



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

EARLY GRADE READING ASSESSMENT (EGRA)

ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE

A GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

Department of Basic Education

Department of Basic Education

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TO THE TEACHER:

1. Use this tool to assess learners' **reading fluency** as follows:

• Letter sounds	How many letters can the learner sound correctly in one minute?
• Word reading (test for phonemic awareness)	How many words can the learner read correctly in one minute?
• Passage reading	How many words can the learner read correctly and fluently in one minute? And, do the learners understand what they read? The point is not mere speed, but to read fluently.

2. Ask learners questions on the passage reading to assess their **comprehension**: How many questions can the learner answer **correctly** after having read the passage?

3. **Important: This is merely an assessment tool. It is not the intention that the learners should** be taught how to use these tools, or coached deliberately to perform well in these specific tasks. The point is not to memorise these tasks. If learners receive proper, overall reading instruction, they will perform well in these assessments. However, the focus should be on proper instruction, not on specifically coaching learners to do these assessment tasks.

WHAT WILL YOU NEED?

You will need:

3. This early grade assessment Charts.
4. A stop watch or a minute timer or a cellular phone.
5. The Progression Sheet for recording each learner's performance.

WHEN WILL YOU ASSESS LEARNER READING SKILLS?

Assess learner reading skills to establish a baseline and to monitor progression in reading over time as follows:

1. At the **beginning** of the academic year (towards the end of the first term), to establish their entry levels of reading (baseline assessment).
2. **Mid-year** (towards the end of the second term or the beginning of the third term), to assess if their reading levels have improved, remained the same or deteriorated (progression level assessment).
3. At the **end** of the academic year to evaluate if learners have achieved the expected levels of **fluency** and **comprehension** for their grade.
4. However, please take note that once a learner has mastered a skill (i.e. has met the benchmark), there is no need for continued assessment later on during the year. So, if a learner has mastered the letter sounds properly, there is no need to continue assessing this learner.
5. Similarly, if a learner cannot read a simple word list, it does not make sense to assess the learner's capacity to read and comprehend a passage.

WHAT DOES THE ASSESSMENT TOOL CONTAIN?

1. Instructions on how to carry out the assessments.
2. Charts (Charts 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3) of **letters** that learners must recognise and sound aloud.
3. Charts (Charts 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3) of **words** that learners must read out aloud.
4. Three **passages** (Charts 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3) that learners must read out aloud.
5. **Questions**, based on the passages, which learners must answer to illustrate their comprehension of the reading passage.
6. **A progression sheet** to monitor the reading progress over time. You will use the sheet to enter each score for each learner for the four (4) tasks relating to reading fluency. Column 1 will be for letter sounds (LS); column 2 for familiar word reading (WR); column 3 for passage reading (PR) and column 4 for comprehension (CO). Once again, please take note that there is no need to re-assess a learner once the learner has met the benchmark.
7. Marking sheets for the learners (Learner Assessment Booklet).

1. Assess letter sounds (LS)

Show the learner the chart of letters. (Charts 1.1, 1.2 or 1.3, depending on the term.)



Say to the learner: “**Here is a page full of letters. I would like you to sound as many letters as you can. I’d like you to start here and move across the page.** (Point to the left most letter in the top row, moving from left to right. Sound the example letters provided to the learner.) **When I say, ‘Begin’, sound the letters as best you can. Point to each letter as you sound it. If you don’t know the sound of a letter, I’ll pronounce it for you. Put your finger on the first letter. Ready? Begin.**”



- Start the timer when you say, “**Begin**”.
- In your marking sheet, strike a line through a letter that the learner sounds incorrectly or cannot sound at all. For example: ~~a~~
- If the learner stops for more than three (3) seconds, pronounce the sound and strike a line through the letter. For example: ~~a~~
- If the entire first line has strike-through lines across all the letters, stop the assessment and indicate that zero letters have been read by the learner.
- If the learner corrects himself/herself upon sounding a letter, accept it as correct.
- If the learner says the name rather than the sound, say “**Sound**”.
- After one minute, say “**Stop**”. Place a bracket (]) after the last letter that the learner has sounded correctly.
- Count and record the number of letters that the learner has sounded correctly on the progression sheet for the letter sounds (LS) task.
- If the learner sounds all the letters correctly in less than one (1) minute, make a tick mark (✓) on the progression sheet for the letter sounds (LS) task and do not assess the learner any further in this task.

Letter sounds

Example for marking Chart 1.1

l	z	s	w	M	j	i	y	a	h
h	b	r	o	T	c]	i	e	t	o
e	n	f	v	B	k	o	d	a	t
g	s	u	x	A	i	r	n	d	p

In this case, the learner was able to sound only up to the letter “c”, which is followed by the bracket (]), entered by the teacher. The teacher only counts up to here, namely: 16. In other words, the learner sounded only 16 letters. Furthermore, the learner made three (3) mistakes, and the teacher has done a strike-through on “z”, “w” and “y”. Therefore, the learner sounded only 13 letters correctly. So the teacher enters “13” on the progression sheet for this assessment period for this letter sounds task (LS).

If the learner has managed to sound all the letters correctly in less than one minute, the teacher puts a tick mark (✓) on the progress sheet for the letter sounds task (LS) and the assessment is regarded as having been completed. There is no need to continue with this assessment, where this learner is concerned, at all.

2. Assess familiar word reading (WR)

Show the learner the chart of words. (Charts 2.1, 2.2, or 2.3, depending on the term.)



Say to the learner: “**Look at these words.**” (Point to the words provided as ‘**Examples**’. Read the provided example words to the learner.) “**Here are some more words. I’d like you to start here,**” (point to the first word on Chart 2) “**and move across the page.**” (Point across the page.) “**When I say, ‘Begin’, read the words as best as you can. Point to each word as you read it. If you don’t know the word, I’ll read it for you. Put your finger on the first word. Ready? Begin.**”



- Start the timer when you say, “**Begin**”.
- On your marking sheet, strike a line through a word that the learner reads incorrectly or cannot read at all. For example: ~~sæt~~
- If the learner stops for more than three (3) seconds, provide the word and strike a line through the word. For example: ~~sæt~~
- If the entire first line has strike-through lines across all the words, stop the assessment and indicate that zero words have been read by the learner.
- If the learner corrects himself/herself upon reading a word, accept it as correct.
- After one (1) minute, say: “**Stop**”. Place a bracket (]) after the last word that the learner has read correctly.
- Count and record the number of words that the learner has read correctly on the progression sheet for the word reading (WR) task.
- If the learner reads all the words correctly in less than one (1) minute, make a tick mark (✓) on the progress sheet for the familiar word reading (WR) task and do not assess the learner any further in this task.

Familiar words

Example for marking Chart 2.1

back	came	but	look	went	what	did	be
got	me	eat	do	like	there	little	with
had	are]	your	make	put	he	see	it
the	all	here	no	from	tree	out	an
come	will	time	my	you	too	cat	she
have	some	away	down	A	them	we	in
that	they	can	one	not	of	this	his
was	is	when	so	go	dog	at	day
big	just	said	her	into	to	up	very
for	mother	and	now	on	where	get	then

The learner read for one (1) minute. In this case, the learner was able to read only up to the word “are”, which is followed by the bracket (]), entered by the teacher. The teacher only counts up to here, namely: 18. In other words, the learner only read 18 words. Furthermore, the learner made two (2) mistakes or failed to read two (2) words and the teacher has done a strike-through on “there” and “little”. Therefore, the learner only read 16 words correctly. So the teacher enters “16” on the progress sheet for this assessment period for this word reading (WR) task.

If the learner had managed to read all the words correctly in less than one minute, the teacher puts a tick mark (✓) on the progression sheet for the word reading (WR) task and the assessment is regarded as having been completed. There is no need to continue with this assessment, where this learner is concerned, at all.

3. Passage reading (PR)

Ask the learner to read the following story aloud, and time him or her. (You will be showing Charts 3.1, 3.2 or 3.3, depending on the term.)



Say to the learner: **“I’m going to ask you to read this story out loud. If you get stuck, I will tell you the word so that you can keep on reading. When I say, ‘Stop’, I will ask you some questions about what you have just read. Therefore, do your best while reading. Start here. (Point to the first word of the passage.) Ready? Begin.”**



- Start the timer when you say, **“Begin”**.
- Make a note of the word that the learner reads incorrectly.
For example: **little**
- If you provided a word, do not mark it as correct.
- If the learner corrects himself/herself upon reading a word, accept it as correct.
- After one minute, say: **“Stop”**. Mark the final word attempted by the learner, before you said **“Stop”**, with a bracket (]).
- Count and record the number of words the learner has read correctly on the progression sheet for the passage reading task (PR).
- If the learner reads all the words correctly in less than one (1) minute, then make a tick mark (✓) on the progression sheet for the passage reading (PR) task and do not assess the learner any further in this task.

Passage reading

Example for marking Chart 3.1

	Words per line
Jabu had a little dog. The little dog was fat and happy. One day Jabu and the dog went out to play in the fields behind Jabu's house.	28
The little dog liked to play tricks and he ran away. The little dog got lost.	16
Jabu was sad. But after a while the dog came back. He had been gone for only a little while.	20
Jabu took the dog home. When they got home Jabu gave the dog a bone. The dog ate it.	19
The little dog was happy, so he slept. Jabu also went to sleep. They both slept for a very long time and played again when they woke up.	28
	III

The learner read for one (1) minute. In this case, the learner was only able to read up to the word "away", which is followed by the bracket (J), entered by the teacher. The teacher counts up to here, namely: 39. In other words, the learner only read only 39 words. Furthermore, the learner made two (2) mistakes or failed to read two words, and the teacher has done a strike-through on "little" and "behind". Therefore, the learner only read 37 words correctly. So the teacher enters "37" on the progress sheet for this assessment period for the passage reading (PR) task.

If the learner had managed to read all the words correctly in less than one minute, the teacher puts a tick mark (✓) on the progression sheet for the passage reading (PR) task and the assessment is regarded as having been completed. There is no need to continue with this assessment, where this learner is concerned, at all.

4. Comprehension questions (CO)



Say to the learner: **“Now I am going to ask you a few questions about the story you have just read. Try to answer the questions as best you can”.**

- Tick a correct response (✓) **for each question** in the Learner Assessment Chart.

Comprehension questions

Example for marking Chart 3.1

Question	Answer	Correct
1. Who had a dog?	Jabu	✓
2. Was the dog big or little?	Little	✓
3. What did the dog like to do?	“Play tricks”	✓
4. Where did Jabu take the dog?	“Home”.	
5. What did the dog do after he got the bone?	Accept either “He ate it” or “He slept”	

Total of correctly answered questions: 3

In this case the learner answered three (3) questions correctly, so the teacher enters “3” on the progress sheet for this assessment period for this comprehension task (CO).

Letter sound fluency

Assessment 1 Chart 1.1 (40 sounds)

Examples: b s

l	z	s	w	M	j	i	y	a	H
h	e	r	o	T	c	i	e	t	O
e	n	f	v	B	k	o	d	a	T
g	s	u	x	A	i	r	n	d	P

Letter sound fluency

Assessment 2 Chart 1.2 (60 sounds)

Examples: r s

M	L	h	g	S	y	R	W	L	N
l	K	T	D	K	T	s	d	n	w
h	w	r	a	F	r	R	C	S	f
A	p	R	u	s	c	Y	j	E	n
U	l	F	t	u	G	M	e	r	B
h	p	m	l	B	F	A	g	f	E

Letter sound fluency

Assessment 3 Chart 1.3 (100 sounds)

Examples: m y

K y r m S l w W U h

l n f b O d R f w B

s F j T P D G l K E

E n C r p a K u t g

G c m P B e h B H A

t Y P N M u r M j p

i l S o m o F s M F

t N p A s L g L Y R

s R E j b k c D d T

a g W h l D S y n y

Assessment 1
Familiar word fluency
Assessment Chart 2.1 (80 words)

Examples: pot bell

back	came	but	look	went	what	did	be
got	me	eat	do	like	there	little	with
had	are	your	make	put	He	see	it
the	all	here	no	from	tree	out	an
come	will	time	my	you	Too	cat	she
have	some	away	down	a	them	we	in
that	they	can	one	not	Of	this	his
was	is	when	so	go	dog	at	day
big	just	said	her	into	To	up	very
for	mother	and	now	on	where	get	then

Assessment 2

Familiar word fluency

Assessment Chart 2.2 (80 words)

Examples: pot bell

here	some	he	will	had	For	so	now
do	my	at	came	time	Day	too	big
was	out	they	when	and	A	them	is
it	look	she	went	just	See	up	tree
what	eat	back	with	from	You	one	this
but	be	an	of	get	Are	the	her
me	not	mother	said	that	Did	there	dog
to	got	we	make	his	Into	cat	very
no	put	then	on	like	come	your	go
in	where	away	can	little	All	have	down

Assessment 3
Familiar word fluency
Assessment Chart 2.3 (80 Words)

Examples: pot bell

her	can	in	there	go	back	that	for
one	away	it	had	so	All	came	put
from	do	be	make	a	out	was	dog
and	he	your	down	tree	eat	too	she
now	you	to	then	got	what	me	some
said	day	when	have	look	see	get	went
into	but	on	an	his	very	not	this
is	cat	at	big	of	with	up	here
did	the	like	they	just	come	are	no
mother	we	them	where	my	little	time	will

Passage reading

Assessment 1 Chart 3.1

Jabu had a little dog. The little dog was fat and happy. One day Jabu and the dog went out to play in the fields behind his house.

The little dog liked to play tricks and he ran away. The little dog got lost. Jabu was sad. But after a while the dog came back. He had been gone for only a little while.

Jabu took the dog home. When they got home Jabu gave the dog a bone. The dog ate it.

The little dog was happy, so he slept. Jabu also went to sleep. They both slept for a very long time and played again when they woke up. **(Total 111)**

Comprehension (CO)

Chart 3.1

Question		Correct (✓)
1.	Who had a dog?	Jabu
2.	Was the dog big or little?	Little
3.	What did the dog like to do?	play tricks
4.	Where did Jabu take the dog?	home
5.	What did the dog do after he got the bone?	The dog ate the bone.

Passage reading

Assessment 2 Chart 3.2

Everyone was in the playground at the school. It was after the holidays. The children were playing with their toys. Nomsa had brought a plastic snake along. She had bought it while on holiday with her parents.

Mrs May, their teacher called everyone inside. Anne liked to play tricks. Anne had an idea. She wanted to play a trick on Mrs May.

Anne cried out that she could see a snake in the playground. Siphosaid he could see it too. Ben asked what kind of snake it was. Mrs May told them it was a black adder. Anne smiled. She said it was only a plastic snake.

After Anne had played her trick, all the children started reading their interesting story books.

(Total 122)

Comprehension (CO)

Chart 3.2

Question		Correct (✓)
1.	Who had bought the snake?	Nomsa
2.	What was the snake made of?	Plastic
3.	Who had an idea?	Anne
4.	What kind of snake was it?	A black adder
5.	Why did Anne want to trick the teacher?	(Any acceptable answer.)

Passage reading

Assessment 3 Chart 3.3

Once there was a giant called Nunu. He was big and ugly. He also liked to eat people. One day he saw a clever and brave girl called Lulu. He caught her. Lulu was very scared. He wanted to eat her but Lulu was too clever for the giant.

Lulu told the giant that she would taste better with salt. The giant put Lulu in his bag. He left the bag on the field. Then he went to get the salt from his house.

Lulu got out of the bag and ran home to her family.

When the giant came back he found that the bag was empty. He was angry and went to bed hungry that night.

Lulu was happy, but the giant was disappointed.

(Total 126)

Comprehension (CO)

Chart 3.3

Question		Correct (✓)
1.	What was the giant's name?	Nunu
2.	What did he like to do?	To eat people
3.	Where did the giant put the girl?	In his bag
4.	What did the girl do after the giant had gone to his house?	Accept any one of these answers: got out of the bag, ran home
5.	Why do you think the giant was disappointed?	(Any acceptable answer.)

School:																		
Class Teacher:																		
Grade:	ONE																	
Grade 1	Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) Progress Sheet																	
Assessment Period	Assessment 1 (Beginning)						Assessment 2 (Middle)						Assessment 3 (End)					
Date																		
Task	Letter sounds	Word recognition	Passage reading	CO	Letter sounds	Word recognition	Passage reading	C	Letter sounds	Word Recognition	Passage reading	CO	Letter sounds	Word Recognition	Passage reading	CO	Comments	
Maximum Totals	1.1 40	2.1 80	3.1 111	5Q 5Q	1.2 60	2.2 80	3.2 122	5Q 5Q	1.3 100	2.3 80	3.3 126	5Q 5Q	1.3 100	2.3 80	3.3 126	5Q 5Q		
Number of times	1 st 20	2 nd 30	1 st 10	2 nd 20	1 st 30	2 nd 40	1 st 15	2 nd 30	1 st 50	2 nd 70	1 st 20	2 nd 35	1 st 20	2 nd 30				
Minimum Benchmark																		
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School:																		
Class Teacher:																		
Grade:	TWO																	
Grade 2 Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) Progress Sheet																		
Assessment Period	Assessment 1 (Beginning)						Assessment 2 (Middle)						Assessment 3 (End)					
Date																		
Task	Letter sounds	Word recognition	Passage reading	CO	Letter sounds	Word recognition	Passage reading	C	Letter sounds	Word Recognition	Passage reading	CO	Letter sounds	Word Recognition	Passage reading	CO	Comments	
Maximum Totals	1.1 40	2.1 80	3.1 111	5Q	1.2 60	2.2 80	3.2 122	5Q	1.3 100	2.3 80	3.3 126	5Q	100	80	126	5Q		
Number of times	1 st 30	2 nd 40	1 st 50	2 nd 60	1 st 50	2 nd 60	1 st 60	2 nd 70	1 st 90	2 nd 100	1 st 70	2 nd 80						
Minimum Benchmark																		
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School:																		
Class Teacher:																		
Grade:	THREE																	
Grade 3 Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) Progress Sheet																		
Assessment Period	Assessment 1 (Beginning)						Assessment 2 (Middle)						Assessment 3 (End)					
Date																		
Task	Letter sounds	Word recognition	Passage reading	CO	Letter sounds	Word recognition	Passage reading	C	Letter sounds	Word Recognition	Passage reading	CO	Letter sounds	Word Recognition	Passage reading	CO	Comments	
Maximum Totals	1.1 40	2.1 80	3.1 111	5Q	1.2 60	2.2 80	3.2 122	5Q	1.3 100	2.3 80	3.3 126	5Q	100	80	126	5Q		
Number of times	1 st 35	2 nd 40	1 st 70	2 nd 80	1 st 40	2 nd 60	1 st 70	2 nd 80	1 st 80	2 nd 100	1 st 80	2 nd 90	1 st 80	2 nd 80	1 st 80	2 nd 90		
Minimum Benchmark																		
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