

MARCH 2016

POINT OF VIEW

Teachers learning, sharing, and reflecting together to improve the lives of young learners – what a privilege to be in partnership with these remarkable literacy leaders and Grade R advocates!

Across the province 180 Grade R teachers volunteered to be Lead Teachers and ambassadors for the Emergent Literacy (ELIT) project. This involved attending a 5-day block training on emergent literacy, attending monthly training workshops in their districts and implementing the STELLAR programme in their classrooms in 2015.

These leaders in the Grade R field are now tasked with rolling out the ELIT project to 3000 Grade R teachers across the province and will be facilitating training and guiding teachers through the learning journey they walked last year.

We are inspired by the Lead Teachers' commitment and dedication to the project despite their full time teaching obligations. We acknowledge the exceptional guidance and support from the ECD and Foundation Phase Advisors across the province.

The ELIT Project is making history.



The STELLAR emergent literacy teacher development programme was produced by Wordworks to take teachers on a learning journey. Since last year Wordworks has partnered with the WCED, with funding from USAID, the ELMA Foundation and J.P. Morgan, to strengthen early language and literacy in the Western Cape. Read more about the STELLAR programme (<http://wordworks.org.za/support-for-grade-r-teachers/>).

We welcome seven new schools into the Wordworks network this year. We commend the teachers who have volunteered to take on the important responsibility of building relationships with families through the Home School Partnership Programme. Thank you to Ackermans' Ububele Project for funding this work.



Did you know?

Spot is going to all the schools in the Western Cape this year. Have you already met him? He's the naughty dog that curled up on the green dress! Teachers, children and parents are looking forward to a new Spot story in the second term.



STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS...

COLLEEN DIEDERICKS has gotten off to a flying start as a Literacy Mentor and Trainer in the STELLAR project. Colleen brings a wealth of experience from 32 years in the WCED as a teacher, Foundation Phase HOD and Subject Advisor.



Our Teacher Kits are available at the discount price of R550 for the month of April only! This offer is valid for any individual, organisation or school currently implementing one of the Wordworks programmes. See our website for more about the Teacher Kit.

My story

Here is another remarkable story by a member of the Wordworks network – this time from KZN. We are inspired by women like Sheilagh who, in their later years, believe they can make a difference and take the initiative to start a project.

My name is Sheilagh Bill and I am the Co-ordinator of a *Ready, steady ... read and write* programme in KwaDabeka, Pinetown. My background is in software development, and I have a passion for reading. Now that I am retired I have time and wanted to give back. I heard about Wordworks from my daughter in Cape Town and it seemed just the right, structured programme, with all the resources provided to get started.



My friend Elaine, who is a teacher, joined me and we approached our church for support. After the Wordworks training, we started last year with 3 volunteers from the church and have grown to 7. We travel to the school where the principal welcomes us and we are building good relationships with the teachers.

We work with First Additional Language with Grade 2s who have very little English. Our biggest challenge is that most of us don't speak isiZulu but we have one Zulu speaking lady who is a great asset to us. The children are very shy to start but soon warm up and love coming to the sessions.

Our volunteers are so dedicated and all love the programme. We have become a close knit team. We also started a school library last year, which is a work in progress, and have collected about 600 books.

Top tip:

It's never too early or too late to read to your child

Books for young children should be in their mother tongue wherever possible. For babies, choose books with bright pictures or photographs of people. Toddlers love stories with repetition, rhyme and actions. Choose some books that reflect your toddler's world and choose others that will make your child curious about new experiences. As children grow they start asking for more complex stories that don't end in one sitting. Continue reading to children even after they have become proficient readers.



Did you see?

The STELLAR emergent literacy teaching system is built around stories. We have made the stories, big books and little books freely available on our website in English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa to encourage multi-lingual teaching. <http://bit.ly/IYloSiC>



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

Calendar

13-15 April, Cape Town: Every Word Counts Training of Trainers Workshop. NGOs wishing to partner with Wordworks to implement the Programme can still apply to attend the training. Please email Lynn Stefano at lynn@wordworks.org.za for details.



Cluster sessions (Term 2) for Grade R teachers participating in the ELIT PROVINCIAL ROLLOUT
- Cluster 3: Week of 5-8 April - Cluster 4: Week of 3-6 May - Cluster 5: Week of 30 May-3 June