



Every Word Counts

Supporting the learning of babies and young children

An early literacy programme by Wordworks

Summary

The Every Word Counts programme can be used across a range of community settings to introduce new knowledge about early learning to those who care for and work with babies and young children. It provides practical ideas for supporting the development of early language and literacy, from birth to 5 years of age. Organisations can integrate the programme and resources into their work with parents and caregivers through home visits or parent groups. ECD practitioners and playgroup facilitators can use their learning in their daily interactions with children and are encouraged to run a series of workshops for their parents.



Programme goals

- Build an understanding of the importance of loving, responsive caregiving, and the positive impact of talking with babies and young children.
- Introduce parents and caregivers to what is meant by early language and literacy learning.
- Share practical ideas and resources on how to support and stimulate language and early literacy in ECD centres, playgroups and at home.

How the programme works

- Organisations, ECD Forums and ECD Centres apply to participate in advertised training or engage with Wordworks to set up a training course for an interested group. A wide range of participants will find the content useful: ECD practitioners, play group facilitators, home/ health visitors, community workers, ECD trainers, Speech and Language therapists/students.
- The participants should choose an age-band: (1) pregnancy up to three years or (2) three up to five years.
- EWC Trainers certified by Wordworks, provide resource-based core training on the EWC materials. Core training requires 12 hours for each age-band selected.
- This core EWC training equips people with the knowledge and practical skills to support language and early literacy development of babies and young children. Participants will be encouraged to use this in their community- and home-based early childhood and parenting programmes.
- There are also two optional 4-hour modules which can be taken on completion of a core course. These train and resource practitioners to offer language programmes to their children and parents.

Overview of the core course content

EWC themes and developmental phases									
Age Band	Developmental phase	Love and connect	Talk	Sing	Play	Share Books	Tell Stories	Notice print	Draw and write
1.	Pregnancy to 6 months								
	6 to 12 months								
	1- and 2-year-olds								
2.	3- and 4-year-olds								

Overview of the optional modules

- The first optional module can be taken after completion of the core course for either age-band. It equips ECD practitioners to run a programme of six 2-hour workshops for parents at their centre so that they can support language and literacy learning at home. Parents will need to have a Workbook and a set of basic stationery.
- The second optional module is specifically for those teaching pre-Grade R children, or training these practitioners. It can be taken after completion of the core course for the 3- and 4-year old age band. The training introduces practitioners to our Little Stars classroom programme and equips them to use these stories and story-based activities to strengthen the teaching of language and early literacy. Practitioners will need a set of Little Stars story packs.

Programme results

Babies and children benefit

- From birth, they engage in responsive, loving communication.
- They are encouraged to learn through play at home and in ECD centres.
- They develop strong spoken language and build important early literacy foundations.

Parents benefit

- They learn how to support their babies' and young children's language and early literacy learning at home.
- They build new routines and their self-esteem and confidence grows as they experience success.
- They become role models in their communities.

Trainers, Practitioners and Community Workers benefit

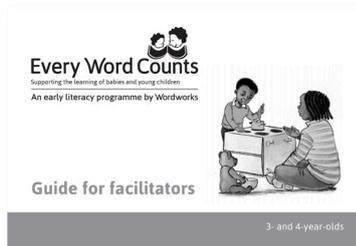
- Their knowledge about early language and literacy development for babies and young children grows.
- They partner respectfully with families to support early learning.
- They build their skills as facilitators, trainers, practitioners, home visitors and community workers.

Programme resources

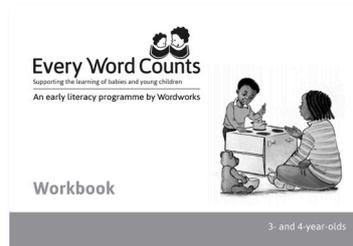
The EWC materials cover the two age bands:

1. pregnancy up to three years
2. three up to five years.

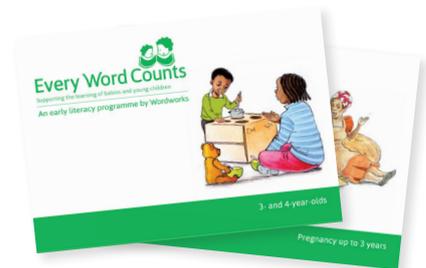
In each age band, the following EWC resources are available:



A Guide for those who facilitate EWC workshops.



A Workbook for all who attend EWC workshops



An A4 flip book for home-visits.

The Little Stars story packs are for ECD Practitioners teaching pre-Grade R classes. Each story pack includes a Teacher Guide as well as classroom materials.



Multilingual Teacher's Guides with a story to tell, songs, and activities linked to the story



Classroom materials: 2D puppets, picture sequences, a Big Book

Would your organisation like to partner with Wordworks to use the EWC programme?

Wordworks warmly encourages organisations to use the EWC programme and materials in their work. Our model is one of partnership.

We offer training, resources and support for partners who wish to take EWC into their own networks. We ask partners to share their learning with Wordworks and other organisations that are using EWC.

Here are some key partnership ideas that we will discuss with you.



- 1. Training:** Wordworks aims to offer annual Training of Trainers courses for EWC. Where our funding allows, this will be funded by Wordworks and will be open to new organisations, as well as existing partners who would like to build additional capacity. Graduates will receive a certificate after they have trained a group of practitioners or home visitors and completed a portfolio.
- 2. Materials:** Wordworks provides programme materials at a competitive price to partners. Where funding allows, we are able to provide materials for a small project at no cost. We will also offer the pdf's of the EWC Workbook and Little Stars story-based materials so that partners can print these in-house or at a local printer.
- 3. Wordworks website portal:** Wordworks has set up a portal on our website for partners. It houses all supporting documents related to the programme, useful videos and interesting reading, new programme materials and M&E tools. Partners will get a password to the portal which will be renewed annually if they continue using the programme.
- 4. M&E support:** Wordworks will provide M&E support, through tools to assess programme effectiveness and impact, and through supporting the write up of case studies and shared learning.
- 5. Partner reporting:** Partners are required to send a short report to Wordworks annually so that we can track programme reach and share learning.
- 6. Partner recognition:** We are careful to acknowledge our partners' programme contributions, reach and impact in all our communications.

Next step: If you would like to partner with Wordworks to train on the EWC programme in your networks, please complete the form: *Application to partner with Wordworks on the EWC programme.*

Are you interested in knowing more about Wordworks?

Wordworks is a South African non-profit organisation that focuses on early language and literacy development in the first eight years of children's lives. Since 2005 we have worked in under-resourced communities with those adults best positioned to impact on young children's language and literacy development – parents and caregivers, family and community members, home visitors, early childhood development practitioners and Grade R to Grade 3 teachers.

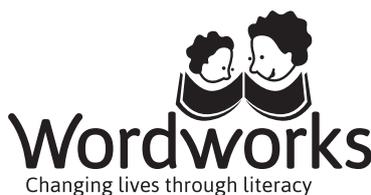
We are working collaboratively to grow an informed, capable, resourced and motivated network of schools, organisations and institutions that promote the importance of, and work effectively for the improvement of, children's early language and literacy, through their association with our programmes and materials.

Wordworks offers training, resources and support for partners who wish to use our early language and literacy programmes in their own networks. Programmes are sustained through ongoing relationships with Wordworks, including refresher training and events, input and guidance, access to resources and opportunities, sharing of learning and support for programme monitoring and evaluation.

Wordworks has developed five Early Language and Literacy Programmes:

- Every Word Counts Programme (0–5 years): Trainers are equipped to train and resource
 - » Home visitors and community workers to strengthen the early language and literacy component of their work with families and caregivers.
 - » ECD practitioners to build language-rich, interactive learning environments and to reach out to parents to support language and literacy learning at home.
- Little Stars Programme: (4–5 years): Trainers are equipped to train and resource pre-Grade R teachers and to strengthen their teaching of language and early literacy through a series of carefully-scaffolded, story-based teaching cycles.
- Stellar Home Language Programme (5–6 years): Trainers are equipped to train and resource Grade R teachers to strengthen their teaching of language and early literacy through a series of carefully-scaffolded, story-based teaching cycles, and to reach out to parents to support language learning at home.
- Home–School Partnerships Programme (5–8 years): Foundation Phase and Learning Support Teachers are equipped to facilitate eight weekly workshops of 2½ hours each, to empower and inspire parents to support informal learning at home.
- Ready Steady Read Write Programme (5–8 years): Co-ordinators and Learning Support Teachers are equipped to set up, train and manage a team of tutors who work weekly with pairs of children for at least six months as they learn to read and write.

Wordworks contributes to language and early literacy learning through the ongoing development and improvement of our programmes and materials, through publications, presentations at conferences and through a wide range of practical open-access resources, drawn from and tested in our programmes. These are made available to the public as free downloads on our website and are also for sale through our catalogue and public workshops, conferences and events.



Contact us for more information about our training packages.

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