONSES TO STORY

INSTRUCTION : Did this story remind you of any experiences you may have had ....Tell me about it.....What lesson did you learn from the story and if you had to change the story how would you like the story to end differently.

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

10.WORD EXTENSION.

INSTRUCTION : Can choose 5 root words from the passage and then make bigger words using the following endings . Then make a sentence using the following endings. Then make a sentence using the following endings (s ing ed ly able).

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

STORY 2

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

Once upon a time there was a little girl who lived on the edge of the woods. She loved to use a red hood and therefore everyone called her Little Red Riding Hood.

One morning , Little Red Riding Hood's mother sighed as she read a letter . It's from Granny ," she said. "And she's not feeling too well. But I just haven't time to go to see her today."

"I could go ,' said Little Red Riding Hood . " Well that's kind of you. I'll pack a basket of nice things for Granny and you can take it to her. But you must promise me not to wander off the path and not talk to anyone on the way."

"Surely," said Little Red Riding Hood".

So little Red Riding Hood set off for her Granny's cottage on the other side of the woods. Her mother waved to her until she was out of sight among the trees.

It was a lovely day . The birds sang and the little woodland animals peeped out to see Little Red Riding Hood go by. Soon she saw some lovely flowers growing beneath the trees .

"These would make a wonderful present for Granny ," she said to herself, as she stopped to pick some . She forgot that her mother had told her not to wander off the path at all.

Just as Little Red Riding Hood had finished picking a big bunch of flowers , a wolf stepped out from behind a nearby tree.

"Good afternoon , my dear ," he said. "What a charming bunch of flowers ."

"I'm sorry , " said Little Red Riding Hood firmly. "but I'm not allowed to talk to strangers. I'm on my way to see Granny and I mustn't be late." And she walked quickly on down the path. Granny's house is near the three tall oak trees. The sly wolf listened carefully and thought of a clever plan .

Then the wolf ran off through the trees , following a secret shortcut that only wolves knew.

Half an hour later ,Little Red Riding Hood arrived at her Granny's cottage. "That's strange ," she thought ."Granny has left her door open. "Little Red Riding Hood knocked on the open door and walked in.

It was quite dark inside the cottage and Little Red Riding Hood wondered whether Granny was asleep , so she tiptoed quietly over to the bed. Granny was wide awake and sitting up but she really didn't look very well at all. She was wearing a nightcap that didn't seem quite big enough.

"Why, Granny ! " whispered Little Red Riding Hood. "What big ears you have ! "

The better to hear you with my dear, said Granny in a strange voice. Little Red Riding Hood looked a little closer.

"Why , Granny ! " she cried in surprise . "What big eyes you have ! "

" The better to see you with , my dear ," said Granny,

" Why, Granny ! " she grasped . "What big teeth you have ! "pulling the covers up a little higher.

"The better to eat you with ! shouted the wolf , leaping out of bed granny's nightcap .and throwing off granny's nightcap.

Little Red Riding Hood screamed at the top of her voice and ran to the door. Luckily , a woodman who was working nearby heard the scream and hurried in with his axe. The wolf was so frightened that he ran off into the trees.

"Where's Granny ? " cried Little Red Riding Hood. Just then there came a strange thumping sound from the cupboard . The woodman opened the door and out fell Granny ! Granny made a lovely pot of hot tea . They all sat and had biscuits and cakes for tea.

Name _____ Reading Assessment 2

INSTRUCTION : Read the passage silently on your own and then read to me. Now listen carefully to my instruction and then complete the following activities.

---

1. READING ABILITY AND FLUENCY

INSTRUCTION : Please read the whole story to me.

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

---

2. CAN REARRANGE THE SENTENCES TO SHOW CHRONOLOGICAL SEQUENCE OF THE STORY

INSTRUCTION : Please can you rearrange these sentence cards to show the order of events in the story.

- ❑ The wolf jumped into granny's bed.
- ❑ The wolf ran off through the trees to granny's house.
- ❑ Red Riding Hood stopped to pick up some flowers.
- ❑ Mother packed a basket of nice things for granny.
- ❑ The woodman frightened the wolf away.

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

---

3. CAN REARRANGE THE WORDS TO MAKE THE SENTENCES COMPLETE

<u>INSTRUCTION</u> : Please rearrange these words to make the following sentences correct. Make sure you start with the card that begins with a capital letter and then end with the word that has a full stop next it.

- packed Mother basket granny. a things nice for of
- voice. Red Riding screamed Hood top at her the of
- stepped A nearby tree. behind wolf from a out
- sly The clever thought wolf old a plan. of
- saw She some growing lovely tree. flowers beneath the

U _____ S

1 2 3 4 5

---

4. CAN MATCH PARTS OF THE SENTENCES THAT GO TOGETHER TO FORM MEANINGFUL SENTENCES

<u>INSTRUCTION</u> : These cards start a sentence. Now choose one of those cards to make the following sentences complete. Put the cards together so that you have 5 sentences.

<u>CARDS TO START THE SENTENCE</u>

Little Red Riding Hood ,Granny lived ,The woodman , Granny, Granny made

<u>CARDS TO END THE SENTENCE</u>

heard Red Riding Hood's scream and came to help her, was found in the cupboard , near three oak trees , set off to her granny's cottage on the other side of the wood, a lovely pot of hot tea.

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

5. CAN RETELL THE CONTENTS OF THE STORY IN ENGLISH. CAN DRAW PICTURES IN SEQUENCE IN THE BLOCKS TO HELP EXPLAIN THE DIFFERENT EVENTS IN THE STORY.

INSTRUCTION : I want you to tell me what happened in the story in your own words. You can use the pictures you have drawn to show me what is happening in the story.

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

---

6. CAN ANSWER 5 QUESTIONS BASED ON THE STORY

INSTRUCTION : I want you to listen carefully at the questions I am going to ask you. I will first read all the questions and then I will ask you one question at a time. You can also read the questions from the card.

- How did Red Riding Hood get her name ?
- Why did Red Riding Hood stop on the way ?
- Can you tell me about the wolf's clever plan ?
- Who frightened the wolf away?
- What happened to granny ?

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

---

7. CAN EXPLAIN OR USE THESE 5 WORDS IN A SENTENCE TO SHOW UNDERSTANDING OF VOCABULARY

INSTRUCTION : I want you to give me a sentence with each of these words. If you want you can explain what these words mean.

promise , wonderful, strangers ,whispered , arrived.

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

8. CAN FIND WORDS IN THE PASSAGE THAT HAVE THESE 5 BLENDS OR WORD PATTERNS

INSTRUCTION : Please can you show me a word in the story for each blend or word pattern.

- **"igh "**
- **"sk"**
- **"mp "**
- **"ft"**
- **" oi"**

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

---

9. CAN RELATE PERSONAL EXPERIENCES TO THE STORY

INSTRUCTION : Did this story remind you of any experiences you may have had ....Tell me about it.....What lesson did you learn from the story and if you had to change the story how would you like the story to end differently.

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

10. WORD EXTENSION

INSTRUCTION : Choose 5 root words from the passage and then make bigger words using the following endings. Then make a sentence with the new word. (s ing ed ly able).

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

STORY 3

THE THREE BILLY GOATS GRUFF

Once there were three billy goats called Gruff. They lived in the mountains , scrambling over rocks and streams in search of the fresh , green grass they loved to eat.

One day the three goats Gruff stood on a hillside and looked down into the next valley. "That is the greenest grass I have seen for many a day," said the biggest billy goat , "but how can we reach it?" The rich green grass was on the other side of the bridge. The wooden bridge looked old and rickety. The smallest billy goat gruff said" I am the lightest and I will go first to make sure the bridge is okay.

In fact the bridge was strong and safe but a wicked old troll lived underneath it. Whenever he heard footsteps on the bridge, he jumped out and ate anyone who tried to cross.

The smallest billy goat Gruff did not know this. Trip trap ,trip trap, went the hooves on the wooden planks. Suddenly the ugly troll's face popped over the edge of the bridge . "Who's that trip – trapping across my bridge ?"he roared.

The little goat was almost too frightened to speak , but at last he said , "I'm the smallest billy goat Gruff ." "Well , I'm a troll , " came the reply."And I'm going to eat you for my dinner."

"Oh don't do that ," said the smallest billy goat Gruff. 'My brother is following me and he is much fatter than I am . He will make you a much better dinner than me." So the greedy troll let the smallest billy goat Gruff go trip- trapping on across the bridge and onto the fresh , green grass on the other side.

When the middle –sized goat saw his brother jumping and running on the other side of the bridge , he decided to cross himself . Trip ,trap, trip, trap, went his hooves on the wooden planks. In the very middle of the bridge , the ugly troll popped up again. "Who's that trip-trapping across my bridge? " he roared.

The middle sized goat Gruff was very frightened , too . He answered bravely. " Oh ,I'm the middle-sized billy goat gruff ,"he said."But you don't want to trouble yourself with

me . My elder brother is following me and he will make a much better meal for a big , strong troll like you."

The greedy troll let the middle-sized goat go trip-trapping over the bridge, to run in the fresh , green grass on the other side.

Now the biggest billy goat Gruff had seen everything that had happened and he smiled to himself. His big hooves went trip, trap, trip trap, on the wooden planks. Suddenly the troll jumped right out of his hiding place and stood in the middle of the bridge.

"Who's that trip-trapping across my bridge?"he roared , louder than ever.

"I'm the biggest billy goat Gruff ," came the reply.

"Move out of my way".

"OH no, "said the troll with a loud voice. I'm going to eat you for my dinner !"

But the brave big billy goat Gruff ran trip . trap. trip, trap over the rickety bridge.When he reached the middle of the bridge, he lowered his horns and charged at the troll. With a great roar , the ugly old troll flew high up into the air. Then he fell with a huge splash into the river below. The fast –flowing water carried him far away, never to be seen again.

And the three billy goats Gruff found all the fresh , green grass they could wish for in the valley and lived happily ever after.

NAME _____ Reading Assessment 3

INSTRUCTION : Read the passage silently on your own and then read to me. Now listen carefully to my instruction and then complete the following activities.

---

1. READING ABILITY AND FLUENCY

INSTRUCTION : Please read the whole story to me.

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

---

2. CAN REARRANGE THE SENTENCE TO SHOW CHRONOLOGICAL SEQUENCE OF THE STORY

INSTRUCTION : Please can you rearrange these sentence cards to show the order of events in the story.

- The greedy troll let the middle -sized goat go trip-trapping over the bridge.
- One day the three goats Gruff looked down into the water.
- The smallest billy goat Gruff crossed the bridge.
- The troll fell with a huge splash into the river.
- The big billy goat Gruff lowered his horns and charged at the troll.

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

---

3. CAN REARRANGE THE WORDS TO MAKE THE SENTENCES COMPLETE

INSTRUCTION : Please rearrange these words to make the following sentences correct. Make sure you start with the card that begins with a capital letter and then end with the word that has a full stop next it.

- The goats eat green grass . loved to the rich
- for The troll dinner . wanted to eat the goats
- stood middle The ugly troll of bridge. in the of
- happily The goats after. lived ever
- bridge The wooden old rickety . looked and

U _____ **S**

1 2 3 4 5

4. CAN MATCH THE PARTS OF THE SENTENCE THAT GO TOGETHER TO FORM MEANINGFUL SENTENCES

INSTRUCTION : These cards start a sentence. Now choose one of those cards to make the following sentences complete. Put the cards together so that you have 5 sentences.

CARDS TO START THE SENTENCE

The goats , The rich green grass , The troll , The big billy goat Gruff , The flowing water

CARDS TO END THE SENTENCE

ate anyone who tried to cross the bridge , carried the troll away , lived in the mountains , charged at the troll , was on the other side of the bridge ,

U_____**S**

1 2 3 4 5

5. CAN RETELL THE CONTENTS OF THE STORY IN ENGLISH . CAN DRAW PICTURES IN SEQUENCE IN THE BLOCKS TO HELP EXPLAIN THE DIFFERENT EVENTS IN THE STORY

<u>INSTRUCTION</u> : I want you to tell me what happened in the story in your own words.

You can use the pictures you have drawn to show me what is happening in the story.

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

---

6. CAN ANSWER 5 QUESTIONS BASED ON THE STORY

<u>INSTRUCTION</u> : I want you to listen carefully at the questions I am going to ask you. I will first read all the questions and then I will ask you one question at a time. You can also read the questions from the card.

- Why did the goats want to cross the bridge ?
- Describe the 'troll' ?
- How did the big billy goat Gruff get rid of the 'troll' ?
- Who lived underneath the bridge ?
- Why did the smallest billy goat Gruff decide to cross the bridge first ?

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

---

7. **CAN EXPLAIN OR USE THESE WORDS IN A SENTENCE TO SHOW UNDERSTANDING**

<u>INSTRUCTION</u> : I want you to give me a sentence with each of these words. If you want you can explain what these words mean.

fresh , flew , dinner , bridge , underneath .

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

---

8. CAN FIND WORDS IN THE PASSAGE THAT HAVE 5 BLENDS OR WORD PATTERNS

<u>INSTRUCTION</u> : Please can you show me a word in the story for each blend or word pattern.

- **"oll "**
- **"spl"**
- **"ish "**
- **"est"**
- **" cr"**

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

9. CAN RELATE PERSONAL EXPERIENCES TO THE STORY

INSTRUCTION : Did this story remind you of any experiences you may have had ....Tell me about it.....What lesson did you learn from the story and if you had to change the story how would you like the story to end differently.

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

10. WORD EXTENSION

INSTRUCTION : Choose 5 root words from the passage and then make bigger words using the following endings. Then make a sentence with the new word. (s ing ed ly able).

U_____ S

1 2 3 4 5

STORY 4

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

Jack and his mother lived in a little cottage down by the river. It's no good ," said Jack's mother one day. "We have no money left and you are such a lazy, silly boy, Jack, that you will never find work."

So ,Jack set off to market with the cow , but on the way he met a stranger."Why walk all the way to market ?" asked the man. "I will take the cow off your hands right away !"

Jack was delighted to have a handful of magic beans and he handed over the cow immediately.

But Jack's mother was furious. "You are a stupid, idle boy!" she cried," and you will go straight to bed without any supper !" And she threw the beans out of the window.

The next morning when Jack woke up , he thought that the room seemed very dark. He looked out of his window and was astonished to see an enormous bean plant had grown beside the house. Jack jumped out of the window and began to climb the window. He climbed and climbed until he came to the top of the beanstalk. There he found a great wooden door and he knocked at the door .

A woman came to the door and looked at him in surprise."You can't stay here ," she said .

"My husband , the giant , eats little boys!"

But Jack was hungry and he pleaded for some food. At last the old woman gave him some bread and cheese. Suddenly the floor began to shake.

"It's my husband cried the woman.

"Hide in the oven , quick !" The giant screamed.

"Fee,fie,fo,fum,

I smell the blood of an Englishman.

Be he alive , or be he dead,

I'll grind his bones to make my bread."

"Nonsense ,"said his wife." That's just the soup ready for your supper."So the giant sat down and ate his soup. After supper, the giant called for his money bags. As Jack watched , he counted out bags and bags of gold coins. As soon as the giant fell fast asleep

, Jack jumped out of the oven. He stole the bag of money and just as he was about to leave the giant woke up. The giant saw Jack carrying the bags of gold . With thundering footsteps , the giant chased after the boy. Jack ran as fast as he could to the top of the beanstalk but all the time he could hear the giant getting nearer and nearer. He ran down as quickly as he could , but the giant followed him. When he was nearly at the bottom , Jack called out.

"Mother ,mother ,bring the axe! "

When he reached the ground, Jack took the axe and with one great blow he cut through the huge beanstalk. The giant came tumbling down to his death. As for Jack and his mother, they lived happily ever after.

Name_____ **Reading Assessment 4**

INSTRUCTION : Read the passage silently on your own and then read to me. Now listen carefully to my instruction and then complete the following activities.

---

1. READING ABILITY AND FLUENCY

INSTRUCTION : Please read the whole story to me.

U_____**S**

1 2 3 4 5

---

2. CAN REARRANGE THE SENTENCES TO SHOW CHRONOLOGICAL SEQUENCE OF THE STORY

INSTRUCTION : Please can you rearrange these sentence cards to show the order of events in the story.

- ❑ Jack cut the huge beanstalk.
- ❑ Jack's mother threw the beans out of the window.
- ❑ Jack set off to the market to sell the cow.
- ❑ The giant counted the moneybags.
- ❑ The giant came tumbling down to his death.

U_____**S**

1 2 3 4 5

_____

3. CAN REARRANGE THE WORDS TO MAKE THE SENTENCES COMPLETE.

<u>INSTRUCTION</u> : Please rearrange these words to make the following sentences correct. Make sure you start with the card that begins with a capital letter and then end with the word that has a full stop next it.

- old Jack The bread cheese. and gave woman some
- lived cottage river. by the Jack a down in
- market met On stranger. the way to a the Jack
- without supper. any Jack went bed to
- climbed beanstalk. Jack top to the of the

U _____ **S**

1 2 3 4 5

4. CAN MATCH PARTS OF THE SENTENCE THAT GO TOGETHER TO FORM MEANINGFUL SENTENCES

<u>INSTRUCTION</u> : These cards start a sentence. Now choose one of those cards to make the following sentences complete. Put the cards together so that you have 5 sentences.

<u>CARDS TO START THE SENTENCE</u>

Jack's mother, Jack was delighted , Jack looked out of the window , Jack knocked , Suddenly the floor,

<u>CARDS TO END THE SENTENCE</u>

and saw a bean plant , called him a lazy boy, to have a handful of magic beans ,began to shake ,on the wooden door.

U _____ **S**

1 2 3 4 5

5. CAN RETELL THE CONTENTS OF THE STORY IN ENGLISH . CAN DRAW PICTURES IN SEQUENCE IN THE BLOCKS TO HELP EXPLAIN THE DIFFERENT EVENTS IN THE STORY

<u>INSTRUCTION</u> : I want you to tell me what happened in the story in your own words. You can use the pictures you have drawn to show me what is happening in the story.

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

---

6. CAN ANSWER 5 QUESTIONS BASED ON THE STORY

<u>INSTRUCTION</u> : I want you to listen carefully at the questions I am going to ask you. I will first read all the questions and then I will ask you one question at a time. You can also read the questions from the card.

- Why did Jack's mother sell the cow ?
- Why was Jack's mother angry ?
- Can you tell me what Jack saw at the top of the beanstalk ?
- Why did the giant get angry and chase after Jack ?
- How did the giant die? ?

U_____ S

1 2 3 4 5

7. CAN EXPLAIN THESE WORDS IN A SENTENCE TO SHOW UNDERSTANDING OF VOCABULARY

INSTRUCTION : I want you to give me a sentence with each of these words. If you want you can explain what these words mean.

market , surprise, giant, counted, huge

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

---

8. CAN FIND WORDS IN THE PASSAGE THAT HAVE 5 BLENDS OR WORD PATTERNS

INSTRUCTION : Please can you show me a word in the story for each blend or word pattern.

- "sm "
- "ee"
- "o-e "
- "br"
- "ow"

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

---

9. CAN RELATE PERSONAL EXPERIENCES TO THE STORY

INSTRUCTION : Did this story remind you of any experiences you may have had ....Tell me about it.....What lesson did you learn from the story and if you had to change the story how would you like the story to end differently.

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

---

10. WORD EXTENSION

INSTRUCTION : Choose 5 root words from the passage and then make bigger words using the following endings. Then make a sentence with the new word. (s ing ed ly able).

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

STORY 5

HANSEL AND GRETEL

Hansel and Gretel lived on the edge of a big forest. One day, Hansel said to his sister, ' Gretel , I am going for a short walk in the forest . Will you come with me ? ' 'All right,' Gretel replied , I'll come with you,' and off they went.

They walked deeper and deeper into the forest until Gretel began to get frightened. 'Hansel ,' she said, ' Where's our house ? I think we are lost.'

"Don't worry ,' said Hansel , ' I am breaking up this bread and throwing the pieces on the ground. That will show us the way home. '

But Gretel saw that the birds were eating the pieces of bread as quickly as Hansel was throwing them down. 'Oh no! 'she cried , ' The birds are eating the bread ! We are lost in the forest! ' And Gretal started to cry.

Just then , Hansel noticed a house. 'Look , Gretel,'he said , 'Don't cry. There's a house. I am going to knock and ask the way home.'

The children ran to the house. Hansel was about to knock on the door when Gretel noticed that the door was made of chocolate ! Hansel noticed that the windows were made of sugar , and then Gretel noticed that the walls were made of cakes!'I am feeling hungry all of a sudden,' laughed Hansel , 'and I am going to eat a piece of this house! 'And next thing both children were eating pieces of the house.

Suddenly a voice came from inside the house,' Who is touching my windows? Who is biting my walls ? Who is licking my door? Who is eating my house ?' Hansel and Gretel jumped back and Gretel said , ' Listen! Can you hear that ? It's an old woman. Perhaps she's a witch ! Come on, Hansel, let's run! '

But before they could move, an old woman appeared . ' Hello, my dears, 'she said ,'It's such a pleasure to see such a lovely pair of children. And you are starving , I can see Come in , my dears. I am making some nice hot soup and you can have some.' And the old woman put her arms round Hansel and Gretel and took them inside her house.

Hansel and Gretel looked round curiously inside to see if the rest of the house was made of chocolate, sugar and cake. Hansel saw a big door that was closed and asked the old woman, ' What's in there ?'
'Go in and have a look ,' she replied , and opened the door for Hansel to go inside. As soon as he was inside , she slammed the door shut! 'Ha ,ha ,ha! ' she laughed,"Now I've got you ! You are going to stay there and I am going to stay there and I am going to eat you on Friday ! '

Then the old woman grabbed Gretel by the arm and said , ' Come on, little girl, you are going to feed your brother so he is nice and fat by Friday. I like nice fat little boys ! You are going to make him some scrambled eggs.'
Gretel was very afraid so she started to do what she was told. She looked around , but couldn't find a stove. "Ex .....ex ....excuse me,' she asked, but where's the stove?'

'Silly girl,' shouted the old woman, Can't you see I've got no stove? There's the fire ! You are going to cook on that! And the old woman pointed at a fire roaring in a large fireplace at the back of the kitchen.
'But I don't know how to cook on a fire,' said Gretel . ' You'll have to show me .'

' All right ,but then you are going to cook some scrambled eggs to fatten your brother so I can eat him on Friday ,' said the old woman angrily. She grabbed Gretel by the arm and dragged her over to the fireplace. As soon as they got there, Gretel pushed the old woman into the fireplace and ran to let Hansel out of the room where he was locked up.
'Quick ,quick ! she called , Let's go ! The children ran out of the house and back to the forest where, luckily for them , their father was looking for them and took them home.

NAME _____ **Reading Assessment 5**

INSTRUCTION : Read the passage silently on your own and then read to me. Now listen carefully to my instruction and then complete the following activities.

---

1. READING ABILITY AND FLUENCY

INSTRUCTION: Please read the whole story to me.

U_____ **S**

1 2 3 4 5

---

2. CAN REARRANGE THE SENTENCES TO SHOW CHRONOLOGICAL SEQUENCE OF THE STORY

INSTRUCTION : Please can you rearrange these sentence cards to show the order of events in the story.

- ❑ The old woman took Hansel and Gretel inside her house.
- ❑ Their father took them home.
- ❑ Hansel and Gretel went for a long walk in the forest.
- ❑ The birds ate the pieces of bread.
- ❑ Gretel pushed the old woman into the fireplace..

U_____**S**

1 2 3 4 5

---

3. CAN REARRANGE THE WORDS TO MAKE THE SENTENCE COMPLETE.

INSTRUCTION : Please rearrange these words to make the following sentences correct. Make sure you start with the card that begins with a capital letter and then end with the word that has a full stop next it.

- walk Gretel forest. Hansel and went for a the in
- hungry Hansel was ate and he the house. chocolate
- old witch the door. The shut
- pushed the witch Gretel fireplace. the into
- lost forest. Hansel Gretel and got the in

U _____ S

1 2 3 4 5

4. CAN MATCH THE PARTS OF THE SENTENCES THAT GO TOGETHER

INSTRUCTION : These cards start a sentence. Now choose one of those cards to make the following sentences complete. Put the cards together so that you have 5 sentences.

CARDS TO START THE SENTENCE

On the edge ,The witch , Hansel and Gretel , Hansel was hungry , Gretel pushed

CARDS TO END THE SENTENCE

For a piece of the chocolate house, the witch into the fireplace, of a forest lived Hansel and Gretel , went for a walk in the forest ,told Gretel to make scrambled eggs.

U_____ S

1 2 3 4 5

5. CAN RETELL THE CONTENTS OF THE STORY IN ENGLISH. CAN DRAW PICTURES IN SEQUENCE IN THE BLOCKS TO HELP EXPLAIN THE DIFFERENT EVENTS IN THE STORY

<u>INSTRUCTION</u> : I want you to tell me what happened in the story in your own words. You can use the pictures you have drawn to show me what is happening in the story.

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

---

6. CAN ANSWER 5 QUESTIONS BASED ON THE STORY

<u>INSTRUCTION</u> : I want you to listen carefully at the questions I am going to ask you. I will first read all the questions and then I will ask you one question at a time. You can also read the questions from the card.

- Why did Hansel's clever plan of finding his way home not work ?
- How did Gretel feel when they got lost? Can you show me one word in the story that tells us how Gretel was feeling ?
- What was the witch's house made of ?
- Who do you think was the bravest and cleverest person in the story and why do you say that ?
- What did the witch want to do with Hansel ?

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

7. CAN EXPLAIN OR USE 5 WORDS IN A SENTENCE TO SHOW UNDERSTANDING OF VOCABULARY

<u>INSTRUCTION</u> : I want you to give me a sentence with each of these words. If you want you can explain what these words mean.

forest , pieces ,dragged , locked , noticed

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

---

8. CAN FIND WORDS IN THE PASSAGE THAT HAVE THESE 5 BLENDS OR WORD PATTERNS

<u>INSTRUCTION</u> : Please can you show me a word in the story for each blend or word pattern.

- "ee "
- "ch"
- "ck "
- "st"
- "mp"

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

---

9. CAN RELATE PERSONAL EXPERIENCES TO THE STORY

INSTRUCTION : Did this story remind you of any experiences you may have had ....Tell me about it.....What lesson did you learn from the story and if you had to change the story how would you like the story to end differently.

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

---

10. WORD EXTENSION

INSTRUCTION : Choose 5 root words from the passage and then make bigger words using the following endings. Then make a sentence with the new word. (s ing ed ly able).

U_____S

1 2 3 4 5

Table 9 A : Learner performance on reading assessment for each story.

Story one : The Three little Pigs.					**Scores**					
Name of Pupil.	**Q 1**	**Q 2**	**Q 3**	**Q 4**	**Q 5**	**Q 6**	**Q 7**	**Q 8**	**Q 9**	**Q 10**
1. Nomalisa	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
2. Diduzi	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
3..Sinesipho	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	3
4. Freddy	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	3
5. Sipho	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
6. Andiswa	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
Story two : Little Red Riding Hood					**Scores**					
1. Nomalisa	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
2.Diduzi	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
3.Sinesipho	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	3	4
4.Freddy	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	4
5.Sipho	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
6.Andiswa.	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
Story three : The three Billy goats gruff					**Scores**					
1. Nomalisa	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	4
2.Diduzi	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4
3.Sinesipho	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	3	3
4.Freddy	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	3
5.Sipho	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4
6.Andiswa	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4
Story 4 : Jack and the Beanstalk					**Scores**					
1. Nomalisa	3	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	3	3
2.Diduzi	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4
3.Sinesipho	3	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	3	3
4.Freddy	3	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	4	3
5.Sipho	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4
6.Andiswa	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4
Story 5 : Hansel and Gretal					**Scores**					
1.Nomalisa	3	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	4	3
2.Diduzi	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	4
3.Sinesipho	3	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	3	3
4.Freddy	3	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	3	3
5.Sipho	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	4
6. Andiswa.	4	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	4	3

Table 9 B : Summary of test scores for each learner.

Summary of Nomalisa's scores

Stories	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
story 1	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
story 2	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
story 3	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	4
story 4	3	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	3	3
story 5	3	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	4	3

Summary of Diduzi's scores

Stories	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
story 1	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
story 2	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
story 3	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4
story 4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4
story 5	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	4

Summary of Sinesipho's scores

Stories	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
story 1	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	3
story 2	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	3	4
story 3	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	3	3
story 4	3	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	3	3
story 5	3	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	3	3

Summary of Freddy's scores

Stories	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
story 1	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	3
story 2	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	4
story 3	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	3
story 4	3	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	4	3
story 5	3	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	3	3

Summary of Sipho's scores

Stories	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
story 1	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
story 2	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
story 3	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4
story 4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4
story 5	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	4

Summary of Andiswa's scores

Stories	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
story 1	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
story 2	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
story 3	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4
story 4	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4
story 5	4	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	4	3

APPENDIX 12
Parental questionnaire and responses perceptions on the BRA

Please indicate your priorities by placing numbers in the boxes to indicate the ordering of your views. 1= most important. 2 = important. 3= third = least important.

Question one

- ❑ It is important to have worksheets in the flip- file to help my child to learn to read.
- ❑ It is important that my child reads many library books to improve reading.
- ❑ Children must take their reading books home everyday to practice their reading.

Question two.

- ❑ I would like my child to be taught to read in Zulu and in English.
- ❑ I would prefer a teacher to teach my child in English but have a Zulu translator present in class.
- ❑ I would like my child to be taught in English only.

Question three

I found the following materials useful in helping my child learn to read.

- ❑ Library books.
- ❑ Stories written by the teacher (literature stories).
- ❑ Readers my child brought home everyday (basals).

Question four.

The reading materials helped my child to :

- ❑ Learn to read faster.
- ❑ Understand the meaning of the stories.
- ❑ Learn more English words.

Question five.

My child has made progress in reading because :

- ❑ I was given an opportunity to assist my child at home.
- ❑ My child read a large number of stories
- ❑ My child worked hard to improve reading performance

Table 10 : Responses to parental questionnaire on their perceptions of the BRA.

Result of Questionnaire to parents of research subjects

Parents of Learners' Responses

Question	Freddy	Andiswa	Nomalisa	Sipho	Diduzi	Sinesipho
One	3	2	3	3	1	2
	2	3	2	2	3	3
	1	1	1	1	2	1
Two	2	1	2	2	3	1
	1	2	3	3	2	2
	3	3	1	1	1	3
Three	3	2	3	3	1	3
	2	3	1	2	3	1
	1	1	2	1	2	2
Four	3	2	3	2	3	3
	1	3	1	3	1	1
	2	1	2	1	2	2
Five	2	3	1	1	2	2
	1	1	3	3	3	3
	3	2	2	2	1	1

APPENDIX 13

List of stories used in this study

Grade one

Teacher written literature stories

1. The cat and the mouse
2. The man and the monkey
3. Goldilocks and the three bears
4. Jack and the Beanstalk

Books used in the Independent Reading Programme

Puddle lane series by Sheila McCullagh
Stage one

- The Wideawake Mice find a new home
- Tim turns green
- Two green ears
- Poor Peter Tall
- The flying saucer
- A present for Aunt Matilda
- How Miranda flew down Puddle Lane
- Toby Spelldragon and the Magician
- The Monster loses his beard
- Jeremy Mouse and Mr Puffle
- Look out! It's magic !
- The Wideawake Mice

Stage two

- Magic balloons
- When the magic stopped
- The Tidy Bird
- The little monster
- Tessa in Puddle Lane
- Mr Grimble grumbles
- The dragon's egg

- **Never twist dragons**
- **The Wideawake Mice go to Market**

Stage three

- **The Magician's party**
- **Hickory Mouse**
- **The Gruffle in Puddlelane**

Stage 4

- **On the way to the Blue Mountains**

List of books from the library corner (grade one and two)

- **The Space Monster by Holly Stephenson**
- **Mountain Express by Sally Taylor**
- **Danny's Class by Su Swallow**
- **The Red Racing Car by Sue Swallow**
- **The Dinosaur's Footprints by Richard Blythe**
- **Going to hospital by Philip Steele**
- **Going to School by Philip Steele**
- **Henry's House by Helen East**
- **Louisa's Garden by Helen East**
- **Michael Goes Shopping by Helen East**
- **Sara by the Seashore by Helen East**
- **Maria goes to work by Helen East**
- **Rosie's Hospital story by Elizabeth Cooper**
- **Zoo for sale by Jenny Vaughan**
- **The Secret Castle by James Riordan**
- **The dancing elephant by Lain, Macdonald**
- **The Emperor's new clothes by Hans Christian, Anderson**
- **Little Grey Rabbit and the Weasels by Alison Uttley**
- **The squirrel and the Hare and the Little Grey Rabbit**
- **Five Little Ducks and Other Action Rhymes by Zita Newcome**
- **Mother Hen and Mary by Jane Pilgrim**
- **Brer Rabbit and the Honeypot by Award Publications Ltd.**
- **Paddington at the Tower by Michael Bond**
- **The Snow Dog by Jean Geldenhuys**

- **The Ugly Duckling by Gilly Marklew**
- **Flight in Danger by James Riordan**
- **Squirrel goes skating by Alison Uttley**
- **Rapunzel by Nicola Baxter**
- **Hansel and Gretel by Fran Hunia**
- **Little Grey Rabbits Birthday by Alison Uttley**
- **Toy Story by Walt Disney Corporation**
- **The wind in the willows collection (Toad at Toad Hall) by Katie,Vandyck**
- **Lucy and Tom at the Seaside by Shirley Hughes**
- **The Lion King and other characters by Walt Disney Corporation**

Teacher written theme readers.

The fish
The sparrow
Ducks
The penguin
Poultry
Water
Bees
Trees
Fruits
Care of the teeth

Literature stories chosen and adapted for direct teaching

- **Tales chosen from Classic Fairytales To Read Aloud by Naomi Lewis**
- **Tales chosen from 365 BEDTIME STORIES by Anne Mckie**
- **Tales chosen from MY TREASURY OF STORIES AND RHYMES by Nicola Baxter**
- **Tales chosen from Peeps into Storyland Book 1 by J.J. Redgrave**

Graded Basals used in grade two

Beacon Readers

- **Little Chick Chick**
- **The Pancake**
- **Old Mother Hubbard**
- **Careful Hans**
- **The Hobyahs**
- **The King of Birds**

New Way Readers

- **The Big Box and other stories**
- **The Camping Holiday and other stories**
- **Little Red Hen and other stories**
- **Deb's Secret Wish and other stories**
- **The Red Doll and other stories**
- **The Three Billy Goats Gruff**
- **The Paper Boy and other stories**
- **Two Animal Stories**
- **Too much Talk and other stories**
- **The Wind and the Sun and other stories**
- **Mollie Whuppie and the Frog Prince**
- **The Little Dancer and other stories**
- **Goldilocks and the three bears**
- **The Little Leaf and The Loose Tooth**
- **The kings Hole**
- **Gaston and the Giant**
- **Dressing up**

Gayway Readers

- **Beany and Brownie**
- **The Green Book**
- **The Three Pigs**
- **The Goat next door**
- **The Three Goats**
- **The Three Bears**
- **The Porridge Pot and The Very Big Turnip**

- **Little House , Big House and Betsy Bell**
- **The lonely Hen**
- **The Run-Away Man**
- **The Blue Book**
- **Pipkin's Ball**
- **The Lazy, Hungry Crocodile and other stories**
- **The clever Jackal and The Goatboy**
- **The Old Cars and Stop the Bus**

APPENDIX 14

TEACHER EVALUATION FORM AND HANDOUT PRESENTED AT THE WORKSHOP

Colleagues will you kindly complete the following evaluation form at the end of the workshop.

1. Please comment on the presentation of the workshop.

.....

.....

.....

2. What were the strengths and weaknesses of the workshop ?

.....

.....

.....

3. Will a balanced reading approach work in your school context?
Yes/ No .....

Why?.....

4. Are there any ideas that you derived from this workshop that you could put into use in your reading programmes? Mention a few

.....

.....

.....

5. Which approach do you think is most appropriate for second language learners?

- ☐ **Traditional**
- ☐ **Balanced**
- ☐ **Progressive** (please tick in the appropriate box)

Comment on your choice .....

.....

6. Do you think there is a need for more language education workshops in the foundation phase? Yes/No .....

Why?.....

A balanced reading approach for English second language learners.

Presented by Mrs J. Gounden (Rogini)

Qualification : B. Paed Primary ED (University of Durban Westville)

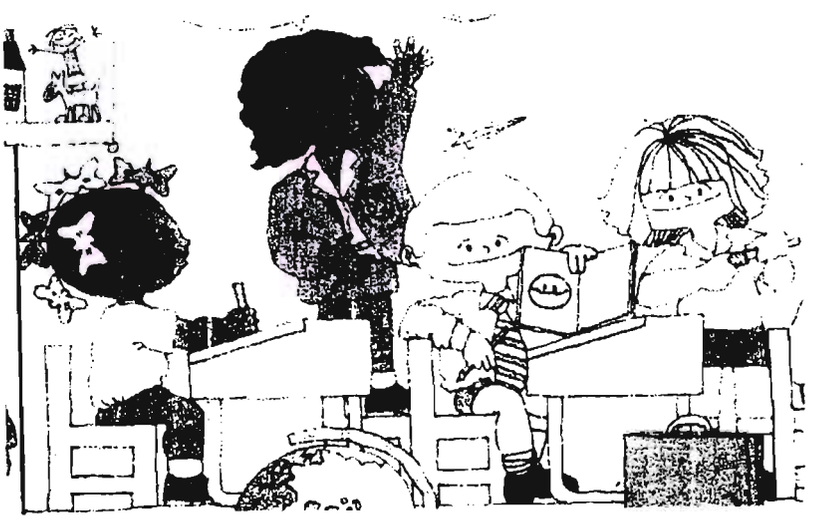
Inservice training Junior Primary – Springfield College of Ed.

B.Ed (University of South Africa).

Remedial Education diploma (Rands Afrikaans University)

Current Studies : Master of Arts : Applied language Studies.

(University of Natal – Pietermaritzburg)



Framework for implementing balanced reading approach.

1.Classroom climate and atmosphere.

(a) A variety of reading materials must be made available for children to read independently (magazines, newspapers, fiction and non- fiction books)

(b) A particular area must be designated for reading such as a corner or classroom library, where children are encouraged to go to read for enjoyment.

(c) An area must be designated for small –group reading instruction.

(d) Reading instruction must promote active participation and social interaction .

(e) Reading and writing are valued and actively promoted (purposeful writing is displayed, dialogue journal writing is promoted, Word walls are used, book talks and read – aloud by the teacher occur regularly.

(f) A pint-rich environment with poems, dictionary , display of learners work , appropriate reference charts , instructions and functional writing is a necessity .

(g) Interesting books of the week can be displayed followed by a short summary of the story.

(h) Reading logs must be monitored on a continuous basis and realistic targets can be set regarding the number of books the child is expected to read.

(i) Opportunities must be created for second language learners to interact with their competent first language peers.

(j) Second language learners must continue to use their first language while their proficiency in the second language is developing.

(k) A reading laboratory can be used for children who want to increase their reading speed and word recognition e.g. stories taped by the teacher where children point with their fingers and follow as the teacher reads along. With the ring of a bell children can turn over to a new page.

(l) Teachers need to instil in their children confidence to use "invented spelling " so that learners can become independent writers.

2. Pre -reading phase.

(a) Allow children to preview the text by having them read the title of the story, look at the illustrations, and then discuss the contents of the story.

(b) Children must be encouraged to activate their background knowledge in order to understand their texts.

(c) Discussion on the topic prior to reading creates an interest and curiosity in the reader which leads to reading motivation.

(d) Discussion of new vocabulary words must be taught in meaningful contexts where salient words, which are central to the understanding of the story, need focusing.

(e) Children can be encouraged to state verbally or write predictions about what they think the story is about by referring to the title of the story.

3. Shared reading.

(a) In "shared reading " students and teachers can read familiar texts aloud together. Reading with partners or small group encourages the participation of students who lack confidence in their reading ability.

(b) Predictable books are preferred where repeated patterns , refrains , pictures ,and rhyme allow children to "pretend read " a book that has been read several times.

(c) The "Big Book" can be used as a valuable resource to teach basic concepts about print.

(d) The shared book experience exposes learners to rich – literacy level language for those children who have limited exposure to storybooks.

4.Guided reading phase.

(a) At different points in the story children must be encouraged to evaluate their predictions as they read along.

(b) Teachers must model fluent reading and then encourage the children to read fluently and with expression.

(c) Teachers must give appropriate assistance and constructive feedback as children complete their reading selections.

(d) The use of new vocabulary must be modelled during discussion .Children must be encouraged to use a variety of word study strategies (e.g. re-reading sentence to identify word in context, decoding and encoding words and syllabification) in order to decipher the meaning of unknown words.

5.Postreading phase.

(a) Children can retell the story , while concentrating on major concepts and events.

(b) Children can retell the story in the first and second language.

(c) Children can be encouraged to use new vocabulary in written responses e.g. the teacher can demonstrate how to use a word in a sentence so that the meaning of the word becomes explicit.

(d) Writing can be used as a natural extension of reading tasks e.g.

- Write a letter to a character in the story.
- Write a list of likes and a list of dislikes about the main character.
- Design a birthday card for the main character. Artistic interpretation is an enjoyable activity as it is a change of pace from writing.
- Children can read specific parts of the story in response to appropriate questions e.g. they can read parts of the story to confirm or disapprove their predictions.
- Learners can write a short book jacket summary to attract other readers or design a book cover.
- Rewrite the story with a different ending.
- Write a dialogue between two characters.
- Engage children in drama activities to develop verbal and non- verbal communication skills. Drama gives learners opportunities to practice role playing. Children can act out a favourite scene with puppets.

- Divide an A4 sheet into 8 sections and include in each block the major happenings of the book in sequence , whilst including with each picture several sentences that sum up the event.

6.Skill and strategy instruction.

(a) It is vital that the teacher provides a clear explanation about the structure of the skill or strategy to be learned and describe when and how it could be used.

(b) Children must be made aware of how the skill or strategy can be used in an appropriate situation by means of teacher modelling.

(c) The teaching of phonics sounds and blends must be followed by children using the skill in a meaningful context. Phonic instruction does not have to be rigidly sequenced , but rather taught incidentally by bulldozing combinations of letters in the context of real reading tasks.

(d) Explicit skill and strategy instruction must be applied in the context of the reading selection.

(e) By means of teacher scaffolding vital reading instructional skills and strategies, children become independent readers. In addition the cross –age tutoring and buddy system can improve the reading skills of the less competent readers.

7. Materials and tasks of the lesson.

(a) The choice of reading material must suit the ability , interest and grade level of the children.

(b) Independent reading tasks must include open- ended questions to allow learners to extend understanding of their texts. Children must be exposed to a large number of high interest reading books, as they need to read extensively.

(c) The children must be encouraged to engage in various modes of reading during the reading lesson (e.g. silent reading , oral , guided and shared).

(d) Children must be encouraged to read for enjoyment.

(e) Children must develop a responsive stance to literature stories e.g. they must feel free / to respond personally and creatively to the reading material.

(f) Reading lessons must contain a balance of teacher –initiated and student-initiated activities.

8. Home support programme .

(a) Reading materials must be sent home on a daily basis and the child is expected to read for 20 minutes everyday.

(b) Sentences based on the flash words and phonic sounds must be revised at home daily for 10 minutes.

(c) If possible parents must read to their children and with their children.

(d) If a child cannot recognise more than 5 words on a page then a parent or a sibling can model good reading strategies.

(e) It is crucial that the reading programme must make provision for parental participation in order to impact positively on school achievement and social growth.

WHOLE LANGUAGE PRINCIPLES.

How whole language lessons should be organised.

- **Lessons should proceed from whole to part.**

Children develop concepts by beginning with general ideas and then filling in the specific details. Theme teaching helps teachers move from whole to part.

- **Lessons should be learner centred because learning is the active construction of knowledge by pupils.**

Lessons begin with what the child knows , and activities build on learners interest. Teachers create contexts for pupils to construct knowledge .

- **Lessons should have meaning and purposes for students now.**

Learners learn things that they see as meeting a present need . They are given choices in what they study. They reflect upon what they are learning and apply what they learn to their life outside and inside school.

- **Lessons should engage groups of students in social interaction.**

When students share their ideas in social settings ,individual concepts are developed. Working in groups , students also learn to collaborate which is a vital life skill .

- **Lessons should develop both oral and written language.**

Teachers need to engage second language learners in reading and writing from the start in order to develop academic competence .

- **Learning should take place in the first language to build concepts and facilitate the acquisition of English.**

Full development of the primary language facilitates the acquisition of the second language whilst recognition of the first language and culture, builds self-esteem.

- **.Lessons that show faith in the learner expands students' potential.**

All students are capable of learning at a competent level if hey are engaged in meaningful activities that move from whole to part, build student's interest and background , serve their needs , provide opportunities for social interaction, and develop their skills in both oral and written language.

Learning and the Learner.

- Learner actively and often enthusiastically engages in complex language and reasoning processes , as well as the construction of complex concepts.

- Authentic experiences and projects are typically perceived as functional and purposeful by the learner.

- Learner –sensitive instruction based on explicit assumption that all learners learn and develop uniquely.

- Gradual approach to adult correctness is expected ; learning is seen as best facilitated when learners are free to experiment and take risks without fear or negative feedback.

- Learning is seen as best facilitated by collaboration.

Curriculum.

- Curriculum is characterised by the kinds of learning experiences that lifelong learners engage in outside of school.

- Curriculum is integrated around topics and themes, with emphasis on developing language and literacy skills across the curriculum.

- Curriculum is determined by, and negotiated among the teacher and the students. Reading materials include, at the earliest levels, a wide variety of materials in natural language patterns with emphasis on repetitive and predictable patterns.

- Direct teaching of skills occurs within the context of whole learning experience and the learners'needs and interests.

Planning for whole Language.

1. What is the question worth talking about ?
2. How does the question fit into your overall plan?
3. How will you find out what the students already know about the question.
4. What strategies will you use together to explore the question ?
5. What materials will you use together to explore the question ?
6. What steps will you and students take to explore the question ?
7. How will you observe the students' learning ?

The reading – writing relationship : Seven instructional principles by Timothy Shanahan.

- **Principle 1 : Teach both reading and writing.**

Children must be given opportunities to learn to write in order to apply writing knowledge to reading development. An abundance of reading and writing instruction should be provided by teachers on a daily basis. It is possible to integrate reading and writing instruction if children have reading and writing knowledge available for sharing .

- **Principle 2 : Introduce reading and writing from the earliest grades.**

Writing can be brought into the classroom very early by means of the language experience approach in which the teacher translates the children's ideas into text. Children should be encouraged to write independently by pretending to" spell the words the way they think they should be spelled."

- **Principle 3 : Instruction should reflect the developmental nature of the reading – writing relationship.**

As children make great strides in their literacy development , the reading and writing tasks ought to become more complex and challenging e.g. initially word recognition and spelling can be emphasised later reading comprehension – writing vocabulary and organisation.

- **Principle 4 : Make the reading –writing connection explicit.**

  Children need to understand that reading and writing knowledge can be transferred and instruction should encourage students to recognise the similarity of reading and writing.

- **Principle 5: Instruction should emphasise content and process relations.**

A story can be used to build reading and writing skills. In this activity children make predictions about the characters , setting, problems ,solutions , and outcomes of stories by examining key vocabulary from the text. The teacher could write this information on a chart for learners to use as story starters in compositions.

Product relations include phonemic awareness , word structures , word meanings, sentence structures, cohesion , joining sentences and passage organisation. **Process knowledge** refers to strategies and procedures for solving problems or for carrying out complex activities.

- **Principle 6 : Emphasize communications.**

The communication aspects of reading and writing can be taught by the following activities : use classroom mailboxes to encourage children to use writing to interact in the classroom , children write about their daily thoughts and the teacher responds to their writing .

- **Principle 7 : Teach reading and writing in meaningful contexts.**

Reading and writing are used to accomplish a myriad of purposes. Among others communication is just one purpose of literacy. Halliday (1975) lists 7 overlapping functions of language which can be explored through reading and writing. The functions are as follows : instrumental – the use of language to get what you want ; regulatory – the ability to control behaviour , yours and that of others through language ; interaction-social uses of language ; personal – creation of individual personality through language; imaginative - fantasy exploration and creation ; heuristic – investigative or learning functions ; informative – the communication of information.

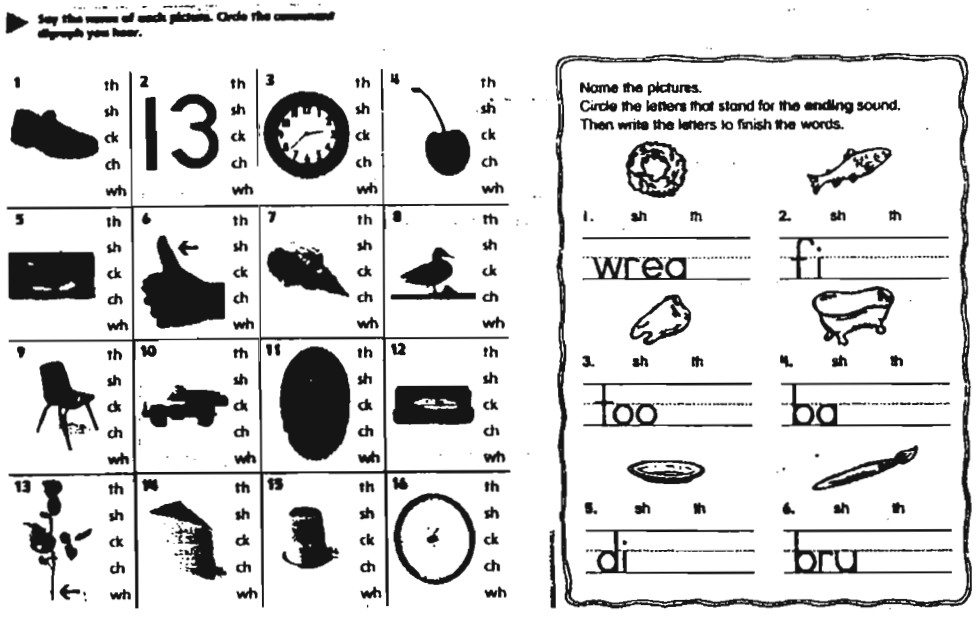
Teaching Suggestions ▼

Consonant Digraphs—Continued

Again, Context. Exercises involving beginning and ending consonant digraphs should involve context so that children can integrate strategies in decoding and context in figuring out unknown words in print:

We write on the board with __alk.
My dog is not fat; he's __in.
The clouds are a puffy __ite color.
We're having pizza for lun__.
I wi__ I could visit the moon.

Got Any /sh/ Words? The popular card game Go Fish can be used for practice. Using a stack of cards with words containing digraphs, groups of children can ask each other for cards containing consonant digraph words.



Consonant digraphs occur at the beginning and end of words and are taught through picture-matching and context-based exercises.

Phonics Support Blackline Masters, Grade One. New York: Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, 1997. Reproduced with permission of the McGraw-Hill Companies.
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Consonant Blends

Consonant blends or clusters are two or three consonant letters that represent closely associated but separate sounds. Blends constitute common phonetic elements in English words.

Three common categories of blends are

- those that involve the letter **l** (*black, clap, flock, slow,* and *please*)
- those that involve the letter **r** (*bright, crow, drop, frame, group, proud,* and *train*)
- those that involve the letter **s** (*scar, skin, slim, small, snore, spell, star,* and *swim*)

Blends also occur in three-letter combinations such as *street, spring,* and *splash.* As with other consonant elements, blends occur at the beginning and ending of words.

It's very likely that words containing initial consonant blends will occur on other word lists that children develop as part of phonics instruction, words like *brown* on a list of **b**-words and *dress* on a list of **d**-words, for example. Many of the activities for teaching blends will be similar to those involved in teaching initial and final consonants.

Teaching Suggestions ▼

Consonant Blends

Creating Words with Blends. Beginning with words familiar to children, the teacher can add letters to create blends:

car—scar *rat—brat* *rip—drip* *room—broom* *lamp—clamp*

Children can brainstorm to expand the list of words beginning with these blends. According to Eldredge (1999), the blends that most often occur at the beginning of American English words are

st—*stop, start, sting, stack*
pr—*pray, price, prince, prize*
tr—*try, tree, truck, track*
gr—*grin, gray, green, grape*
pl—*plan, plum, place, plane*
cl—*clean, class, clock, close*
cr—*cry, crash, crank, crack*
str—*string, strap, straw, strong*
br—*broom, brown, bring, brook*
dr—*dry, drag, drive, dress*
fl—*flap, flop, flag, flat*
fr—*free, frog, freeze, Friday*
bl—*black, blush, bland, blink*
sl—*sly, slow, slap, sled*
sw—*swim, swing, swamp, switch*
sm—*small, smart, smell, smile*
sc—*scene, score, scale, scrub*
sk—*sky, skid, skate, skunk*
gl—*glad, glare, glue, glove*
tw—*twin, twine, twist, twig*
scr—*scrap, scrape, screw, scrub*
spr—*spring, spread, spray,*
sn—*snap, snow, snack, snail*
spl—*splash, splint, splinter*

Consonant Blends—Continued

Word Families. Initial consonant blends can be used as onsets in small group or large group activities in building word families:

an—*plan, clan, scan, bran, Fran*
ing—*sting, swing, string, bring, spring*

Using the preceding list of blends and the list of phonograms presented later (see p. 76), children can create hundreds of new words as part of phonics practice.

Final Blends. Consonant blends also occur in final position in words. According to Eldredge (1999), consonant blends that occur most frequently at the end of American English words are

nt—*bent, rent, aunt, runt*
nd—*and, send, band, behind*
ct—*act, duct, tract, reflect*
nce—*dance, fence*
nk—*ink, sank, rink, sunk*
mp—*ramp, imp, lamp, limp*
nge—*range, fringe*
ft—*lift, left, raft, craft*
sk—*desk, disk, task, tusk*
pt—*apt, kept, slept*
nse—*dense, rinse*
sp—*clasp, lisp*
lt—*felt, lilt, tilt, built*

Context. Children can become aware of consonant blends in final position through exercises that combine decoding and context with sentences such as

I pour water down the kitchen si__.
In Aladdin, *the genie lit the la__.*
I do my schoolwork at my de__.

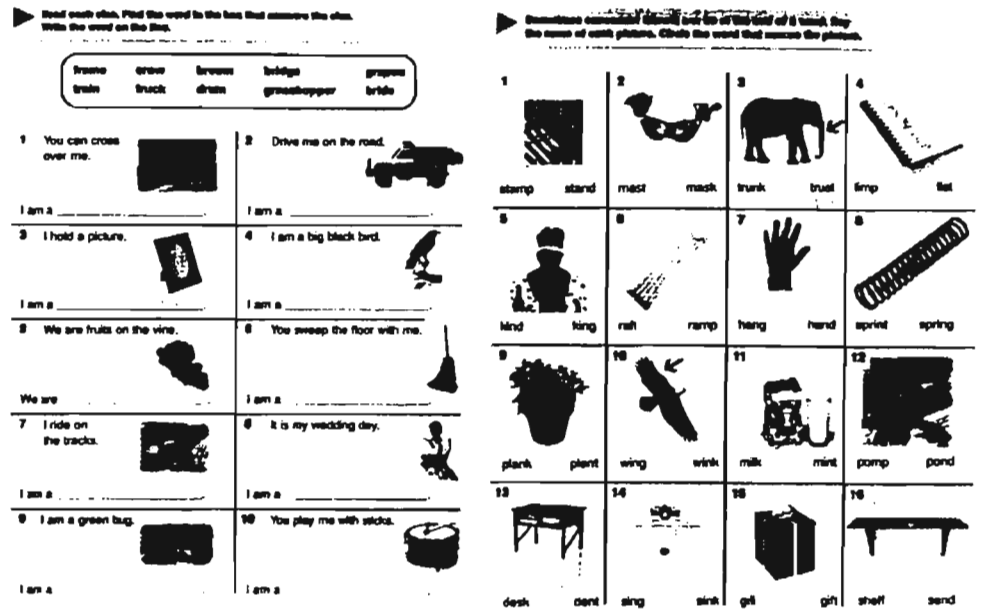
Sometimes, blends and digraphs can occur in sequence in the same syllable, as digraphs become part of blends. In a word like *throw*, for example, the digraph **th** is blended with the letter **r**. Blends that include digraphs occur at the beginning of words like

shr—*shrub, shred, shrewd, shrank*
squ—*square, squint, squash, squeeze*
thr—*throw, thrill, throat, thread*

and at the end of words like

nch— inch, lunch, ranch, pinch

Children can practice decoding words while identifying the digraphs that are part of the blends in these words.



Like digraphs, consonant blends occur at the beginning and ending of words and are taught through picture-matching and context-based exercises.

From Phonics Level C. © 1998 by Modern Curriculum Press, Inc. Used by permission of Pearson Learning.

Teaching Suggestions ▼

Working with Blends and Digraphs Together

Real or Not? Elements of vocabulary development can be added by making a list of words containing blends and digraphs, some of which are real words and some of which are not:

scare	*blare*	*mare*
slare	*spare*	*square*
stare	*plare*	*trare*
glare	*brare*	*plare*

As children discuss which words are real and which are not, they acquire the meaning of words they may not have heard before.

Teaching Suggestions ▼

Long Vowels

Comparing Short and Long Sounds. The teacher presents contrasting pairs of words like

mad — made	*ran — rain*	*cub — cube*
hid — hide	*cod — code*	*pad — paid*
bat — bait	*pan — pane*	*not — note*

Children separate the words according to the sounds they hear. Contrasting vowel sounds in word pairs like these is an extension of phonemic awareness instruction.

Word Families. Word families can be created as easily with long vowels as with short vowels. With rimes like

ate *eat* *ice* *oat* *une*

children can build word families by adding initial consonant letters and blends:

date	*beat*	*mice*	*boat*	*dune*
gate	*heat*	*nice*	*coat*	*June*
late	*neat*	*rice*	*goat*	*tune*
mate	*seat*	*lice*	*float*	*prune*

In working with word families in which the vowel sound is long, it's easy to see the variability in the spelling of long vowel sounds. In building a word family for the *ate* phonogram, for example, children will suggest the initial letters b (for *bate*, which is spelled *bait*) and w for *wate* (which is spelled *wait* or *weight*). This launches teachers and children into a lesson on homophones, which extends phonics into word meaning and spelling.

Edward Fry* (1998) has identified 38 phonograms that can be found in over 650 different one-syllable words. These common phonograms include both short and long vowels:

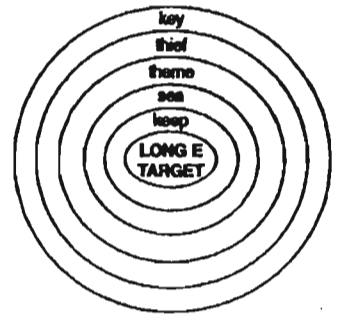
- ay—*say, pay, day*	- ug—*rug, bug, hug*
- ill—*hill, Bill, spill*	- op—*mop, cop, pop*
- ip—*ship, dip, tip*	- in—*pin, tin, chin*
- at—*cat, bat, fat*	- an—*pan, man, ran*
- am— *ham, jam, dam*	- est—*best, nest, pest*
- ag—*bag, rag, tag*	- ink—*pink, sink, drink*
- ack—*back, sack, black*	- ow—*low, show, slow*
- ank—*bank, sank, tank*	- ew—*new, few, chew*
- ick—*sick, chick, quick*	- ore—*more, sore, store*
- ell—*bell, sell, tell*	- ed—*bed, red, fed*
- ot—*pot, not, hot*	- ab—*cab, dab, crab*
- ing—*ring, sing, thing*	- ob—*cob, job, knob*
- ap—*cap, map, clap*	- ock—*sock, rock, block*
- unk—*rank, junk, skunk*	- ake—*cake, lake, brake*
- ail—*pail, jail, nail*	- ine—*line, nine, shine*
- ain—*rain, pain, chain*	- ight—*knight, light, right*
- eed—*feed, seed, weed*	- im—*him, rim, swim*
- y—*my, by, try*	- uck— *duck, luck, truck*
- out—*pout, trout, shout*	- um—*gum, bum, drum*

List from Fry, E. B. (1998, April). Teaching reading: The most common phonograms. *The Reading Teacher, 51*(7), 620–622. Reprinted with permission of Edward B. Fry and the International Reading Association.

Long Vowels, continued

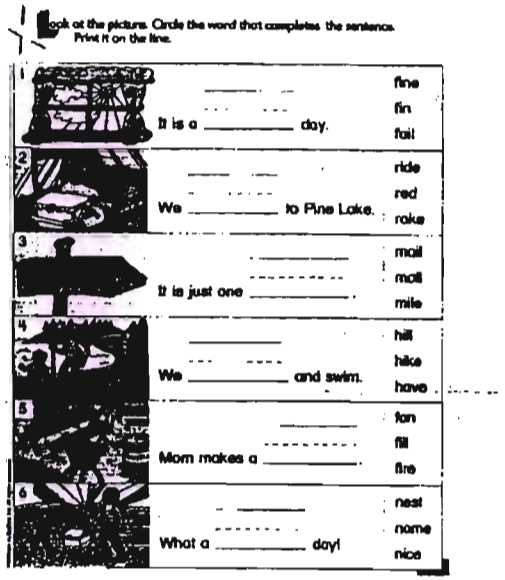
See how many other words you can build from these common rimes.

Long Vowel Word Wall. Long vowel words that children encounter as part of their classroom language experiences can be posted on word walls. These can be arranged in displays such as



Children can suggest other displays for other discrete phonics elements.

Games. Games such as WORDO, concentration, Go Fish!, and other popular games can be adopted for use with practicing and reinforcing long vowel sounds.



Exercises involving long vowels typically focus both on the sound of the vowel and the various letter combinations that can represent that sound. *Phonics Activity Book, Grade Two.* New York: Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, 1997. Reproduced with permission of the McGraw-Hill Companies.

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Other Vowel Sounds

The vowel sound system of English is complex and contains phonemes other than short and long vowels. They include medial vowels, double vowels that are single phonemes and double vowels that make blended sounds, r-controlled vowels, and schwa.

Medial vowels occur in words such as *father, wall,* and *water.* The vowel sound is neither short nor long, but may be described as "somewhere in between." Some very fine distinctions exist among these medial vowel phonemes, and not all experts classify them in the same fashion. Some people pronounce the /ä/ in *father* and the /ô/ in *off* differently; to other speakers, these are the same sounds. Instead of trying to explain to children the intricacies of how these sounds work, Blevins (1998) suggests teaching these sounds by spelling patterns.

Teaching Suggestions ▼

Medial Vowels

Spelling Patterns. Rimes or phonograms containing medial vowels can be written on the chalkboard and children can develop lists of words based on these patterns:

-alk *talk, walk, stalk* **-all** *ball, call, fall*

As in all cases, children should be alert to variations in the pattern, as in *chalk* and *shall.*

Word Sort. Children can categorize words according to their vowel sounds in word sorts. Children can be given a list of "a-words"

fame	*far*	*sail*	*bay*
part	*cab*	*fat*	*car*
call	*cape*	*fad*	*came*

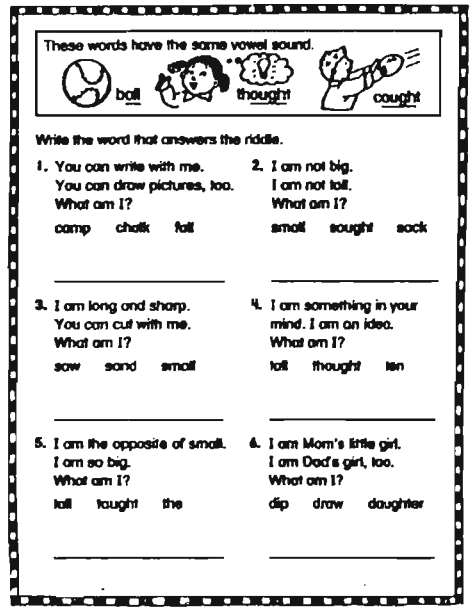
and asked to sort these words according to the following categories:

Long Sound	Short Sound	"Other" Sound
fate	*fat*	*father*

Children then place the word in the appropriate list.

"See if it Works." As children encounter unfamiliar words with medial vowel sounds, they can be encouraged to try the medial sound if the appropriate long or short sound does not make sense in the context of the sentence.

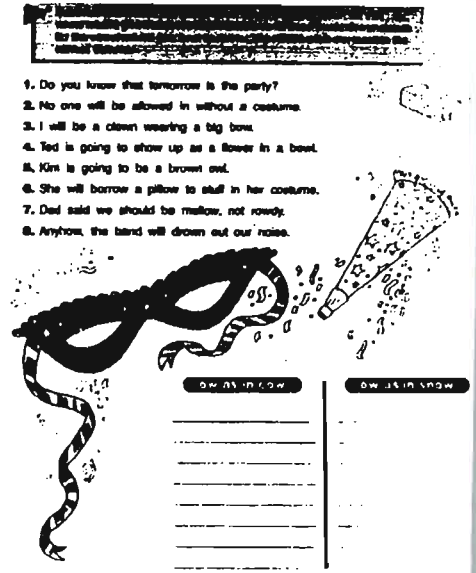
Double vowel letters exist in combination, sometimes making a single vowel sound and sometimes making blended vowel sounds.


These words have the same vowel sound.

ball thought caught

Write the word that answers the riddle.

1. You can write with me. You can draw pictures, too. What am I?
   camp chalk fall
2. I am not big. I am not tall. What am I?
   small sought sock
3. I am long and sharp. You can cut with me. What am I?
   saw sand small
4. I am something in your mind. I am an idea. What am I?
   tall thought tan
5. I am the opposite of small. I am so big. What am I?
   tall taught the
6. I am Mom's little girl. I am Dad's girl, too. What am I?
   dip draw daughter



Medial vowel sounds are often taught by patterns. Exercises on other vowel sounds often involve word sorts.

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Vowel digraphs are two vowel letters that combine to make a single sound. For example, the letter combination **oo** creates two separate phonemes:

/o͝o/ as in *too, food,* and *school*
/o͞o/ as in *good, book,* and *cookie.*

Other digraphs are the **ai** in *rain* that makes the /ā/ sound, the **oa** in *boat* that makes the /ō/ sound, and the **ew** in *grew* that makes the /ū/ sound (here is where **w** is considered a vowel). The double **o**'s in *food* and *good* combine to make phonemes that are unique in the overall sound system of American English.

Vowel diphthongs are two vowel letters that represent a "blended" vowel sound as the **oi** in *boil* or the **ou** in *shout.* Just as one can tell the difference between consonant blends and digraphs by listening carefully to the sound divisions (or lack thereof), one can tell the difference between vowel digraphs and diphthongs by listening carefully to the distinction in vowel phonemes. In the word *boat,* there is no separation of sounds in the vowel digraph; all one hears is the /ō/ sound. In the word *boil,* one can hear a blending of the two elements in the vowel diphthong /oi/.

Story title

_____

Where does it happen?

Who are the characters?

How does the story get going?

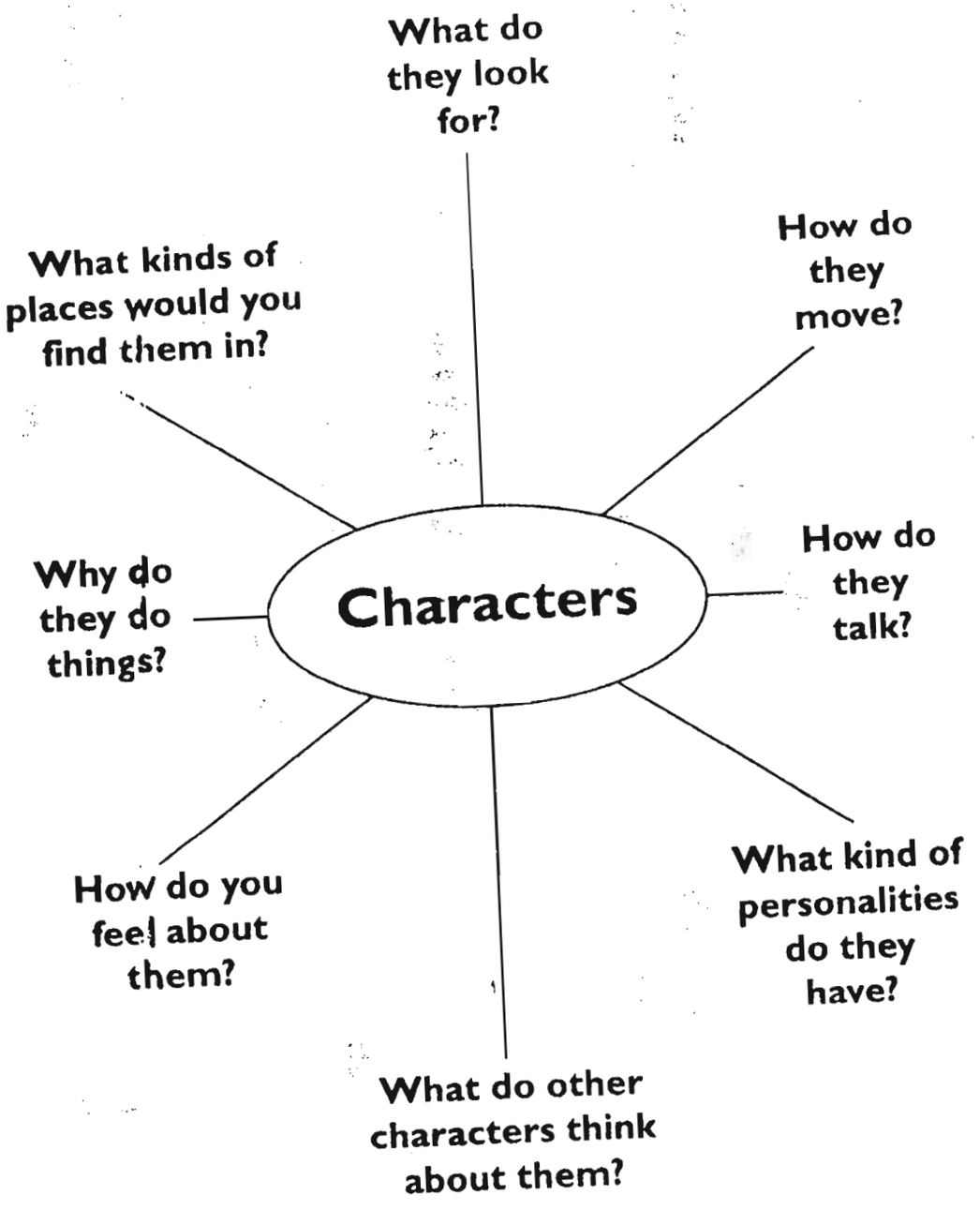
Is there a problem?

Are there any solutions?

What happens in the end?

How does everyone feel?

What is it about?


Characters
What do they look for?
How do they move?
How do they talk?
What kind of personalities do they have?
What do other characters think about them?
How do you feel about them?
Why do they do things?
What kinds of places would you find them in?

Zoom in-characters

What is your character's name?

What is s/he like?

When your story starts ...

What does s/he do?

How does s/he feel?

Why?

In the middle ...

What does s/he do?

How does s/he feel?

Why?

At the end ...

What does s/he do?

How does s/he feel?

Why?

Has anything changed this character?
If so – what and why?

Characters in my story

Draw pictures of your characters.
Write their names underneath.

Write some words to show what they're like.

Write a bit about what they do.

At the end – how do they feel?

Story planner 3

Starting off

What is it about?

Where does it happen?

Who are the characters?

Getting going

What happens?

Is there a problem?

Is it something exciting?

Sorting out

What happens next?

What do the characters do?

Are there possible solutions?

Finishing off

How does it end up?

How do the characters feel?

How do you feel?

Concepts embedded in the balanced reading approach.

"Independent reading" "Activating background knowledge "

"Extensive reading " " Reading logs " "Inventive spelling "

"Paired reading" dialogues "Word wall"

"Shared reading" " language experience"

"Shared book experience" "guided writing"

"Guided reading"

"modelled writing

"independent writing"

"Choral reading" "summarization"

"Listening to literature read aloud " " supportive learning "

"Literature discussions " "active learning"

"Reading aloud " "collaboration"

"Cross- age tutoring " "Brainstorming"

"Buddy system " "Scaffolding"

"Theme study" "Cooperative learning"

"Story impression" " skills taught in meaningful contexts "

"Personal responses" "Print –rich environment"

"Story telling" "Home support programme "

"Drama" "Developing multiple intelligences "

"Additive bilingualism " "Communicative competence "

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