Welcome and Orientation

BOOKLET 1

DECODING

TEACHING CHILDREN TO READ

10 HOURS
To Complete All 10 Lessons
Welcome and Orientation

Welcome to Funda Wande Reading Academy booklet 1, the Gradual Release Model of Teaching Reading: Five CAPS Reading Activities.

This module covers Five Reading Activities which are used to teach the components of the reading curriculum described in CAPS. These reading activities are:

- Teacher Read Alouds
- Shared Reading
- Group Guided Reading
- Paired Reading
- Independent Reading.

Across these activities, the teacher gradually decreases the amount of scaffolding she provides to learners as they read, and learners increasingly take responsibility to read independently. We call this the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model of Teaching. The model is explained in the first two lessons.

There are 20 lessons in this Module, each of which will take approximately an hour to complete. You should be able to complete the Module in 20 hours.

It is important that you go through the lessons in sequence as each lesson builds on the content from the previous one. We encourage you to be an active reader while engaging with each lesson.

Each lesson has a video(s) that you need to watch by clicking watch now and a self assessment to completed.

Now watch video 31: Teaching reading overview

While you watch, think about:

1. What are the three over-arching components which make up the reading process?
2. What does the teacher focus on to develop learners’ reading skills?

Check your understanding: True or false?

1. Decoding, comprehension and response need to be taught together in order to ensure learners can read with meaning. True or False?
2. A teacher no longer needs to teach phonics in Grade 3. True or False?
3. When teachers read stories and discuss what has been read, they are developing comprehension. True or False?
4. A teacher needs to be a reader herself so that she can be a role model to her learners. True or False?

Reflection

Before checking on the answers to your self-assessment, please reflect on the following:

1. Which aspect of the lesson did you find the most informative?
2. What do you do daily in your class to encourage and motivate learners to read?

Answers
### Overview Of The Lesson and Topics

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In order to gain the most from this course, please ensure that you watch the videos in full and that you complete each self-assessment.

We encourage you to be active readers and viewers throughout the course. The assessments during the course are self-checks and the answers are given at the end of each lesson. At the end of the module there will be a final assessment.

The final assessment is made up of two tests and the details are as follows:
- Test 1 is taken after the completion of Booklet 1 and 2.
- Test 2 after the completion of Booklets 3 and 4.
- Each test lasting 1 hour and is in multiple-choice format.
- An online link for each test will be provided on the scheduled date.
- You will receive your results after clicking the submit button at the end of each the test.
- If you fail the test you will be provided a second chance to take the test and a new date will be scheduled for this.

We hope you enjoy the course and find it beneficial!
Lesson 1: What Is Reading?

Learning to read with understanding is the most important academic skill that any person can learn. A few learners might learn to read at home, but the majority need to be taught how to read. This means that their Foundation Phase teachers are the most important teachers they will ever have! At the start of this course, it is helpful for you to get an overall picture of how children learn to read and how reading is best taught. You will learn more about this in the modules that follow.

What you will learn in this lesson

- Why it is essential that children learn to read in the early grades
- The three key components of reading
- How reading develops over the Foundation Phase

What is reading?

There are three over-arching components involved in reading: decoding, comprehension and response.

1. Decoding includes:
   a) Recognising the individual sounds of a language (phonemes).
   b) Matching the sounds to the letters of the alphabet.
   c) Using knowledge of letter-sound relationships to read words, sentences, and longer texts.
   d) Doing this quickly, accurately and with appropriate intonation (oral reading fluency).
2. **Comprehension includes:**
   a) Knowing the meaning of individual words.
   b) Understanding words in sentences.
   c) Making sense of sentences, paragraphs, and longer texts.
   d) Linking new knowledge with existing knowledge.

3. **Response includes:**
   a) Experiencing success in reading so that you are confident in your abilities as a reader.
   b) Gaining knowledge and insight from what you read.
   c) Being motivated to read – this develops when learners are confident and read many interesting books at the right level. Learners’ reading is supported when they have reading role-models.
   d) Thinking about what you read and responding to it with feeling.

It is important to understand that these three over-arching components (decoding, comprehension, and response) work together. While the first step in learning to read is decoding, the ultimate purpose for reading is to develop understanding.

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**Now watch video 31: Teaching reading overview**

**While you watch, think about:**

1. What are the three over-arching components which make up the reading process?

2. What does the teacher focus on to develop learners’ reading skills?
**Reading development in the Foundation Phase**

Please go through the table below which provides a sense of how the three elements of reading (decoding, comprehension, and response) accumulate over the three years of the Foundation Phase. The table outlines the aspects of reading that the teacher typically focuses on in different grades in the Foundation Phase.

As you read the table, notice that it is the teacher’s responsibility to actively motivate and encourage learners throughout the reading process. It is critical that reading is an enjoyable activity which learners find meaningful and relevant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Reading skills/attitudes</th>
<th>How it is developed</th>
<th>How it contributes to reading</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Phonological awareness (especially phonemic awareness)</td>
<td>By playing with sounds in rhymes, songs and games</td>
<td>Helps learners to decode in Grade 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alphabetic knowledge</td>
<td>Through exposure to print; by learning to form letters in a playful way</td>
<td>Helps learners to decode in Grade 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>By having conversations, listening to stories read aloud, answering questions and talking about texts</td>
<td>Helps learners to read with comprehension in Grades 1, 2 &amp; 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Motivation to read</td>
<td>By making reading enjoyable; teacher as role model</td>
<td>Helps learners to be responsive readers in the FP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Phonological awareness (especially phonemic awareness)</td>
<td>By teaching learners to hear individual sounds</td>
<td>Supports decoding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phonics</td>
<td>By teaching letter-sound relationships (single letters and some digraphs)</td>
<td>Supports decoding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Through exposure to rich language and the teaching of vocabulary during shared reading; word walls, etc.</td>
<td>Supports comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>By asking questions before, during and after reading</td>
<td>Supports comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Motivation to read</td>
<td>By making learners’ experience of reading successful and enjoyable</td>
<td>Encourages responsive reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 &amp; 3</td>
<td>Phonics</td>
<td>By teaching letter-sound relationships (digraphs &amp; trigraphs)</td>
<td>Supports decoding</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading fluency</td>
<td>Repeated practice (paired reading)</td>
<td>Supports decoding &amp; comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Exposure &amp; direct teaching and assessment of vocabulary</td>
<td>Supports comprehension</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Lesson 1: What Is Reading?

Check your understanding: True or False?

Write your answer in your notebook and check your answers at the end of the lesson.

1. Decoding, comprehension and response need to be taught together in order to ensure learners can read with meaning. True or False?

2. A teacher no longer needs to teach phonics in Grade 3. True or False?

3. When teachers read stories and discuss what has been read, they are developing comprehension. True or False?

4. A teacher needs to be a reader herself so that she can be a role model for her learners. True or False?

Reflection

Before checking on the answers to your self-assessment, please reflect on the following:

1. Which aspect of the lesson did you find the most informative?

2. What do you do daily in your class to encourage and motivate learners to read?

Well done, you have completed Lesson 1.
Welcome back.

In this lesson you will explore what is referred to as the Big Five in teaching reading. Unlike speaking, reading does not come naturally. It must be taught. And it must be taught in a systematic, ordered way. Research tells us that we should explicitly teach the following five things (the “Big Five”):

**What you will learn in this lesson**

- The importance of motivation
- The **Big Five** in teaching reading:
  1) Phonemic Awareness
  2) Phonics
  3) Vocabulary
  4) Fluency
  5) Comprehension

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**Watch video 25: Big Ideas in Reading**

While you watch, think about:

How do the Big Five relate to decoding, comprehension and response?

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**Funda Wande**

Big ideas in Reading

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**WATCH NOW**
Reading development across the Foundation Phase

Take a second look at the table in Lesson 1 showing Reading Development across the Foundation Phase. Note what the teacher focuses on in different grades in the Foundation Phase. Remember that when learners start school, they are likely to be in different phases of their reading development. Some learners will have well-developed phonemic awareness and vocabulary, and some will have print awareness and alphabetic knowledge. However, others may not.

Check your understanding: Multiple choice

Watch video 25 again to answer these questions. Write your answer in your notebook and check your answers at the end of the lesson.

1. The teacher asks Zintle to beat the drum in order to support her to:
   a) Hear that there are two beats (syllables) in her name
   b) Hear that her name starts with a “z” sound
   c) Help her see the link between the “z” letter and the sound “z”.

2. When teaching phonics, the focus is on:
   a) Helping the child hear the sound
   b) Helping the child see the link between the letter shape and the letter sound
   c) Helping the child write the letter.

3. Fluency refers to:
   a) Reading speed and intonation
   b) Reading accuracy
   c) Both a) and b).

Reflection
Before checking on the answers to your self-assessment, please reflect on the following:

1. What did you see from the video that you would like to do in your classroom?
2. Which of the Big Five do you need more information on?

Well done, you have completed Lesson 2.
We will go into detail for each of the Big Five in the next lessons, beginning with the decoding component, which includes phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics and fluency.
Lesson 3: What are phonological and phonemic awareness?

Welcome back.

When we learn to read, we build on the knowledge we already have about spoken language. However, we do not usually pay attention to individual sounds in speech. Therefore, we need to help beginning readers to notice the individual sounds in spoken words so that they can match those sounds with letters when they read and write.

What you will learn in this lesson

• Why teaching learners to hear and recognise sounds is so important
• What phonemic awareness includes
• Why teaching phonological awareness (PA) is critical to developing reading skills
• When to do phonological and phonemic awareness exercises with learners

Watch video 42: Phonological awareness & Phonemic awareness

While you watch, think about:

1 What is the difference between phonological and phonemic awareness?
2 When is the most important time to focus on building this awareness?
Lesson 3: What are phonological and phonemic awareness?

Phonological awareness

Phonological awareness is about being aware of the sounds in speech. It is concerned with the sounds we hear in spoken language, not the way we write those words. Phonological awareness is an “umbrella term” because it covers different aspects of awareness of the sound system in a language.

When they have phonological awareness, learners can:

a) **Distinguish individual words** in the stream of speech (e.g. they know that imini yonke is two words, not one continuous word).

b) **Recognise words with similar sounds**, such as rhyming words in English and alliteration in isiXhosa (e.g. The fat cat sat on the mat and USindiswa ususa isele).

c) **Identify syllables in words** (e.g. Kakuhle has three syllables, ka + ku + hle).

d) **Recognise individual sounds in speech** (e.g. they can tell that /t/, /ts/ and /tsh/ are three different sounds).

e) **Recognise different sounds within words and manipulate them** (e.g. they can tell that the first sound in dada is /d/, but in dlala the first sound is /dl/. The sound at the end of both words is /a/).

Phonemic awareness

Phonemic awareness is a specific part of phonological awareness. It is the ability to recognise individual sounds within words and to manipulate these sounds.

A child with phonemic awareness can:

a) **Isolate sounds** or distinguish individual sounds in words (know that the word “cat” is made up from three letter sounds, /c/, /a/ and /t/).

b) **Delete sounds** or remove them from words (know that if you remove the sound /s/ from “cats”, then it becomes “cat”).

c) **Substitute sounds** or replace them with other sounds (if you replace the sound /c/ in “cat” with the sound /b/, it becomes “bat”).

d) **Blend sounds** together with other sounds (if you add the sound /l/ after /c/ in “cap”, it becomes “clap”).
Lesson 3: What are phonological and phonemic awareness?

Why phonemic awareness is important

1 Hearing separate sounds in language is necessary for reading and writing: In languages with an alphabetic writing system, letters represent sounds. It is therefore important for learners to be able to hear separate sounds within words so that they can match up letter symbols and sounds in order to read written words. Developing phonological awareness and phonemic awareness helps them do that. Learners who do not have this awareness struggle to learn to read.

2 Manipulating sounds is key for reading and writing: When they have phonemic awareness, learners can manipulate sounds by blending (putting together sounds) or breaking words up (segmenting) into sounds.

3 It connects auditory and visual language in the brain: Developing learners’ phonological and phonemic awareness helps to form a bridge in the brain that links the auditory perception of language (oral language) with the visual perception of language (written language). These are processed in different parts of the brain, so it is important that these different brain parts get connected in early literacy development.

When do I teach Phonological and Phonemic Awareness?

1 In Grade R and early Grade 1: With good teaching learners should have phonological and phonemic awareness by mid-Grade 1, which means you then only need to spend time on it with the learners who need extra help.

2 Throughout the day: Look for opportunities to focus on sounds and manipulating sounds throughout the day. You can do it whenever you teach a new word, in all learning areas. Provide practice opportunities during mat work, in small groups and individually.

3 With short, fast activities: Phonological awareness activities should be short but fast paced. DO NOT spend 15 minutes on phonological awareness without any other learning objective.

4 In HL and in EFAL: Phonological awareness can transfer across languages. If learners can do it in the HL, they’ll find it easier to do in FAL.
### Check your understanding: True or False?

Write your answer in your notebook and check your answers at the end of the lesson.

1. Phonological awareness is becoming aware of the sound system of a language. **True or False?**

2. Phonemic awareness is part of phonological awareness. **True or False?**

3. Phonological awareness is being able to manipulate individual sounds in a word. **True or False?**

4. Phonological awareness is taught in Grade 3. **True or False?**

5. Phonemic awareness is necessary for reading and writing. **True or False?**

### Reflection

Before checking on the answers to your self-assessment please reflect on the following:

1. Reflect on what you understand by the idea of learners being able to manipulate sounds.

2. Reflect on how important it is in class to help learners know the difference between letters, letter sounds, syllables and words.

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Well done, you have completed Lesson 3.
Lesson 4: Teaching phonological and phonemic awareness

Welcome back.

You have learnt phonological awareness and phonemic awareness. Now we look at how you teach these skills to your learners. Remember that phonemic awareness falls under the broader umbrella term of phonological awareness.

What you will learn in this lesson

- How to teach learners phonological and phonemic awareness
- Using learners’ names to develop sound awareness
- Practising sound manipulation (isolating, deleting, substituting)
- How to assess phonological awareness

Watch video 26: Teaching Phonological and Phonemic awareness

While you watch, think about:

1. What is the difference between phonological and phonemic awareness?
2. How do the teachers use gestures to show learners that they should listen to the sounds in the words?

Big Idea 5
Funda Wande

Phonemic Awareness

WATCH NOW
Helping learners manipulate sounds and syllables

We say that learners can manipulate sounds when they can do the following: identify, delete, and substitute syllables and sounds in words.

Here are some suggestions for how to get learners to do this:

a) Tell the learners we are going to play games with words and sounds and we are going to make silly words that don’t even exist!

b) Tell learners to listen to the word “baleka” and say the word after you: (baleka).

c) Ask them to clap out the syllables in “ba-le-ka” and count how many there are: (three).

d) Ask them to say baleka without the “ba-” (without the first syllable): (-leka).

e) Now say baleka without the “b-” (without the first sound): (-aleka).

f) Ask them to say baleka without the “-ka” (without the last syllable): (bale-).

g) Now say baleka without the “-a” at the end (without the last sound): (balek-).

h) Ask them to say it without “-le-” (without the middle syllable): (ba-ka).

i) Ask them to say baleka without the “ba-” and then to say it with “ma-” instead of “ba-” (substituting the first syllable) (maleka), with “da-” instead of “ba-” (daleka), then with “wa-” instead of “ba-” (waleka).

While the activities above should be done daily with the whole class it is important to make time to regularly check each individual child’s phonological awareness. This can be done orally and quickly with each learner. Look at the checklist below and see how you can assess and capture the results of each child.

You mainly need to do this assessment in Grade R. After that it will probably only be necessary for a few learners who might be struggling.

Provide corrective feedback: if a learner responds incorrectly or doesn’t get it, always model the correct answer. Be patient and kind – do not get angry or impatient, as this will create barriers to learning.
A tool for recording Phonological awareness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Skill Being Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify first sound in name / verb</td>
<td>a. Identifying words within a sentence (phonological awareness).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clap syllables in word</td>
<td>b. Substituting (replacing) the first sound with a new letter sound (phonemic awareness).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delete first syllable in word</td>
<td>c. Isolating a sound within a word (phonemic awareness).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substitute first syllable in word</td>
<td>d. Syllabification – breaking a word into syllables (phonological awareness).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delete last syllable in word</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substitute last syllable in word</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break syllables into separate sounds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blend sounds to make syllables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blend syllables to make words</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Check your understanding: Mix and match

Match the activity in column A with the correct skill it develops in column B. Write your answer in your notebook and check your answers at the end of the lesson.

A/ ACTIVITY

1. Zintle drums out the syllables in her name.
2. The teacher asks which sound is different in the three names: ASANDA, AMANDA and AYANDA.
3. The teacher asks learners to replace first sound in BALA with a L.
4. The teacher says the sentence, “Zola ran to the bus”. She repeats the sentence and then asks the class how many words they heard.

B/ SKILL BEING DEVELOPED

a. Identifying words within a sentence (phonological awareness).
b. Substituting (replacing) the first sound with a new letter sound (phonemic awareness).
c. Isolating a sound within a word (phonemic awareness).
d. Syllabification – breaking a word into syllables (phonological awareness).

Reflection

Before checking on the answers to your self-assessment please reflect on the following:

1. Which aspects (isolating sounds, deleting, replacing, syllabification, rhyming, blending, segmenting) of the lesson on phonological awareness were new to you?
2. How could a Grade R/1 teacher include phonological awareness in their daily classroom practice?

Well done, you have completed Lesson 4.
Welcome back.
We have talked about the importance of learners being able to identify and manipulate sounds. However, in order for learners to read print, they need to know how these sounds are captured in writing. They need to learn which letters correspond to which sounds. **Phonics** is the teaching of letter-sound knowledge, and how to use this to read words.

### What you will learn in this lesson
- What phonics refers to
- Why phonics is important
- Phonics in isiXhosa, Afrikaans and English
- How to teach phonics explicitly and systematically

### Teaching letter-sound relationships
Teachers need to explicitly teach learners the relationship between the letter symbol and the sounds it makes. Let's watch a Grade R teacher teach the symbol for the letter “b”, and then let's watch a Grade 1 teacher teach letter-sound relationships.

### Watch video 95: Letter-sound knowledge
1. How does this grade R teacher help children to link the letter and the sound?
2. Does this activity involve and benefit all the children?
Watch video 96: Introduction to letter sound relationships

While you watch, think about:

1. How does this grade 1 teacher teach letter-sound relationships?
2. Do these activities involve and benefit all the children?

Why is teaching phonics important?

1. **All learners benefit** from explicit phonics teaching, especially those who struggle to read and those with learning difficulties.

2. **It establishes the alphabetic principle**: (the insight that letters in written language represent the sounds of language)

3. **It helps learners decode new words they have not encountered before**. This is very empowering.

3. **It promotes reading and writing success**.

3. **Phonics is essential but not enough**: We need to focus on comprehension and response as well.
How to teach phonics

1. **Teach it explicitly and systematically**, in a planned sequence and pace. Do not leave it to chance that learners will learn all the letter-sounds. Without explicit phonics teaching, many learners will not acquire this knowledge, or will learn it too slowly.

2. **Use the gradual release model.** First model the letter-sound relationship for the learners (I do), then do it with them (we do), then ask individual learners (you do). The sequence is: I do → we do → you do.

3. **Teach it in a dedicated period every day and provide time for practice.** CAPS sets aside 15 minutes a day for phonics, but you can provide additional practice throughout the day, including while the teacher is busy with small reading groups.

4. **Include multi-sensory activities.** Let learners use their bodies, gestures, ears, eyes and voice. Let them work with different kinds of writing equipment. Incorporate songs and movement. For teaching blending, use actions to show how the separate sounds come together.

5. **Work with single sounds as well as syllables.** Make sure that learners can recognise single letter-sounds as well as syllables. It is important for them to be able to distinguish the different letters that make up a syllable.

6. Make sure that learners can distinguish the letter-sounds that they represent **quickly and accurately in any order** that you present them. They should be able to say the sound when you show them the letter and write the letter when you say the sound.

7. **Teach blending.** Make sure that learners can blend sounds. This includes blending single C+V (Consonant + Vowel) syllables, as well as blending syllables together to form words.

8. **Reinforce with writing or word building using letter cards.** Make sure that learners write the letters and words they are learning. Reading and writing reinforce each other. Learners should also build words using letter cards.

9. **Do not neglect meaning.** Make sure that learners know the meanings of the words that they decode. It is more difficult for learners to decode words that they don’t understand.
Check your understanding: True or False?

Write your answer in your notebook and check your answers at the end of the lesson.

1. Phonics refers to the teaching of letter-sound knowledge. **True or False?**
2. Phonological awareness teaches learners to hear and identify sounds whereas phonics helps learners to recognise the written letter and the sound it represents. **True or False?**
3. No matter what language children are learning, they all need to be taught about phonics. **True or False?**

Reflection

Before checking on the answers to your self-assessment please reflect on the following:

1. Do you understand the difference between teaching phonological awareness and phonics?
2. Do you use the gradual release method when teaching phonics (“I do” (teacher models); “We do” (whole class with me) and “You do” (learners)]

Well done, you have completed Lesson 5
Lesson 6: Blending and segmenting

The focus in the previous lessons has been on single letter sounds. This lesson focuses on teaching learners to blend letters to form syllables and syllables to form words.

What you will learn in this lesson
- Blending of letters and syllables
- Games and activities to encourage learners to blend and segment (both syllables and words)

Watch video 145: Blending letters to form syllables

While you watch, think about:
1. What activities do learners do to segment (break apart) syllables or words?
2. What activities do they do to blend (build up)?
3. Why is practice in both blending and segmenting valuable?
Watch video 93: Building words from syllable cards

The teacher is doing activities with the learners to build words from syllables.

While you watch, think about:
1. How does the teacher scaffold and support learners to put syllables together to build words?
2. How does she provide feedback?

7 Big Ideas
Funda Wande

Blending and Segmenting
Building words from syllable cards

WATCH NOW
Lesson 6: Blending and segmenting

Check your understanding: True or False?

Write your answer in your notebook and check your answers at the end of the lesson.

1. The teacher should show children how a syllable can be broken down into separate letters, and how these letters can be blended together again to make the syllable. **True or False?**

2. The teacher should always show the syllables in the same order (e.g. ba, be, bi, bo, bu). **True or False?**

3. The teacher should use phonics terminology (e.g. segmenting, syllables, blending) with the learners. **True or False?**

4. Being able to blend and segment is very important in learning to read. **True or False?**

Reflection

Before checking on the answers to your self-assessment please reflect on the following:

1. Which activities do you do with the whole class and with individuals and small groups to support learners to learn how to segment words and to blend letters and syllables in words?
2. Do you check that your learners can recognise syllables quickly and correctly?

Well done, you have completed Lesson 6
Welcome back.

This lesson is about assessing phonics. Knowledge of letter-sounds should become “finger-tip” knowledge. It is important for the teacher to know which learners are still struggling with matching letters and sounds and to adjust teaching to help those learners.

**What you will learn in this lesson**

- The importance of assessing letter sound knowledge
- Some ideas to assess letter sound knowledge informally
- Assessing letter-sound knowledge formally

**Informal letter-sound assessment**

We start with informal assessment of letter-sound knowledge. Before watching the video take note of these three important points:

**Assess regularly:**
- a) Give learners the sounds and ask them to write them down.
- b) Show them the letters and ask them to say what sounds they stand for.
- c) Notice what kinds of letter-sound errors they make when reading words and sentences.
- d) Notice learners using invented spelling – which sounds are or aren’t being matched correctly to letters.

**Look for speed and accuracy:**
- a) Learners should be able to say letter-sounds quickly and accurately in any order that you present them.
- b) They also need to identify letter-sounds quickly and accurately in words.

**Re-teach and practise often:**
- a) Re-teach the sounds that learners are struggling to recognise.
- b) Give learners plenty of practise using different methods.
Watch video 110: Letter-sound recognition

While you watch, think about:

1. Why is it important for learners to recognise letters rapidly, accurately and in any order?

2. How does the teacher informally assess the learners?

Check your understanding: Multiple choice

In Video 110:

1. Which of the following does the teacher do to informally assess learners' letter-sound knowledge?
   Choose all the correct answers.
   a) She asks learners to write down the letter as she names it.
   b) She randomly points to the letters on the alphabet frieze and gets them to call out the letter-sound.
   c) She gives each learner letter cards and when she calls out the letter-sound they must show her which letter she is sounding out.

2. Why does the teacher point to letters on the alphabet frieze in a random order?
   a) To confuse the learners.
   b) To trick the learners.
   c) To ensure that the learners really know the letters and have not just learnt the order of the alphabet.

Answers
Formal letter-sound assessment

Watch video 112: Formally assessing letter-sounds

While you watch, think about:

1. Why is this formal assessment test timed?
2. What does the teacher do during this assessment?

Important points to note

1. The teacher assesses one child at a time, at her desk.
2. The learner should read from left to right.
3. The chart includes random letters of both lower and upper case. There are single letters and digraphs and trigraphs.
4. The learner is given one minute to complete as many letter-sounds as possible.
5. If the learner does not know a letter he/she should move on to the next letter.
6. The number of correct letter-sounds is recorded. The teacher notes which learners need additional help.
7. While the learner is being assessed, the rest of the class are busy with work that has been set for them.
8. By the end of Grade 1, a learner should be able to correctly sound out approximately 40 letters in one minute.
Lesson 7: Assessing letter-sound knowledge

Check your understanding: True or False?
Write your answer in your notebook and check your answers at the end of the lesson.

1. The teacher should do both formal and informal testing of phonics. True or False?

2. Formal assessment of letter-sound knowledge needs to be done on an individual basis. True or False?

3. Formal letter-sound assessments do not need to be timed. True or False?

4. The teacher must keep a record of each learner’s results in order to assess progress. True or False?

Reflection
Before checking on the answers to your self-assessment please reflect on the following:

1. Think about two things that you have learnt in this lesson about assessment.

2. Think about which resources you could make to enable you to teach and assess letter-sound knowledge regularly in your grade.

Well done, you have completed Lesson 7
Lesson 8: Developing word reading (word recognition)

In this lesson, we look at the importance of sight words and developing rapid word reading. Reading words from flashcards or lists does not require the reader to read for meaning. Therefore, reading individual words must never be the main kind of reading learners do. However, it does give learners the opportunity to practise reading words quickly and accurately.

What you will learn in this lesson
- What is meant by word reading/recognition
- The importance of sight words
- Rapid word recognition
- Ways of improving word reading
- The importance of regular practice in reading.
- Doing word reading within Shared and Group Guided Reading

Word reading
What is word reading and why is it important?

Word recognition (or word reading) is the ability to recognise and read a written word automatically without conscious effort—a result of practice in reading. Automatic and accurate word recognition frees up the mind so the reader can focus on meaning. Being able to recognise words quickly (without painstakingly decoding each syllable) leads to oral reading fluency.

Look at the diagram of the house. Notice the role of word recognition in building the speed and accuracy necessary to read fluently.

Sight words
An important part of learning to read quickly and accurately is the use of sight words.

a) "Sight Words" is used to refer to lists of high frequency words that learners are taught to recognise quickly and accurately.
b) This means they should recognise the word as a whole and not have to decode it letter by letter.
c) Learners must practise reading sight words every day (through flash cards and lists).
d) Sight words are particularly important in English as there are many key words that cannot be easily decoded, such as "the", "their", "although", etc.
e) Sight words are less important in isiXhosa, but it is still helpful for learners to recognise short, high frequency words quickly without reading them syllable by syllable (e.g. ukuba, kokuba, kwakhuko, kwathi, phezulu, ngaphakathi, ngoku, yonke/bonke, wakhe/lakhe).
f) There are many games and activities that the teacher can use to ensure that word recognition is fun and active.
Practice, practice ...

Reading words need not be boring and mechanistic. Teachers can turn it into a fun activity, and learners often find it motivating to see how their word reading skill improves over time.

Here are some examples of games that practise word reading.

1. **Swop Shop**: This is a teacher-led activity. You need two identical sets of sight word cards (one card per learner) and a list of the words for the teacher. Give each learner a card. The teacher reads out a word. Learners must quickly read their words and learners who have the word the teacher has read out must quickly swap places.

2. **Bingo**: Another teacher-led activity, the teacher needs a list of all the words. Make bingo cards (one per learner) with sight words on them – put a different set of words on each card. For Grade 1 there could be just six words on a card and in higher grades you could have nine or more words. Each learner gets a card and some counters (e.g. dried beans). The teacher calls out a word and the learners look at their cards to see if the word appears on their bingo card. If it does, they put a counter on the word. The first player who has a counter on every word on their card shouts “Bingo” and wins the game.
1 **Memory:** Choose five to ten high-frequency words. Make two cards for each word. Players play in pairs. They put the cards face down on the table. They take turns to turn over two cards and read the words. If the cards match, they can keep them. If they do not match, they turn the cards over again in the same place. The other player can remember where each word was to increase their chances of getting a matching pair. The winner is the one with the most cards.

2 **Go Fish:** Make two cards for each of 20 high-frequency words. Two to four players can play the game. Deal out six cards to each player and put the rest face down in a stack on the table. Players hold their cards so that the others can’t see them. The aim is to make pairs of words. Player A asks Player B if they have X word, trying to find the pair for one of their own cards. If Player B has the card, they give it to Player A. If not, B tells A to “Go Fish” and Player A must take the top card from the stack on the table. When a player has two of the same cards, they put them down on the table. The winner is the first one to have no cards left in their hand.

3 **Snap:** Make two sets of cards for 30 high-frequency words. This is a game for two players. Shuffle the cards and deal them out to the players. At the same time players turn over the top card in their pile and read the word aloud. Whoever sees two identical words says Snap! They keep the two cards. The winner is the one with the most cards.

4 **Board games:** Use a board with words of pictures on it. Each player needs a counter. Throw a dice, move the corresponding number of places and read the word. For games with pictures, if they land on a picture they have to spell or write the word.

Use Wordworks games for this or make your own. Download the caterpillar game, the snake game or the snail game from http://www.wordworks.org.za/games-2/ (you can also watch videos of learners playing the games).
Check your understanding: Multiple choice

1 Word reading refers to:
   a) Blending sounds into syllables.
   b) Recognising and reading words quickly and accurately.
   c) Understanding the meaning of vocabulary.

2 Being able to read words rapidly is important because:
   a) It builds phonemic awareness.
   b) It improves oral reading fluency.
   c) It develops vocabulary knowledge.

3 A high frequency word is:
   a) A word that is hard to understand.
   b) A word that is used often in texts.
   c) A word that cannot be decoded.

4 Sight words are:
   a) Words that do not occur in isiXhosa.
   b) Words that we learn to recognise without sounding out every phoneme.
   c) Words that we decode using letter-sound knowledge.

Reflection
Before checking on the answers to your self-assessment please reflect on the following:

1 How often do you use games in your classroom to reinforce skills?

2 Do you send home sight words for learners to practice reading them at home?

Well done, you have completed Lesson 8
Lesson 9: Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)

Oral reading fluency (ORF) refers to the ability to read a text fast and accurately, with appropriate intonation and feeling. This kind of reading sounds natural, like spoken language.

What you will learn in this lesson

- The three components of oral reading fluency (ORF)
- The key link between understanding and fluency
- How fluency can be taught and developed

The three components of ORF:

1. **Accuracy**: Learners must decode and recognise words quickly and correctly.

2. **Speed**: Learners must read at a good pace (appropriate to age/grade level) not slowly, word-for-word. Decoding words must become automatic in order to free up memory for comprehension.

3. **Prosody (intonation and expression)**: Learners must read with feeling and in a natural way, chunking up the text in suitable ways, pausing in appropriate places.

Understanding is key to fluency. ORF activities should encourage accurate, fluent reading that sounds natural, like spoken language. Readers can only “sound natural” if they understand what they are reading. Learners who “bark at print” (i.e. decode fast without understanding what is read) do not pay attention to accuracy and intonation.
Now watch videos 106, 113 & 115: What is ORF Parts 1, 2 & 3, in succession:

While you watch, think about these questions:

1. How did the first learner read?
2. What did you notice about the way the learner read?
3. How did the second learner read and what did you notice about how she read?
4. How did the teacher assist the learner in developing her fluency skills? What did she repeatedly ask her to do?
5. What does the teacher do after the whole group has finished reading? Why is this important?
6. What strategies is the teacher sharing with her colleagues that they can use if a learner is battling with their reading?
Lesson 9: Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)

**Decoding**
Oral Reading Fluency

**What is ORF?**
Part 2: Why is Oral Reading Fluency important?

**113**

**What is ORF?**
PART 3: What happens when reading is too slow?

**115**
**Teaching ORF**

1. Model fluent reading during Read-alouds and Shared Reading.

2. Explicitly draw learners' attention to what it sounds like to read with Speed, accuracy, and intonation.

3. Explicitly draw learners' attention to how they should respond to punctuation by pausing (commas), raising voice (question marks), adding volume (bold or exclamation marks) or stopping briefly at full stops.

4. Encourage learners to read quickly and not to exaggerate syllables.

5. Ask learners to read sections again (more quickly and with intonation).

6. Encourage learners to read as they would say words in natural talk.

7. Praise and encourage learners generously.

**What teachers can do to promote each aspect of ORF**

1. **To promote accuracy, you can say:**
   a) Did that make sense?
   b) Slow down.
   c) Look at the words carefully.
   d) Read that sentence again.

2. **To promote speed you can say:**
   a) Slow down when the text is unfamiliar.
   b) Speed up when the text is easier.
   c) Read that sentence again faster.

3. **To promote prosody and expression, you can say:**
   a) Try reading three or more words together without pausing.
   b) Take a breath and try to read the comma or punctuation at the end of the sentence without stopping for another breath.
   c) Read as if you are talking to someone.
   d) What does this punctuation mark tell you to do?
Lesson 9: Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)

Check your understanding: Select the correct word
re-read – syllables – individual – prosody – accuracy

1. The three components of oral reading fluency are speed, prosody and ____________ .

2. Oral reading fluency needs to be checked on an ____________ basis.

3. The teacher can ask the reader to ____________ the sentence (or phrase) in order to encourage them to read more fluently.

4. The teacher should encourage learners not over to exaggerate ____________ when reading.

5. When reminding learners to adjust their reading according to the punctuation the teacher is supporting ____________ .

Reflection
Before checking on the answers to your self-assessment please reflect on the following:

1. Do I spend enough time in class explicitly developing oral reading fluency?
2. Do I regularly read an interesting text aloud to the learners where I model fluent reading?

Well done, you have completed Lesson 9
Lesson 10: Assessing oral reading fluency

Welcome back.

We have talked about the importance of learners being able to identify and manipulate sounds. Fluency is measured in terms of how many words are read correctly in a minute (word count per minute, WCPM). Learners who cannot read fluently read slowly, word for word, with lots of pauses and inaccuracies. They often nod on each syllable or word.

As they get older learners read with increasing speed. There are usually big gains in ORF between Grade 1 and Grade 2, and after that the gains proceed more slowly and steadily.

What you will learn in this lesson

• How oral reading fluency is measured
• When to do ORF assessments
• How to do ORF assessments
• How to keep records of ORF results

How is ORF measured?

Formal assessments of ORF usually take place at the beginning of the year and ideally again about half-way through the year. Teachers need to note the ORF result of each learner to have a baseline to assess progress.
What tool is used to measure ORF?

Below is an example of an ORF measurement tool. The teacher has taken a short text from a graded reader from the previous year and has retyped the text into a table with a word count at the end of each sentence. This facilitates a quick word count at the end of each assessment. The teacher makes a “master copy” which she places on her desk for each learner to read. She then makes a copy of the text for each learner. She uses this copy to mark and keep records of the assessment.

The teacher calls a learner to her desk and asks them to read the text from the master copy for one minute. While the learner is reading, the teacher marks which words they have misread or left out. At the end of a minute the learner stops reading and the teacher can quickly count how many words the learner read correctly.
Look at the example below:

### Oral reading fluency and Comprehension

- Ask the learner to read the story aloud.
- Underline any words the learner reads incorrectly.
- Stop after 1 minute and note the number of words read correctly. This is the score for oral reading fluency.
- Then ask the comprehension questions. Only ask the questions up to where the learner stopped reading.
- Tick if the learner answers correctly.

### Ukufunda ngotyibiliko nengqiqo

- Yalela umfundi afunde ibali ngokukhwaza.
- Krwela umgca phantsi kwegama ngalinye angalifundanga kakhle umfundi.
- Yima emva komzuzu ubale amagama umfundi awafunde ngokuchanekileyo.
- Buza imibuzo yengqiqo. Imibuzo mayiphelele apha umfundi afunde waphhelela khona.
- Korekisha ukuba umfundi uphendule umbuzo ngokuchanekileyo.

#### Oral reading fluency

1. Ask the learner to read the story aloud.
2. Underline any words the learner reads incorrectly.
3. Stop after 1 minute and note the number of words read correctly. This is the score for oral reading fluency.
4. Then ask the comprehension questions. Only ask the questions up to where the learner stopped reading.
5. Tick if the learner answers correctly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UJabu nenja yakhe</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UJabu wayenenja encinane.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngenye imini uJabu nenja yakhe</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bayakudlala kwibala elalisemva kwendlu.</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injana yabona umvundla yazama ukuwuleqa.</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yalahleka inja.</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wabangayibiza uJabu kodwa ayizange ibuye.</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UJabu wabonakala eneenyembezi emehlweni akhe waza wagoduka.</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kodwa kwathi phambi kwangorhatya yabuya injana.</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yayidiniwe, ilambile. Wavuya kakhulu uJabu akumbona umhlobo wakhe.</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UJabu wa yinika ukuty aynamzini inja.</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uJabu nenja yakhe baya kulala.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beka uphawu ( ) ukuba umsebenzi khangwe qqitywe ngenxa yokuba umfundi engakhange akwazi ukufunda.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inani lamagama afundwe ngomzuzu omnye.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inani lamagama afundwe ngokuphosekileyo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inani lamagama ewonke nafundwe ngokuchanekileyo</td>
<td>/56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukuba umsebenzi qqitywe ngaphantsi komzuzu omnye, bhala inani lemizuzwana.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once the teacher has assessed all the learners she will record the results in a file or record book. These results will be useful in deciding how to put learners in ability groups for Group Guided Reading (GGR).
Lesson 10: Assessing oral reading fluency

Check your understanding: True or False?

Write your answer in your notebook and check your answers at the end of the lesson.

1 Each learner’s ORF is assessed at the beginning of the year and again towards the middle of the year. True or False?

2 The ORF assessment does not need to be timed. True or False?

3 The ORF assessments only assess the speed of reading. True or False?

4 The ORF results are useful for establishing ability groups for Group Guided Reading. True or False?

Reflection

Before checking on the answers to your self-assessment please reflect on the following:

1 What preparation do I need to do to ensure that I can assess each learner’s ORF at least once a year?

2 How will it benefit my teaching to keep records of the ORF results?

Well done, you have completed Lesson 10! This is the end of Part 1 of the Module, on Decoding. In Part 2, we will look at Comprehension.
Lesson Quiz Answers

Lesson 1
1. True. The teacher needs to consciously teach all three aspects of reading.
2. False. A teacher will continue teaching more complex phonics in Grade 3, as well as keep reinforcing the simpler phonics learnt in the previous grades. (And of course, if there are learners who do not have any phonic knowledge in Grade 3, a teacher will start at the beginning of simple letter sounds with those learners.)
3. True. Reading stories and discussing the meaning is one of the most effective ways to develop understanding and comprehension.

Lesson 2
1. a) The teacher wants Zintle to hear that her name has two syllables (two beats).
2. b) Phonics is specifically about teaching learners to know which letter makes which sound.
3. c) Fluency is about reading speed, reading accuracy, as well as reading intonation (expression).

Lesson 3
a) True. Phonological awareness is becoming aware of the sound system of a language.
b) True. Phonemic awareness is part of phonological awareness.
c) False. Phonemic awareness is about manipulating or playing with the sounds in words.
d) False. Phonological awareness is a focus in Grades R and 1. By Grade 3 it should only be necessary for remedial help.
e) True. We need to be able to distinguish the sounds in words in order to write the words and read them.

Lesson 4
1. d) Zintle’s name is segmented into syllables (syllabification).
2. c) Isolating a sound within a word (aSanda, aYanda ...).
3. b) Substituting (or replacing) (Bala into Lala).
4. a) Identifying words within a sentence.

Lesson 5
1. True. Phonics does refer to the teaching of letter-sounds.
2. True. Phonics teaches learners to see the printed letter/syllable/word whereas phonological awareness helps learners hear the sounds.
3. True. Even if different languages have different phonic systems they need to be taught purposefully and in a deliberate and organised way.

Lesson 6
1. True. The teacher can use the same pair of letters to show learners what happens when she brings the letters together to make a syllable and when she separates a syllable into letters.
2. False. If the teacher always uses the same order for letters and syllables, the learners will learn the order off-by-heart. To ensure that they recognise the sounds of letters and syllables, the teacher should mix up the order in which she shows them.
3. **True.** The teacher needs to teach the learners the correct terms (the metalanguage) so that learners have an awareness of what they are doing in order to make sense of printed words.

4. **True.** Being able to blend and segment is a critically important aspect of learning to read.

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**Lesson 7**

1. **Both b) and c).** The teacher uses the alphabet frieze and individual letter cards to check understanding.
2. **c)** The teacher points to letters randomly to ensure that learners are not just memorising the order of letters.

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**Lesson 8**

1. **b)** Word reading refers to learning to recognise and read words quickly and accurately.
2. **b)** Rapid word reading improves oral reading fluency.
3. **b)** A high frequency word is a word that is used often in texts. (Many high frequency words in English are also sight words.)
4. **b)** Sight Words are words that can be recognised without sounding out every phoneme.

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**Lesson 9**

1. **b)** Word reading refers to learning to recognise and read words quickly and accurately.
2. **b)** Rapid word reading improves oral reading fluency.
3. **b)** A high frequency word is a word that is used often in texts. (Many high frequency words in English are also sight words.)
4. **b)** Sight Words are words that can be recognised without sounding out every phoneme.

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**Lesson 10**

1. **True.** It is ideal to assess ORF at the beginning of the year to obtain a baseline and then around mid-year to assess progress and identify problem areas.
2. **False.** The ORF is a time-based assessment. The teacher wants to find out if the learner can read quickly and accurately within a given time.
3. **False.** The ORF assesses speed and accuracy.
4. **True.** Assessing learners’ ORF provides an accurate idea of how well they read. The results can then be used to place learners of similar abilities in the same group for Group Guided Reading.
Lesson 10: Assessing oral reading fluency

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