



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

GUIDELINES FOR THE GRADES 1 – 3 SUBMISSIONS

Introduction

Language and Literacy in South Africa

1. The Context

The Language in Education Policy (LiEP) of 1997 makes provision for the promotion of multilingualism and supports the development and respect of all the official languages in South Africa. The Policy is explicit about the:

- Protection, promotion and extension of language rights as means of communication;
- Promotion of multilingualism and an additive approach to language in education;
- Promotion of the use of learners' home language while promoting the provision of access to other languages;
- Redressing the imbalances created by neglect of historically disadvantaged languages in the schools.

The LiEP therefore provides the necessary guidance when developing instructional packages for the different languages. The common practice has however missed this, as there has been an inclination to overlook differences between English (a Germanic language) and African languages (Bantu languages), resulting in misapplying the reading literacy logic of English into reading literacy packages of African languages. This has continued to disadvantage these historically disadvantaged languages.

The Department has therefore sharpened its focus when it comes to promoting parity of languages, by adopting a holistic and comprehensive approach to developing reading literacy packages, which recognize the diversity of languages and the different typologies they predict for reading literacy development.

2. African Languages

In order to develop successful language literacy programmes that are both culturally and linguistically sensitive, it is important to recognise the differences and similarities between the structures of the African languages of Bantu origin, and those of the Germanic languages of South Africa (English and Afrikaans). It is also important to promote linguistic intersections in order to develop cross literacy enrichment and to promote a multilingual perspective.

- African languages have transparent orthographies, with consistent one-to-one relationships between phonemes and graphemes. This makes it feasible to emphasize fluency, comprehension and context over individual word decoding early on in the reading process.
- African languages are agglutinative and morphologically rich, meaning words may be comprised of many morphemes, using affixes to denote grammatical features and aspects of meaning, such as tense, aspect, mood and negation. For this reason, explicit attention should be given to the teaching of morphological awareness and morphology in any African language literacy programme.
- Many African cultures have rich oral traditions, where stories, history, and knowledge are passed down verbally. This oral tradition, which emphasizes comprehension, fluency and the joy of storytelling, should be carefully considered and integrated into an African language reading programme.

3. English

- Whilst African language and English literacies are all based on the Roman alphabet, English has an opaque orthography, with complex phoneme / grapheme relationships.
- This means that any English literacy programme should have a greater focus on synthetic phonics and word decoding, as it takes longer for children to master the reading and writing of the 44 phonemes and 240 graphemes of English.

4. Phonics as part of African Language Literacy and Reading Programmes

- Phonological awareness and phonics should be purposefully integrated into the early grade language and literacy instructional programmes.
- In all languages, whilst the language-specific phonemes and graphemes should be explicitly taught, the duration of programmes should acknowledge the transparent orthography of African languages, which allows for fast and efficient mastery of word decoding.

5. Reading Benchmarks

All Reading Programmes must be designed to allow learners to reach the National Reading Benchmarks as follows:

Language	By the end of Grade 1, all learners should be able to read / sound	By the end of Grade 2 all learners should be able to read at least	By the end of Grade 3 all learners should be able to read at least
isiNdebele HL	40 cspm	20 cwpm	35 cwpm
isiXhosa HL	40 cspm	20 cwpm	35 cwpm
isiZulu HL	40 cspm	20 cwpm	35 cwpm
Siswati HL	40 cspm	20 cwpm	35 cwpm
Sepedi HL	40 cspm	40 cwpm	60 cwpm
Sesotho HL	40 cspm	40 cwpm	60 cwpm
Setswana HL	40 cspm	40 cwpm	60 cwpm
Tshivenda HL	40 cspm	35 cwpm	55 cwpm
Xitsonga HL	40 cspm	30 cwpm	40 cwpm
Afrikaans HL	40 cspm	50 cwpm	80 cwpm
English HL*	N/A	124 cwpm	139 cwpm
English FAL	N/A	30 cwpm	50 cwpm

**Note, the English HL benchmarks are taken from the 2017 Hasbrouck & Tindal Oral Reading Fluency Data and represent the 75th percentile after a year of reading instruction.*

6. Components of the Package

In order to promote the values of LiEP, all components should carefully follow orthographic rules and correct terminology for each language.

a. Teacher's Guide

- The teacher's guide should present a clear overview of the programme approach and components.
- Teacher's Guides must closely align to official documents.
- Language themes should integrate concepts and vocabulary from:
 - Mathematics
 - Life Skills
 - Coding and Robotics
- The Teacher's Guide should map out content and skills per grade and term.
- There should be clear alignment between the Teacher's Guide and the rest of the components of the package.
- The Teacher's Guide should also include assessment guidelines and may include sample assessment tasks.

b. Core Reader

- The Core Reader must be provided per learner.
- The Core Reader should progressively develop learners' knowledge and skills in all reading components.
- The purpose of these core readers is to ensure that all learners are exposed to a reading programme that systematically develops phoneme/grapheme recognition, blending and segmenting skills, decoding skills, morphological awareness and knowledge, fluency skills and comprehension skills.

c. Anthology

- An anthology of 20 texts per grade should be designed to be read-aloud by teachers to learners.
- These books are suitable for use in Home Language and FAL.
- Anthologies should include a balance of fiction and non-fiction texts of different, but age appropriate genres, for example: myths, legends, fairy tales, fables, tall tales, simple articles, and information stories.
- Anthologies should include but not be limited to stories that reflect cultural and traditional nuances, idiomatic and figurative language, and character names that are language specific.

- Information stories should cover topical issues and should be seen to promote human rights, inclusivity, social cohesion, ethics, etc. as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

d. Graded / Levelled Readers

- A series of 40 graded / levelled readers should be available per grade that appeal to learners' interests, include many high-frequency words and some contextual clues to help learners infer the meaning of unknown words. Levelled readers may include repetitive text.

e. Big Books

- A series of 8 big books per grade allows the teacher to demonstrate and/or teach certain text features in context, including:
 - Print organisation from top to bottom and left to right
 - Genre features such as headings, sub-headings, illustrations, captions, tables, layout, etc.
 - Punctuation marks
 - Word attack skills such as blending and segmenting
 - Word attack skills for long words in agglutinative languages, such as syllabification
 - Comprehension skills such as visualisation, inference, evaluation and making connections, etc.

f. Classroom Resources: Phoneme / Grapheme Frieze

- The frieze must consist of loose cards that may be used in different ways.
- Cards should illustrate the language specific phonemes / graphemes to be taught per grade. This means that most or all single letter graphemes will be covered in Grade 1, whilst the frieze will include more complex graphemes in Grade 2 and possible Grade 3, depending of the duration of the phonics programme.
- Grapheme cards may also include a word that utilizes the grapheme, together with a related picture illustration.

g. Classroom Resources: Flashcards

- Flashcards must be language and grade specific.
- They may be used as a phonics resource, to illustrate the grapheme and words that include the grapheme.

- They may be used as a vocabulary resource, to share new theme-based vocabulary, and possibly illustrations of the words or phrases.
- They may be used for morphological development, to illustrate morpheme chains and for use in morphological games.

h. Posters

- A set of 8 posters per grade to be used as a Listening & Speaking resource to support teaching and learning in HL and FAL.

i. Handwriting Charts

- Handwriting charts should clearly indicate the starting points and directions for correct letter formation in print and linked script, usually cursive.
- Charts should include all letters of the alphabet in both lower and uppercase.
- Charts should be clearly legible and durable.

7. Mathematics

a. The Context

- The teaching of Mathematics in the FP is guided by:
 - The principles of the NCS
 - The South African Framework for teaching and learning in Mathematics
 - The ATPs
- This Framework for teaching and learning in Mathematics focuses on:
 - Conceptual understanding
 - Procedural fluency
 - Strategic competence
 - Reasoning
 - Learning centred classroom

b. Mathematics and African Languages

- The Language in Education Policy recognises the value of using learners' home languages as languages of learning and teaching (LoLT), particularly in the early grades.
- The introduction of Mother Tongue Based Bilingual Education (MTBBE) aims to facilitate conceptual understanding by allowing learners to grasp mathematical concepts in their familiar language before transitioning to the chosen LoLT.

c. Components of the Mathematics Package

In order to promote the values of LiEP, all components should carefully follow orthographic rules and correct terminology for each language.

d. Teacher's Guide

- The Teacher's Guide should present a clear overview of the programme approach and components.
- The Mathematics Teacher's Guide must closely align to official documents.
- The Teacher Guide should map out content and skills per grade and term.
- There should be clear alignment between the Teacher's Guide and the Learner Book.
- The Teacher's Guide should also include assessment guidelines and may include sample assessment tasks.

e. Mathematics Learner Book

- This Learner Book is used to illustrate mathematical concepts and representational problems visually.
- Once the teacher has demonstrated a worked example of a problem for learners, additional problems may be presented in the Learner Book.

8. Life Skills

Components of the Life Skills Package

a. Teacher's Guide

- The teacher's guide should present a clear overview of the programme approach and components.
- The Life Skills Teacher's Guide must closely align to official documents.
- The Teacher Guide should map out content and skills per grade and term.
- There should be clear alignment between the Teacher's Guide and the Learner Book.
- The Teacher's Guide should also include assessment guidelines and may include sample assessment tasks.

b. Life Skills Learner Book

- One learner book per grade that clearly aligns to the Teacher's Guide.
- Learner Books should include all required activities.

9. Coding and Robotics

As Coding and Robotics is a newly introduced subject, it is essential to provide a comprehensive teacher guide that equips teachers with the necessary understanding of the aims, specific skills, and approaches required for effective teaching and learning in this field, as outlined in the Coding and Robotics Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (C&R CAPS).

Components of the Coding & Robotics Package

Teacher's Guide

- The Teacher's Guide should present a clear overview of the programme approach and components.
- The Teacher's Guide must be closely aligned to the C&R CAPS.
- The Teacher's Guide should map out concepts, content and skills per grade and term.
- There should be clear alignment between the Teacher's Guide and the Learner Book.
- The Teacher's Guide should also include assessment guidelines and may include sample assessment tasks.

Coding & Robotics Learner Book

The Learner Book must:

- cover all the content/concepts and skills as set out in the Coding and Robotics (C&R) Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)
- provide well-thought through activities to develop and ground content/concepts and skills
- reflect aims and approaches as set out in the C&R CAPS

Coding Cards

- A set of Coding Cards to demonstrate and complete coding activities in the Learner Book.

Below are some Reference Documents

Publishers should consider the following documents in the preparation of their submissions:

- **Foundation Phase CAPS**

[https://www.education.gov.za/Curriculum/CurriculumAssessmentPolicyStatements\(CAPS\)/CAPSFoundation.aspx](https://www.education.gov.za/Curriculum/CurriculumAssessmentPolicyStatements(CAPS)/CAPSFoundation.aspx)

- **Revised Annually Teaching Plans (RATPs)**

<https://www.education.gov.za/Curriculum/NationalCurriculumStatementsGradesR-12/2023ATPs.aspx>

- **Framework for the Teaching of Reading in African Languages and Phonics Programme in African Languages**

<https://www.education.gov.za/SearchResults.aspx?search=framework%20for%20the%20teacing%20of%20reading%20in%20african%20languages>

- **National Reading Benchmarks**

<https://www.education.gov.za/Research,MonitoringEvaluationReports.aspx>

- **Ministerial Task Team Report on Text Book Evaluation**