

JULY 2015

## The beginning of an exciting partnership for Grade R

We have felt so much energy and excitement running across the province as July sees the start of the WCED's Western Cape Emergent Literacy training for Grade R!

The training aims for Grade R learners to become confident listeners and speakers as well as emergent readers and writers and to go on to flourish at school.

So how is it going to happen?

Wordworks trainers, partners and WCED Advisors are working with 200 Lead Teachers across all districts to integrate high quality resources and good practice in their own teaching of emergent literacy. The resources include the STELLAR materials provided by Wordworks as well as those provided by the DBE.

In 2016, STELLAR materials will be distributed to all 3000 Grade R teachers in the province, and the Lead Teachers will take up the challenge of sharing their knowledge and experience with their colleagues in a full-year programme of support. Thank you to our donors – USAID, the ELMA Foundation and JP Morgan - and to the WCED for enabling us all this opportunity to work together.



*ECD Advisor Diana Niemand and her dynamic and innovative group of Lead Teachers in the Cape Winelands district.*



Everybody loves a good story! Here Xoli Guzula demonstrates story telling techniques to our ELP Co-ordinators. A well-told story will fascinate and entertain little ones, while teaching them new words and concepts.

### Top tip:

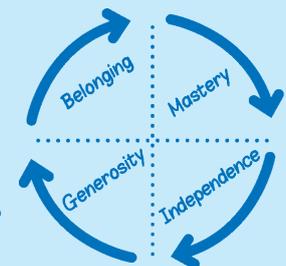
The Circle of Courage is a values-based framework for helping our children be their best selves.

**Belonging:** Feeling a sense of community, loving others and being loved

**Mastery:** Gaining competence and skills; developing self-control and a sense of responsibility; striving to achieve personal goals rather than superiority.

**Independence:** Learning to do things alone, to make decisions, set goals and take responsibility for success and failure.

**Generosity:** Being able to share and be kind to others.



Bendtro L et al, Reclaiming youth at risk (1992)

## STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS...

Wordworks is delighted to announce the appointment of a new Trainer! Bukelwa Yuze, who has over twenty years' experience in early education, has a special interest in isiXhosa and English literacy and the promotion of early reading. She is an advocate for the holistic development of the child with an emphasis on child-friendly classroom management. We look forward to working with Bukelwa and benefitting from her experience and passion.



## My story

I am Amanda Sickle, and I am an avid reader. Amongst other things, I believe in legacy and random acts of kindness.



I work full-time at a research organisation. In my 'other time' I manage an NPO, called The Reading Room, which I founded in 2012. Reading for enjoyment is in my nature, so I was horrified to learn that among Grade Three children, the national average performance in literacy was 35%; and in numeracy, 28% (Department of Education, 2012)

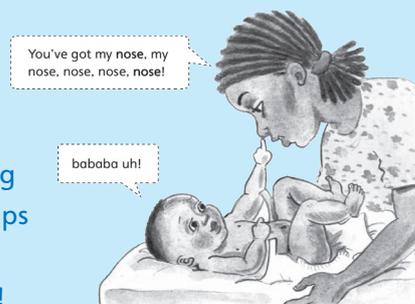
I started my 'reading-assistance' journey as a volunteer for Help2Read. The movie 'The Reading Room' inspired me to start reading assistance free-of-charge from my home, which soon became too small. We now lease retail space in Ottery - I pay for this from my salary. Ten volunteers, known as 'reading buddies', assist between 45-50 learners in Grades 1-12 every Saturday morning.

I stumbled upon Wordworks perchance while searching online for resources. I must confess I am hooked on their materials! They're so easy to implement that I use them all the time. Wordworks also trained me to facilitate workshops to empower parents to support their children's learning.

I see the difference all this makes to a child's self-awareness and development and, of course, the school report is all the evidence I need to know that I must be doing something right! Often we need to step out of our comfort zones and just do it!!

## Did you know?

The process of learning to read and write starts at birth. An infant's brain is very impressionable and it is much easier to learn language during the early years. What's more, early skills provide the foundation for new skills and this process continues throughout a child's life. So, talking to babies and little children is not just important for building relationships – it builds brains too!



## Did you see?

The Joy of Reading project is open to anyone who enjoys reading with children. The team emails free weekly stories that touch on values such as tolerance, tenderness and responsibility. The stories will encourage reading and also create a time to talk with children about values that are important to you.

*If you are interested in receiving the weekly stories send your email address to: [stories4ev@gmail.com](mailto:stories4ev@gmail.com)*

*The Joy of Reading - Stories for Everyone: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Stories-for-Everyone/125862557478585>*



For more information visit our website: [www.wordworks.org.za](http://www.wordworks.org.za) or keep up to date with our activities by following us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/wordworksSA](https://www.facebook.com/wordworksSA).