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What inspired you to take on and promote the Stellar programme in South- and beyond over so many years? At the time my colleagues at Metro South were all involved in the Litnum strategy with WCED. I was wanting to do something for the Grade R educators as well. It was at about the same time I was introduced to Wordworks and as the saying goes...we have never looked back. I believe without a doubt that the sooner young children are introduced to strong emergent literacy skills, the fewer problems will occur later in their lives and the less corrective work will need to happen in the higher grades. Of course the spinoff will be improved literacy results in our systemic tests because the foundation laid in literacy will be so strong.

What motivates you to advocate and work for early language and literacy?

I am blessed to have a full and meaningful life. One of the great joys for over a decade or so is to take time out and spend it with a few ladies at a book club, where we chat and discuss many books and life in general. But why am I telling you this... you see one of my earliest memories as a little girl is mom reading a bed time story to me at night. That daily ritual started a lifelong love for reading. I remember those stories well and some of those stories are still around today. As we read and engage with language and literacy, the journey of life becomes a new discovery on a daily basis. I know the joy I have experienced from dreaming and discovering all sorts of worlds through books. (The TV is seldom on) My sincere wish is that all children experience those same discoveries from a very young age.

What are the top 3 things you have learned while being involved with Wordworks?

- The power of a team. I was supported by many people while we were rolling out the ELIT programme. All my colleagues at the district office, the folk at Wordworks, but a huge shout out must go to the Lead Teachers who I was so privileged to work alongside. Three years later we still share life together. We also, of course, share ideas, in-house jokes and our love for Hershey Chocolates.

- Running the ELIT programme in Metro South was a huge project. Nothing that is worth something is ever easy. There were tough times, but oh when I look back I have learnt all sorts of skills, and above all many, many young lives have been touched.

- I was sitting in church one evening and out of a Bible fell a folded A4 page. When I bent to pick it up for the older lady sitting next to me she explained her grandson gave it to her. It was the little book of Ali and the Paint (used in the Stellar Programme)! Experiences like that certainly touch many hearts.

Do you have an early literacy message you would like to share with other woman?

On the cover of my 2018 diary I have the famous quote from Dr Seuss that, in true Dr Seuss style, simply says: You're never too old, too wacky, too wild, to pick up a book and read to a child. If all the ladies (and men too) across South Africa would do just that we will indeed find the warmth, love and joy that is experienced when as Dr Seuss says we take time out to read to a child. And what a great reading nation we will be.