Where to access Funda Wande materials

- The Funda Wande Reading for Meaning Course for teachers is available on the Funda Wande APP: funda.fundawande.org

A video showing how to get onto and navigate this APP is available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L0bE1HEuoGA

- PDF versions of the APP (with text and reference to videos on youtube) are available on Funda Wande’s website: https://fundawande.org/learning-resources

- Videos can be found on the Funda Wande youtube channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdbzR2fVsW5AtaQY_WYbvHw

- Other supporting materials such as the Vula Bula stories (in 6 languages) and Funda Wande lesson plans (in isiXhosa and English) are available on the Funda Wande website: https://fundawande.org/learning-resources

Funda Wande Course Modules

1. CAPS Reading Activities
2. Emergent Literacy
3. Teaching Decoding
4. Teaching Vocabulary
5. Teaching Comprehension
6. Teaching Writing and Handwriting
7. Teaching EFAL in Foundation Phase 1
8. Teaching EFAL in Foundation Phase 2
9. Developing a Culture of Reading
10. Inclusive Education
11. Reading Assessment and Remediation
12. Planning and Progression

Logging in to the Rhodes Course on the Funda Wande App.

1. Connect to the internet via mobile phone, pc or tablet

2. Use Google chrome and insert the following link

https://funda.fundawande.org/login/
3. If this is your first time, first register for the open course.

4. Fill in the registration form and press the orange ‘register’ bar.

5. You will know you have successfully registered if you see this. Click on ‘Go to Login’.

6. Anyone who is registered can log in on this page. Type in your ID Number and use the same ID Number as your password. Press ‘Log in’ to proceed.

7. Choose English and then start the Rhodes Course
What is assessment of literacy?

Assessment is the process of finding out what learners know and what they can do. In the process, the teacher makes judgements about a learner’s reading and writing performance. The teacher’s judgements must be informed by a good knowledge of, on one hand, the components of reading and on the other, how children learn to read and write. The teacher’s judgements must also be supported by evidence. For example, if the teacher assesses a learner as a fluent reader, she must have evidence to show that the learner can read accurately, quickly and with expression.
Once the teacher has assessed a learner, she must provide feedback that helps the learner to move forward. She must also use the feedback she has gained from the results of the assessment to reflect on her teaching – what has been learned and what still needs to be done? This will assist her in setting new goals and planning the next phase of her teaching. We call this the assessment cycle.

To assess reading and writing effectively, teachers must also know:

- What the focus of reading and writing should be at each grade level
- What learners should be achieving at each grade level (i.e. benchmarks for learning)
- How to set appropriate goals and provide effective feedback.

What does good literacy assessment look like?

- Aimed at finding out what children can do.
- Relevant – it must cover the components of reading and writing that should receive focus in the grade.
- At the right level of challenge so that it distinguishes between good learners, average learners and weak learners who need more assistance.
- Appropriate for the learners’ age and stage of development.
- Accurate – if two teachers assess the same learners, they should get very similar results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Main focus of assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Phonological awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oral language (especially vocabulary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concepts of print</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Letter-sound knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Word recognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Letter-sound knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oral reading fluency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Oral reading fluency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comprehension</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reflection

- Do you reflect on the results of assessment and use them to plan the next step in your teaching?
- Would you describe the judgments you make of your learners’ performance as well-informed?
- Are your assessments at the right level of challenge?

Activity 11.1
Choose the correct multiple-choice answer.

1. The main aim of assessment is:
   - To record results and enter them on SA-SAMS.
   - To find out what learners know and can do.
   - To make sure that as many learners as possible pass.

2. A benchmark is:
   - A standard that learners are expected to achieve at a particular grade level.
   - A method of assessing learners’ reading and writing.
   - A guideline to help teachers make good judgements when assessing learners.

3. A good test:
   - Distinguishes between strong, average and weak learners.
   - Sets very high standards so that only a few learners pass.
   - Ensures that every learner passes.

4. A focus of reading assessment in Grade 3 should be:
   - Letter-sound knowledge.
   - Word recognition.
   - Comprehension.

5. Why is it important that assessment is supported by evidence?
   - To ensure that the assessment is accurate.
   - So it can be put on the teacher’s assessment file.
   - To make it easy to understand and record.
**L2: Why do we assess learners?**

**Outcomes**
- Understand why we assess learners.
- Know the 4 main types of assessment and their purposes.
- Know what baseline assessment looks like.

**Why do we assess learners?**

**Teachers assess learners to find out:**
- What they know and can do and whether there are any gaps.
- Whether learners are making progress over time.
- How effective their own teaching is and what they should teach next.

**What is the purpose of assessment?**

There are 4 main types of assessment each with a different purpose:

1. **Baseline assessment** is carried out at the beginning of the year. The teacher does a baseline assessment to find out what the starting point is for each learner. She uses the information to plan her teaching and to monitor each learner’s progress from this starting point. The teacher also uses baseline assessment to put learners into ability groups for Group Guided Reading so that their needs can be met.

2. **Formative assessment** happens continuously during teaching. Its purpose is to provide children with feedback on their learning so that they can make progress. It is also called **assessment for learning (AfL)**. Teachers keep informal records of formative assessment.

3. **Summative assessment** is done at the end of a period of teaching, for example, at the end of a section in the curriculum or the end of the term or year. Its purpose is to measure how much each child has learned. For this reason, it is often called **assessment of learning (AoL)**.

4. **Diagnostic assessment** has two different meanings. Firstly, it is used to refer to assessment that is done before teaching to find out what learners already know and can do. Teaching then takes account of the results of the assessment. The same test can be used after teaching to find out what progress learners have made. Baseline assessment is an example of this kind of assessment. Secondly, diagnostic assessment refers to tests that are given to learners when they fail to make progress. These tests are often administered by literacy specialists.

In Lessons 3 and 4 we’ll look further at formative and summative assessment and the differences between them.
Watch video 8. In this video, you will see one teacher talking about baseline assessment and another teacher putting this into practice. While you are watching, think about these questions:

- What is the challenge teachers face at the beginning of the year?
- What in this teacher's view is the purpose of baseline assessment?
- How does she suggest teachers should do baseline assessment?

**Reflection**

- Do you do a baseline assessment at the beginning of each year?
- What aspects of reading do you focus on at your grade level in your baseline assessment?
- How do you use the results of your baseline assessment?

**Activity 11.3**

Choose the correct multiple-choice answer.

1. In the video, the teacher refers to a challenge that teachers face at the start of each year. This challenge is that:
   - [ ] They don't know the reading level of each learner.
   - [ ] They don't have enough time to cover the curriculum.
   - [ ] They don't have sufficient space and resources.

2. Summative assessment is a form of:
   - [ ] Assessment for learning.
   - [ ] Diagnostic assessment.
   - [ ] Assessment of learning.

3. Formative assessment happens:
   - [ ] Continuously during learning.
   - [ ] Before learning takes place.
   - [ ] After learning takes place.

4. The purpose of summative assessment is to:
   - [ ] Provide feedback to learners during instruction.
   - [ ] Measure learning at the end of a period of instruction.
   - [ ] Assess prior knowledge before instruction.

5. Norms for reading in South Africa:
   - [ ] Are available in all eleven official languages.
   - [ ] Are available for Grade 2 only.
   - [ ] Are still in the process of being developed.
L3: Learn more about formative assessment

Outcomes
– Understand the purpose of formative assessment
– Know what formative assessment looks like
– Understand the role of feedback in formative assessment.

What is formative assessment?
The purpose of formative assessment is to promote learning. It does this by helping learners to see:
– What they are aiming for
– Where they are now
– How they can close the gap.
The goal of formative assessment is to enable learners to become independent. Ultimately, they should be able to set goals and assess their own learning.

What am I aiming for?
The teacher must show learners what successful learning looks like, for example, by modelling it. In the case of writing, teachers can share the criteria for assessment. This shows learners what they have to do to be successful. Teachers should help learners to set goals for achievement.

Where am I now?
The teacher must observe learners and provide continuous feedback. The feedback should be descriptive. It should help learners to see how to get closer to their goal. The teacher can also teach learners how to self-assess so that they can monitor their own learning.

How can I close the gap?
Teaching should have a clear focus, for example, teaching one comprehension strategy at a time, so that learners can see what they are aiming for. Teachers should encourage learners to use feedback to get closer and closer to their goal. In the case of writing, teachers can display learners’ work so that they can see examples of successful learning.

Watch video 70B. In this video, you will see a Grade 1 teacher teaching learners to use their letter-sound knowledge to write words. While you are watching, think about these questions:
– How does the teacher model the goal of the activity?
– What do you think she learns from watching the children writing?
– How does she provide feedback and support the learners?

Reflection
– Do you do a baseline assessment at the beginning of each year?
– What aspects of reading do you focus on at your grade level in your baseline assessment?
– How do you use the results of your baseline assessment?
L4: Comparing formative with summative assessment

Outcomes
- Understand the purpose of summative assessment
- Understand what is meant by norms and benchmarks
- Understand the similarities and differences between formative and summative assessment.

What is summative assessment?
The purpose of summative assessment is to find out how much children have learned, usually resulting in a mark of some kind.

Summative assessment can be informal or formal. An example of an informal summative assessment would be a weekly spelling test. Examples of formal summative assessment are the CAPS Formal Assessment Tasks. Teachers are expected to record the results of these assessments on SA-SAMS and include them in reports to parents.

Formal assessments are usually measured against some benchmark. A benchmark is a standard that learners are expected to achieve at different grade levels e.g. by the end of Grade 3, CAPS states that learners should be able to “form all lower and upper-case letters in joined script or cursive writing.”

Sometimes achievement is measured against norms. Norms are created by testing a representative sample of learners across the country. The results are shown as percentiles. In the example provided, you can see that the top 10% of Grade 2 learners in the USA (i.e. those at the 90th percentile) can read 142 words correct per minute (wcpm) by the end of Grade 3, 50% of learners (those at the 50th percentile) can reading 89 wcpm and the bottom 10% of learners (those at the 10th percentile) can only read 31 wcpm. Norms enable teachers to get a realistic view of their learners’ performance by comparing it to that of learners across the country. Norms can also be used to construct benchmarks.

We are still in the process of developing reading norms in South Africa.

Both summative and formative assessment are important in monitoring children's learning.

Reflection
- Do you use the benchmarks in CAPS to set goals and assess learning?
- Do you set regular informal tests to assess whether goals have been achieved?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formative assessment</th>
<th>Summative assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Happens during teaching</td>
<td>Happens after teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helps children learn</td>
<td>Shows how much has been learned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers can guide learners</td>
<td>Results in marks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informs teachers immediately what learners are struggling with</td>
<td>Teachers can assess progress against benchmarks or norms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helps teachers to plan what to do next</td>
<td>Helps teachers to plan what to do next</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ORAL READING FLUENCY IN GRADE 2 (Hasbrouk & Tindal 2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentile</th>
<th>Term 1 (wcpm)</th>
<th>Term 2 (wcpm)</th>
<th>Term 3 (wcpm)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>89</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Activity 11.4
Choose the correct multiple-choice answer.

1. The purpose of summative assessment is to:
   - Compare learners with other learners.
   - Measure how much has been learned.
   - Contribute to continuous assessment.
   - By the end of Grade 1, a learner should be able to write his/her own name, short words and sentences.” This is an example of:
   - Measurement
   - Norm
   - Benchmark

2. The purpose of norms is to make it possible for teachers to:
   - Compare their learners’ performance with that of a representative sample of learners across the country.
   - Compare their learners with the best learners across the country.
   - Compare their learners’ performance with that of learners of average ability across the country.
   - Learners in the 75th percentile are those in the top:
     - 30% of learners.
     - 25% of learners.
     - 20% of learners.
   - Learners in the 25th percentile are those in the bottom:
     - 20% of learners.
     - 25% of learners.
     - 30% of learners.
1. Read this article by Jan Chappuis (2005) entitled “Helping students understand assessment.” The article is about formative assessment. Jan Chappuis describes 7 strategies that teachers can use to help children to understand their learning goals better, to understand their own skill level in relation to their goals, and to take responsibility for reaching their goals.

2. Watch this video in which Dylan Wiliam, an expert on assessment, explains formative assessment.

3. Check out this link for an excellent introduction to Assessment for Learning developed by Cambridge Assessment International Education:

   https://cambridge-community.org.uk/professional-development/gswafl/index.html
L7: Review

Choose the correct multiple-choice answer.

1. The purpose of summative assessment is to:
   - To make sure learners pass and progress to the next grade.
   - Because marks are required by the District Office.
   - To find out what learners know and what they are able to do.

2. Why is it important for teachers to be able to distinguish between good, average and weak learners?
   - So that they can focus all their attention on the weak learners.
   - So that they can differentiate teaching and enable all learners to reach their potential.
   - So that they can enable the strong learners to excell.

3. A teacher gives learners a quiz on Friday to assess the vocabulary explicitly taught during the week and takes it in to mark. What kind of assessment is this?
   - Formative
   - Summative
   - Diagnostic

4. A teacher is worried about one of her learners who is still struggling to decode in Grade 3. She decides to assess his phonological awareness and letter-sound knowledge using the EGRA tests. What kind of assessment is this?
   - Summative
   - Formative
   - Diagnostic

5. A Grade 1 teacher is teaching handwriting. She goes around the class, observing learners and giving feedback where necessary. What kind of assessment is this?
   - Diagnostic
   - Formative
   - Summative

6. A Grade 3 teacher has asked her learners to write a story. First, they describe the characteristics of a good story. Then they discuss how they would decide whether a story was good or not. The teacher writes a check-list on the board. The learners then start planning and writing their stories. What is the teacher doing?
   - Helping learners to see where they are now.
   - Helping learners to see how to close the gap.
   - Helping learners to see what they are aiming for.

7. A Grade R teacher does all her assessment informally. She observes the learners and uses an assessment rubric to assess them. She creates a relaxed, supportive atmosphere and makes sure the activities she assesses are enjoyable and fun. Why does the teacher do this?
   - To make assessment appropriate for learners’ age and stage of development.
   - She wants the learners to enjoy themselves and have fun in her classroom.
   - Because learners cannot do written assessment yet.

8. The purpose of summative assessment is to:
   - Measure learning at the end of a period of instruction.
   - Assess prior knowledge before instruction.
   - Provide feedback to learners during instruction.

9. Norms and benchmarks help a teacher to:
   - Decide what mark to give a learner.
   - Interpret the results of assessment.
   - Ensure that assessments are accurate.

10. Why is effective feedback important?
    - It tells learners what they have done wrong.
    - It tells learners what they have done well and what they need to do to improve.
    - It enables learners to compare themselves with other learners.
11.2 Tools for assessment

11.2 Tools for assessment

7 lessons in this unit

L1: Using assessment criteria and rubrics
L2: Observing learners
L3: Asking questions
L4: Peer and self-assessment
L5: Keeping records and using assessment data
L6: Find out more
L7: Review

L1: Using assessment criteria and rubrics

Outcomes
- Understand the purpose of assessment criteria, rubrics and check-lists
- Know what they look like
- Know how they are used

What are assessment criteria?
Assessment criteria make clear what a learner should do to complete an assessment task successfully. They may also specify different levels of achievement.

Assessment criteria are closely linked to learning outcomes. They help teachers to focus on what is important in completing an assessment task successfully and to think about what distinguishes different levels of achievement.

An assessment rubric lays out the criteria so that they can be used to carry out the assessment. Some rubrics are designed to be used by the teacher; others can be shared with learners.
When the teacher shares the assessment criteria with learners, this helps them to visualise what successful learning looks like. It helps them to set goals and check whether they have met the learning outcomes. The teacher can give the learners a check-list to assess their own work and improve it before they hand it in.

The teacher can involve the learners in drawing up the check-list. For example, she could say, What should our diagram of the life-cycle look like? How do we show the order in which the stages happen? How do we show that the life cycle continues? Why do we need a caption? What do we need to check when we are drawing and labelling our diagrams?

When the teacher involves the learners in constructing the check-list, this gives them a sense of ownership and encourages them to take responsibility for their own learning. It helps learners to self-assess and to self-regulate.

Watch video 248. In this video, you will see learners doing a writing activity in which they draw and label a diagram of a life cycle. As they finish, the teacher looks at what they have done and gives individual feedback.

- While you are watching, think about whether the teacher should have provided a check-list.
- Could this have helped the learners to check their own work?

Reflection
- Do you ever use assessment rubrics?
- Do you discuss the criteria for assessment with learners? How do you make this simple and easy to understand?
- Can you think of any disadvantages of using assessment rubrics? Would you use them for all your assessments?

Activity 11.5
True or false?
1. Assessment rubrics can vary from very detailed to simple and accessible.
   - True
   - False.
2. Assessment rubrics always show the marks that should be allocated.
   - True
   - False.
3. When teachers use rubrics, their assessment is more likely to be consistent.
   - True
   - False.
4. When teachers are using rubrics, they are more likely to get distracted by unimportant details in a learner’s performance.
   - True
   - False.
5. When learners use check-lists to check their writing before handing it in, this helps them to become independent.
   - True
   - False.
L2: Observing learners

Outcomes
– Understand why observation is an important assessment tool
– Know how to use observation for assessment
– Understand the advantages and disadvantages of observation.

Observing learners, either by watching or listening to them, is an important method of assessment in the Foundation Phase. Teachers gain insight into how individual children are learning. In Grade R, nearly all assessment is done in this way.

Teachers can record some of their observations on checklists or as anecdotal notes. Some teachers like to write on sticky notes and transfer these to the checklist or notebook later. Not all observations will be recorded. The teacher, however, will be building up a picture in her mind of each learner’s abilities. The more teachers know about learners, the better able they are to support their learning.

Below are some examples of assessment through observation

– Handwriting: While learners are practising, a Grade 1 teacher moves around the classroom observing and assessing posture, pencil grip, letter formation and spacing between letters and words. When the need arises, the teacher intervenes assisting learners to sit correctly, hold their pencils correctly, and form and space letters and words correctly.
– Phonological Awareness: while a Grade R teacher is on
the mat with a group of learners, she notices the children who quickly learn to manipulate sounds and words and those who struggle. She makes a mental note and after the lesson records this in her anecdotal notes.

- **Group Guided Reading:** A Grade 3 teacher chooses one or two learners to assess during each Group Guided Reading lesson. At the end of the lesson, she writes her assessment on a record sheet.

- **Motivation to read:** A Grade 2 teacher makes a point of informally assessing which learners show an interest in books and go to the reading corner regularly and which ones do not. She records this in her anecdotal notes. She uses the information to try to find ways of encouraging reluctant readers to enjoy reading.

The advantage of observation is that it assesses learning in its natural context. It helps teachers to understand where learners are in the moment.

Challenges are that it can be time-consuming and it needs high levels of organisation to record while teaching and to file records.

Watch [video 1G](#)
- Notice how the teacher listens carefully and gives feedback until the learner can read more fluently.
- Is the teacher using formative assessment or summative assessment?

**Reflection**
- How do you use observation to assess your learners?
- Do you listen to your learners reading aloud?
- Do you watch your learners writing?
- How do you record your assessments?

**Activity 11.6**

**True or False?**

1. In Grade R, nearly all assessment is informal and observational.
   - True
   - False
2. Observation is an effective way of doing formative assessment of handwriting.
   - True
   - False
3. Anecdotal notes are informal records of teachers’ observations of learners.
   - True
   - False
4. One of the advantages of observation is that it does not take up much time.
   - True
   - False
5. Group Guided Reading provides a good opportunity to observe individual learners’ reading ability.
   - True
   - False
L3: Asking questions

Outcomes
- Understand the role of questioning in assessment
- Understand the different kinds of questions
- Know how to ask questions in formative and summative assessment.

Why is questioning important?
Asking questions is central to assessment. Good questions help teachers to find out what learners know, what they partially know and what they don't know. This tells teachers where to focus their teaching.

In the literacy classroom, questions are especially important when teachers are assessing comprehension.

Broadly speaking, there are two different kinds of questions:

1. Closed questions
2. Open questions

Closed questions have one right answer or they are yes/no questions. These questions are often looking for the facts. For example:
- What is the title of the story?
- Who is the main character in the story?

Open questions have more than one possible answer. These questions are usually trying to get learners to think more deeply. For example:
- What do you think is going to happen in the story? Why do you think that?
- How do you think Peter felt when the villagers didn’t respond to his cries for help?

Often teachers use a combination of closed and open questions. For example:
- Do you think the villagers were right to ignore Peter's cries for help?
- Why do you think that?

When assessing comprehension, the teacher also needs to include a mixture of literal and inferential questions.
and some evaluative and appreciation questions. The questions should be prepared in advance as part of the teacher's lesson plan.

**Questions serve** a slightly different purpose in formative and summative assessment.

**In formative assessment** questions support learning. Teachers can use the following strategies to deepen learning:
- Ask open-ended questions to get learners to think.
- Give learners time to answer questions. Don't be afraid to wait.
- Use the THINK-PAIR-SHARE strategy. This gives every learner a chance to think and discuss before sharing their ideas with the whole class.
- Use NO HANDS UP. Write learners' names on popsicle sticks and draw names at random. This gives every child a chance to participate.

**In summative assessment**, the teacher needs to think carefully about what has been taught. Questions need to be clear and focused. If the test is written, the teacher should consider what learners can realistically write in the time available.

Watch [video 226](#). In this Shared Reading lesson, the teacher is using questions to assess what learners remember about the life-cycles. She builds on this knowledge in her Shared Reading lesson.

While you are watching, think about these questions:
- How does the teacher use questions to assess what learners remember about the life cycle of a butterfly?
- How does she build on their answers to make sure they understand the life cycle of a frog?

**Reflection**
- When you are preparing a Read-aloud or Shared Reading lesson do you include the questions you will ask?
- Do you use the THINK-PAIR-SHARE strategy?
- Do you make sure that every child in the class gets a chance to answer questions?
Activity 11.6
Choose the correct answer.

READING TEXT FROM THE GRADE 3 DBE WORKBOOK.

- The first question is:
  - Closed
  - Open
- The first part of question 4 is:
  - Open
  - Closed
- The second part of question 4 is:
  - Closed
  - Open
- The first question is:
  - Inferential
  - Literal
- The fourth question is:
  - Inferential
  - Literal
**L4: Peer and self-assessment**

**Outcomes**
- Understand the role of peer and self-assessment
- Know how to teach learners to do peer and self-assessment

**What are peer and self-assessment?**

**Peer assessment** is when learners use assessment criteria in the form of rubrics or check-lists to reflect on each other’s reading and writing and give feedback.

**Self-assessment** is when a learner uses assessment criteria to reflect on their own performance. They identify where improvements need to be made in their reading/writing, make the necessary adjustments and/or set new learning goals.

**The role of the teacher** is to teach learners how to do peer and self-assessment by:
- Making learning goals clear.
- Modelling what success looks like.
- Sharing assessment criteria.
- Providing examples of performances that do and do not meet the criteria.
- Modelling how to assess and give positive, constructive feedback.

**The role of learners** is to:
- Work cooperatively with a peer.
- Assess their peer’s performance using a rubric or check-list.
- Give positive, constructive feedback.
- Reflect on feedback.
- Make necessary adjustments and/or set new learning goals.
When learners assess the work of the peers, it teaches them how to assess their own reading and writing. The same rubrics and check-lists can be used for peer and self-assessment.

Why are peer and self-assessment important? These forms of assessment help children to learn what is expected of them and to become independent learners who don’t depend completely on the teacher to make progress. It is important that this foundation is laid in the early years.

The classroom culture must be supportive:
- Assessment should not be feared – it should be seen as a learning opportunity.
- Errors should also be viewed as learning opportunities.
- Feedback should be valued.
- Learners should be motivated to improve their own reading and writing as well as that of others.

Strategies for supporting peer and self-assessment:
- Traffic robot – give each learner a green, yellow and red circle, which they can use to show you how well they understand.
- Thumbs up – at the end of a lesson ask learners to put thumbs up if they understand, thumbs down if they don’t, and thumbs together if they’re not sure.
- Teach learners appropriate language to use when giving feedback to each other.
Watch video 84. In this video, the teacher is guiding learners how to respond to a peer if he/she decodes a word incorrectly in paired reading. While you are watching, think about these questions:

- How does the teacher guide the learners to give supportive feedback?
- How does the teacher define the purpose of paired reading?
- Is there anything you might do differently if you were the teacher?

**Reflection**
- Do you encourage your learners to do peer or self-assessment?
- How do you teach them to do this?
- Have you ever used the Traffic Robots or Thumbs Up strategies for self-assessment?

**Activity 11.7**

- **True or False?**
  1. In order to do peer and self-assessment successfully, learners need to understand the learning goals.
     - True
     - False
  2. Learners also need to understand the criteria for assessment.
     - True
     - False
  3. Teachers need to model what successful learning looks like.
     - True
     - False
  4. In peer assessment, learners focus on showing their partner where they are going wrong.
     - True
     - False
  5. Doing peer-assessment teaches learners how to assess themselves.
     - True
     - False
L5: Keeping records and using assessment data

Outcomes
- Know what is required in the National Protocol for Assessment
- Understand why good record keeping is important
- Understand what is meant by data driven instruction

How should teachers record assessments?
According to the National Protocol for Assessment a teacher’s file should contain:
- A contents page.
- An annual teaching plan.
- A list of textbooks and other resources used.
- The formal programme of assessment.
- A record sheet containing marks for each formal assessment task; these are captured on SA-SAMS.
- Informal notes of any intervention that is planned by the teacher to assist learners who need additional support.
- All formal assessment tasks (School Based Assessment and practical assessment tasks) and the memos used.
- Marking guidelines and check-lists.

The teacher’s assessment file can be a file, a folder, a box, or any other suitable storage system.

It is the teacher’s responsibility to make sure the file is kept up to date. It should be available on request at all times for moderation and accountability purposes.

Good record-keeping is important because the information is used to track each learner’s progress over their school career. The Learner Profile assists the teacher in the next grade or school to understand the learner’s capabilities and to support the learner appropriately.

The information in the teacher’s assessment file is also used to write report cards which inform parents of their children’s progress.

Teachers in a phase need to meet at least once a term to analyse assessment results and plan how to use these to support learning.

South Africa is moving towards what is called data-driven instruction. This means that teaching is shaped by the results of assessment, which enables schools and teachers to differentiate instruction. More and more of our assessment results will be stored on SA-SAMS and we will be able to analyse and use these to guide teaching.
Watch a video about data-driven instruction

In this You Tube video, you will see a school principal talking about the value of SA-SAMS.

While you are watching, think about the following questions:

- Why is it important to have accurate data?
- Why is it helpful to have a record-keeping system that makes it easy to analyse a learner’s performance.

Reflection

- Do you have an Assessment File? How do you use the information on your Assessment File?
- Do the teachers in the Foundation Phase in your school meet regularly to analyse assessment results and plan how to use them to support learning?
- Do you use SA-SAMS to inform teaching and learning?

Activity 11.8

True or False?

1. Assessment records must be accurate and up-to-date.
   - True
   - False

2. Data driven instruction involves developing a database of information about learners and using that information to improve the quality of learning and teaching.
   - True
   - False

3. South Africa is not yet using data driven instruction.
   - True
   - False

4. Teachers should meet in their phase at least once a term to discuss how they will use assessment results to plan forward.
   - True
   - False

5. Data driven instruction supports differentiated instruction.
   - True
   - False
1. Read the article at this link by Jay McTigue (2005) entitled “Seven practices for effective learning.” The article emphasises the importance of showing criteria and models in advance of teaching, and encouraging self-assessment and goal setting.

2. Read the summary of “What makes great teaching?” based on a review of research (Coe, Aloisi, Higgins & Major 2014). The report emphasises how effective questioning, the use of assessment and providing model responses all support quality teaching.


4. Watch this video which explains how to do THINK-PAIR-SHARE:

5. Watch these two videos in which Dylan Wiliam talks about peer and self-assessment and assessment strategies:

6. Watch this video in which learners and teachers talk about peer and self-assessment:
Choose the correct multiple-choice answer.

1. How does sharing assessment criteria with learners help them?
   - It helps them to answer the questions in the test.
   - It helps them to see what successful learning looks like.
   - It helps them to go step-by-step through the assessment task.

2. How does doing peer assessment help learners to assess themselves?
   - It helps them to be successful.
   - It helps them to internalise the criteria for success.
   - They learn what it feels like to be assessed.

3. What is an assessment rubric?
   - It is a check-list that teachers and learners can use to check whether learners have met the requirements.
   - It specifies the assessment criteria for the learning outcome and describes different levels of achievement for each one.
   - It describes what learners must do in order to achieve the learning outcome.

4. A Grade R teacher observes her learners throughout the day. When she notices something worth recording about a child’s behaviour she notes it on a sticky note. At the end of the day, she writes up her notes in her assessment book.
   - Writing up marks.
   - Writing up anecdotal notes.
   - Using a check-list.

5. Which of the following offers a good opportunity to formatively assess learners’ individual reading ability?
   - Group Guided Reading.
   - Shared Reading.

6. Which of the following is an appreciation question?
   - Do you think the ending of the story was effective? Why/Why not?
   - Why do you think the villagers didn’t respond to Peter’s cries for help?
   - Did you enjoy the story? Why/Why not?

7. Which of the following is an evaluation question?
   - Do you think the ending of the story was effective? Why/Why not?
   - Why do you think the villagers didn’t respond to Peter’s cries for help?
   - Did you enjoy the story? Why/Why not?

8. A Grade 2 teacher asks learners what they think is the Big Idea in the story they have just read together. She asks them to think about the question for 1 minute. Then asks the to turn to their partner an discuss the question for 5 minutes. Finally, the teacher asks some individual learners for their answers. What is this strategy called?
   - Think-pair-share.
   - Paired discussion.
   - Round robin.

9. Which of the following is a good strategy for developing self-assessment?
   - Think-pair-share.
   - Round robin.
   - Traffic robot.

10. Data-driven assessment helps teachers:
    - To use the results of assessment more effectively.
    - By reducing the amount of marking they have to do.
    - To mark learners’ assessment tasks more quickly.
Assessing the Big Five
7 lessons in this unit

L1: Assessing phonological awareness

Outcomes:
- Understand why it is important to assess phonological awareness
- Know when to assess phonological awareness
- Know how to assess phonological awareness

Why is it important to assess phonological awareness?

It is important to assess learners' phonological awareness, and especially their phonemic awareness, in Grade R because this is necessary for children to develop letter-sound knowledge in Grade 1. If children have good phonemic awareness by the end of Grade R, they will learn to decode in Grade 1.
In Home Language, phonological awareness is assessed mainly in Grade R starting at the simplest level (clapping out syllables in spoken words and words in simple sentences) and continuing on. It should also be done as part of baseline assessment in Grade 1, and it may need to be done as part of diagnostic assessment across the grades in the Foundation Phase.

If you are doing formative assessment, you can assess individual learners when they are working in small groups on the mat, or even when you are doing phonological awareness activities with the whole class. Most assessment of phonological awareness is likely to be formative.

If you are doing summative assessment, you will need to assess learners individually. All learners will need to do the same assessment task under the same conditions (e.g. the same time allowance). This will be quite time-consuming so you will need to plan it into your teaching schedule.

Begin by asking learners to clap out the number of syllables in spoken words e.g. kakuhle (3 syllables), tshotsha (2 syllables) and the number of words in simple spoken sentences (e.g. Umama upheka ukutya./Utishala ubhala ebhodini ngetshokhwe.)

Then assess phonemic awareness. In order of difficulty, ask learners to:

- Identify the beginning and end sounds in words (e.g. baleka).
- Blend sounds to make syllables and syllables to make words (e.g. b + a → ba, l + a → la; ba + la → bala)
- Segment words into syllables and words into sounds (e.g. vu–ka, v–u–k–a)
- Replace one sound with another in a word (e.g. bala, vala, lala)

Build up over time from the easier assessment tasks to the more difficult ones.

Remember that phonological and phonemic awareness are about spoken language. Don’t use flash cards to prompt the learners.

Watch the video 116 Part 1 While you are watching, think about these questions:

- What does the teacher observe about Khayone’s response to her question?
- How does she help him to identify the sound at the beginning of his name?
Reflection
– Why is it important to assess learner’s phonological awareness in Grade R and Grade 1?
– Do you think Grade R and Grade 1 teachers are sufficiently aware of the need to do this?

Activity 11.9
True or False?
1. Assessment of phonological awareness is mainly done informally and formatively during lessons.
   - True
   - False
2. Phonological awareness should be assessed as part of baseline assessment at the beginning of Grade 1.
   - True
   - False
3. The Grade 1 teacher should prepare letter and word cards for assessment of phonological awareness.
   - True
   - False
4. Phonemic awareness is necessary in order to learn letter-sound relationships.
   - True
   - False
5. Identifying sounds (phonemic awareness) is easier than identifying syllables.
   - True
   - False
L2: Assessing phonics

Outcomes
- Understand why it is important to assess letter-sound knowledge
- Know when to assess letter-sound knowledge
- Know how to assess letter-sound knowledge
- Know how to assess learners’ ability to segment and blend.

Why is it important to assess letter-sound knowledge?

If learners have poor letter-sound knowledge, they will not be able to decode print. Research shows that one of the main reasons South African children are not learning to read, is poor letter-sound knowledge.

It is important therefore for teachers to do individual, summative assessment of each learner’s letter-sound knowledge. In Grade 1 they should do this once a term. It is also important to do this during baseline assessment in Grade 2. Teachers should also regularly assess the letter-sound knowledge of struggling readers in all grades.

How do you assess letter-sound knowledge?
- Show the learner a chart of letters that have been mixed up and ask them to read across from left to right, saying aloud what sound each letter makes.
- Give the learner one copy to read from and keep one copy in front of you. Let the child sit opposite you.
- Go through the examples with them and show them what they must do.
- Go through the letters with them and time them for one minute.
- They can put their finger under the letters as they move from left to right.
- Put a line through each letter that they get wrong.
- After a minute, count how many letters they read correctly.
- Each time you assess learners, they should read more letters and make fewer mistakes.

EXAMPLE OF A CHART USED FOR ASSESSING A LEARNER’S LETTER-SOUND KNOWLEDGE.
In Grade 1, the chart must be adapted to the letters that have been taught. In Grade 2, all the letters can be included, as well as digraphs.

Teachers can also do pen-and-paper tests, which are less time-consuming:
- Make a list of 11 letters that you want to test. (Use the first as an example.)
- Ask the learners to write the numbers 1 to 10 in their exercise books.
- Tell the learners that you are going to say a sound and they must write the corresponding letter next to the number. (Do an example on the board to show them.)
- Say the 10 sounds one by one, giving learners enough time to write each one down.
- Take the learners’ books in, mark the test, and give it back next day.
- Give feedback to learners and revise any letter-sounds they are still struggling with.

In the first half of Grade 1, you could start with 6 letter-sounds rather than 11.

Watch video 102. In this video, the teacher teaches learners how to segment words into syllables and blend syllables into words. In the process of teaching, she formatively assesses learners and provides feedback.

While you are watching the video, think about these questions:
- How does the teacher formatively assess the learners?
- Could the teacher do the same activity with letter-sounds instead of syllables?

Reflection
- In your school, do Grade 1 learners have their letter-sound knowledge assessed regularly?
- Does the school know which learners are making progress with letter-sounds and which ones are not?
- Does every learner have their letter-sound knowledge assessed in the Grade 2 Baseline Assessment?

Activity 11.10
True or False?
1. If learners have poor letter-sound knowledge, they will struggle to learn to read.
   ○ True
   ○ False
2. Research shows that Foundation Phase learners in South Africa have excellent letter-sound knowledge.
   ○ True
   ○ False
3. Letter-sound knowledge only needs to be assessed formatively in Grade 1.
   ○ True
   ○ False
4. By the end of Grade 1, learners should be assessed on all single letter-sounds.
   ○ True
   ○ False
5. It is also important to assess learners’ ability to segment and blend.
   ○ True
   ○ False
L3: Assessing oral reading fluency (ORF)

Outcomes
- Understand why it is important to assess ORF
- Know how to assess ORF both formatively and summatively
- Know how to measure ORF performance against benchmarks.

What is ORF and why is it important?
ORF is the ability to read quickly, accurately and with expression. It leads to silent, independent reading. ORF is important because fluent readers are able to pay more attention to comprehension. It is, in fact, an indicator of reading comprehension.

ORF can be assessed both formatively and summatively.

Formative assessment takes place during Shared, Group Guided and Paired Reading. The teacher models ORF during Shared Reading. Learners see and hear what fluent reading looks like. In Group Guided Reading learners try to put into practice what they have observed. The teacher reminds them of the goal, provides them with feedback and gives them an opportunity to put this into practice. If she wishes, the teacher can also record her informal assessment of the learner’s ORF on a checklist or as an anecdotal note.

In Paired Reading learners listen to and assess each other. As well as providing feedback, this experience helps learners to become more reflective of their own performance. Paired reading also gives them the practice they need to improve their performance.

To assess a learner’s ORF summatively:
- Give the learner a passage to read (at least 2 to 3 paragraphs long).
- Time the learner reading for a minute.
- Note the number of words read incorrectly, then subtract the number of errors from the total number of words they read in a minute. This will give you a score of words read correctly per minute (wcpm).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Izinyo</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Njolunye usuku uluwazi ubona izinyo.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Kumele ukuba eteni leli zinyo?” uphathuka.</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uluwazi ufuna ukuba njati leli zinyo</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ubuna umfako, wenyeka encowini yalelwazi lwezisaya</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ubhekisisa amazinyo enyoka.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akulona izinyo lenyoka.</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uluwazi ubona umfaneke izihlubesi</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ubhekisisa amazinyo ebhubezi, ebuka leli zinyo</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akulona izinyo lebhubezi, amazinyo ebhubezi eawatheni naleli zinyo.</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EXAMPLE OF AN ASSESSMENT OF A LEARNER’S ORAL READING FLUENCY.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Siyelo Mabuse Term 1</th>
<th>Total words read</th>
<th>Number of errors</th>
<th>Total words read correctly (TWRC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

End of Gr 1 | End of Gr 2 | End of Gr 3
-------------|-------------|----------------|
18 wcpm (maximum 45 wcpm) | 40 wcpm (maximum 56 wcpm) | 45 wcpm (maximum 68 wcpm)

These provide a guide to benchmarks. Note that the figures are averages. The maximum scores show what very good readers in each grade can achieve.
This assessment needs to be done individually (one-on-one). If you assess learners’ ORF in your baseline assessment at the beginning of the year (in Grades 2 and 3) and keep a record of their scores, you can assess them again in Term 3 and see how their reading fluency has improved.

We do not have well-established norms for ORF in African languages that learners’ scores can be measured against. However, in the Zenex Literacy Project the following results were achieved for ORF in isiXhosa:

Watch video 108. While you are watching the video, think about the following questions:
- How does the teacher make the learner feel comfortable during the summative assessment?
- How would you assess this learner’s ORF? Can she read fluently?

Observe the teacher assessing formatively:
- What feedback does she give the learners? How does she guide the learners to read more fluently?

How does one learner take responsibility for improving her own ORF?

Reflection
- Do you assess learners’ oral reading fluency in your school?
- Is it part of your baseline assessment in Grades 2 and 3?
- How well are your learners performing when measured against the Zenex Literacy Project benchmarks?

The rubric the teacher was using in the video:

Activity 11.11
True or False?

1. Fluent reading is fast, accurate reading.
   - True
   - False

2. If learners have good ORF, this indicates that they will also have good reading comprehension.
   - True
   - False

3. Group Guided Reading provides a good opportunity to formatively assess learners’ ORF.
   - True
   - False

4. Summative assessment of ORF needs to be done one-on-one.
   - True
   - False

5. Each summative assessment of ORF takes little more than a minute.
   - True
   - False
L4: Assessing vocabulary

Outcomes
- Understand why it is important to assess learners’ vocabulary knowledge
- Know when to assess learners’ vocabulary knowledge
- Know how to assess learners’ vocabulary knowledge both formatively and summatively.

Why is it important to assess vocabulary and how do you do it?
It is important to assess vocabulary because research shows that there is a strong relationship between vocabulary knowledge and success in school. Good vocabulary knowledge is necessary for reading comprehension.

Vocabulary assessment can be done both formatively and summatively throughout the year in all grades of the Foundation Phase.

Summative assessment can be done at the end of each one or two-week cycle in which a theme has been taught. There are several ways in which you can assess the vocabulary that was taught:

1. Translation tasks: In classes where 2 languages are taught, it makes sense to use translation to assess learners' knowledge. You can do this by asking learners to match words in different ways e.g. matching words in Columns A and B using arrows. Or you can ask learners to label a picture in both languages.

2. Cloze tasks: Learners are given sentences with a key word left out. They must choose from words in a list. They need to understand both the sentence and the words in the list to make the correct choice. Cloze tasks are difficult to design in African languages like isiXhosa because of the way words are structured, but they are easy to do for English.

3. Matching words and pictures: This is a good activity for Grade R and Grade 1.

4. Definition-word matching tasks: Learners are given a definition (a phrase or sentence) and they have to find the appropriate word from a list.
**Formative assessment** can be done in all lessons, for example:
- When new words are introduced in EFAL, the teacher can ask learners what the equivalent word is in their home language.
- When revising new words in Shared Reading, the teacher can ask learners to point to the corresponding objects or actions in the pictures in the Big Book (e.g. ibhokwe, ihashe).
- The teacher can point to different things in the pictures in the Big Book and ask, “Yintoni le?”
- The teacher can play guessing games e.g. I am a large animal. I have thick skin. I have big ears and a long trunk. Who am I?

Watch **video 126**. In this video you will see a teacher using concept checking questions to formatively assess her learners’ vocabulary knowledge.
- Do you think the teacher has already taught the words? In which lesson do you think she did this?
- How do the concept questions help the teacher to assess whether or not the learners understand the meaning of the words?
- How do they help the learners to self-assess?

**Reflection**
- Do you regularly assess your learners’ vocabulary knowledge?
- What strategies do you use for formative and summative assessment of vocabulary knowledge?
- How would you rate your learners’ vocabulary knowledge in Home Language? Good? Average? Poor?

**Activity 11.12**
**True or False?**
1. You can begin doing formative assessment of vocabulary in Grade R.
   - True
   - False
2. Matching words and pictures is a good way of assessing learners’ vocabulary knowledge in Grade 3.
   - True
   - False
3. Once children can read and write, you can use cloze tests to assess vocabulary.
   - True
   - False
4. Cloze tests assess both vocabulary and reading comprehension.
   - True
   - False
5. Concept checking questions require actions but not much thought.
   - True
   - False
L5: Comprehension

Why is it important to assess comprehension and how do you do it?

Comprehension is the ultimate goal of reading instruction. The ability to understand what they read is vital for learners in every subject in the curriculum. It determines whether or not they will succeed at school. But research shows that many South African children are not learning to read with understanding. It is therefore very important that teachers assess learners’ comprehension, monitor their progress and provide support where necessary.

Comprehension can be assessed throughout the Foundation Phase. Teachers should assess whether learners understand what they read and whether they can use reading strategies – can they use their background knowledge, make connections and inferences and respond to what they are reading? In Grade R learners will be assessed in terms of their comprehension of stories read aloud to them by the teacher.

Formative assessment can be done with the whole class during Shared Reading. The teacher can ask before, during and after questions, ensuring that they include inferential as well as literal questions. The teacher can use questions to probe learners’ understanding and make them think about the text. She can also model how to use reading strategies such as inferencing and summarising.

During Group Guided Reading, the teacher can choose one or two learners during each lesson to informally assess using a rubric.

The teacher should also do summative assessments of learners’ reading comprehension. When setting a comprehension test, the teacher should:

- Select a short text at grade level.
- Create some questions – the number of questions will depend on the grade and the time available.
- Make sure to include both literal and inferential questions.
- The teacher could also include an evaluation and/or an appreciation question.

The teacher could use a comprehension task from the DBE Workbook.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For assessing comprehension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Little understanding of text; only able to answer very simple, literal questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Basic understanding of text; can make some predictions and answer literal questions; no inferencing or engaging with the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Good understanding of text; can use prior knowledge to make connections and predict, can make some inferences, is able to respond to text e.g. can answer inferential and appreciation questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Excellent comprehension of text; uses prior knowledge to make connections and predict, makes inferences, engages with and responds to the text e.g. can answer inferential, appreciation and evaluative questions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A RUBRIC FOR INFORMAL ASSESSMENT OF READING STRATEGIES.
Watch **video 149**. In this video, the teacher helps the learners to make sense of an English text. She asks questions that require the learners to make inferences.

While you are watching the video, think about these questions:

- How do the teacher’s questions assess learners’ understanding of the English story?
- How does the teacher probe the learners’ understanding?
- How does the teacher assess learners’ ability to infer?

**Reflection**

- Do you assess your learners’ reading comprehension regularly?
- How would you rate your learners’ reading comprehension?
- Are your learners able to answer inferential questions?

**Activity 11.12**

Read the story and the questions that come after the story.

The first question is a literal question.
- True
- False

Question 2 is an inferential question.
- True
- False

Question 3 is an evaluation question.
- True
- False

Question 3 is an appreciation question.
- True
- False

Question 4 is an inferential question.
- True
- False
L6: Find out more

1. Read Module D2 Assessing different components of reading from the Zenex Foundation’s Expert Reading Teacher resources.

2. The second reading is also from the Zenex Expert Reading Teacher resources. It looks specifically at assessing vocabulary.

3. Watch a video produced by World Vision on how to assess oral reading fluency. You will see a Grade 1 teacher administering an Oral Reading Fluency assessment:

   Mr Mlongotl
   Grade One Teacher

   I'll typically test a few different students each day
Choose the correct multiple choice answer.

1. Phonological awareness should be assessed mainly in:
   - Grade 1.
   - Grade 2.
   - Grade R.

2. Syllable awareness is developed:
   - At the same time as phonemic awareness.
   - After phonemic awareness.
   - Before phonemic awareness.

3. What is the teacher assessing?
   Teacher: How many sounds in vuka? Let's clap them out: v-u-k-a. How many sounds?
   Learner: Four.
   - Phonological awareness.
   - Phonemic awareness.
   - Letter-sounds.

4. What is the teacher assessing?
   Teacher: Say baleka without the first syllable, without ba-.
   Learner: Leka.
   Teacher: Good. Now say baleka without the last syllable, without -ka.
   Learner: Bale.
   - Phonological awareness.
   - Phonemic awareness.
   - Letter-sounds.

5. When a teacher does an individual assessment of letter-sound knowledge, learners read letters aloud from a letter chart.
   How long do they do this for?
   - One minute.
   - Two minutes.
   - Three minutes.

6. Cloze tasks are a good way of assessing:
   - Oral reading fluency.
   - Vocabulary.
   - Reading comprehension.

7. What is the teacher assessing?
   The teacher gives learners a short passage to read. She times the learners reading aloud for one minute and then works out how many words they have read correctly in one minute.
   - Word reading.
   - Vocabulary.
   - Oral reading fluency.

8. Matching words and pictures is a good way of assessing Home Language vocabulary knowledge in:
   - Grade 2.
   - Grade 3.
   - Grade R and Grade 1.

9. Formative assessment of individual learners' ability to use reading strategies can be done during:
   - Shared Reading.
   - Group Guided Reading.
   - Independent Reading.

10. During Shared Reading, the teacher asks before, during and after questions. Before reading she asks predictive questions and ones that draw on learners' background knowledge. During and after reading she asks a lot of inferential questions.
    The teacher is asking questions that formatively assess:
    - Reading comprehension.
    - Ability to use reading strategies.
    - Both a. and b.
What is feedback and why is it important?

Outcomes
- Understand what is meant by feedback
- Know why it is important

What is feedback?
Feedback is information about how we are doing in our efforts to reach a goal. For example, a child is learning to read and their goal is to read a simple text fluently. The child has listened to the teacher read aloud fluently many times so they have some sense of what fluent reading sounds like. However, it is difficult for the learner to gauge how closely their reading approximates the fluent reading of the teacher. The teacher needs to act like a mirror so that the learner can see how to make the next step towards fluent reading.
**Good feedback** helps learners to bridge the gap between where they are now and where they need to be in order to achieve their learning goals. It is not simply giving advice. It is feeding back to the learner what their performance looks or sounds like in relation to criteria for success. It is important that these criteria have been shared.

**For feedback to be effective**, learners have to act on it. However, feedback involves emotions. Learners may resist feedback because it draws attention to inadequacies in their performance. Feedback therefore needs to be presented in a positive way with the emphasis on improvement, and there needs to be a relationship of trust between the teacher and the learners.

Watch **video 1G** The video shows a teacher giving feedback to a learner during Group Guided Reading.

While you are watching, think about these questions:
- How does the teacher help the learner to see and hear how to take the next step in reading fluently?
- What improvements do you see in the learners’ performance?
- How do you think the reader feels when he reads more fluently?

**Reflection**
- What happens if we don’t get feedback on our performance?
- How do you feel when someone gives you feedback?

**Activity 11.13**
True or False?
1. Good feedback propels children forward in their learning.
   - True
   - False
2. Without feedback, it is harder children to achieve their learning goals.
   - True
   - False
3. For feedback to be effective, the teacher and the learners need to share the criteria for success.
   - True
   - False
4. The teacher should not tell the learner where they are going wrong in case it upsets them.
   - True
   - False
5. Feedback is only successful if it results in improvement.
   - True
   - False
L2: What does effective feedback look like?

Outcomes
- Know what effective feedback looks like
- Know what unhelpful feedback looks like

What does effective feedback look like?

For feedback to be effective it should be:
1. Oriented towards learning goals. It should tell learners where they are in relation to their goals and what they need to do next to achieve them.
2. Clear and specific. Learners should be able to act on the feedback. It should tell them what they are getting right and where they need to improve.
3. User-friendly. It should focus on one or two changes that will result in improvement.
4. Timely. It should be given in time for learners to act on it. There should also be time for the learner to reflect on it.
5. Ongoing. Learners need information about how they are improving over time. It helps if learners can record their progress visually.
6. Accurate and consistent. Feedback should be accurate so that it leads to improvement. It should be consistent so that learners do not become confused.

Watch [video 247](#) The video shows a teacher giving feedback to a learner during Group Guided Reading.

While you are watching, think about the following questions:
- Does the teacher make the criteria for success clear?
- How does the teacher give feedback? Is there anything you might change about the way she does this?
- Are the learners able to act on the feedback?

Reflection
- What do you think makes feedback unhelpful and ineffective?
- How does a teacher know if her feedback is effective?
- How would you describe the feedback you give your learners? What elements of it are helpful and effective? Is there anything that you would like to change?
L3: How feedback influences mindsets

Outcomes
- Understand the difference between a fixed and a growth mindset
- Understand how mindsets affect learners' motivation and how they respond to feedback
- Understand how teachers can influence mindsets

What are mindsets

People have different beliefs about what enables you to succeed in learning. Some people believe success depends on your ability and this is something that doesn’t change. These people are described as having a fixed mindset. Other people believe that effort leads to success and that if you work hard, your ability grows. These people are described as having a growth mindset.

Learners with a fixed mindset value getting answers right and looking clever. If they experience failure, they see it as something lacking in themselves. They lose confidence in their ability, opt out of difficult tasks and are reluctant to learn new things.

Learners with a growth mindset value learning and are resilient in the face of failure. They respond well to challenges, believing that with effort, they will succeed.

In practice, learners may not have one mindset or the other, but they may lean in one direction. Their mindsets can also change over time.

Carol Dweck, a psychologist, found that the kind of praise you give learners influences their mindsets. If you praise learners for their ability, you foster a fixed mindset. If, on the other hand, you praise learners for the effort they have made, you foster a growth mindset.

Watch a video: Carol Dweck: The effect of praise on mindsets

In this video, you will see a researcher giving learners some easy puzzles to solve. When they complete a puzzle, some learners are praised for their ability and others are praised for their effort. Then they are given a set of more difficult puzzles.

Learners are then asked whether they want more easy questions or more difficult ones. Those praised for their ability want more easy ones – they want to perform well. Those praised for their effort want more difficult ones – they want a challenge.
While you are watching the video, think about these questions:
– How do the different kinds of praise affect learners’ belief in their abilities (self-efficacy)?
– How do they affect learners’ motivation?

**Reflection**
– What do you think makes feedback unhelpful and ineffective?
– How does a teacher know if her feedback is effective?
– How would you describe the feedback you give your learners? What elements of it are helpful and effective? Is there anything that you would like to change?

**Activity 11.15**
**True or False?**
1. Learners with a fixed mindset view mistakes as showing that they lack ability.
   - True
   - False
2. Learners with a growth mindset view mistakes as opportunities to learn.
   - True
   - False
3. Learners with a fixed mindset are receptive to constructive feedback and act on it.
   - True
   - False
4. If teachers praise learners for effort, this supports the development of a growth mindset.
   - True
   - False
5. If teachers praise learners for being clever, this fosters a fixed mindset.
   - True
   - False
L4: Promoting a growth mindset

Why is it important to promote a growth mindset

By promoting a growth mindset, teachers will be creating an environment in which learners are responsive to feedback.

Teachers can do this by creating a classroom culture where:

- Tasks are challenging but achievable. Success criteria are shared.
- Questioning and feedback are used to support learning.
- Failure and mistakes are seen as opportunities for learning rather than something to be feared.
- Effort and persistence are talked about and valued.
- Children are encouraged to learn from each other using strategies such as peer assessment and think-pair-share.
- Self-assessment is used to help children reflect on their learning. They recognize their strengths and think about different ways to improve their learning.

Watch video 68B in this video, you will see a learner responding to the teacher's feedback. Notice how she takes ownership of the feedback.

While you are watching, think about this question:

- What is it that enables the learner to take ownership of the feedback?
- How does she use the feedback to improve her performance?
- How does the teacher encourage the other children to learn from this?

Reflection

- In what ways is a growth mindset promoted in your classroom?
- Are there any changes you would like to make?

Activity 11.16

True or False?

1. Feedback is only effective if learners respond to it.
   - True
   - False

2. If children believe they can learn from mistakes, they are more likely to be responsive to feedback.
   - True
   - False

3. When children reflect they are become more aware of their own learning.
   - True
   - False

4. Learning to get help from others supports a growth mindset.
   - True
   - False

5. The teacher should always be in control of children’s learning.
   - True
   - False
1. Read this article by Grant Wiggins entitled Seven Keys to Effective Feedback (2012).

2. Read this article by Carol Dweck entitled Caution – Praise can be Dangerous (1999), in which she describes her research on Mindsets.

3. Watch this video in which Carol Dweck talks about developing a growth mindset:
Choose the correct answer.

1. What is feedback?
   - Feedback gives learners words of encouragement e.g. Well done! Good job!
   - Feedback provides a mark and points out learners’ mistakes.
   - Feedback is information that tells learners where they are in relation to their goals.
   
2. Effective feedback:
   - Gives learners as much detail as possible on their performance.
   - Does not tell learners where they are going wrong if this will hurt their feelings.
   - Is clear and specific, highlighting one or two things that will result in improvement.
   
3. Learners with a growth mindset believe that successful learning is a result of:
   - Ability.
   - Effort.
   - Luck.
   
4. Learners with a fixed mindset believe that successful learning is a result of:
   - Ability.
   - Luck.
   - Effort.
   
5. Learners with a growth mindset:
   - Fear failure.
   - Do not give up when things get difficult.
   - Are ready to accept a challenge.
   
6. Learners with a fixed mindset:
   - Fear failure.
   - Do not give up when things get tough.
   - Choose easier tasks which make them look good.
   
7. If a learner has a voice in their head saying, “Oh, you’d better not make a mistake, you’d better look smart, people are judging you,” they have:
   - A growth mindset.
   - Neither of the above.
   - A fixed mindset.
   
8. If a learner has a voice in their head saying, “Here is an opportunity, here’s a mistake I can learn from, I feel smart when I do something difficult,” they have:
   - A fixed mindset.
   - Neither of the above.
   - A growth mindset.
   
9. Feedback that includes praise for effort fosters:
   - A growth mindset.
   - Neither of the above.
   - A fixed mindset.
   
10. Feedback that includes praise for ability fosters:
    - A growth mindset.
    - Neither of the above.
    - A fixed mindset.
Identifying learners at risk

6 lessons in this unit

L1: Identifying learners at risk
L2: Targeting learners' specific needs
L3: Planning an intervention
L4: Keeping records and tracking learners' progress
L5: Find out more
L6: Review

L1: Identifying learners at risk

Outcomes
- Understand why early identification of at-risk learners is important
- Know how to identify learners at risk of falling behind in literacy development

The importance of early identification of reading difficulties

Remediation is the process of identifying learners who are falling behind in reading and writing and helping them to catch up. Early identification is very important. The longer teachers wait, the less likely it is that learners will ever catch up.

The Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA)
- The EGRA is widely used for diagnostic assessment in South Africa.
- It is available in all 11 official languages.
- It assesses phonemic awareness, letter-sound recognition, word reading, oral reading fluency and comprehension.
- It is effective in identifying those who are not at grade level e.g.
  - Learners with poor phonological awareness in Grades R and 1.
  - Learners with poor letter-sound knowledge in Grade 1.
  - Learners with poor oral reading fluency and comprehension in Grades 2 and 3.

THE EARLY GRADE READING ASSESSMENT (EGRA)
How do we identify learners at risk?

- **Baseline assessment**: Teachers should do a baseline assessment at the beginning of the year. This should cover the components of reading and writing that are key at the grade level. Teachers can use the EGRA for this purpose. They should compare the results with any norms or benchmarks that are available.

- **Learner profiles and previous year's reports**: These can give teachers a good idea of which learners need additional support. Once identified, it is helpful to discuss each learner's specific needs with the teacher from the previous grade.

- **Repeaters**: Research suggests that learners who are over-age and repeating the grade perform worst on literacy assessments. It is important to identify their specific problems and provide support for them.

- **Observation**: Teachers should observe learners on a daily basis, especially in Group Guided Reading, and be alert to any who need additional support and/or further diagnostic assessment.

- **Parental input**: It is helpful to talk to a learner's parents/caregivers to get a complete picture of the child's challenges.

**Reflection**

- How do you identify learners at risk in your school?
- How useful do you find Learner Profiles?

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**Activity 11.17**

**True or False?**

1. Research shows that catching up later is more difficult, takes longer and has a negative impact on learners' confidence and interest in reading.
   - True
   - False

2. It is important to assess learners' phonological awareness at the beginning of Grade 1.
   - True
   - False

3. It is important to assess learners' letter-sound knowledge at the beginning of Grade 2.
   - True
   - False

4. It is important to assess learners' oral reading fluency at the beginning of Grade 3.
   - True
   - False

5. There is not much point in talking to parents/caregivers, as they have very little understanding of their children's learning challenges.
   - True
   - False
L2: Targeting learners’ specific needs

**Outcomes**
- Know how to use assessment results to target learners’ specific needs

**Using the results of assessment to target learners’ needs**

Once a learner has been assessed as at risk, the teacher needs to target the child’s specific needs. This requires looking carefully at the test results, comparing them to available norms or benchmarks, talking to the child’s previous teacher and parents/caregivers.

It is important to identify where to start when supporting a learner. For example, imagine a Grade 2 teacher has assessed the following skills in her baseline assessment for reading:

- Letter-sounds (phonics)
- Word recognition
- Oral reading fluency (ORF)
- Comprehension

She has 3 learners who have done badly in all these assessments. They know very few letter-sounds and their word recognition is very weak. As a result, their ORF and comprehension is almost non-existent.

**Where should the teacher start?** For any learner who is struggling with letter-sounds, the teacher should ask: Can the learner hear and distinguish the sounds in a word? To find out, she should assess the learners’ phonological awareness. If this is also weak, she should begin by working on this together with letter-sound knowledge. Once this has begun to improve, she can move on to segmenting and blending, and word recognition. Working with syllable and letter cards would also be valuable at this stage.

It is important not to focus only on the very weakest learners. The teacher needs to make sure that all learners in her class achieve the assessment standards for the grade by the end of the year. In Grade 3, for example, ORF is important. If the teacher has identified learners who are not meeting the benchmarks, she can set targets and work on this with the learners in Group Guided Reading.
Watch **video 10,11,12** In these videos, you will see three Grade 3 learners doing their baseline assessment for ORF.

While you are watching the video, try assessing their ORF using the simple rubric provided.
- Are there any of the learners you think might benefit from support?
- How would you provide this? Would you do this during Group Guided Reading or would you provide short sessions outside of class time? Can you think of any other ways of providing support?

**Reflection**
- Do you have any learners in your class who have fallen behind in reading and writing?
- How do you identify their specific needs?
- How do you target areas of need in your remedial teaching?

**Activity 11.18**
**True or False?**
1. If teachers are not able to target learners' needs, they may pitch an intervention at the wrong level.
   - True
   - False
2. Teachers should use the results of assessments to target learners' needs.
   - True
   - False
3. Reading norms help teachers to see whether learners are performing at grade level.
   - True
   - False
4. The teacher should not do phonological awareness in Grade 3 since this is a Grade R/1 activity.
   - True
   - False
5. Accurately focused remedial teaching will help learners to make progress.
   - True
   - False
Outcomes
– Understand what a literacy intervention is
– Know how to plan and organise a literacy intervention

What is an intervention?

An intervention is a plan of action taken to help learners overcome specific reading problems. It usually lasts for a specific period (e.g. extra lessons for a term). Learners are typically put in small groups, pairs or receive one-on-one coaching, depending on their needs.

The class teacher works with these learners outside of class time or during class time while other learners are busy with their usual activities.

How long should the intervention be?
– Research shows that ‘little and often’ (e.g. 15 minutes x 3 per week) works better than one longer session.

When can you fit it in?
– 15 minutes before/after school each day
– 15 minutes during break time

How should the intervention be carried out?
– One-on-one for learners who really struggle
– In pairs or in small groups

Who can be called on to assist?
– Teacher assistants
– Parents/grandparents
– Unemployed but relatively educated youth

Important tips
• Be consistent, encouraging and patient.
• Build self-sufficiency through explicitly teaching the learners strategies that they can use to overcome an obstacle e.g. word attack skills.
• Build a growth mindset. Make sure that the learners understand the link between effort, perseverance and achieving a goal.
• Build quick-wins: gain the learners’ trust and promote their confidence.
• Build motivation to read, to make an effort and to learn.

(Source: National Framework for the Teaching of Reading in African Languages in the Foundation Phase, page 112)
What should be taught?

– **Teach the targeted areas of greatest need.** If the learner can’t read words in a sentence, maybe they have problems with phonological and phonemic awareness or letter-sound knowledge. If so, go back to basic phonics. However, if the learner knows letter-sounds but has problems with reading words in a sentence, then focus on developing blending and segmenting skills and provide opportunities for the learner to practise word attack strategies.

– **Teach explicitly:** Make the learning goal clear, model the learning, provide plenty of practice and feedback. Assess regularly to monitor learners’ progress.

– **Teach for mastery:** Make sure the learner has acquired the necessary skill before moving on to the next step.

Watch a [video](#) This video was made at the non-profit Stern Center in the USA. You will see Dr Andrea Brown working with 10-year old Becca. You will see Becca doing word reading and ORF assessment tasks.

While you are watching the video, think about these questions:

– Why is Becca assessed frequently?

– Why do teachers need to assess continuously?

– Why is not being able to read well described as an emotional issue?

**Reflection**

– Do you have any learners in your class who have fallen behind in reading and writing?

– How do you identify their specific needs?

– How do you target areas of need in your remedial teaching?

**Activity 11.19**

**True or False?**

1. An intervention is a project to help learners overcome specific reading difficulties.
   - True
   - False

2. Learners are assisted in groups, pairs or one-on-one depending on their needs.
   - True
   - False

3. Research shows that you need at least half-an-hour for each session.
   - True
   - False

4. The sessions should contain lots of variety so that they are interesting and fun.
   - True
   - False

5. The sessions should aim for incidental learning through exposure.
   - True
   - False
**L4: Keeping records and tracking learners’ progress**

**Outcomes**
- Know what an intervention to support a struggling reader looks like
- Know how to plan and implement an intervention

**Why is it important to track a learner’s progress?**

It is important to keep track of a learner’s progress otherwise you have no reliable way of knowing whether your intervention is helping the learner or not.

**Use assessment data:**
- Test the learners before the intervention starts so that you know where they are at (or use the baseline results).
- Monitor progress during the intervention.
- Assess learners after the intervention.

**Feed back information about progress:**
- Show learners what progress they are making.
- Build a growth mindset by praising them for their effort.
- Celebrate successes.

**Build up the Learner Profile:**
- Get information from different sources (e.g. test results, observations, information from parents).
- Note small successes.

**If a learner is not making progress, try to identify what is wrong:**
- Is the intervention targeted at the right level?
- Does the learner need one-on-one attention rather than working in a group?
- Is a longer intervention needed?
- Has something happened at home to upset them?
- Is a referral necessary?

**Reflection**
- Know what an intervention to support a struggling looks like
- Know how to plan and implement an intervention

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**Celebrate successes along the way**

- Praise learners for their effort and perseverance. This builds a growth mindset.
- Even a little gold star on the forehead can boost the confidence of a young learner! It makes success visible.
- Research shows that literacy related rewards reinforce the value of reading and writing. For small successes, this could be a coloured crayon, a pencil sharpener or time in the reading corner – perhaps at the end of the intervention, a picture book with simple text that the learner could read and enjoy.

**Activity 11.20 True or False?**

1. Assessment data tells the teacher whether an intervention is working or not.
   - True
   - False
2. The teacher should not share the data with the learner.
   - True
   - False
3. It is important to record the results of assessment on the Learner Profile.
   - True
   - False
4. Celebrating small successes gives the learner confidence that they are making progress.
   - True
   - False
5. If the learner does not make progress, there is not much the teacher can do about it.
   - True
   - False

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**A teacher celebrating a small success with a learner.**

**A note in the Learner Profile recording a small success.**

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**An example of a note in the Learner Profile**

For the first time, Sipho could name all the letter-sounds quickly and correctly (4th week of intervention). He smiled afterwards and seemed more confident. His concentration seems to have improved and he is starting to participate more in class.
1. This unit has been based closely on the section that deals with supporting struggling learners in the National Framework for the Teaching of Reading in African Languages in the Foundation Phase. We are attaching the Framework – you will find this section on page 108.

2. Read this article by Carolyn Denton from the Children’s Learning Institute at the University of Texas about classroom reading instruction that supports struggling readers.

Classroom Reading Instruction That Supports Struggling Readers: Key Components for Effective Teaching

by Carolyn A. Denton, Children’s Learning Institute, University of Texas Health Science Center Houston

The National Research Council (NRC), a group of experts convened to examine reading research and address the serious national problem of reading failure, concluded in their landmark report Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998) that most reading problems can be prevented by providing effective instruction and intervention in preschool and in the primary grades. The NRC noted that for students to learn to read well they must a) understand how sounds are represented by print and be able to apply this understanding to read and spell words, b) practice reading enough to become fluent readers, c) learn new vocabulary words, and d) learn to self-monitor when reading to make sure what they read makes sense and to correct their own errors. The NRC also found that it was important that teachers provide explicit instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics integrated with many opportunities to read and write meaningful, connected text. (They purposely used the word integrated rather than balanced. It isn’t enough simply to add on components of a fragmented curriculum to balance one with another.) Finally, they noted that effective reading teachers adapt their instruction, making changes designed to meet the needs of different students.

In summary, the evidence to date shows that there are five overriding research-supported characteristics of effective instruction for students with reading difficulties. This article’s focus is on identifying and then exploring in more detail each of these components of powerful instruction:

1. Teach essential skills and strategies.
   ◊ Effective reading teachers teach skills, strategies, and concepts.

2. Provide differentiated instruction based on assessment results and adapt instruction to meet students’ needs.
   ◊ Effective teachers recognize that one size doesn’t fit all and are ready to adapt instruction—both content and methods.

3. Provide explicit and systematic instruction with lots of practice—with and without teacher support and feedback, including cumulative practice over time.
   ◊ Students should not have to infer what they are supposed to learn.

4. Provide opportunities to apply skills and strategies in reading and writing meaningful text with teacher support.
   ◊ Students need to be taught what to do when they get to a “hard word.”

3. Watch this video in which a teacher is working with a learner on his ORF. Notice how they share the learning goal and how the teacher links the feedback to the goal.
Choose the correct multiple choice answer.

- Early identification of reading difficulties is important because:
  - The teacher needs to report this to the SMT as early as possible.
  - This will enable the teacher to provide support before it is too late.
  - The teacher needs to organise her groups at the start of the year.

- How should teachers identify learners at risk of experiencing reading difficulties?
  - By asking the teacher who taught the previous grade.
  - By seeing which learners are not outgoing and confident.
  - By using a combination of different means of assessment.

- Input from parents/caregivers:
  - Ability.
  - Is not very helpful since they know little about literacy development.
  - Takes too much time to obtain and delays the start of the intervention.
  - Can give the teacher a more holistic view of the child if she asks them the right questions.

- Learners with a fixed mindset believe that successful learning is a result of:
  - Shared Reading
  - Group Guided Reading
  - Paired Reading

- Which of these tests can be used for diagnostic assessment?
  - PIRLS
  - ANA
  - EGRA

- Reading norms:
  - Tell the teacher what is normal reading behaviour for a learner.
  - Provide an evidence-based benchmark the teacher can use to interpret a learner’s test results.
  - Enable the teacher to see whether the learner has passed or failed test.

- What is the suggested benchmark for ORF in isiXhosa by the end of Grade 3?
  - 40 wcpm
  - 45 wcpm
  - 50 wcpm

- Research suggests that learners who are over-age for the grade:
  - Do better in tests than learners who are the normal age for the grade.
  - Do the same in tests than learners who are the normal age for the grade.
  - Do worse than learners who are the normal age for the grade.

- If baseline data is inaccurate:
  - The intervention may take longer than expected.
  - The intervention will be more costly.
  - The intervention will not target the right skills.

- How can the teacher build a learner’s confidence and encourage them to persevere with learning to read?
  - Reward small successes, praise the learner for being clever and help them to see that they are making progress.
  - Reward small successes, praise the learner for effort and help them to see that they are making progress.
  - Reward small successes, give the learner lots of gold stars and high fives.
Funda Wande
Reading for Meaning