

The Right to Read & Write

‘Everyone has the right to a basic education’

– The South African Constitution, Section 29 (1a)



The Right to Read and Write
South African Human Rights Commission
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1. Preamble

1.1 Introduction

South African society has one supreme law that stands over and above all others: the Constitution. It is the body of fundamental principles that outlines the legal foundation for the existence of our republic and states the rights and duties of its citizens and those we elect to govern us. One of those fundamental rights enshrined in the constitution is that “*Everyone has the right to a basic education*” (Section 29(1)(a))

In many senses this particular right is a special right in the Constitution and different from many others since it is ‘*immediately realizable*.’ Unlike the other socioeconomic rights in the Constitution – such as the rights to housing, to healthcare, to food, water, security, and further education – there is no qualification to the right to a basic education. There is nothing that says the state must work towards the ‘*progressive realization*’ of the right to a basic education, or that the realization of the right to a basic education is ‘*subject to available resources*.’ There are only two socioeconomic rights in the entire Constitution that are not subject to such limitations and progressive realization, and these are: (1) The right to a basic education (Section 29(1)(a)) and (2) Children’s core socioeconomic rights to ‘*basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care services and social services*’ (Section 28(1)(c)) This was not an accident. In their wisdom, the drafters of the Constitution recognized that in addition to other necessary measures of redress, it was only through the systematic prioritization of the next generation that South Africa would be able to transcend the multifaceted and far-reaching consequences of apartheid.

When the South African Constitution was being written, it was expressly noted and understood that education would hold a privileged place in the new democratic dispensation. Neither redress nor prosperity would be possible without it. The Constitution’s mandate to ‘*free the potential of each person*’ was contingent on the realization of this right for all who live in the country. As Constitutional Court Justice Bess Nkabinde ruled:

“The significance of education, in particular basic education, for individual and societal development in our democratic dispensation in the light of the legacy of apartheid, cannot be overlooked... [B]asic education is an important socioeconomic right directed, among other things, at promoting and developing a child’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to his or her fullest potential. Basic education also provides a foundation for a child’s lifetime learning and work opportunities”

- *Governing Body of the Juma Masjid Primary School v Essay.*

While the unqualified right to a basic education has not been legally contested, it is still not entirely clear what is (and is not) included when one speaks about a ‘basic education’. The Constitution itself does not provide an explication of this right which specifies how it is to be realized and what conditions would need to be met for this right to be said to have been realised or not.

In 2013 the Minister of Basic Education prescribed the *Regulations Relating to Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure* which set out the ‘necessary resources’ that form the minimum core of this right in terms of infrastructure. Subsequent court interpretations of these regulations demonstrate that South Africa now has a set of defined norms for basic physical infrastructure such as running water, electricity, sanitation, and a safe built-environment (*Equal Education v Minister of Basic Education* 2019 (1) SA 421, ECB), as well as basic educational materials such as one textbook per subject per child (*Minister of Basic Education and Others v Basic Education for All and Others* [2016] 1 All SA 369, SCA). This has gone some way to make explicit what the State’s minimum obligations are in the fulfilment of this right, at least in terms of

infrastructure and textbooks. To that extent it has begun to explicate or ‘unpack’ the meaning of the right to a basic education by specifying its minimum content.

However, what has been lacking in much of this unfolding process is the specification of minimum *outcomes* that must be met for the right to a basic education to be said to have been realized for an individual. What is the minimum set of knowledge, skills and dispositions that an individual must possess for their right to a basic education to be said to have been realized? Alternatively, are there certain specific measurable ‘core’ outcomes that, if a child is unable to achieve them, one can say definitively that their right to a basic education (or at least some fundamental component of it) has been denied?

It is the contention of this background paper that one of these minimum ‘core’ outcomes with respect to the right to a basic education, is that a child must be able to read and write with understanding at a basic level, in their home language, by the age of ten. Put differently, this fundamental skill is one of the tools by means of which the constitutional promise is to be fulfilled. Unless and until the child is educated to the requisite minimum level, the constitutional promise remains unfulfilled. The purpose of this document is to provide a clearly articulated, evidence-based, and measurable definition of what it means to “*read and write, with understanding, at a basic level.*” In so doing it aims to operationalize this right by making one additional core component of the right to a basic education explicit. This component would be the “Right to Read and Write.” Whilst it is clear that the right to a basic education envisaged in the Constitution goes well beyond merely the ability to read and write, it is equally clear that if a child is denied this most basic skill (to read and write with understanding) they have at the same time, also been denied the right to a basic education.

In the same way that the government, the courts and civil society now have a shared understanding of the physical resources that are necessary for the realization of the right to a basic education (textbooks, toilets, teachers etc.), the intention of this document is to move towards a similarly shared understanding of the content of the right to a basic education with respect to outcomes, and to do so by providing a clearly articulated, defensible, measurable, and research-informed definition of what it means to read and write at a basic level.

1.2 Learning to Read and Write

‘Every person – child, youth and adult – shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs. These needs comprise both essential learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy, and problem solving) and the basic learning content (such as knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes) required by human beings to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions, and to continue learning.’

- *World Declaration on Education for All, Article 1, 1990*

The World Declaration on Education for All correctly identifies that there are numerous components to education with many ‘learning tools’ and many ‘learning content’ areas. While all of these tools and learning areas are important and worthy of our time and resources, it is also true that the ability to read and write is the bedrock foundation upon which all other school-based learning builds. In the modern era almost all school curricula are mediated through written language, either digitally or in print. As a result, if a child cannot read and write at a basic level by the age of ten, they are precluded from a wide range of activities they should be entitled to by virtue of their personhood. Most obviously, they are precluded from further learning at school with severe consequences for their future educational opportunities. However, they are also precluded from meaningful civic engagement, from text-based personal enrichment, from most forms of dignified employment, as well as from text-based communication and self-expression.

In addition to the above, it must also be emphasised that The Right to Read and Write is for *all* children, including and especially, for those with disabilities. Given the multiple additional barriers to dignity faced by those with disabilities - to civic engagement, to higher education and to employment - basic education is of utmost importance to this group in particular, and the Right to Read and Write especially so. It is expressly noted here that it will be a hollow victory if the Right to Read and Write is “mostly” realised while those with disabilities and other barriers to learning are left behind. It behooves us to recognise and acknowledge that while it may take us longer, and it may come at a higher price, there is no dignified version of the future where the vulnerable who are most in need of resources and support are left behind.

Following the above contextualisation of this right, the remainder of this document proceeds with six additional sections: Section 2 below provides a brief overview of the background context to the right, including a summary of the reading outcomes of South African children as well as the rationale behind the age specification (10 years old) and the language specification (home language) of the right. Section 3 provides an overview of the legal context and South Africa’s local and international legal obligations with respect to literacy. Section 4 shifts towards the practical task of defining what it means to ‘read and write with understanding at a basic level’ by creating a framework for assessing reading comprehension. Section 5 builds on this and specifies the practicalities of how one might measure reading at a basic level and Section 6 briefly looks at writing. Finally, Section 7 focuses on inclusive education and Section 8 on the Resources needed for reading and writing. There is a final postscript reviewing the overall endeavor of the document.

2. Reading outcomes, age thresholds and language specification

2.1 Reading outcomes in South Africa

South Africa is in the fortunate position of having more than a decade's worth of international assessment data on early-grade reading outcomes. The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) has collected data on reading outcomes using a nationally representative sample of Grade 4 children, with testing conducted in 2006, 2011 and 2016. These tests are conducted in the Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT) in the Foundation Phase, which for most learners is also their home language (see Spaul & Pretorius, 2019 & Section 2.3 below). The PIRLS study is endorsed by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) which uses it as a formal benchmarking assessment indicator for the national 'DBE Action Plan to 2030' as well as by the South African Presidency for monitoring improvements towards the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) goals (DBE, 2020: p.62). Helpfully, PIRLS has created four different benchmarks of reading intuitively labelled as the Low, Intermediate, High and Advanced benchmarks, with thresholds of 400, 475, 550 and 625 PIRLS points (Mullis et al., 2017: p.53).

Of most relevance for the present purposes is the PIRLS 'Low International Benchmark'. If learners have reached this threshold (400 points) then they are able to "*locate and retrieve explicitly stated information, actions or ideas*" and "*make straightforward inferences about events and reasons for actions*" (Mullis et al., 2017: p.53).

The most recent PIRLS data (2016) shows that 78% of South African Grade 4 children did not reach the Low International Benchmark. This is in stark contrast to the other participating countries. Of the 50 countries that participated in PIRLS 2016, the median percentage of students not reaching the low international benchmark was only 4% (Mullis et al., 2017: p.55). While the majority of PIRLS participants are high-income countries, South African still has a much higher percentage of non-readers (78%) than in comparable countries like Morocco (64%), Iran (35%), and Chile (13%) (Mullis et al., 2017: p.55).

Encouragingly, the South African PIRLS data does show an improvement in the percentage of Grade 4 learners reaching the Low International Benchmark over the last decade. This was 13% in 2006 (Howie et al., 2008: p.26) increasing to 18% in 2011 and finally to 22% in 2016, although there is some uncertainty¹ around the 2011 figure (DBE, 2020: p.69). While the fact that there has been an improvement over time is encouraging, it is worth reiterating that at the current rate of progress, South African will only achieve universal literacy (98% reaching the Low International Benchmark) in the year 2100. This is not an unattainable level of literacy. For example, already in 2016 Ireland, Poland, Sweden and Russia had achieved this level of universal literacy.

2.2 Specifying the Age of 10 for the Right: Criteria for selection

The decision to select the age of ten for the right to read and write was informed by three different sources: (1) Scientific consensus: The consensus in the scientific scholarly literature on how long it takes children to

¹ Martin Gustafsson has documented the technical problems with PIRLS scaling when looking specifically at South Africa in the 2011 round of the PIRLS assessment (see Gustafsson, 2020). While he reports the corrected scale scores for 2011 in that paper, the existing PIRLS international assessment report (as at April 2021) does not report the percentage reaching the Low International Benchmark. However, using the classical scores from the microdata (DBE, 2020: p.69) Gustafsson estimates that 18% of Grade 4 learners in 2011 reached the Low International Benchmark.

learn how to read and write at a basic level, (2) South African law: The age that children are legally mandated to attend school, and (3) The South African curriculum: The grade and age that the curriculum states that children should be able to read and write at a basic level. Each of these is briefly summarized below.

2.2.1 Scientific consensus:

The scientific literature on when and how children learn how to read and write is vast and has a long history. While reading and writing are a continuum, where one can continue to improve one's skills of reading and writing well into old age, the basic skill of being able to read and write simple sentences and paragraphs is a well-defined skill and one that should be mastered at an early age. Reviewing the scientific literature one can see a broad consensus that children should be able to learn to read and write at a basic level in at least their home language within three years of formal full-time schooling (McGuinness, 2004; Carroll et al. 2011). The time it takes to learn to read partially depends on the complexity of the language used. Learning to read in some languages is easier than in others because they have regular sound-symbol correspondence (i.e., one letter represents one sound). These languages have what are called 'transparent orthographies' i.e. language structures with clear rules. Ten of South Africa's official 11 languages have transparent orthographies (Spaull et al. 2020), only English does not. English has what is called an 'opaque' language structure because a single letter can have multiple different sounds depending on the word (for example plaque and park). Research shows that children can learn to read in transparent languages at a basic level after only one year of instruction, while learning to read at a basic level in English can take up to three years (Ziegler & Goswami, 2005). A summary of the above is that children should be able to read and write at a basic level in their home language after at most three years of formal full-time schooling. Selecting the age of 10 thus allows for all children to have had three years of formal full-time schooling in South Africa.

2.2.2 South African law

According to South African law, the statistical age norm for children in grade 3 (the last grade of the Foundation Phase) is nine years of age. Section 3 of Notice 2433 of 1998 (in Government Gazette Vol.400 No.19377) states that "*The statistical age norm per grade is the grade number plus 6, Example: Grade 1 + 6 = age 7*". This is informed by section four which states that "*A learner must be admitted to grade 1 if he or she turns seven in the course of that calendar year.*" Selecting the age of 10 for the right to read and write is thus a conservative approach since the majority of ten-year-old learners would already be in grade 4.

2.2.3 South African curriculum

The South African curriculum is designed in such a way that it assumes that at the very latest, by the end of grade 3 children should be able to read and write fluently and with understanding in at least one language, ideally two. This is one of the reasons why Grades R-3 is called the 'Foundation Phase' since it is during these years that children acquire the foundations for future learning, most notably the ability to read, write and calculate. In fact, already in Grade 2 the learning outcome for reading in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) states that a child "*Reads independently simple fiction and non-fiction books, poetry cards, comics*" and for writing, "*Writes at least two paragraphs (ten sentences) on personal experiences or events (e.g. a family celebration). Drafts, writes and 'publishes' own story of at least two paragraphs for others to read*" (p.27).

2.3 Identifying the language to be used in assessing the right to read

Most children in South Africa attend a school where the language of learning and teaching (LOLT) in Grades R-3 is the same as their home language. To be specific, "72% of learners are in schools where most children (75%+) have the same home language as the one that is used in their school in the Foundation Phase" (Spaull & Pretorius, 2019: p151) and therefore this is the language that they are meant to learn to

read in. Furthermore, South African law makes provision for parents to choose the school that they would like their child to attend. While many parents choose schools that use a Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT) that is the same as their home language, some parents do not. In addition, some parents do not have a choice about where to send their child. Given that some children will attend a school where the Foundation Phase is taught in a language that is different from their home language (either due to parental choice or circumstance) we suggest that where this is the case the technical interpretation of the language of the right to read and write be understood as follows:

‘The right to read states that all children have the right to learn to read and write at a basic level by the age of 10 in the language of learning and teaching (LOLT) used in their school in the Foundation Phase (Grades R-3).

3. Constitutional and International Obligations Around the Right to Read and Write

The preamble highlighted that the right to a basic education is a vitally important and special right in our Constitution. The right is ‘*immediately realisable*’ and there are numerous laws and court judgments in South Africa that have spelt out some of the critical inputs that the state is legally obliged to provide to ensure that children are able to enjoy their right to basic education. Furthermore, despite progress in clarifying what the necessary *inputs* are as well as some progress in making them available to all children, millions of children in South Africa are still unable to read and write for meaning and therefore, we submit, unable to enjoy their right to education. We argue that a critically important *outcome* of the enjoyment of the right to education must be that a child be able to read and write with understanding at a basic level, in their home language, by the age of ten. If it is possible to provide a clearly articulated and measurable definition of what it means to “*read and write, with understanding, at a basic level*”, is there a legal basis for requiring its enforcement? This chapter reviews what international laws and policies say in this regard, whether foreign law supports this proposal, and whether our existing South African jurisprudence would support the notion that children have the right to be able to read and write for meaning by the age of 10.

3.1 International law and policy framework

Section 39(1) of our Constitution provides that “*When interpreting the Bill of Rights, a court, tribunal or forum ... (b) must consider international law; and (c) may consider foreign law.*” Our Constitution therefore makes it clear that if a South African court is called upon to interpret the right to basic education and determine whether it includes an outcome that children must be able to read for meaning by the age of 10, the court will have to consider international law.

There are a number of international instruments that speak directly to the right to education. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (“UNESCO”) Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) among others, all enshrine the human right to education. The right is also elaborated on at the regional level in the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights (1981), and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990). South Africa has ratified all of these international treaties and is bound by them.

South Africa must regularly report on its progress to implement such treaties. This is relevant for the present purposes since the April 2017 report to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in April 2017 explicitly mentions foundational literacy. The concluding observations handed down by the Committee urged South Africa to ‘*reduce the school dropout rate by improving the acquisition of foundational numeracy and literacy.*’

There are various international policy documents, commitments and goals that demonstrate the international commitment to literacy, within a broader framing of the right to education. UNESCO has worked on literacy for over 70 years. UNESCO held its first world congress on literacy in 1965 where various Education Ministers met under the theme “the eradication of illiteracy”. In the report on the first world congress on literacy, literacy is linked to education and stated to be fundamental to the enjoyment of economic and social development as well as participation in civic life (Sanchez Moretti & Frandell, 2013).

On 18 January 2002, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution No. 56/116 which states that literacy is crucial to the acquisition, by every child, youth and adult, of essential life skills that enable them to address the challenges they can face in life, and represents an essential step in basic education. In the same year, at the regional level, the Eighth Conference of Ministers of Education of African Member States (MINEDAF VIII), adopted the Dar-Es-Salaam Statement of Commitment, which required states to take ‘intensive actions to promote literacy’ (para 13(c)).

The Dakar Framework for Action, which was endorsed by South Africa, laid out a set of strategies which were to be achieved by 2015. Among the strategies was goal 6: *‘Achieving recognised and measurable learning outcomes by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and life skills.’*

The UN’s Sustainable Development Goal’s 2030 (SDGs) also include a focus on education. Goal number 4 emphasises the necessity of early childhood education and literacy. While the SDGs are not legally binding, governments are expected to take ownership and establish national frameworks for the achievement of the 17 Goals. It is likely that our courts would take cognisance of the fact that South Africa approved and adopted the UN SDG 2030.

Global Education Monitoring analyses and reviews education on behalf of UNESCO and 160 countries that have mandated them to do so. In 2006 Global Education Monitoring released a report dedicated to the theme of ‘Literacy for Life’. It stressed the need to strengthen literacy at the foundational stage. In this regard, multilingualism was identified as a crucial factor in literacy policy.

‘Use of mother tongues is pedagogically sound, encourages community mobilization and social development, and provides for political voice. At the same time, there is strong demand for learning dominant languages to increase economic opportunity, mobility and engagement in national development processes. Consistency and coherence must shape language, literacy and education policy (UNESCO, 2006: p.116).

In 2018, the International Literacy Association’s Board of Directors set up a task force to develop a global campaign around children’s rights to read—to determine what must be done to achieve this right. This task force is composed of ILA members from Australia, Ireland, Japan, Russia, and the United States. They have created a list of 10 rights linked to the right to read² (ILA, 2018).

The International Literacy Association stresses the enabling link between the right to read and social justice. At a base level, the ability to read enables meaningful engagement with the contemporary world. However, the right cannot be reduced to the bare minimum of the ability to decode writing, and must foreground meaning and understanding. The right to literacy and the right to read are, at a fundamental level, concerned with access to and quality of basic education. More than that, the right to read and the right to literacy are concerned with the material children have access to reading - ideally children should have choice in the materials they read, have access to text in different formats, and have access to materials in the language children speak and that reflect their cultural experiences in the world.

The SAHRC submits that international laws and policies support an interpretation of the right to education which encompasses a child’s right to be able to read for meaning by the age of 10. As previously mentioned, our Constitution provides that a court may also consider foreign law which includes the judgements of courts in other countries. We now turn to highlight a few important cases from foreign jurisdictions.

² The 10 rights are (1) Children have the basic human right to read, (2) Children have the right to access texts in print and digital formats, (3) Children have the right to choose what they read, (4) Children have the right to read texts that mirror their experiences and languages, provide windows into the lives of others, and open doors into our diverse world, (5) Children have the right to read for pleasure, (6) Children have the right to supportive reading environments with knowledgeable literacy partners, (7) Children have the right to extended time set aside for reading, (8) Children have the right to share what they learn through reading by collaborating with others locally and globally, (9) Children have the right to read as a springboard for other forms of communication, such as writing, speaking, and visually representing, and (10) Children have the right to benefit from the financial and material resources of governments, agencies, and organizations that support reading and reading instruction” (ILA, 2018. p2)

3.1.1 Comparative case law

Court cases dealing squarely with the right to literacy in foreign courts are rare. Our courts will not find much guidance from other jurisdictions, but three cases discussed here may be of assistance.

In the United States, in the very recent matter of *Gary B. v. Gretchen Whitmer, No. 18-1855 (6th Cir. 2020)*, the plaintiffs were a group of students attending public and charter schools in Detroit. The students alleged that their schools were incapable of delivering access to literacy. This was due to a lack of qualified teachers, dilapidating infrastructure and the failure to provide educational materials. There was a general shortage of teachers at the schools, and unqualified and inexperienced “paraprofessionals” were permitted to teach at the schools. Further, the students alleged that the curriculum taught at the schools did not support literacy and the physical environment was not conducive to learning. Proficiency rates for almost all subjects at the Plaintiffs’ schools were very low.

The court held that a basic minimum education is one that plausibly provides access to literacy. The court found that the Supreme Court had never found that there was no fundamental right to literacy. The court stated that there was a direct relationship between education, power and economic success. Further, the court held that literacy was necessary for the exercise of negative rights and participation in the social process.

The court rooted its analysis of literacy as a fundamental human right in America’s history of racism. The court recognised how the denial of access to education was weaponised to exclude black people in America from ‘...the political power needed to achieve liberty and equality’. The court found that literacy in America was essential for economic and political power, and that to deny such would be a grave injustice. The court found that the Constitution did not categorically rule out positive rights, and that recognising the right to a minimum education was fundamentally different to the recognition of other positive rights. Therefore, the court found that there is a fundamental right to a basic minimum education (meaning access to literacy).

The court stated that the fundamental right to a basic minimum education extended to the degree of literacy that is necessary for the effective participation in American democracy. What schools may require for this was a question left to district courts dealing with the cases that may arise. Based on the evidence provided by the students, the court found that it could be inferred that they had been denied an education conducive to providing literacy, and thus remitted the matter back to trial.

Despite the parties having settled, this landmark decision was subsequently vacated by the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals, with the court announcing they will hear the matter afresh – effectively nullifying the ruling that there is a constitutional right to basic minimum education. Even though the right to literacy was not definitively established and no precedent was set, it is arguable that a South African court would be persuaded by the reasoning in the *Gary B* case.

In the Indian case of *Mohini v State of Karnataka (1992 AIR 1858)* the petitioner in the case was charged a higher tuition at a private medical school than a person living within Karnataka would have been charged (a “capitation fee”). She was unable to afford the tuition and was thus barred from attending the school. At the time, education was not expressly stated as a right enforceable in the Constitution.

The court held that the right to dignity is inviolable, and that the right to dignity cannot be assured without the development of an individual’s personality. According to the court, the development of personality can only be secured through education. The court noted that Articles 41 and 45 of Chapter IV of the Indian Constitution were enacted in the context of a 70% illiteracy rate in India. These Articles recognised the right to education and the government’s duty to enforce this. Although the petitioner in this case was not illiterate, the Indian Supreme Court found literacy and education to be an extension of the right to life.

The Canadian case of *Moore v. British Columbia* 2012 SCC 61, [2012] 3 S.C.R. 360 concerned the right to education of a student with severe dyslexia ('the appellant'). As a result of the appellants' dyslexia, he struggled to read and required special assistance through a special remediation program offered in the Canadian public education system. The program was subsequently closed down due to funding cuts. The appellant was forced to enrol in a private school which catered for learners with learning disabilities. Although this case was not decided in terms of the 'right to literacy' it is worth noting because the learning disability the appellant suffered from impaired his ability to learn to read and write. He required intensive remediation in order to have meaningful access to education and the court found that the unjustified closure of the program that provided this discriminated against him.

3.1.2 South Africa legal framework and jurisprudence

Closer to home, even though South Africa's courts and legislature have not explicitly stated that being able to read for meaning is an element of the right to education, the SAHRC submits that the wording of our Constitution, the South African Schools Act No 84 of 1996 (the Schools Act) and numerous findings by our courts all support the proposition that the right to read and write is an integral, justiciable, component of our right to basic education.

Our courts have come closest to confirming that learners do have a right to literacy in this country in the *Basic Education for All* matter which dealt with the provision of textbooks to schools. Here Justice Navsa commented that:

'Frederick Douglass, a former slave and eminent American human rights leader in the abolitionist movement understood the liberating power of books and their connection to education and the fulfilment of human potential. He said: "Once you learn to read, you will be forever free". More recently Kofi Annan, the former United Nations Secretary General, said: "Literacy is a bridge from misery to hope. It is a tool for daily life in modern society. It is a bulwark against poverty and a building block of development, an essential complement to investments in roads, dams, clinics and factories. Literacy is a platform for democratization, and a vehicle for the promotion of cultural and national identity. Especially for girls and women, it is an agent of family health and nutrition. For everyone, everywhere, literacy is, along with education in general, a basic human right" (emphasis added).''

Section 29 of South Africa's Constitution provides that '*everyone has the right to a basic education...'*. Our courts have confirmed that the right to basic education is "immediately realisable". As stated by Justice Nkabinde in *Governing Body of the Juma Masjid Primary School v Essay NO* matter,

"There is no internal limitation requiring that the right be 'progressively realised', 'within available resources' subject to 'reasonable legislative measures'. The right to a basic education in section 29(1)(a) may be limited only in terms of a law of general application which is 'reasonable and justifiable in an open and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom'..."

While the term "basic education" is not defined in the Constitution, the legislature set out explicitly in the preamble to the Schools Act what the purpose of basic education is. Parliament stated that our schools must "*redress past injustices in educational provision*", and provide an education that will "*lay a strong foundation for the development of all of our people's talents and capabilities...(and) contribute to the eradication of poverty and the economic wellbeing of society...*".

Our courts have also spelt out what the purposes are of the right to a basic education. In *Juma Masjid*, Justice Nkabinde stated that:

“Indeed basic education is an important socio-economic right directed, among other things, at promoting and developing a child’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to his or her fullest potential. Basic education also provides a foundation for a child’s lifetime learning and work opportunities.”

The SAHRC submits that the courts have adopted a wide and transformative approach to the right to education. Accordingly, for basic education to achieve the purposes which the courts and legislature have prescribed, education must have, by implication, a certain content and quality. It is inconceivable that a learner can develop their “*talents and capabilities*” and develop to their “*fullest potential*” if they are unable to read and write for meaning.

When determining whether a learner’s right to basic education includes the right to be able to read and write for meaning, other intersecting Constitutional rights must be considered. Section 28(2) of the Constitution provides that “*a child’s best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child.*” Clearly it would be in a child’s best interests to be able to read and write for meaning so that they may access their right to basic education.

Our courts have also linked the right to education with section 10 of the Constitution, the right to human dignity. In the *Watchenuka* case the Supreme Court of Appeal held that “*the freedom to study is...inherent in human dignity; for without it, a person is deprived of the potential for human fulfilment.*” It is quite clear that learners cannot study if they cannot read.

And lastly, section 9 of the Constitution guarantees the right to equality and prohibits unfair discrimination. The vast majority of learners in South African schools that are unable to read for meaning by the age of 10 are black and attend no-fee, poorly resourced schools. The SAHRC submits that the state’s failure to ensure that a child is able to read may constitute discrimination in terms of Section 1 of the Equality Act because it:

“(i) causes or perpetuates systemic disadvantage; (ii) undermines human dignity; (and) (iii) adversely effects the equal enjoyment of a person’s rights and freedoms in a serious manner that is comparable to discrimination on a (listed ground).”

It is inconceivable that this discrimination could ever have a legitimate purpose. The learners’ inability to read and write is an infringement of their right to equality and may amount to unfair discrimination.

3.1.3 The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

South Africa ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (the “CRPD”) and its Optional Protocol without reservation in 2007. The South African government is therefore obliged to respect and implement the rights of persons with disabilities as set out in the CRPD. Article 24, in particular, sets out state party obligations in respect of the right to education for persons with disabilities. It provides for persons with disabilities to live to their full potential and to participate effectively in society.

Article 24(2) requires states that are party to the convention to ensure, amongst other things, that “[p]ersons with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education”.

Article 24(3), deals with the taking of appropriate measures to “*enable persons with disabilities to learn life and social development skills to facilitate their full and equal participation in education and as members of the community. To this end, States Parties shall take appropriate measures*”. Amongst other things, this includes “[f]acilitating the learning of Braille, alternative script, augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication and orientation and mobility skills, and facilitating peer support and mentoring”.

3.1.4 The South African Constitution and Disability

Section 9 of the Constitution that entrenches the right to equality and prohibits discrimination on various listed grounds including disability. Our courts have adopted the approach that the right to equality favours substantive equality over formal equality. The right imposes both positive and negative obligations on the state to ensure an equality of outcomes; not only must the state remove barriers to the enjoyment of rights by people with disabilities, but it must also take measures designed to ensure that the opportunity to enjoy these rights equally is meaningful.

Section 10 guarantees the right to dignity. Our courts have recognised that a life without dignity is a life that is substantially diminished, and that everyone is entitled to be treated as worthy of respect and concern. Section 29(1)(a) of the Constitution includes the right to basic education. The judgment in the case of *Minister of Basic Education v Basic Education for All ('BEFA')* held that in terms of this right every learner is entitled to a textbook in every subject at the commencement of the academic year.

These obligations in terms of international law and the Constitution require that the principle established in the *BEFA* case extend to learners with visual and other print disabilities to ensure that a textbook be provided in every subject by being translated into Braille or other accessible formats for learners with visual and other print disabilities.

The SAHRC submits that the state must therefore ensure that all learners with visual and print disabilities are able to read and write on par with other learners by having access to the same learning materials, with the necessary accommodations made. It must further take steps to ensure that all administrative and legislative barriers impeding that objective are removed.

4. A Framework for Assessing Reading Comprehension

In order to make the Right to Read and Write tangible and practical, it would need to be measured and assessed, and in order for that to happen there first needs to exist a shared framework for understanding reading comprehension and how it can be measured. It is the proposal of this background paper that the conceptual framework used for assessing reading comprehension be based on the PIRLS reading literacy framework. The PIRLS framework for assessing reading comprehension is explicitly based on processes derived from current models of reading comprehension. This section of the report (Section 4) draws on an ongoing collaboration coordinated by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) around benchmarking early grade reading (see Ardington et al. 2020).

Current models of reading comprehension assume that how we process and construct meaning happens in the mind of a reader. During the reading process, readers construct an abstract representation of the ‘state of affairs’ described in a text that goes beyond the literal information stated in a text (Van Dijk & Kintsch 1983; Kintsch & Rawson 2005; McNamara & Magliano, 2009; Cain & Barnes 2017). This is referred to as the *situation model*. Building the situation model is an integrative process. It brings various idea units in the text together with knowledge the reader brings to the text (Kintsch 1988, 1998). Basic idea units called the *textbase representation* are constructed, involving cohesive devices and text-based inferences within and between adjacent sentences. This provides a foundation from which to understand texts more profoundly through integrative processes, linking the textbase to prior top-down knowledge schemas, thereby forming a *situation model* of what the text is about. The text itself is critical in parsing surface-level elements and building a textbase for deeper text understanding. Prior information - in the text or in the reader’s head - constrains the processing of incoming information and updates it.

Current models also assume that reading comprehension is dynamic and can change as a function of several text factors (grammatical, vocabulary or topic complexity in a text), environmental factors (parenting practices, exposure to print) or pedagogic factors (inadequate reading instruction, lack of print resources). These can give rise to differential effects in development and performance.

The PIRLS framework foregrounds the text in relation to these processes. PIRLS identifies four levels of comprehension that reflect the four main types of processes involved in meaning construction and integration. These levels of understanding are operationalised from the different types of questions that are posed, ranging in cognitive demand from easy literal questions to more challenging inferential, integrative and evaluative questions.

4.1 Four categories of questions in PIRLS & the rationale for using them

The four PIRLS categories are set out below (from Howie et al. 2017).

1. Focus on and Retrieve Explicitly Stated Information (Literal)

In focusing on and retrieving explicitly stated information, readers use various ways to locate and understand content that is relevant to the question. Items testing this process require the reader to focus on the text at the word, phrase and sentence level for the purpose of constructing meaning. The process may also require the reader to focus on and retrieve pieces of information from across the text (Mullis & Martin, 2013).

- Identifying information that is relevant to the specific goal of reading
- Looking for specific ideas
- Searching for definitions of words and phrases
- Identifying the setting of a story (e.g. time and place)
- Finding the topic sentence or main idea (when explicitly stated) (Mullis & Martin, 2013, p. 21).

2. Make Straightforward Inferences (SI)

The ability to ‘make straightforward inferences’ that are not explicitly stated allows readers to move beyond the surface of texts and to resolve gaps in meaning. Some of these inferences are straightforward in that they are based primarily on information that is contained in the text and readers must connect two or more ideas. The ideas themselves may be explicitly stated, but the connection between them is not, and must, therefore, be inferred. However, despite the inference not being explicitly stated in the text, the meaning of the text is understood. Skilled readers will connect two or more pieces of information and recognise the relationship even though it is not stated in the text (Mullis & Martin, 2013).

With this type of processing, the focus may be on local meaning residing within one part of the text, the focus may also be on a more global meaning, representing the whole text. Reading tasks that may exemplify this type of text processing include the following:

- Inferring that one event caused another event
- Concluding what is the main point made by a series of arguments
- Identifying generalisations made in the text
- Describing the relationship between two characters (Mullis & Martin, 2013, p.22).

3. Interpret and Integrate Ideas and Information (I&I)

As with the more straightforward inferences, readers who are engaged in interpreting and integrating ideas and information in text may focus on local or global meanings. As readers interpret and integrate they construct meaning by integrating personal knowledge and experience with meaning that resides within the text. In this way, readers draw on their understanding of the world, as well as their background knowledge and experiences, more than they do for straightforward inferences and make connections that are not only implicit, but that may be open to some interpretation based on their own perspective (Mullis & Martin 2013).

- Discerning the overall message or theme of a text
- Considering an alternative to actions of characters
- Comparing and contrasting text information
- Inferring a story’s mood or tone
- Interpreting a real-world application of text information (Mullis & Martin 2013, p.23)

4. Evaluate and Examine Content, Language and Textual Elements (E&E)

According to Mullis and Martin (2013), as readers evaluate the content and elements of a text, the focus shifts from constructing meaning to critically considering the text itself. Readers engaged in this process step back from a text in order to examine and critique it. In evaluating and critiquing elements of text structure and language, readers draw upon their knowledge of language usage to reflect on and judge the author's language choices and devices for conveying meaning. Using past reading experience and familiarity with the language and text structure, readers evaluate the visual and textual features used to organise the text (Mullis & Martin 2013).

- Judging the completeness or clarity of information in the text
- Evaluating the likelihood that the events described could really happen
- Evaluating how likely an author's argument would be to change what people think and do
- Describing the effect of language features, such as metaphors or tone
- Determining an author's perspective on the central topic (Mullis & Martin 2013, p.24).

There are several theoretical and pragmatic reasons for using the PIRLS conceptual framework. Firstly, there are several different taxonomies for assessing comprehension of text at varying levels of difficulty, with varying numbers of categories, for example the Bloom Taxonomy has six. Including too many categories or levels can make a framework complicated and off-putting to a lay person, whereas too few categories (e.g. distinguishing only between literal and inferential questions) may not be differentiated or nuanced enough to provide useful input to schools, teachers, parents or learners. The PIRLS framework comprises four different categories, making it manageable but also adequately nuanced to identify different kinds of higher order skills needed to understand texts at a deeper level.

Secondly, the PIRLS framework is extensively and meticulously documented and described (Mullis & Martin 2013), and after every round of assessment, a limited number of typical PIRLS narrative and information texts and questions are released into the public domain for education stakeholders to review and use. The framework is thus detailed, transparent and readily accessible.

Thirdly, information regarding the reliability and validity of the assessment framework is available, both internationally and locally, so the robustness of the assessment tasks in different cultural-linguistic contexts is transparent, and can be viewed and compared.

Lastly, South Africa is in the fortunate position of having participated in PIRLS over a number of cycles. The PIRLS assessments in South Africa (2006, 2011, 2016 and the upcoming 2021 round) provide a wealth of data relating to reading comprehension at various levels in all 11 official languages in Grade 4.

This is not to say that the PIRLS framework or instruments are perfect (no assessment is), only that it is the best available instrument locally or internationally to measure reading comprehension reliably and rigorously. Issues of fairness always present challenges in cross-cultural, cross-linguistic assessment. Since its inception in 2001, the number of non-English speaking countries participating in PIRLS has increased. This means that the diversity profile of participating PIRLS countries has also increased considerably, especially in the past decade, which has in turn increased attention and resources within the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (who oversee PIRLS) on matters of fairness and cross-contextual comparisons. The texts and question types have been translated in all 11 official South African languages, enabling comparison and differential analysis of responses to questions by different groups.

4.2 PIRLS Low international benchmark

In PIRLS assessments, the international mean is set at 500 points. Following a rigorous psychometric process of comparing reading outcomes for children at different points in the score distribution, it was agreed that the cut point of 400 points should designate the ‘Low International Benchmark.’ Students who fall below this threshold can be considered non-readers in the sense that they cannot read a simple text and answer a series of straight-forward questions related to the text. PIRLS provide a narrative description of what it means to be at or above the Low International Benchmark:

“When reading predominantly simpler Literary Texts, students can: (a) locate and retrieve explicitly stated information, actions, or ideas. (b) Make straightforward inferences about events and reasons for actions, and (c) Begin to interpret story events and central ideas. When reading predominantly simpler Informational Texts students can: (a) Locate and reproduce explicitly stated information from text and other formats (e.g. charts, diagrams), (b) Begin to make straightforward inferences about explanations, actions and descriptions” (Mullis et al. 2017: p.53).

As mentioned previously, among the 50 participating countries in PIRLS, 96% of Grade 4 learners reached this low threshold of reading, yet in South Africa only 22% of Grade 4 learners could read at this level – i.e. 78% of them did not reach this low benchmark (note the test was administered in all 11 official South African languages).

4.3 Method for classifying questions according to the categories

When operationalizing the Right to Read, assessors will be required to select an appropriate text and appropriate questions related to that text. For that reason we have included in the appendix a variety of exemplar texts and exemplar questions. The aim is not that these exact texts and questions are used in every instance of determining whether a child’s right to read has been realized or violated, but rather that equivalent texts and questions are used. The section below provides a helpful guide to select appropriate questions that are comparable to the exemplar texts and questions.

Sometimes it is tricky to decide how to classify some questions as they may seem to straddle two categories. Inconsistency in the classification of question types can lead to inconsistencies in the threshold – some texts and questions are easier than others. To this end, four criteria are used to serve as guidelines to help clarify distinctions between categories and to ensure consistency in assigning questions to their relevant categories. Based on the seminal work on reading comprehension by David Pearson and colleagues at the Centre for Reading (University of Illinois) during the 1970’s and 1980’s, the central premise underlying these criteria is that the question type and its difficulty level is determined in relation to the task demands of the question and the source of the information needed to answer it.

4.3.1 Source of information

In reading comprehension, there are basically two sources of information from which answers to questions can derive – the *text* being read (text based or textual information) and the general knowledge that the *reader* brings to the reading task (reader based or personal information – also referred to as background information).

4.3.2 Explicitness of textual information

The information needed to answer a question may be *explicitly* stated in a text (i.e. it can be located precisely in a specific part of the text) or it may be *implicit* in the text (i.e. the answer is somewhere in the text but it

needs to be inferred). Inferring answers from textual information places higher cognitive demands on the reader than locating information in a specific part of the text. Raphael, Highfield and Au (2006) refer in practical terms to explicit text information as Right There – readers can put their finger on the information in the text to answer the question, while implicit text information is referred to as Think and Search – the information is implied somewhere in the text, but the reader has to put together information from different parts of the text to answer the question (i.e. make connections or inferences between text parts).

4.3.3 Distance between connected textual information

Research has shown that it is easier to make inferences or connections between adjacent or local parts of text than between more remote or global parts of text (Vauras, Kinnunen & Kuusela 1994; Van den Broek 1997. Pretorius 2005, 2006). The criterion of local versus distant position was used to distinguish between connecting information from (i) within a single sentence or from adjacent sentences (local), as opposed to (ii) connecting information across sentences within a paragraph, across paragraphs or across the whole text (global).

4.3.4 Relationship between reader-based and text-based information

Although all reading comprehension relies on the knowledge that a reader brings to a text (the reader's linguistic knowledge, knowledge of texts and literate conventions, general background knowledge, extent of topic-specific knowledge, etc.), reading comprehension in particular engages reader-based knowledge with information in the text being read in particular ways. Raphael et al. (2007) refer in practical terms to reader-based knowledge as In My Head information, and they then further distinguish between Text and Me and On my Own information. More challenging questions that require readers to infer, integrate or evaluate information across a text (i.e. globally) rely more on implicit textual information combined with reader-based information, i.e. Text and Me information. When information to an answer is not found in the text at all it can be categorised as an 'On my Own' response – the question relates specifically to readers' personal experiences, ideas and feelings, and all responses will be unique to particular readers. These are typically the kinds of questions that teachers will pose to learners before reading a text, to activate their background knowledge. For example, if the teacher reads a text about rhinos, oxpeckers and ticks, she might ask the class who has seen such creatures, or enquire whether anyone has suffered from tick-bite fever and what it was like. A reader does not have to read the text to answer this kind of question. These 'On My Own' questions can also be posed during or after reading (*How would you have reacted if this had happened to you?*). Because these kinds of questions are open-ended, auto-experiential and involve no true 'right or wrong' answers, they are more subjective to assess and are seldom asked in formal reading comprehension assessments, and so they will not concern us here.

4.3.5 PIRLS Question Types

The PIRLS question categories are arranged hierarchically from 1-4 in terms of increasing cognitive demands, i.e. from lower to higher order questions. If uncertainty arises as to which category to assign a question, the doubt usually revolves around adjacent categories on the hierarchy rather than those further apart. For example, it is easier to distinguish between literal (1) and integrative (3) or evaluative (4) questions than between literal (1) and straightforward inferences (2), or between straightforward inferences (2) and integrative (3) questions.

The four criteria outlined above help to clarify distinctions between the four PIRLS question types in the following ways:

- (a) clarify the distinction between *Literal and Straightforward Inferences (SI)*, the criterion of explicit information in the text (Right There) was used – readers can put their finger on the answer in the text. The answer is not negotiable - it is unanimous and Right There.

- (b) To clarify the distinction between *Straightforward Inferences (SI)* and *Integrate and Interpret (I&I)* the criterion of local versus distant position was used. If the question involved some thinking and searching to make a connection/inference between adjacent sentences it was classified as SI; if the inference was made across several sentences (i.e. non-adjacent sentences) then it was classified as an I&I, since connecting information globally requires greater effort of integration. In addition, although all inferences rely on some kind of knowledge (language, background, etc), straightforward, local inferences rely more readily on textual information in adjacent chunks of information (In the text), whereas with I&I questions, text information combined with own personal knowledge form the basis for integration and interpretation (Text and Me).
- (c) To clarify the distinction between *Integrate and Interpret (I&I)* and *Evaluate and Examine (E&E)*, the criterion of Text and Me was used to distinguish whether the connection made by the reader was more of interpreting global connections (I&I) or making global connections of an evaluative nature (E&E).

A summary of the application of these criteria is provided in Table 1 below. Detailed examples of how these classification criteria are applied are provided in the Appendix, based on a Xhosa narrative text and questions used in the Story Powered Schools Project.

Table 1: PIRLS question types and classification criteria

PIRLS question type		Criteria
1	Focus on and Retrieve Explicitly Stated Information (Literal)	If readers can put their fingers on the actual answer in the text (or underline the relevant words), then it is a literal question as the answer is Right There.
2	Make Straightforward Inferences (SI)	If readers can infer an answer from two (or more) adjacent sentences, then it is a SI question. They can't quite put their fingers on an actual word or phrase in a single place, but their fingers hover between adjacent sentences as they Think and Search. The information they use to make the connection is largely text based (In the text).
3	Interpret and Integrate Ideas and Information (I&I)	If readers can infer an answer by integrating information from two (or more) sentences across several sentences or across paragraphs (a more global Think and Search), or from bits of information in the text combined with their background knowledge (Text and Me), then it is an I&I question.
4	Evaluate and Examine Content, Language and Textual Elements (E&E)	If readers make a judgement or evaluation that derives from information in the text combined with their background information (Text and Me), then it is an E&E question.

4.3.6 Format used for reading comprehension questions

PIRLS uses two kinds of question format, namely (1) multiple choice questions with 4 options, and (b) constructed response questions, where a space is provided in the assessment booklet for learners to write their answers. Examples of the two formats are shown below, taken from a PIRLS Literacy text that has been released in the public domain, *The Pearl*.

11. Josh is pleased that Reuben has come back. What does Josh do that shows this?



12. Why does Reuben want to move back?

- A He wants to live in peace.
- B He wants to find more pearls.
- C He wants to see his old house.
- D He wants to buy a big boat.

13. Reuben offers to give Josh two things. What are they?



1. _____



2. _____

The two formats can be used for asking any of the four question types. For example, Question 11 above is an *Integrate & Interpret* question, while both MCQ Question 12 and constructed response Question 13 are Literal questions where the information for answering them is explicitly stated in the text.

The constructed response question format enables one to examine aspects of reader writing skills, and also informs teachers about the kinds of instructional classroom practices that will help learners to structure their written answers in ways that are relevant to the question, and in accordance with the length and weighting of the desired response. For example, Question 11 clearly requires an answer that is an argument or reason that needs to be expressed in one or more sentences, while Question 13 requires mention of “two things”, where two words or a phrase suffice (a (new) house and a (shiny big) boat).

4.3.7 Ensuring consistency across languages and texts

In multilingual education contexts like South Africa, it is important to ensure consistency in assessment of text comprehension across different texts and languages. In this regard, it is important that in translating from the source text (ST) to the target text (TT), clear translation criteria and quality control measures be established beforehand and be observed during the translation and monitoring process. The following five criteria should also be adhered to:

- (a) Narrative texts in ST and TT must display the same story structure (setting, characters, problem, resolution). Likewise, information texts must contain the same idea units per paragraph across ST and TT.

- (b) Translations from the ST to TT must have exactly the same layout, viz. the same information per paragraph must occur on the same page, in the same position, and the visuals must be placed in exactly the same positions on each page.
- (c) The same number, format and kinds of questions must be asked in the TT as in the ST.
- (d) Information that is explicitly stated or that is inferred in the ST must likewise be explicitly stated or inferred in the TT. This is to ensure that the same comprehension process occurs in the reading of the texts, regardless of the language.
- (e) The questions must retain their same category status in the ST and TT. In other words, if an inferential question is asked in the ST, then it is important to ensure that the question remains an inferential question in the TT and that the inferred information in the ST has not been rendered explicit in the TT, or vice versa.

5. Measuring the “Right to Read”

For the Right to Read to be operational it should be clear not only what texts need to be used and what questions to ask related to the text but also the level of achievement required in answering those questions. Given that the PIRLS Low International Benchmark (LIB) has been put forward as the evidence-based ‘threshold’ for determining the Right to Read, there are a number of additional metrics worth reporting, which we do so here.

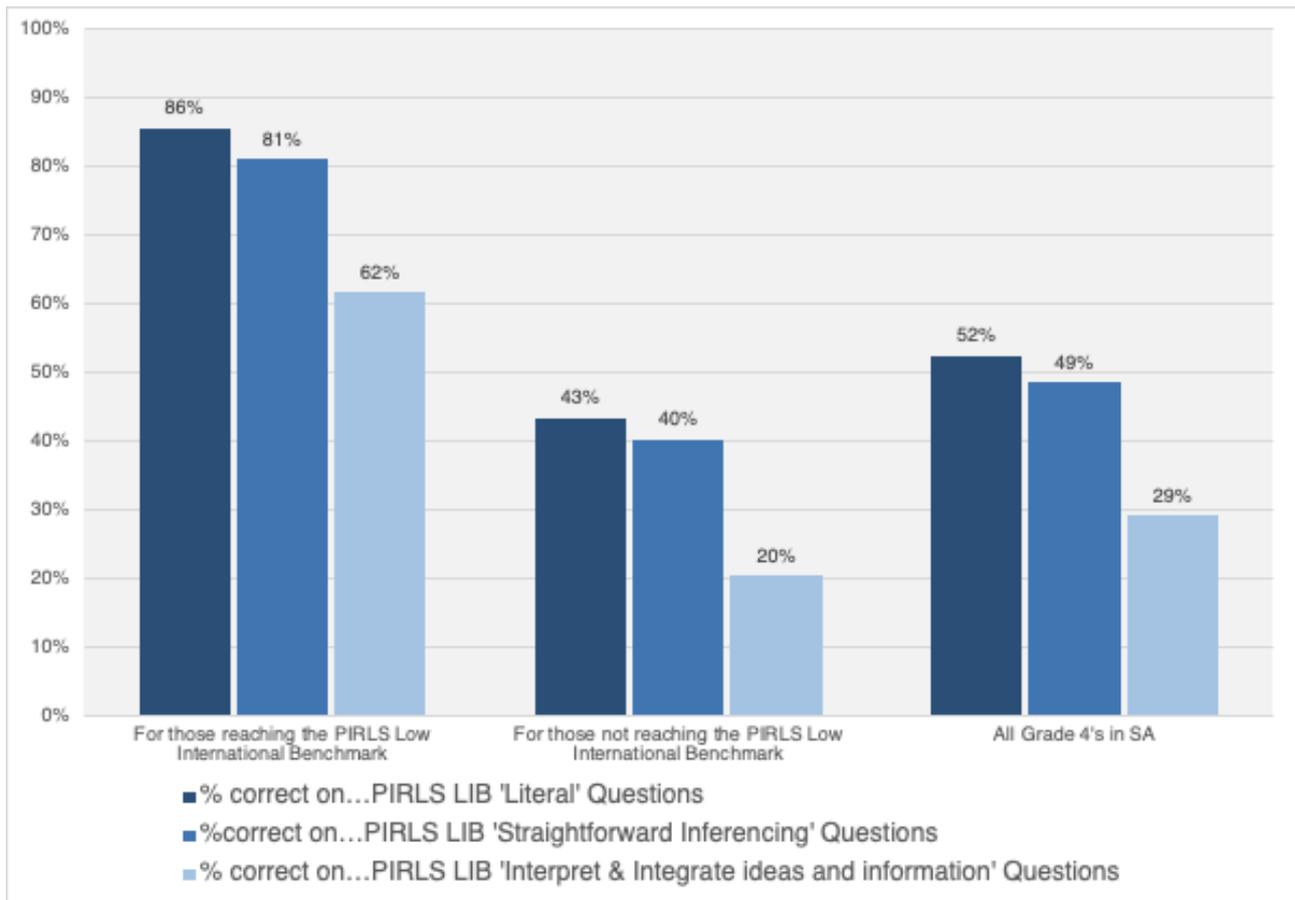
5.1 Achievement level required to ‘read for meaning’: the 80% threshold

Looking at PIRLS 2016, there are 56 questions that were classified as being at the Low International Benchmark level, with the distribution of questions being predominantly in the ‘Literal’ and “Straightforward inferencing categories” (see PIRLS, 2016, and Appendix C for the full breakdown). One can furthermore look at three groups of children in South Africa:

- (a) All Grade 4 children,
- (a) Grade 4 children who do not reach the PIRLS Low International Benchmark,
- (a) Grade 4 children who do reach the PIRLS Low International Benchmark.

This last group can be considered the group of children who have realised the Right to Read. Figure 1 below shows the breakdown of achievement on the three most common types of questions: (1) Literal, (2) Straightforward inferencing, and (3) Interpret and integrate ideas and information. Because the Low International Benchmark is the lowest level of reading achievement there are virtually no questions in the “Evaluate and Examine” category described in the previous section. The exact breakdown of questions can be found in Appendix C of this document.

Figure 1: The classical score achievement on PIRLS 2016 question items for three groups of learners (Note responses are weighted for survey design but not for difficulty of question type).



What is evident is that Grade 4 children (10 year olds) who reached the Low International Benchmark were able to answer at least 80% of ‘Literal’ questions and at least 80% of ‘Straightforward Inferencing’ questions. Given that this is drawn from a rigorous psychometric assessment that was administered to a nationally representative sample of South African Grade 4 learners - and was administered in all 11 official South African languages - this is the most evidence-based threshold currently available for the Right to Read. Put simply, for children to be said to be able to “read for meaning” they should be able to answer at least 80% of literal and straightforward-inferencing questions based on a short and simple fiction or non-fiction text.

5.2 Distribution of question types

In addition to the achievement levels required for different types of questions, one can also draw on the PIRLS questionnaire to extract an empirical guideline regarding the distribution of question types. If learners are to be classified as having met the criteria of “reading for meaning”, they should be able to answer at least 80% of *Literal* questions and 80% of *Straightforward Inferencing* questions correctly. However there remains two important questions:

5.2.1 Distribution of Literal and Inferential questions

The first question is ‘What should the distribution be in terms of the number of Literal questions included in the assessment versus the number of *Straightforward Inferencing* questions? If one reviews the PIRLS Low International Benchmark questions, there are 35 *Literal* and 16 *Straightforward Inferencing* questions (see Appendix C). As a result, our recommendation is that the assessment should include approximately two Literal

questions for each Straightforward Inferencing questions (a ratio of 2:1). For example, if there were six questions in the assessment following the text, four should be literal questions and two should be Straightforward Inferencing questions. We would recommend against asking fewer than six questions.

5.2.2 Distribution of question difficulty

The second question is ‘*What should the distribution be in terms of question difficulty within a question type?*’ (i.e. how many ‘Easy’ Literal questions vs how many ‘Medium’ Literal questions and so on?). In our review of the PIRLS Low International Benchmark questions we ranked questions as either 1, 2 or 3, corresponding to “Very easy”, “Easy” and “Medium” within the Literal and Straightforward Inferencing questions (note that because we are only looking at questions relating to the Low International Benchmark, there are no ‘hard’ questions). These ratings are included in Appendix C. Among the 35 Literal questions the ratio of “*Very-Easy : Easy : Medium*” questions was approximately 40:40:20. (To be specific, of the 35 *Literal* questions, 16 were ‘Very-Easy’, 13 were ‘Easy’ and 6 were ‘Medium’. Among the 16 *Straightforward-Inferencing* questions there were approximately equal numbers of the three types of questions (of the 16 questions the ratio was 6:5:5). Summarising the above we can say that at least two thirds of the questions used to determine the Right to Read (*Literal* and *Straightforward Inferencing questions*) should be classified as either ‘*Very-easy*’ or ‘*Easy*.’ While it is true that these evaluations are somewhat subjective, with the help of the exemplar texts and questions, as well as the analysis rubric included in Appendix C, we believe that the difficulty level can be standardised across different assessments.

In contrast to assessing reading, the research around assessing writing is less developed in South Africa and internationally. For example, there is no international assessment program for writing analogous to PIRLS. For that reason, we do not put forward specific empirical thresholds (like the Low International Benchmark, or the 80% threshold described above) for writing. To do so would be somewhat arbitrary. Notwithstanding the above, it is still possible to propose a framework for assessing writing, as well as nascent ‘narrative’ thresholds of beginning writing. We provide this in the next section.

6. Framework for assessing writing

Reading and writing are complementary and recursive processes, which provide the foundation for literacy development. Whereas reading makes it possible for children to take meaning from a text, writing makes it possible for them to create and communicate meaning in a written form (Luongo-Orlando, 2010; Ortlieb, 2014). Writing is essential for many types of learning, and in school and university most learning is assessed through the medium of writing. The inability to write proficiently is therefore a barrier to academic progress and self-expression.

Writing behaviours are developed when children are exposed to different kinds of written texts early in their lives. However, for children learning to read and write in African languages, limited access to a variety of books written in their languages impacts on both their reading and writing skills. It is important, therefore, that suitable books in African languages are made available to children.

Extensive research has been conducted on the development of writing from emergent literacy in the early years right through to the proficient stage, particularly in the English language (Daffern & Mackenzie, 2015; Miller & MacKenna, 2016). Benchmarks are set and standards stipulated in these studies to assess what a learner should know and be able to do at the end of each phase of writing development. These standards are generic and have largely been developed in English. Although there are commonalities in the purposes of texts and forms that writing can take, differences do occur in the way these are realised across languages. Very little research has been carried out in South Africa involving the assessment of children's writing. We urgently need contextually appropriate writing benchmarks for all languages taught in South Africa.

This should be borne in mind when considering the proposed assessment indicators outlined below, which are adapted from the "First steps in writing map of development" (Department of Education, Western Australia, 2013). The indicators have been adapted to describe a minimum level of achievement for a 10-year old South African child. An exemplar of an *Assessment Guide for Writing to Describe* from First Steps is provided in Appendix B.

6.1 Assessing writing proficiency

When determining whether a child can write at a basic level one would typically review five aspects of writing: (a) how they use texts, (b) their contextual understanding, (c) use of writing conventions, (d) handwriting skills, and (e) ability to follow the writing process. The proficiency of a child at the "basic" level at each of these sub-components is described below:

6.1.1 Use of texts

- (a) Recognises a small range of different text structures (e.g. description, recount, narrative, instructions, information reports, praise poems, riddles, nursery rhymes).
- (b) Writes a small range of familiar texts (e.g. a description).
- (c) Organises writing in simple ways (e.g. uses headings in informational texts).
- (d) Uses language appropriately for different text types (e.g. dialogue/direct speech in narrative text; time connectives such as first, *next*, then in English recounts).

6.1.2 Contextual understanding

- (a) Explains the purpose of a small range of familiar text forms (e.g. understands that the purpose of a riddle is to entertain).
- (b) Talks about the purpose of a piece of writing and the ideas to be included.
- (c) Explains why characters and events are presented in a particular way when composing literary texts.
- (d) Explains why people or ideas are represented in a particular way in informational texts.

6.1.3 Conventions of writing

- (a) Spells and uses a small bank of known words correctly.
- (b) Uses knowledge of phonics to spell new words: Understands word division rules (e.g. *ndiyahamba/ndi-ya-hamba* in isiXhosa) and morphology (e.g. in Nguni languages: *um-*, *aba-*, *isi-*, *izi-*, *ili-*). Knows letter patterns and the sounds they represent (e.g. */nca/*, */ngca/*, *nkca/* in isiXhosa).
- (c) Writes simple sentences using correct grammar and punctuation.
- (d) Links ideas using conjunctions (e.g. *ngoba*, *kodwa-* in isiZulu).
- (e) Has some understanding of how to group sentences in paragraphs.
- (f) Uses common punctuation marks: capital letters, full stops, question marks, exclamation marks, commas.

6.1.4 Handwriting skills

- (a) Forms letters correctly in joined script.
- (b) Observes conventions of print: consistent size of letters and spacing between words and paragraphs.
- (c) Writes fluently and legibly.

6.1.5 The writing process

- (a) Brainstorms and plans with the teacher what they are going to write.
- (b) Writes texts independently or in collaboration with peers.
- (c) Creates a text that can be shared with others (i.e. a published text).

7. Inclusive education

7.1 The right to read and write for learners with disabilities

South Africa is committed to inclusive education which means that *all* learners must be supported, and their learning needs must be met (DoE 2001). Currently, people with a disability have lower literacy rates than people without disabilities (UNESCO, 2018) and it is important to ensure that the Right to Read and Write is also realised by learners with disabilities. A range of barriers to learning may impact a learner's ability to learn to read and write, including disabilities such as sensory impairments (low vision and hearing impairment); various physical impairments; specific learning difficulties (like dyslexia); and neurodevelopmental conditions like autism and intellectual impairment. This may mean providing adjustments and accommodations to enable learners to participate “on an equal basis with others” (Article 2, CRPD, UN, 2006). These adjustments may be needed to the curriculum, assessment tasks and Learning and Teaching Support Materials (DBE, 2014).

7.2 Examples of adjustments for learners with disabilities

Learners who are blind or have low vision, for example, might need LTSM in Braille, a Braille writer, and instruction in reading and writing in Braille. Or, access and participation might be enabled by enlarged printed texts, magnifying devices, or screen readers. Learners with Cerebral Palsy, an upper limb difference, or other impairment that might affect handwriting, might need a simple adjustment like a pencil grip, or they might need an assistive device such as a keyboard or touch screen, or speech-to-text software. Such specialised and individualised assistive devices would usually be accessed through a special school/resource centre, or full service school, using the processes outlined in the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support policy (DBE, 2014). Recent research also shows the ongoing inadequacies for disability support in mainstream schools (Deghaye, 2021). Learners with dyslexia may need more intensive reading instruction, and may benefit from listening to audio texts as they follow the written text. Some learners would need their reading comprehension assessed orally. Occupational therapists from the District Based Support Team may be consulted to assist where learners have difficulties with motor or perceptual skills that affect their reading and writing.

8. Resources for reading and writing (LTSM)

The Right to Read depends on children in the Foundation Phase having access to a range of suitable Learner and Teacher Support Materials (LTSM). In other words, a necessary, if not sufficient, condition for children to read and write with meaning by the age of ten, is access to a minimum set of appropriate LTSM. The minimum Foundation Phase LTSM proposed for the Right to Read and Write prescribes the types of resources and the minimum number of each type of resource for each of Grades 1, 2 and 3. The Braille editions of all materials listed below must be printed to enable access and participation of blind learners. Furthermore, given the significant cost savings of using Open Access materials, it is the view of the authors of this background paper that quality Open Educational Resources (OER) should be prioritized.

8.1 Overview of key materials

8.1.1 Lesson Plans

The list of minimum resources begins with Lesson Plans. It is proposed that teachers have lesson plans for each of the 40 weeks of the school year (an average of 10 weeks per term). Lesson plans should be aligned to the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) and the National Framework for the Teaching of Reading in African Languages in the Foundation Phase. Lesson plans should provide weekly and daily routines that allow for flexibility and choice in selecting content from the DBE Rainbow Workbooks and other available LTSM. The lesson plans should also build on children’s cultural, community and linguistic repertoires as well as acknowledge learner diversity and accommodate the full range of learning needs. All Foundation Phase teachers, School Management Teams and Subject Advisors must have an understanding of the purpose of the lesson plans and must be trained in the approach and use of the lesson plans.

8.1.2 DBE Rainbow Workbooks

The next resource in the Foundation Phase LTSM minimum package is the DBE Rainbow Workbooks. For each of the past 10 years, the DBE has prepared, printed and delivered two language workbooks for every learner in Grades 1, 2 and 3 respectively. This “common” resource is essential to ensure that each child has a minimum set of their ‘own’ books. These books should reflect the latest research in the teaching and learning of reading and writing.

8.1.3 Phonics, Sight Words, Vocabulary and Handwriting

The minimum package includes a grade-appropriate annual phonics programme with alphabet and phonics charts, flashcards, vocabulary lists, flashcards, sight word lists, hand-writing charts, as well as vocabulary and conversation posters.

8.1.4 Books in the Home Language of Learners

Finally, the minimum package proposes a range of books for every Foundation Phase classroom and every Foundation Phase learner. Every classroom should have 20 teacher-led Shared Reading texts (Big Book titles), 40 Read Aloud texts, and 80 levelled library books for individual reading. All Grade 1 and 2 learners

should receive two anthologies of graded reader texts per year (20 titles per anthology so 40 titles for the year, one per week) for Group Guided Reading, Paired Reading and Independent Reading. These readers should be a carefully structured series: developmental, decodable, phonically sequential, and of varying levels of complexity. All Grade 1, 2 and 3 learners should receive graded reader texts in their home language. These readers should include a minimum of 40 titles (fiction and non-fiction), as well as different genres of texts. Learners must be allowed to take the graded readers home.

Table 2: Grade-specific Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) for reading and writing

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson plans for 40 weeks • 2 DBE Rainbow Workbooks for each learner • 1 annual phonics programme • 1 set of alphabet cards (frieze) or chart • 1 set of phonics cards • 1 set of phonics flashcard words and wordlists • 1 set of sight word flashcards and wordlists • 1 core vocabulary list of words • Print handwriting charts • 10 vocabulary and conversation posters/charts • 80 classroom levelled library books • 20 Big Book texts – one every two weeks • Two anthologies of graded readers (for Term 1+2 and Term 3+4) with 20 stories per anthology (40 titles in total, one per week) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson plans for 40 weeks • 2 DBE Rainbow Workbooks for each learner • 1 annual phonics programme • 1 set of phonics cards • 1 set of phonics flashcard words and wordlists • 1 set of sight word flashcards and wordlists • 1 core vocabulary list of words • Print and cursive handwriting charts • 10 vocabulary and conversation posters/charts • 80 classroom levelled library books • 20 Big Book texts – one every two weeks • Two anthologies of graded readers (for Term 1+2 and Term 3+4) with 20 stories per anthology (40 titles in total, one per week) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson plans for 40 weeks • 2 DBE Rainbow Workbooks for each learner • 1 annual phonics programme • 1 set of sight word flashcards and wordlists • 1 core vocabulary list of words • Cursive handwriting charts • 10 vocabulary and conversation wall posters/ charts • 80 classroom levelled library books • 20 Big Book texts – one every two weeks • Two anthologies of graded readers (for Term 1+2 and Term 3+4) with 20 stories per anthology (40 titles in total, one per week)
Writing	<p>Writing materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blank paper, Unlined (blank) exercise books/jotters, Lined exercise books, writing strips • Sand trays, Thick wax crayons, HB pencils, Pencil grips for those who need them • Examples of different text types, both literary and informational; Writing frames to support the writing of different kinds of sentences and text types; Vocabulary charts; Word wall; Personal word book; Dictionaries; Relevant assistive devices for learners with disabilities 	<p>Writing materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blank paper, Unlined (blank) exercise books/jotters, Lined exercise books, writing strips • Wax crayons, , HB pencils, Pencil grips for those who need them • Examples of different text types, both literary and informational; Writing frames to support the writing of different kinds of sentences and text types; Vocabulary charts; Word wall; Personal word book; Dictionaries; Relevant assistive devices for learners with disabilities 	<p>Writing materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blank paper, Unlined (blank) exercise, Lined exercise books, books/jotters, writing strips • Wax crayons, HB pencils, Pencil grips for those who need them • Examples of different text types, both literary and informational; Writing frames to support the writing of different kinds of sentences and text types; Vocabulary charts; Word wall; Personal word book; Dictionaries; Relevant assistive devices for learners with disabilities

8.2 Providing the minimum Foundation Phase LTSM package to schools

While it is true that the vast majority of Foundation Phase classes are not equipped with the above minimum package of Foundation Phase LTSM, there are a number of reasons why this minimum package of resources could be rapidly made available to all Foundation Phase classrooms. The most important of these is that most of these resources do already exist, are Open Access (and therefore relatively cheap to print), and can be distributed via existing distribution channels.

While some of the items listed above are not available in all languages (for example 80 grade-specific library books), the majority of these resources do already exist in all 11 languages. Specifically, the Rainbow Work-

books, lesson plans, phonics programmes, alphabet and phonics charts/cards/friezes/ flashcards, sight word lists and flashcards, vocabulary lists, handwriting charts, Big Books, and graded readers. Furthermore the DBE has produced, printed and delivered workbooks to nearly 4 million Foundation Phase learners in South Africa every year over the past 10 years. The capacity to print and deliver other LTSM is clearly available. The possibility of utilising Open Access materials (for example the Vula Bula series) should also be explored since this is a viable way of getting high-quality materials to all learners in their Home Language and within existing budget constraints.

Age-appropriate books are available in all languages but there may not be sufficient titles in some of the languages. It is proposed that an audit of all available Big Books, library books, graded readers/anthologies is undertaken and the cost of producing these established³.

³ In 2019 and 2020, the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDOE) provided graded reader anthologies – consisting of 16 to 20 stories – to every Foundation Phase learner in the province (500 000) at a cost of R15 per reader. The readers were delivered at no cost with the Rainbow Workbooks.

9. Postscript

The Constitution of South Africa was, and is, one of the landmark achievements of our young democracy. It sets out the rights and obligations of citizens and those we elect to govern us, as well as charting a course to a non-racial society founded on ‘human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms.’ While the Constitution is clear and unequivocal - everyone has the right to a basic education - it is the ongoing task of civil society, government, legislature, and the judiciary to explicate what that means. Rights are not self-fulfilling, nor obligations self-evident.

It has been the aim of this document to put forward a defensible explication of one core component of the right to a basic education, and that is the ‘right to read and write.’ It is our contention here that no child can reach their full potential without being able to read and write for meaning and pleasure. We believe that if that is the case then the onus is on us to find a way to measure this right and whether it has been realized.

By drawing on a wealth of experience and research we have attempted to put forward an evidence-based argument for what it means to read and write at a basic level. It is the role of the Executive branch of government to decide whether it agrees with the above interpretation of this component of the right to a basic education. And it is the role of the Judiciary to adjudicate whether the Executive’s actions and interpretations of this right are in keeping with the text, spirit, and ethos of the Constitution.

The Right to Read and Write:

“Every child in South Africa has the right to read at a basic level, in their home language, by the age of 10. That is to say, they can read and understand a short and simple text and answer 80% of the literal and straight-forward inferential questions they are asked that are based on that text. Approximately 60-80% of these questions should be classified as ‘Very easy’ or ‘Easy’ questions.

“Every child has the right to write at a basic level, in their home language, by the age of 10. That is to say that they can express themselves in writing by using a collection of simple and related sentences with correct grammar and punctuation.”

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11. Appendix A

11.1 Analysis of Question types in texts used

In the section below, the questions used in the *Ant and Dove* narrative are analysed, and reasons for their classification provided. Because the text and questions were intended for Grade 3 and 4 learners, no E&E questions were posed.

Table 2: Dove and Ant (isiZulu story given below)

isiZulu	English translation
UJuba noNtuthwane	Ant and Dove
Ngelinye ilanga kwakusuku kushisa kakhulu. UJuba noNtuthwane behlezi emthunzini wesihlahla.	One day it was a very hot day. Ant and Dove were sitting in the shade of a tree.
“Ngomile,” kumemeza uNtuthwane.	“I’m thirsty,” Ant said aloud.
“Yini ungazitholeli amanzi okuphuza emfuleni?” Kubuza uJuba esihlahleni esiseduze nehlati. “Usize uqaphela ungaphonseki phakathi emanzini.”	“Why don’t you get a drink of water from the river?” cooed Dove from a nearby tree. “Just be careful. Don’t fall in.”
UNtuthwane wagijima waya emfuleni waqala ukuphuza amanzi. Ngokuphazima kweso, kwaqhamuka umoya onamandla wavunguza wadudulela uNtuthwane emanzini. “Ngisizeni bo! Ngiyaminza!” Kukhala uNtuthwane.	Ant ran to the river and began to drink. Suddenly a strong wind blew Ant into the water. “Help me!” cried Ant. “I’ve fallen in!”
UJuba wabe azi ukuthi kufanele asize uNtuthwane ngokushesha. Wathatha iqabunga eliwe esihlahleni waliqathaza emanzini. UNtuthwane wagibela kulo wantanta ngokuphepha waze waphumela endaweni eyomile.	Dove realised he had to help Ant quickly. He broke off some leaves from the tree. Dove then flew over the river and dropped them into the water. Ant climbed onto a leaf and floated safely to dry land.
Emva kwezinsuku ezimbili uNtuthwane wabona umzingeli efuna ukubamba uJuba. UNtuthwane wayazi ukuthi kufanele asize uJuba ngokushesha. Ngakho-ke wagibela onyaweni lomzingeli wamncinza eqakaleni. “Eshu!” kukhala umzingeli. UJuba wezwa umzingeli ekhala wandiza wabaleka wayocasha esihlahleni. [105 words]	Two days later Ant saw a hunter trying to catch Dove. He crawled up the hunter’s leg and bit his ankle. “Ouch!” cried the hunter. Dove heard the hunter and flew away to safety in a tree. [148 words]
Sepedi	isiXhosa
Tšhošane le Leeba	UMbovane noHotyazana
Ka letšatši le lengwe go be go fiša kudu. Tšhošane le Leeba di be di dutše ka fase ga morithi wa mohlare.	Ngaminazana ithile eyayishushu, uMbovane noHobe babehleli emthunzini womthi omkhulu bencokola.
“Ke swerwe ke lenyora,” Tšhošane ya realo ka go hlaboša lentšu.	“Andisenxanwe,” watsho ethethela phezulu uMbovane.
“Ke ka lebaka la eng o sa ye go nwa meetse ka nokeng?” Leeba la kuruetša le le godimo ga mohlare wa kgauswi. “O hlokomele. O se ke wa wela ka gare.”	“Kutheni ungaseli kula manzi omlambo nje? Wabuza uHobe esemthini. “Kodwa uqaphela ungatyibiliki uwele emanzini.”
Tšhošane e ile ya kitimela ka nokeng ya re go fihla ya thoma go nwa meetse. Ka ponyo ya leihlo, moya wo maatla wa ubula Tšhošane wa e lahlela ka meetseng. “Nthušeng!” Tšhošane ya goeletša. “Ke wetše ka meetseng!”	Kwangoko uMbovane wabaleka ukuya kusela emlanjeni. Ngesiqophe kwavuka umoya omkhulu owamphephethekisa waya kutshona emanzini. “Yhoo ndafa, ndincedni ndiyatshona!”
Leeba le ile la elelwa gore le swanetše go thuša Tšhošane ka pela. Le ile la thokga matlakala a mohlare. Gape, Leeba le ile la fofa ka godimo ga noka gomme la lahlela matlakala ka gare ga meetse. Tšhošane e ile ya namela godimo ga letlakala gomme ya phaphamala ka polokego go tšwela ka ntle ga meetse.	UHobe weva isikhalo sikaMbovane waqonda kwangoko ukuba umhlobo wakhe ufuna uncedo. Wathi qwaba-qwaba isebe lomthi waza wabhabha nalo ukuya phezu komlambo. Akufika apho waliphosa ukuze uMbovane aqabele kulo. Wenza njalo ke uMbovane wadada ngelo sebe ukuphumela ngaphandle emhlabeni owomileyo.
Ka morago ga matšatši a mabedi, Tšhošane e ile ya bona motsomi a leka go swara Leeba. E ile ya namela leoto la motsomi gomme ya mo loma mo kokoilaneng. “Ijoh!” Motsomi a goeletša a lla ga bohloko. Leeba le ile la kwa motsomi ge a goeletša gomme la fofela mohlareng wo mongwe gore le bolokege. [220 words]	Emva kweentsuku ezimbini wathi uMbovane ezihambela, wabona umzingeli etola efuna ukugibisela uHobe. Wachwechwa wenyuka ngomlenze womzingeli wamthi tswii ukumluma eqatheni. “Shuu!” wakhala umzingeli walibala ngoHobe. UHobe weva isikhalo somzingeli waqonda ukuba usinde engozini, wabhabhela phezulu emthini. [148 words]

Question types

	Question	Desired answer	Question type	Xhosa: Where does information for answer come from?	Sepedi: Where does information for answer come from?
1.	Xhosa: Zeziphi izilwanyana ezikweli bali? Sepedi: Na kanegelo ye e bolela ka diphoofole dife? [Which animals are in the story]	ihobe nembovane Leeba le Tšhošane [Dove and ant]	Lit	Both animal names appear in title and in S2. uHobe occurs x 4 in text uMbovane occurs x 6 in text Right there	Both animal names appear in title and in S2. Leeba occurs x 3 in text Tšhošane occurs x 6 in text Right there
2.	Xhosa: Ngobani abalinganiswa abaphambili kweli bali? Sepedi: Na baanegwathwadi ke bomang mo kanegelong ye? [Who are the main characters of this story?]	IHobe neMbovane Leeba le Tšhošane	I&I	Although the two names are in the title and in adjacent S2, they are not explicitly called abalinganiswa in the story. The listener uses background knowledge about narrative texts to infer that the animals are the story characters (Text and Me).	Although the two names are in the title and in adjacent S2, they are not explicitly called bomang mo kanegelong in the story. The listener uses background knowledge about narrative texts to infer that the animals are the story characters (Text and Me).
3.	Xhosa: Kwakutheni ukuze uHobe noMbovane bahlale phantsi komthi? Sepedi: Ke ka lebaka la eng Tšhošane le Leeba di ile tša dula ka fase ga mohlare? [Why did Ant and Dove sit under a tree?]	Babesemthunzini kuba kwakushushu. Di be di dutše morithing wa mohlare ka gobane go be go fiša. [They were in the shade because it was a hot day.]	SI	The first sentence (S1) states: Ngenye imini kwakushushu kakhulu. S1 provides the reason, via a backward inference from S2, why they are under a tree. (A Search and Think inference made between adjacent sentences. The relevant information for making the connection is In the Text.)	The first sentence (S1) states: Ka letšatši le lengwe go be go fiša kudu. S1 provides the reason, via a backward inference from S2, why they are under a tree. (A Search and Think inference made between adjacent sentences. The relevant information is In the Text.)
4.	Xhosa: uHobe wacebisa uMbovane ukuba awafumane phi amanzi? Sepedi: Na Leeba le ile la šišinya gore Tšhošane e yo hwetša meetse kae? [Where did Dove suggest Ant get some water?]	Emlanjeni Ka nokeng [The river]	Lit	The answer is Right There: “Kutheni ungayi kusela amanzi emlanjeni nje?” waphendula uHobe	The answer is Right There: “Ke ka lebaka la eng o sa ye go nwa meetse ka nokeng?” Leeba la kuruetša le le godimo ga mohlare wa kgauswi.
5.	Xhosa: Kwakutheni ukuze uMbovane awele emlanjeni? Sepedi: Ke ka lebaka la eng Tšhošane e wetše ka nokeng? [Why did Ant fall into the river?]	Umoya omkhulu wamvuthelela emanzini Moya wo maatla o e ubutše wa e lahlela ka meetseng. [A strong wind blew him into the river.]	Lit	The reason (and result) are given Right There in the same sentence: Ngephanyazo umoya omkhulu wamvuthelela uMbovane emanzini.	The reason (and result) are given Right There in the same sentence: Ka ponyo ya leihlo, moya wo maatla wa ubula Tšhošane gomme ya wela ka meetseng.

6.	<p>Xhosa: Wawisa ntoni uHobe emanzini?</p> <p>Sepedi: Na Leeba le lahletše eng ka meetseng?</p> <p>[What did the Dove drop into the water?]</p>	<p>Wawisa igqabi emanzini (ukuze uMbovane anyuke kulo angarhaxwa)</p> <p>Le lahletše letlakala ka meetseng (gore Tšhošane e kgone go namela godimo ga lona, e se ke ya nwelela)</p> <p>[He dropped a leaf into the water (so that Ant can climb on it and not drown)]</p>	Lit	<p>The leaf (igqabi) that Dove dropped into the river for Ant is mentioned x 3 in the text – Right There</p>	<p>The leaf (lahletše) that Dove dropped into the river for Ant is mentioned x 3 in the text – Right There</p>
7.	<p>Xhosa: Ungayichaza njani ukuba uHobe wayemkhathalele uMbovane?</p> <p>Sepedi: Na o bona bjang gore Leeba le rata Tšhošane?</p> <p>[How would you tell that Dove cared about Ant?]</p>	<p>Waxelela uMbovane ukuba alumke emlanjeni / Wasindisa uMbovane ekutshoneni</p> <p>Le eleditše Tšhošane gore e hlokomele kua nokeng/ Le phološitše Tšhošane gore e se ke ya nwelela</p> <p>[He told Ant to be careful at the river/He saved Ant from drowning]</p>	I&I	<p>Readers draw on their understanding of the world (friends care for/look out for one another) in relation to events across the text (Dove warned Ant to be careful/ Dove saved Ant) to interpret Dove's feelings and intentions (he likes Ant; he helps Ant).</p> <p>The Text and Me inferences are made across non-adjacent sentences.</p>	<p>Readers draw on their understanding of the world (friends care for/look out for one another) in relation to events across the text (Dove warned Ant to be careful/ Dove saved Ant) to interpret Dove's feelings and intentions (he likes Ant; he helps Ant).</p> <p>The Text and Me inferences are made across non-adjacent sentences.</p>
8.	<p>Xhosa: Ngubani owayefuna ukulimaza/ ukubulala uHobe?</p> <p>Sepedi: Ke mang yo a bego a nyaka go kweša Leeba bohloko / go le bolaya?</p> <p>[Who wanted to hurt/kill the Dove?]</p>	<p>Ngumzingeli</p> <p>Motsomi</p> <p>[The hunter]</p>	SI	<p>Reference to the hunter intending to catch the Dove requires an inference made within the same sentence that catching an animal in the hunting context implies hurting/killing it: ...uMbovane wabona umzingeli ezama ukubamba uHobe</p>	<p>Reference to the hunter intending to hurt the Dove is made Right There within the same sentence ... Tšhošane e ile ya bona motsomi a leka go swara Leeba.</p>
9.	<p>Xhosa: uMbovane mncinci kakhulu. Wammisa njani umzingeli ukuba angalimazi uHobe?</p> <p>Sepedi: Tšhošane ke ye nnyane kudu. Na e kgonne bjang go thibela motsomi gore a se ke a kweša Leeba bohloko?</p> <p>[Ant is very small. How did he stop the hunter from hurting Dove?]</p>	<p>Waluma umzingeli emlenzeni ukumphazamisa esenzela ukuba abhabhe uHobe</p> <p>E lomile motsomi mo kokoilaneng go mo gakantšha gore Leeba le kgone go tšhaba</p> <p>[He bit the hunter on the leg to distract him so Dove could fly away]</p>	SI	<p>Inferring how one event leads to another (Hunter wants to hurt Dove> Ant distracts Hunter> Dove has chance to escape) in adjacent sentences: uMbovane wabona umzingeli ezama ukubamba uHobe. uMbovane wanyuka ngomlenze womzingeli waza wamluma eqatheni. Because the question explicitly states the Ant's intention, this is more of a Search and Think inference rather than a Text and Me inference (I&I). The relevant information for making the connection is In the Text.</p>	<p>Inferring how one event leads to another (Hunter wants to hurt Dove> Ant distracts Hunter> Dove has chance to escape) in adjacent sentences: Tšhošane e ile ya bona motsomi a leka go swara Leeba. E ile ya namela leoto la motsomi gomme ya mo loma kokoilane. Because the question explicitly states the Ant's intention, this is more of a Search and Think inference rather than a Text and Me inference (I&I). The relevant information for making the connection is In the Text.</p>

10.	<p>Xhosa: Wohluke njani uHobe kuMbovane?</p> <p>Sepedi: Na Leeba le fapana bjang le Tšhošane?</p> <p>[How is Dove different from Ant?]</p>	<p>UHobe yintaka yona imbovane sisinambuzane / ihobe inkulu kwaye imbovane ncinci kakhulu</p> <p>Leeba ke nonyana, Tšhošane ke khunkhwane / Leeba ke le legolo mola Tšhošane e le ye nnyane kudu.</p> <p>[Dove is a bird and Ant is an insect/ Dove is big and Ant is very small]</p>	I&I	<p>Readers draw on their knowledge of the world (ants and doves) in relation to events across the text (friends helping each other) to integrate information. They make generalisations based on Text and Me.</p>	<p>Readers draw on their knowledge of the world (ants and doves) in relation to events across the text (friends helping each other) to integrate information. They make generalisations based on Text and Me.</p>
11	<p>Xhosa: Emva kokufunda ibali, ucinga ukuba abantu ababini abahluka kakhulu bangaba ngabahlobo? Ndixelele ukuba kutheni ucinga njalo.</p> <p>Sepedi: Morago ga go bala kanegelo ye, na o nagana gore batho ba babedi ba ba fapanago kudu e ka ba bagwera? Ke ka lebaka la eng o nagana bjalo?</p> <p>[After reading the story, do you think the two people who are totally different can be friends? Tell me why you think so.]</p>	<p>Kwibali uHobe noMBovane bohluKile kodwa banokuba ngabahlobo, bayancedana ngexesha abadingana ngalo.</p> <p>Mo kanegelong Leeba le Tšhošane di a fapana fela di kgonA go ba bagwera; di a thušana ka dinako tšohle ge go nyakega</p> <p>[In the story Dove and Ant are different but they can still be friends; they help each other in times of need.]</p>	I&I	<p>The first part of the question provides the theme of the story. Readers draw on their experience of the world (diversity within society) in relation to events across the text (friends helping each other in need) to integrate information across the text and link it to the stated theme. They come to conclusions about (human) behaviour based on Text and Me.</p> <p>(NB: If the first part of the question had not framed the theme, this (i.e. What is the main idea or theme in this story?) would have been a more advanced E&E question.)</p>	<p>The first part of the question provides the theme of the story. Readers draw on their experience of the world (diversity within society) in relation to events across the text (friends helping each other in need) to integrate information across the text and link it to the stated theme. They come to conclusions about (human) behaviour based on Text and Me.</p> <p>(NB: If the first part of the question had not framed the theme, this would have been a more advanced E&E question.)</p>

12. Appendix B: Assessment Guide for Writing

Assessing Writing to Describe			
Students are in the stage where they display most of the bulleted points.			
	Beginning Stage	Developing Stage	Consolidating Stage
	Can state the purpose and audience of texts to be composed and includes basic organisational features of simple forms used to describe.	Is aware of the purpose and audience when composing texts and uses a partial organisational framework of a small range of forms used to describe.	Considers the purpose and audience to select specific vocabulary and uses appropriate organisational frameworks to compose a variety of forms used to describe.
Focus on Assessing	<p>The writer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> shares information about a known topic writes an observation and comment focuses on a specific part of a whole class of things, e.g. 'My cat eats meat' not 'Cats eat meat'. describes features that are not necessarily important or relevant groups similar information together writes a concluding statement that is a personal comment rather than a summary, e.g. I like cats. uses personal or subjective language, e.g. 'I really like...' uses simple vocabulary, e.g. big, little uses a limited range of signal words, e.g. and 	<p>The writer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides limited factual information about a given topic uses a limited range of forms and formats, e.g. report, chart introduces the topic by providing a classification that may lack precision, e.g. Dogs are animals. gives limited general information, e.g. size, colour, habitat includes information under headings writes a concluding statement with some attempt to summarise what has been written is beginning to use objective language uses some technical or subject-specific vocabulary is beginning to use timeless present tense e.g. are, hunt uses simple words to signal compare and contrast, e.g. like, as big as... 	<p>The writer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides detailed factual information about a given topic uses a variety of forms and formats, e.g. description, slide show, encyclopaedia entry introduces the topic by providing a precise classification or generalisation includes details that are clearly related to the topic and elaborates on special features groups related information into paragraphs introduced by a topic sentence writes a summary or concluding paragraph that reiterates the key points and may include an evaluative comment, e.g. This invention will change the course of history. maintains objective language throughout uses technical and subject-specific vocabulary appropriately uses timeless present tense, e.g. fly, live, suckle uses appropriate signal words to compare, contrast, define and classify e.g. are similar to, belong to
		<p>The writer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides information that is selected, sorted and synthesised adapts forms and formats for a target audience writes an introduction that successfully classifies or generalises information essential to the subject or topic includes detailed information selected because of its relevance to the subject or topic organises information into paragraphs that link cohesively to compose a coherent text writes a concluding paragraph that accurately summarises the main points uses formal objective style to suit purpose and audience, e.g. humanity faces increasing... the family is... chooses precise technical and subject specific language to suit purpose and audience, e.g. carnivorous, mammals, pollutants maintains consistent use of tense throughout writes cohesively using a wide range of signal words to compare, contrast, define and classify, e.g. more powerful than, nevertheless 	
Focus on Teaching	Familiarising, Analysing, Modelling, Sharing, Guiding and Applying See pages 30–37 and 43–45		Familiarising, Analysing, Modelling, Sharing, Guiding and Applying See pages 30–37 and 46–47

From *First Steps Writing Resource Book* (Department of Education Western Australia, 2013:40)

Ukuhlola Ukubhala ukuze uChaze
Abafundi bakwinqanaba apho babonisa uninzi lwamanqaku akhankanyiweyo

<p>Inqanaba eliqalayo Uyakwazi ukuxela injongo nabafundi beetekisi eziza kuyilwa kwaye ziquka iimpawu zolungiselelo ezisisiseko zeendlela ezilula ezisetyenziswayo ukuchaza</p>	<p>Inqanaba elikhulayo Uyayazi injongo nabafundi xa eyila itekisi kwaye usebenzisa inxenye yesakhelo solungiselelo lweendlela ezimbalwa ezisetyenziswayo ukuchaza</p>	<p>Inqanaba elibethelelayo Ugqala injongo nabafundi ukukhetha isigama esithile kwaye usebenzisa izakhelo zolungiselelo ezifanelekileyo ukuze kuyilwe iindlela eziliqela ezisetyenziswayo ukuchaza</p>	<p>Inqanaba elandisayo Uyila iindlela ezisetyenziswayo ekuchazeni ngokukhetha isigama nokusebenzisa izakhelo zolungiselelo ukuze zilungele imeko yokubhala.</p>
<p>Umbhali:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> wabelana ngolwazi olumalunga nesihloko esaziwayo ubhala akuqaphelayo aze aphawule ngako ugxila kwinxenye ethile yeqela lezinto, umz. 'Ikati yam itya inyama' hayi ukuthi 'likati zitya inyama'. Uchaza iimpawu ezingabalulekanga uqokelela ulwazi olufanayo ndawonye ubhala inkcazelo equkumbelayo engeyimbono yakhe kunesishwankathelo, umz. Ndiyazithanda iikati. usebenzisa ulwimi lwakhe, umz. 'Ndiyayithanda kakhulu ...' usebenzisa isigama esilula, umz. inkulu, incinci usebenzisa uluhlu lwamagama abalulekileyo, umz. kwaye 	<p>Umbhali:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> unika ulwazi oluncinci malunga nesihloko esinikiweyo usebenzisa uluhlu olungephi lweendlela zokubhala nobume bencwadi, umz. ingxelo, itshathi wazisa isihloko ngokunika uhlelo olunokungachaneke ngokupheleleyo, umz. Izinja zizilwanyana. unika ulwazi jikelele oluncinci, umz. ubukhulu, umbala, indawo yokuhlala iquka ulwazi oluphantsi kwezihloko ubhala inkcazelo egqibelayo eshwankathela okubhaliweyo uqalisa ukusebenzisa ulwimi olungaqhutywa luluvo usebenzisa isigama sobugcisa okanye sesifundo esithile uqalisa ukusebenzisa ixesha langoku lokuqondisa umz. uyahamba usebenzisa amagama alula ukubonisa ukuthelekisa nokuchasanisa, umz. njenge, enkulu ngathi, njenge 	<p>Umbhali:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> unika ulwazi/ iinkcukacha eziyinyani malunga nesihloko Usebenzisa iindlela zokubhala nobume bencwadi, umz. inkcazo, umboniso, isigama kwizichazimagama wazisa isihloko ngokwenza uhlelo oluthe ngqo okanye iintetho ezizukayo uquka iinkcukacha ezimalunga nesihloko aze acacise iimpawu ezikhethekileyo uhlanganisa ulwazi olunxulumeneyo akhe imihlathi eqalwa sisivakalisi esiyintloko. ubhala isishwankathelo okanye umhlathi ophethayo ophindaphinda imiba ephambili nesenokuquka izimvo eziphicothayo, umz. Oku kuqamba kuya kutshintsha imbali. usebenzisa ulwimi olungaqhutywa luluvo oko/ kwitekisi yonke. Usebenzisa isigama sougcisa nesesifundo esithile ngokuchanekileyo usebenzisa ixesha langoku lokuqondisa, uyabhabha, uyahlala, uyancancisa usebenzisa amagama abalulekileyo ukuthelekisa, ukuchasanisa, ukuchaza nokuhlela, umz. ziyafana ne, zezesikolo 	<p>Umbhali:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unika ulwazi olukhethiweyo, oluhleliweyo noludityanisiweyo utshintsha/ ulungisa iindlela zokubhala nobume bencwadi zilungele abafundi ubhala intshayelelo ehlela okanye equkanisa ulwazi olusisiseko kwisihloko iquka ulwazi oluneenkukacha olukhethwe ngenxa yokubaluleka kwayo kwisihloko ulungisa ulwazi lube yimihlathi ehlangeneyo eyenza itekisi ebumbeneyo necacileyo ubhala umhlathi ophethayo oshwankathela ngokuchanekileyo imiba ephambili usebenzisa isimbo esingaqhuywa luluvo esisesikweni ukuze sifanele injongo nabafundi, umz. ukwanda kweembuzo zabantu ... usapho lu... ukhetha ulwimi lobugcisa olucacileyo nolufanele isifundo esithile ukuze lulungele injongo nabafundi, umz. Isilwanyana esitya inyama, isilwanyana esanyisayo, izinto ezingcolisayo usebenzisa ixesha ngendlela engaguqukiyo ubhala ngokuhlangeneyo uluhlu lwamagama ukuthelekisa, ukuchasanisa, ukuchaza nokuhlela, umz. inamandla angaphaya kuna, kodwa ke
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Ingxam yokufundisa</p> <p>Ukuziqhelanisa, ukuhlalutya, ukuzekelisa, ulwabiwo, ukukhokela nokusebenzisa Jonga kula makhasi/maphepha 30-37 nakula 43-45</p>		<p>Ukuziqhelanisa, ukuhlalutya, ukuzekelisa, ulwabiwo, ukukhokela nokusebenzi80sa Jonga kula makhasi/maphepha 30-37 nakula 46-47</p>	

Kelo ya go Ngwala go Hlaloša

Baithuti ba boemong bja go bontšha bontši bja dintlha tšeo di nomorilwego ka marontho

	Kgato ya Mathomo O kgona go fa maikemišetšo le batheeletši ba dingwalwa tšeo di tlogo hlangwa, a ba a akaretša dibopego tša motheo tša peakanyo ya diforomo tšeo di šomišitšwego go hlaloša.	Kgato ya Tšwelopele O lemoga maikemišetšo le batheeletši ge a hlama dingwalwa le go šomiša tlhamo yeo e hlaotšwego ya peakanyo ya mehuta ye mennyane ya diforomo tšeo di šomišitšwego go hlaloša.	Kgato ya Teefatšo Akanya maikemišetšo le batheeletši go kgetha tlotlontšu ye e itšego le go šomiša ditlhamo tša peakanyo go hlama mehuta ya diforomo tšeo di šomišitšwego go hlaloša.	Kgato ya Katološo Hlama diforomo tšeo di šomišitšwego go hlaloša ka go kgetha tlotlontšu le go šomiša ditlhamo tša peakanyo go lebana le kamano ya tiragalo ya go ngwala.
Tsepelelo go Kelo	<p>Mongwadi o:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aba tshedimošo ka hlogo goba sererwa sa go tsebega • ngwala temogo le tshwayatshwayo • tsepelela karolong ye e itšego ya dilo ka moka tša maemo a go fapafapana, mohl. 'Katse ya ka e ja nama' e sego 'Dikatse di ja nama.' • hlaloša dibopego tšeo di sego bohlokwa ka mokgwa woo go ba tša maleba • hlopha tshedimošo ya go swana • ngwala setatamente sa tshwayatshwayo ya motho go e na le kakaretšo, mohl. Ke rata dikatse. • šomiša polelo ya bomotho, mohl. 'Ke rata... ka nnete.' • šomiša tlotlontšu ye bonolo, mohl. kgolo, nnyane • šomiša mehuta yeo e lekantšwego ya mantšu a tšhupetšo, mohl. le 	<p>Mongwadi o:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fa dintlha tša tshedimošo malebana le hlogo goba sererwa seo se filwego • šomiša mehuta e se mekae ya diforomo le dibopego, mohl. pego, tšhate • tsebiša hlogo goba sererwa ka go fa tlhopho yeo e se nago nepagalo, mohl. Dimpša ke diphoofolo • fa tshedimošokakaretšo ye e lekantšwego, mohl. bogolo, mmala, tlwaelo • akaretša tshedimošo ya ka fase ga dihlogo goba direrwa • ngwala setatamente sa mafetšo ka go leka go akaretša seo se ngwadilwego • thoma go šomiša polelo ya tebanyo • šomiša tlotlontšu ye nngwe ya theknikhale goba ya go lebana le thuto ye e itšego • thoma go šomiša mantšu ao e sego a nako a lebaka la lebjale mohl. ba, tsoma • šomiša mantšu a bonolo go šupetša, go bapetša le go fapantšha mohl. swana, kgolo bjale ka... 	<p>Mongwadi o:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fa dintlha tša tshedimošo ka botlalo ka hlogo goba sererwa seo se filwego • šomiša mehuta ya diforomo le dibopego, mohl. tlhalošo, pontšho ya selaete, matseno a ensaetlelophediya • tsebiša hlogo goba sererwa ka go fa tlhopho yeo e nago le nepagalo goba ya go akaretša • akaretša dintlha tšeo di tswalanago gabotse le hlogo goba sererwa le go bontšha dibopego tša go ikgetha • hlopha tshedimošo ya go tswalana ka ditemana tša go tsebišwa ke lefoko la hlogo goba sererwa • ngwala kakaretšo goba temana ya mafetšo yeo e gatelelago dintlha tše bohlokwa gape a ka akaretša tshwayatshwayo ya go akanywa. mohl, Tlhamo ye e tla fetša tshepelo ya histori. • šomiša polelo ya tebanyo go fihla mafelelong • šomiša tlotlontšu ya theknikhale goba ya go lebana le thuto ye e itšego ka tshwanelo • šomiša mantšu ao e sego a nako a lebaka la lebjale mohl. fofa, dula, amuša • šomiša mantšu a maleba a go šupetša go bapetša, go fapantšha, go hlatholla le go hlopha mohl. ba, swana le, tša 	<p>Mongwadi o:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fa tshedimošo yeo e kgethilwego, e hlaotšwego le go tlemaganywa ka mafoko • fetša diforomo le dibopego go ya ka batheeletši bao ba lebantšwego • ngwala matseno ao a hlophago le go akaretša tshedimošo ye e hlokegago ya thuto goba ya hlogo goba sererwa • akaretša tshedimošo ye e tletšego yeo e kgethilwego ka lebaka la gore e amana le thuto goba hlogo/sererwa • beakanya tshedimošo ka ditemana tšeo di kopanago ka kamano go hlama sengwalwa sa kamano • ngwala temana ya mafetšo yeo e akaretšago dintlha tše bohlokwa • šomiša setaele sa tebanyo sa semmušo sa go sepelelana le maikemišetšo le batheeletši, mohl. koketšego ya difahlego tša botho ..., lapa le ... • kgetha polelo yeo e nepagetšego ya theknikhale , ya thuto ye e itšego ya go sepelelana le maikemišetšo le batheeletši, mohl. diphoofolo tša go ja nama, diphoofolo tša go amuša, dilo tšeo di tšhilafatšago • šomiša lebaka la go swana go fihla mafelelong • ngwala ka kamano ka go šomiša mehuta ya mantšu a go šupetša, go bapetša, go fapantšha, go hlatholla le go hlopha mohl. se maatla kudu go feta, le ge go le bjalo
Tsepelelo ga go ruta	Go itlwaetša, Go fetleka, Go bopa, Go abela, Go hlahlala, Go diriša		Go itlwaetša, Go fetleka, Go bopa, Go abela, Go hlahlala, Go diriša	

Assessing Writing to Recount
Students are in the stage where they display most of the bulleted points.

	Beginning Stage	Developing Stage	Consolidating Stage	Extending Stage
Focus on Assessing	Can state the purpose and audience of texts to be composed and includes basic organisational features of simple forms used to recount.	Is aware of the purpose and audience when composing texts and uses a partial organisational framework of a small range of forms used to recount.	Considers the purpose and audience to select specific vocabulary and uses appropriate organisational frameworks to compose a variety of forms used to recount.	Crafts forms used to recount by selecting vocabulary and manipulating organisational frameworks to suit the context of the writing event.
	<p>The writer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> retells personal experiences provides little information about setting or the context in which the events happened, e.g. <i>tells who and where but not when</i> includes only those events that have personal significance includes some events in sequence concludes with a personal comment, e.g. I had fun uses simple past tense uses mainly simple action verbs, e.g. I went, I saw, I did uses little variety of linking words, e.g. and, then 	<p>The writer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reconstructs personal experiences or events using a limited range of forms and formats, e.g. recount, letter, email provides sufficient information to orient the reader, giving simple details about who, when, where, what, why and how differentiates between events by including additional information about the more important events lists all events in chronological order concludes with a personal evaluative comment, e.g. We arrived home, tired but happy uses simple past tense correctly uses action verbs, e.g. <i>I played, we visited</i> uses a limited number of linking words to do with time or sequence, e.g. after that, next 	<p>The writer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reconstructs personal and factual experiences and events using a variety of forms and formats, e.g. biographies, diaries, pamphlets provides an orientation that includes contextual and environmental details that impact on the way events unfold elaborates important events elaborates aspects of participants that affect events, e.g. Helen Keller's perseverance in the face of adversity gives credibility by the use of dialogue concludes with an evaluative or summarising comment appropriate to the form maintains consistent tense uses a variety of action verbs, e.g. I glimpsed, I travelled uses linking words to indicate time, e.g. before, later in the day uses both first and third person 	<p>The writer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recounts to suit purpose and target audience, choosing the most appropriate form and format provides an orientation that both sets the scene and aims to interest the reader includes significant events chosen to add interest and impact elaborates on events so that the reader can visualise the experience chooses to include dialogue or reported speech for impact manipulates time order of events for impact concludes with a personal reflection, evaluative comment or summarises the text, appropriate to the form maintains consistent tense or manipulates tense for effect writes cohesively using a large variety of action verbs and linking words manipulates first and third person for impact
Focus on Teaching	Familiarising, Analysing, Modelling, Sharing, Guiding and Applying See pages 30–37 and 121–124		Familiarising, Analysing, Modelling, Sharing, Guiding and Applying See pages 30–37 and 124–126	

From *First Steps Writing Resource Book* (Department of Education Western Australia, 2013:119)

13. Appendix C: Breakdown of PIRLS 2016 items and achievement

Classical score average per item in SA PIRLS Literacy 2016 using weights and only LIB items							PIRLS descriptions from https://timssandpirls.bc.edu/publications/pirls/2016-methods/pdf/P16_MP_App_13-B_Literary_Item_Descriptions.pdf and leveling and comprehension type by SAHRC literacy team			
PIRLS name	STATA name	% correct for Everyone	% correct for those who achieved PIRLS LIB (Rasch 400 or greater)	% correct for those who did not achieve PIRLS LIB (Rasch below 400)	Itemtype (Constructed response or MCQ)	Location (difficulty parameter)	PIRLS name	Description of item from PIRLS	Level	Comprehension processes
B01	L21B01C	0,63	0,88	0,58	CR	-2,5	B_01	Retrieve and reproduce explicitly stated information about the central character	2	LIT
B02	L21B02M	0,63	0,94	0,56	MC	-2,4	B_02	Retrieve the explicitly stated reason for a character's action	2	LIT
B03	L21B03M	0,63	0,94	0,56	MC	-2,4	B_03	Retrieve the explicitly stated reason for a character's action	2	LIT
B07	L21B07C	0,33	0,77	0,24	CR	-1,2	B_07	Retrieve and reproduce an explicitly stated detail about the reason for an event	3	LIT
B11	L21B11M	0,47	0,82	0,39	MC	-1,2	B_11	Retrieve and recognize an explicitly stated cause of a character's action	3	LIT
L03	L21L03C	0,41	0,75	0,32	CR	-1,9	L_03	Locate and reproduce an explicitly stated reason for a character's words	2	LIT
L04	L21L04C	0,45	0,78	0,35	CR	-1,9	L_04	Locate and reproduce the reason for a character's words	2	LIT
L06	L21L06C	0,53	0,85	0,44	CR	-2,1	L_06	Retrieve and reproduce explicitly stated information	1	LIT
L07	L21L07M	0,45	0,83	0,35	MC	-1,4	L_07	Retrieve and recognize explicitly stated explanation of a character's action	2	LIT
L12	L21L12M	0,48	0,87	0,37	MC	-1,5	L_12	Retrieve an explicitly stated reason for a character's action	2	LIT
L13	L21L13C	0,45	0,88	0,33	CR	-1,5	L_13	Locate and reproduce 1 (of 2) explicitly stated detail	2	LIT
L14	L21L14M	0,50	0,96	0,36	MC	-1,4	L_14	Locate and recognize an explicitly stated idea	1	LIT
M01	L21M01M	0,81	0,92	0,78	MC	-3,3	M_01	Locate explicitly stated information at the beginning of the text	1	LIT
M03	L21M03C	0,65	0,83	0,59	CR	-3,1	M_03	Locate and reproduce an explicitly stated action of a character	2	LIT

M04	L21M04C	0,37	0,81	0,24	CR	-1,3	M_04	Locate and reproduce an explicitly stated detail	2	LIT
M05	L21M05M	0,70	0,97	0,62	MC	-2,4	M_05	Recognize and retrieve an explicitly stated detail	3	LIT
M06	L21M06C	0,58	0,91	0,49	CR	-1,9	M_06	Recognize and reproduce explicitly stated information	1	LIT
M08	L21M08C	0,66	0,96	0,57	CR	-2,2	M_08	Locate and reproduce explicitly stated information	1	LIT
M10	L21M10C	0,59	0,90	0,50	CR	-2,0	M_10	Locate and reproduce 2 explicitly stated feelings of a character	2	LIT
M11	L21M11M	0,27	0,53	0,19	MC	-0,2	M_11	Locate and retrieve an explicitly stated feeling	1	LIT
M12	L21M12C	0,41	0,71	0,32	CR	-1,6	M_12	Locate and reproduce an explicitly stated detail	1	LIT
M16	L21M16C	0,36	0,78	0,23	CR	-1,4	M_16	Locate and reproduce an explicitly stated action	1	LIT
O01	L11O01M	0,58	0,91	0,50	MC	-2,3	O_01	Locate explicitly stated information at the beginning of the text	1	LIT
O03	L11O03M	0,81	0,99	0,76	MC	-2,7	O_03	Locate and recognize explicitly stated information	1	LIT
O05	L11O05C	0,32	0,80	0,20	CR	-1,8	O_04	Retrieve an explicitly stated character trait	3	LIT
O09	L11O09C	0,41	0,91	0,29	CR	-1,7	O_09	Locate and reproduce explicitly stated information	1	LIT
O10	L11O10C	0,73	0,98	0,67	CR	-3,0	O_10	Locate and reproduce explicitly stated information	1	LIT
O14	L11O14C	0,48	0,87	0,39	CR	-1,9	O_14	Locate and reproduce explicitly stated information	1	LIT
U01	L11U01C	0,62	0,91	0,54	CR	-2,4	U_01	Locate and reproduce explicitly stated information at the beginning of the text	1	LIT
U02	L11U02M	0,74	0,98	0,66	MC	-2,2	U_02	Locate and recognize an explicitly stated action	1	LIT
U04	L11U04C	0,45	0,72	0,37	CR	-1,8	U_04	Locate and reproduce the reason for a situation	2	LIT
U05	L11U05M	0,51	0,85	0,41	MC	-1,7	U_05	Locate and recognize an explicitly stated reason for a character's action	2	LIT
U06	L11U06M	0,47	0,87	0,35	MC	-1,4	U_06	Locate and recognize the explicitly stated reason for a situation	3	LIT
U09	L11U09M	0,47	0,83	0,36	MC	-1,3	U_09	Locate and reproduce explicitly stated information	1	Lit
U11	L11U11C	0,41	0,76	0,31	CR	-1,7	U_11	Locate and reproduce 1 (of 2) pieces of explicitly stated information	3	LIT

B04	L21B04C	0,40	0,86	0,31	CR	-1,3	B_04	Make a straightforward inference about a reason for a character's action	1	SI
B05	L21B05M	0,56	0,90	0,49	MC	-1,3	B_05	Locate and recognize an embedded detail	2	SI
B06	L21B06M	0,57	0,79	0,52	MC	-1,8	B_06	Make a straightforward inference about the reason for an event	1	SI
B08	L21B08C	0,28	0,70	0,19	CR	-1,4	B_08	Make a straightforward inference about the purpose of a character's action	3	SI
B12	L21B12M	0,57	0,86	0,50	MC	-2,2	B_12	Make an inference to recognize the purpose of a character's action	3	SI
F10	R11F10C	0,32	0,57	0,25	CR	-1,4	F_10	Recognize and reproduce a character's feeling that is clearly suggested at a specified point in the story	1	SI
L01	L21L01M	0,55	0,89	0,45	MC	-1,4	L_01	Make a straightforward inference about a detail from the beginning of the story	1	SI
L05	L21L05C	0,36	0,68	0,26	CR	-1,4	L_05	Make a straightforward inference and reproduce 1 (of 2) of a character's actions	3	SI
M09	L21M09M	0,47	0,84	0,36	MC	-1,5	M_09	Make an inference about the reason for an event	1	SI
M13	L21M13M	0,67	0,98	0,58	MC	-2,2	M_13	Make a straightforward inference about a character's reaction to a situation	1	SI
O06	L11O06C	0,39	0,84	0,28	CR	-1,5	O_06	Make a straightforward inference about a character's words	2	SI
O07	L11O07M	0,58	0,83	0,52	MC	-1,6	O_07	Make a straightforward inference about the purpose for a character's action	3	SI
O08	L11O08M	0,55	0,66	0,52	MC	-1,7	O_08	Make a straightforward inference about a character's feeling	2	SI
O11	L11O11C	0,44	0,88	0,33	CR	-1,9	O_11	Make a straightforward inference about a character's reaction	2	SI
O12	L11O12M	0,58	0,85	0,51	MC	-2,1	O_12	Make a straightforward inference about a character's reaction	2	SI
U03	L11U03M	0,49	0,85	0,39	MC	-1,3	U_03	Make a straightforward inference about the reason for a situation	3	SI
B13	L21B13C	0,23	0,59	0,15	CR	-1,0	B_13	Interpret story events to determine the cause of one of a character's stated feelings	2	I&I
L09	L21L09C	0,27	0,51	0,20	CR	-1,0	L_09	Integrate ideas to show understanding of how a character develops	3	I&I

L15	L21L15C	0,27	0,55	0,19	CR	-0,9	L_15	Show understanding of a character's trait by 1 (of 2) example of a character's actions	3	I&I
U12	L11U12C	0,40	0,83	0,28	CR	-1,4	U_12	Determine the sequence of events of the whole story	1	I&I
U13	L11U13M	0,53	0,93	0,41	MC	-1,5	U_13	Evaluate the whole story and recognize a central idea	1	EVAL

