

Emergent Literacy

– reading and writing

WHAT IS EMERGENT LITERACY?

Emergent literacy refers to the knowledge and skills that precede learning to read and write as taught formally in Grade one.

Emergent literacy is:

- The earliest phase of reading and writing.
- The initial understanding of what reading and writing is.
- When learners begin to understand that print holds meaning.
- When learners begin to understand that print is a form of communication.

HOW DO LEARNERS DISPLAY SIGNS OF EMERGENT LITERACY?

- They begin to draw and scribble and 'read' what they have written.
- They handle books and begin to show that they understand the conventions of books.
- They hold the book the right way up, turn the pages and point to words (even though they cannot read them).
- They 'read' the pictures.
- They make up their own stories, e.g. 'Once appollo time...!'

ATTITUDES THAT LEARNERS SHOULD DISPLAY AND TEACHERS SHOULD ENCOURAGE (SIGNS OF LITERACY READINESS):

Learners should:

- Want to listen to stories.
- Want to be read to.
- Be curious about words and letters.
- Explore books (their text and pictures).
- Enjoy songs, poems, rhymes, jingles, books and fantasy play.

CLASSROOM STRATEGIES TO DEVELOP YOUR GRADE R LEARNERS' LITERACY SKILLS

You need to create a literacy environment. The following eight practical ideas and strategies will help your learners develop literacy skills:

I. TALK

- Provide opportunities for conversation in class group, small group, and one-to-one settings.
- When talking with learners:
 - Use uncommon words – words that learners are unlikely to hear in everyday conversations.
 - Extend learners' conversational abilities: encourage descriptive, grammatically mature conversation.
 - Talk about topics that are unfamiliar and that involve knowledge about the world.
 - Listen and respond to what learners say.