

# Wordworks

## @ Home early language and literacy pilot

for Grade R and Grade 1

Second mid-pilot report: January 2021

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### Introduction

During the second half of 2020, in response to the disruption of schooling caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the inequality of access to online resources, Wordworks distributed over 40 000 sets of printed materials for families with Grade R and Grade 1 learners at 206 WCED schools.

While learners of all ages require support for learning at home, we would argue that our youngest learners are a particularly high risk group, as they are at risk of missing the vital months when children typically learn to read and write. This is not a part of the curriculum or phase of schooling that can be ‘trimmed’ or easily caught up.

While online resources may be an appropriate learning medium for certain age groups, young learners are not yet able to read and therefore access resources independently; it is therefore essential for them to have adult guidance as they learn to read and write. While teachers have particular experience and skills to offer these children, all our work with families has taught us that parents, caregivers and older siblings can also provide vital accompaniment on this journey.

The 170 WCED schools initially selected to receive the materials were those that had committed to run Wordworks early language and literacy parent and community programmes in 2020, and who were unable to continue this work due to Covid-19. In addition, a few NGO partners (such as the Principal’s Academy, Knysna Education Trust, and Shine Literacy) collaborated with Wordworks which enabled 36 additional schools (from their networks) to also receive the materials.

Communication with districts was managed by Wordworks and while Wordworks took responsibility for advocacy, communication and support to schools, our messages were shared and used by some of the partner NGOs, which preferred to maintain links with their own network.

## This report

This **second mid-pilot report** has been compiled to summarise the work done to support schools and homes to use these materials, and to reflect the feedback received so far from districts and schools. We were delighted by a 72% response rate to our first questionnaire and a 64% response rate to our second questionnaire, with our first questionnaire being completed by 455 teachers from 148 participating schools, and our second questionnaire being completed by 387 teachers from 132 schools. Overall, 548 unique teachers from 159 unique schools provided us with feedback, **a very positive school engagement rate of 77%**. In addition to the teacher feedback, we received questionnaire input from 34 District Officials. We look forward to providing an analysis of feedback provided to us in our questionnaire for parents early in 2021.

Table 1: Questionnaire response totals from participating schools

No. schools receiving materials	No. schools responding Q1 (%)	No. schools responding Q2 (%)	No. unique schools responding to Q1/2 (%)
206	148 (72%)	132 (64%)	159 (77%)

Table 2: Questionnaire response totals from teachers at participating schools

Teachers responding to Q1	Teachers responding to Q2	No. unique teachers responding to Q1/2
455	387	548

## Resources

The @ home learning materials received a high percentage of strongly positive responses in both the teacher and advisor questionnaire responses. We asked whether the resources were seen as an effective way of teaching early literacy skills as outlined in the Annual Teaching Plans. 81% of teachers rated the effectiveness with a 4 or 5 rating, while a further 18% rated them 3 – a 99% approval rating. 60% of the teachers felt the materials would be very easy, or easy for the parents to understand while a further 32% felt they would be somewhat easy. We read this that 92% of teachers felt the materials were accessible.

## Reach

Because Wordworks used donor programme funds to print the resources, dissemination in this pilot, is largely to Wordworks programme schools. For this reason, while the resources were distributed to all eight WCED districts, there is a very strong bias towards the urban metros where Wordworks programmes are more entrenched: 33% of the materials to Metro South, 19% to Metro Central, 18% to Metro North, 10% to Metro East. Cape Winelands received 10%, West Coast 7% and between them ECK and Overberg Districts only received 3% of the resources. Reflecting this distribution, 56% were in English, 28% in Afrikaans and 16% in isiXhosa.

### Materials dissemination

The first questionnaire focused in some detail on the distribution of the 40 909 sets of @ home learning resources, with the second questionnaire checking on any changes to logistics. This focus felt important as without effective distribution of the correct number of the correct language resources, the project would be set up for failure from the start.

Considering that the first round of distribution took place while schools were closed, and the second as they established a 'new normal', we were pleased with the success of the dissemination, thanks to the strong collaboration of districts and schools. The materials had to travel from Wordworks, to Districts, to schools. Questionnaire responses indicate that approximately one third of schools collected directly from Wordworks, one third collected from District Offices while one third were taken to schools by Districts. 97% of teachers in the first questionnaire said it was moderately to very easy to get the materials to schools. In the second questionnaire, 70% of teachers said it was easier or much easier to get the materials to their schools, 26% felt it was the same, and only 4% had found it more difficult.

Once at schools, teachers were responsible for ensuring materials reached homes – no simple task during lock down and yet 88% of teachers said that it was moderately to very easy to get the materials home. Teachers estimated that 82% of homes have received the materials, with 57% collecting from schools, and 32% being sent home with children. As learners were back at schools by the time Resource Pack 2 was disseminated, we thought it was self-evident that the materials would be sent home with them, and that this aspect of distribution would no longer be a challenge.

### Support

80% of teachers said they had received the WhatsApp support messages sent to them by Wordworks – of those that didn't receive, 64% provided their cell phone numbers and we remedied this. 84% of the teachers said they found the messages very helpful or helpful, with a further 15% saying they were moderately helpful. Teachers expressed a slight preference for video and text format over voice notes. 63% of the teachers said they always passed the messages on to parents while 26% said they sometimes did. Those who struggled or failed to pass on messages cited difficulties with their own and parent data, as well as parents' not having devices or consistent cell phone numbers. Nonetheless, almost 60% of teachers reported relying solely on WhatsApp to share messages with parents.

### **Uptake in homes**

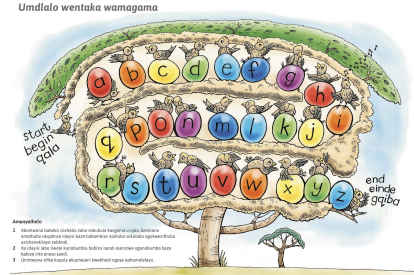
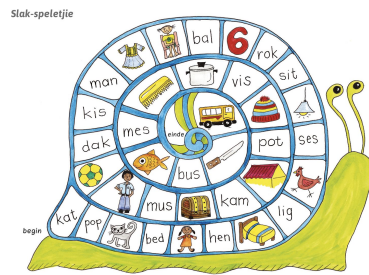
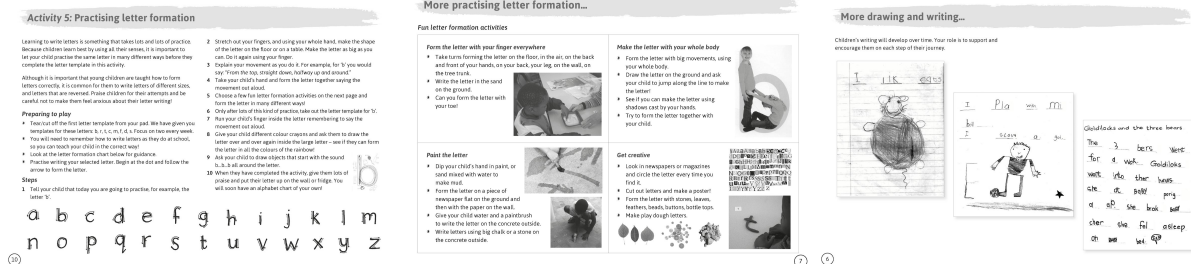
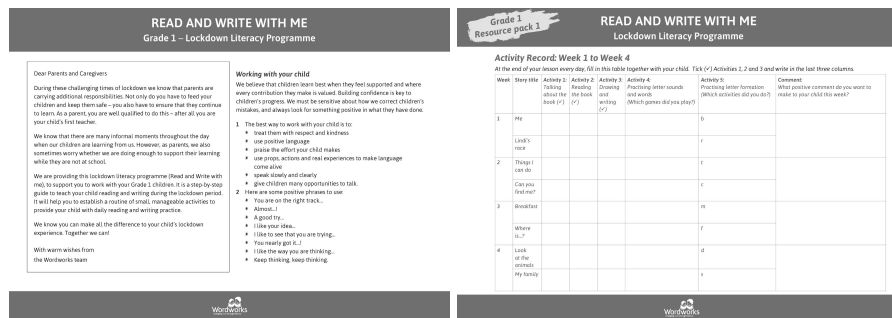
Knowing that they had no way of knowing for sure, we asked teachers to give us their professional sense of the uptake of materials in homes. They would rely on their engagement with parents and children, work shared in hardcopy form or on WhatsApp and the number of activity records that were sent back to school. (The Activity Record is a page in the resource pack that encourages children and parents/caregivers to keep track of the work done – and offers opportunity for positive feedback to the child). Encouragingly, 41% of teachers felt that all or most of their families were using the materials, while a *further* 32% of teachers felt that more than half of their families were using the materials. Teachers reported that 37% of families returned completed Activity Records to schools.

# The materials

The Wordworks materials were distributed in three batches to ensure families had materials for three months of work at home. They are referred to in this report as a **set** of materials. A different **set** was disseminated for Grade R and for Grade 1.

Each set was made up of:

- 1 x printable activity guide  
(A4, b/w, 8 pages for Gr R, 12 pages for Gr 1)
  - 3 x printable resource packs.
    - Little book readers
    - Literacy game boards
    - Letter templates
    - Apparatus
- (A4, colour 16 pages for Gr R & 19 pages for Gr 1)





## Materials dissemination

Materials were printed and packed by Wordworks. Districts provided a breakdown of numbers by grade and language. Some materials were collected directly from the Wordworks offices in Heathfield, Cape Town before the materials were transported to the relevant district office. There were 56 schools (all located in the Cape Metro) who took up this opportunity, 33 from District South, 13 from District Central, 6 from District East and 4 from District North. Others were distributed via District Offices or partner NGOs to schools. Schools, in turn, had the responsibility of ensuring materials reached the homes. The following tables and charts give a picture of the scale and spread of the dissemination effort which mirror existing networks of support – with a strong bias to the urban metros.



*Boxes of materials occupying all areas of the Wordworks offices from where they were collected and distributed*

Table 3: Distribution of sets per District by language

Education district	AFR	ENG	XHO	Total no. of sets	% sets per district
Metro South	910	11330	1501	13741	33.6%
Metro Central	501	6322	943	7766	19.0%
Metro North	2764	3459	1042	7265	17.8%
Metro East	422	1311	2293	4026	9.8%
Cape Winelands	3166	101	704	3971	9.7%
West Coast	2727	87	36	2850	7.0%
Eden & Central Karoo	599	36	36	671	1.6%
Overberg	533	66	20	619	1.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>11622</b>	<b>22712</b>	<b>6575</b>	<b>40909</b>	<b>100%</b>

Figure 1a: Distribution of sets of materials per education district

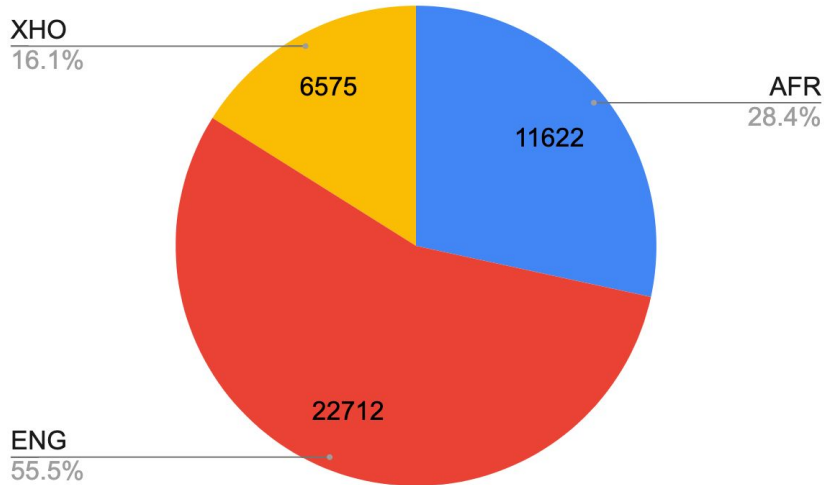
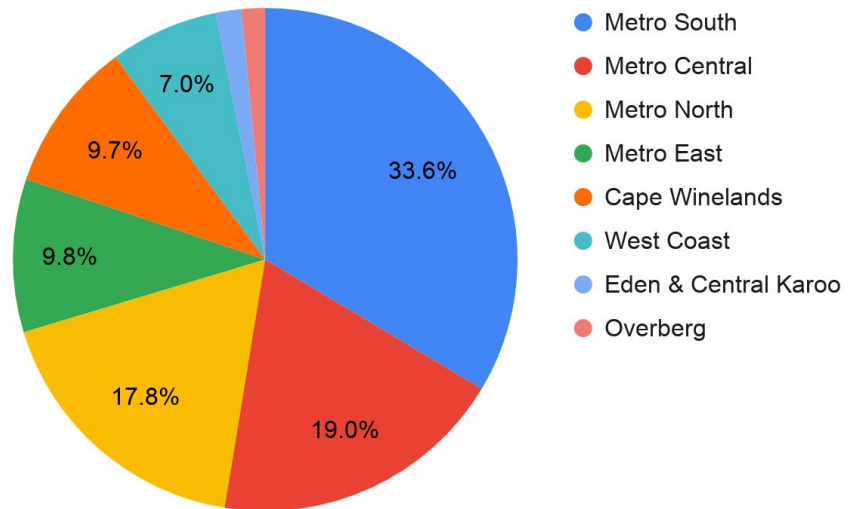


Figure 1b: Distribution of sets per language

The vast majority of materials went to children in homes, but they were also sent to educators and Officials.

Table 4: Number of sets for **children** per district by grade and language

	Grade R materials			Grade 1 materials			Total
Education district	N AFR sets	N ENG sets	N XHO sets	N AFR sets	N ENG sets	N XHO sets	
Metro South	221	4085	433	539	6510	961	12749
Metro Central	151	2503	341	241	3357	515	7108
Metro North	985	1245	343	1458	1939	598	6568
Metro East	103	401	854	237	792	1277	3664
Cape Winelands	1482	0	257	1468	33	364	3604
West Coast	984	0	0	1528	45	0	2557
Eden & Central Karoo	234	0	0	294	0	0	528
Overberg	178	20	0	290	20	0	508
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 338</b>	<b>8 254</b>	<b>2 228</b>	<b>6 055</b>	<b>12 696</b>	<b>3 715</b>	<b>37 286</b>

Table 5: Number of sets for **educators** per district, by language (Note: Materials were provided for Grade R & 1 class teachers, Learning Support teachers and FP HODs at each school. Also, note: Multiple language sets were provided per educator. It is important to recognise that the total number of sets provided in no way equals the total number of class teachers involved.)

	Grade R materials			Grade 1 materials			Total
Education district	N AFR sets	N ENG sets	N XHO sets	N AFR sets	N ENG sets	N XHO sets	
Metro South	41	301	25	65	390	38	860
Metro North	114	98	24	163	133	33	565
Metro Central	28	201	18	37	217	25	526
Metro East	17	34	53	25	44	69	242
Cape Winelands	84	12	18	88	12	21	235
West Coast	78	0	0	101	6	0	185
Overberg	19	3	0	26	3	0	51
Eden & Central Karoo	16	0	0	19	0	0	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>2699</b>

Table 6: Number of complete packs of materials (Grade R & 1 sets in all three languages) provided for WCED **officials** per district.

Education district	N
Metro South	22
Metro North	22
Metro Central	22
Cape Winelands	22
Metro East	20
West Coast	18
Eden & Central Karoo	18
Overberg	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>154</b>



## Questionnaire participation

We planned to send out a questionnaire to participating teachers a month after each batch of materials was sent to schools. This report reflects on the results of the first two questionnaires which were sent out on 8 September and 19 October 2020 to all the teachers in our pilot database. The questionnaires which were sent out as Google forms can be viewed at [Appendix A1](#) and [Appendix A2](#).

We were very pleased to receive responses from 455 teachers from 148 schools to our first questionnaire and 387 teachers from 132 schools to our second questionnaire – a 72% and 64% response rate respectively. Although the rate dropped slightly for Questionnaire two, this seems to have been because a number of schools/teachers assumed it was the same questionnaire that they had already completed. On the other hand, many additional schools completed Questionnaire two leading to a very positive 77% response rate overall from participating schools.

Table 7: Number and percentage of schools responding to questionnaire one and two by district. The list of schools receiving these materials can be viewed at [Appendix B](#).

Education district	No. schools receiving materials	No. schools responding Q1	% responding Q1	No. schools responding Q2	% responding Q2
Metro South	65	56	86%	45	69%
Metro Central	54	36	67%	29	54%
Metro North	27	22	81%	18	67%
Cape Winelands	18	10	56%	11	61%
West Coast	17	13	76%	13	76%
Metro East	16	6	38%	12	75%
Overberg	6	2	33%	3	50%
Eden & Central Karoo	3	3	100%	1	33%
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>64%</b>

### Dear Grade R and One teachers

Please complete this questionnaire to give us more information about how the Wordworks READ AND WRITE WITH ME Pack 1 is being used by your school and families.

Follow this link to see the materials:  
<https://wwhomeliteracy.org.za/readwrite/>

Due date for this form: Friday 18 September 2020

**\*Required**

What is the name of the school at which you teach? \*

Table 8: Number of teachers responding by district and by grade

*\*Note: While the questionnaire was targeted at Grade R and 1 teachers, 14 of the 455 questionnaire one respondents and 11 of the 387 questionnaire two responses fell into an “other” category which includes teachers who teach more than one grade, teachers teaching older children and Learning Support Teachers.*

Education district	Teachers responding to Q1			Teachers responding to Q2			Total unique teachers resp. Q1/2
	Grade R	Grade 1	Total Q1	Grade R	Grade 1	Total Q2	
Metro South	79	107	190	58	74	135	208
Metro Central	38	41	81	31	31	63	97
Metro North	32	43	77	32	31	66	97
Cape Winelands	22	18	42	21	24	46	48
West Coast	15	18	36	19	22	42	36
Metro East	9	6	15	17	11	30	48
Eden & Central Karoo	4	5	10	0	1	1	9
Overberg	2	2	4	2	2	4	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>455 *</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>387 *</b>	<b>548</b>

## Teacher questionnaire responses

### Materials dissemination

#### How did the READ AND WRITE WITH ME Packs 1/2 arrive at your school?

Figure 2: Of the 148 schools that responded to the first questionnaire, schools reported that the materials arrived at their premises in the following ways. 14 of these schools provided contradictory information which could not be verified.

(Note: While this chart only shows responses from those schools that responded to the questionnaire, our records show that 56 of the 206 schools receiving materials collected their materials from the Wordworks offices. This amounts to 27% of all schools in reality.)

Questionnaire 1

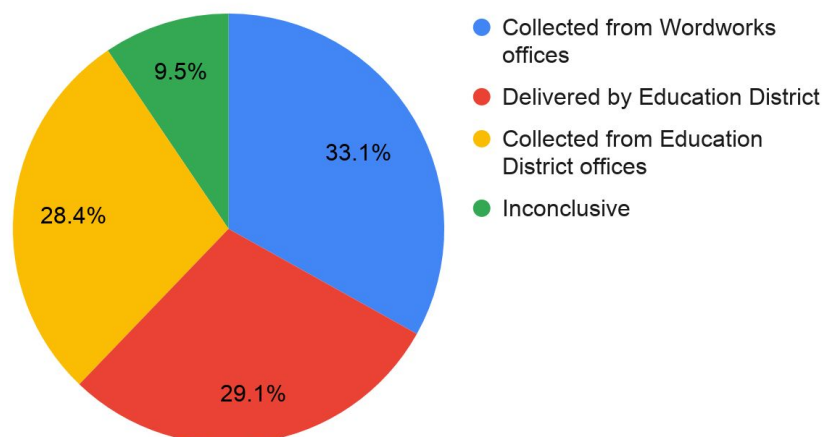


Figure 3: Of the 132 schools that responded to the second questionnaire, schools reported that the materials arrived at their premises in the following ways. 12 of these schools provided contradictory information which could not be verified.

(Note: While this chart only shows responses from those schools that responded to the questionnaire, our records show that 54 of the 206 schools receiving materials collected their materials from the Wordworks offices. This amounts to 26% of all schools in reality.)

#### Questionnaire 2

- Collected from Wordworks offices
- Delivered by Education District
- Collected from Education District offices
- Inconclusive

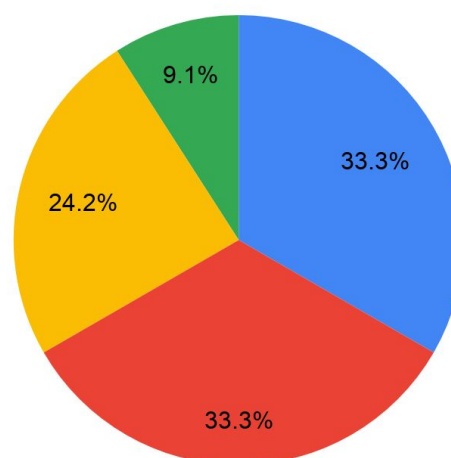


Table 9: Counting teachers' ratings for "Rate how easy/difficult it was to get the Pack 1 materials to your school"

Education district	Rating scale: 5 = very easy; 1 = very difficult					Total
	5	4	3	2	1	
Metro South	93	60	34	2	1	190
Metro Central	29	30	19	3		81
Metro North	32	23	19		3	77
Cape Winelands	13	15	13		1	42
West Coast	20	10	6			36
Metro East	7	6	1	1		15
Eden & Central Karoo	4	6				10
Overberg		3		1		4
<b>Total</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>455</b>

In the first questionnaire, teachers were asked to describe any difficulties experienced in getting the materials to their schools, and to provide suggestions for improvement where relevant.

Some comments were:

- "WCED to invest in affordable delivery so teachers do not use their own vehicles and petrol."
- "Deliver at school and inform secretary to reach the educators"
  - Metro Central Teachers
- "We are in Dunoon and had to get to Heathfield... Which is far for us"
  - Metro North Teachers
- "We would prefer if it was delivered"
  - Metro South Teachers

- “The district office is in Caledon and we are situated in Grabouw.”  
– Overberg Teachers
- “Remoteness can cause a day or two delay before we can collect material”  
– West Coast Teachers

In the second questionnaire, teachers were again given an opportunity to provide suggestions for improving distribution of the materials to schools, and while around 90% of responding teachers declined to provide any suggestions, 10% of them indicated that they would prefer the materials to be delivered directly to their schools.

### Was it easier or more difficult to get the READ AND WRITE WITH ME Pack 2 to your school than it was for Pack 1?

It was encouraging to see that in the second questionnaire, over 70% of teachers felt it was easier to get the materials to their schools, while around 25% of teachers felt it was neither more nor less difficult than it was for Pack 1.

5 = much easier; 1 = more difficult

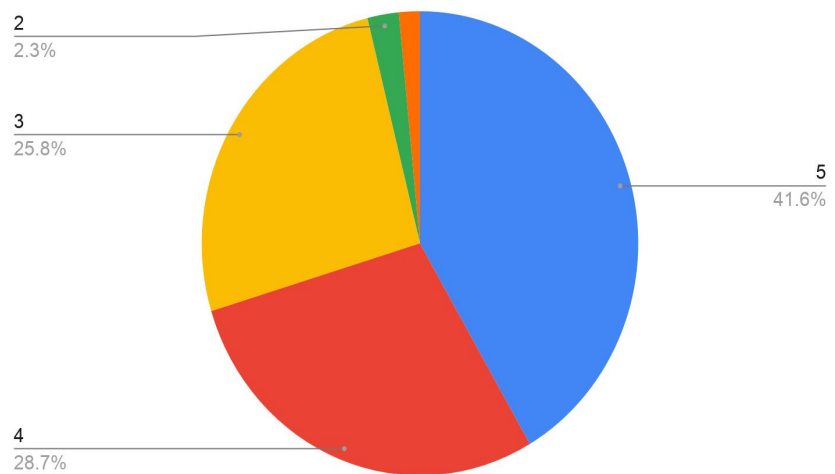


Figure 4: Counting teachers' ratings for “Was it easier or more difficult to get the READ AND WRITE WITH ME Pack 2 to your school than it was for Pack 1?”



Representatives from three metro schools collecting materials from the Wordworks offices

## Getting materials to homes during school closures

Figure 5: Of the 148 schools that responded to the first questionnaire, schools reported that the materials reached the homes of children in their classes in the following ways. 17 of these schools either provided contradictory information which could not be verified or indicated that the materials had not yet reached any homes.

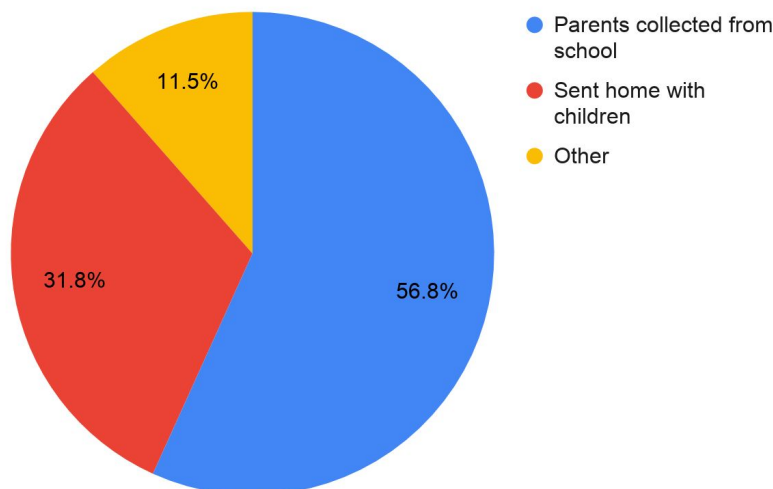


Table 10: Counting teachers' ratings for "Rate how easy/difficult it was to get the Pack 1 materials to homes"

Education district	Rating scale: 5 = very easy; 1 = very difficult					Total
	5	4	3	2	1	
Metro South	67	58	51	12	2	190
Metro Central	25	24	21	11		81
Metro North	20	23	27	4	3	77
Cape Winelands	4	13	9	3	13	42
West Coast	13	12	10		1	36
Metro East	5	5	3	2		15
Eden & Central Karoo	6	2		1	1	10
Overberg	1	1	2			4
<b>Total</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>455</b>

In the first questionnaire, teachers were asked to describe any difficulties experienced in getting the materials to homes, and to provide suggestions for improvement where relevant.

Some comments were:

- "Learners live on farms and access is difficult due to the pandemic."
- "It was difficult because of the phasing in of children and most grades weren't back at school yet."  
– Cape Winelands Teachers
- "We had to continuously phone for parents to fetch the packs and some had no contact with the school."
- "Some of the parents did not come and fetch work for their children."  
– Metro Central Teachers



- “All the parents did not collect it. We handed the rest of the packages out when learners returned to school.”  
– Metro North Teachers
- “Some parents did not attend book collection dates set. Many learners had not yet returned.”
- “It was not easy as parents don't fetch children from school...I suggest that we have a short introduction to the work and hand it out to parents.”  
– Metro South Teachers
- “Learner absenteeism made it difficult to hand out to learners who did not come to school.”  
– West Coast Teachers



Parents collecting materials from schools

### Getting materials to homes once schools reopened

As learners were back at schools by the time Resource Pack 2 was disseminated, we assumed that materials would be sent home with learners and that this aspect of distribution would no longer be a challenge.

Certainly the figures below show that nearly 70% of teachers felt it was easier to get the materials to homes, while around 27% of teachers felt it was neither more nor less difficult than it was for Pack 1.

5 = much easier; 1 = more difficult

2  
4.4%

3  
27.1%

4  
28.7%

5  
38.8%

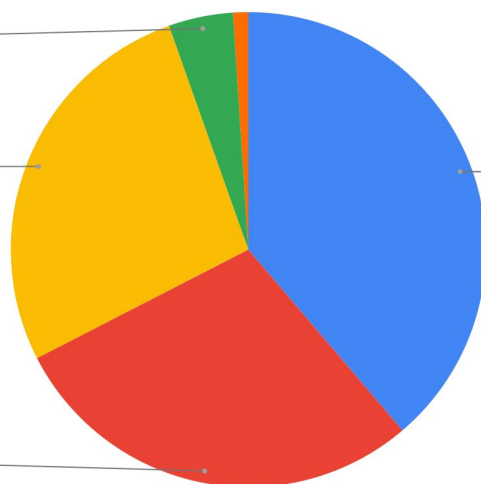


Figure 6: Counting teachers' ratings for "Was it easier or more"

difficult to get Pack 2 to homes than it was for Pack 1?"

## How many of the children in your class have the READ AND WRITE WITH ME materials at home?

Table 11: Teachers reporting how many of the children in their classes have the Resource Pack 1 materials at home

Education district	No. teachers responding	No. children in teachers' classes	No. children with Pack 1 at home	% children with Pack 1 at home
Metro South	190	6245	5139	82%
Metro North	77	2679	2351	88%
Metro Central	81	2642	2294	87%
West Coast	36	1195	986	83%
Cape Winelands	42	1404	771	55%
Metro East	15	522	478	92%
Eden & Central Karoo	10	329	239	73%
Overberg	4	133	106	80%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>15149</b>	<b>12364</b>	<b>82%</b>

Table 12: Teachers reporting how many of the children in their classes have the Resource Pack 2 materials at home

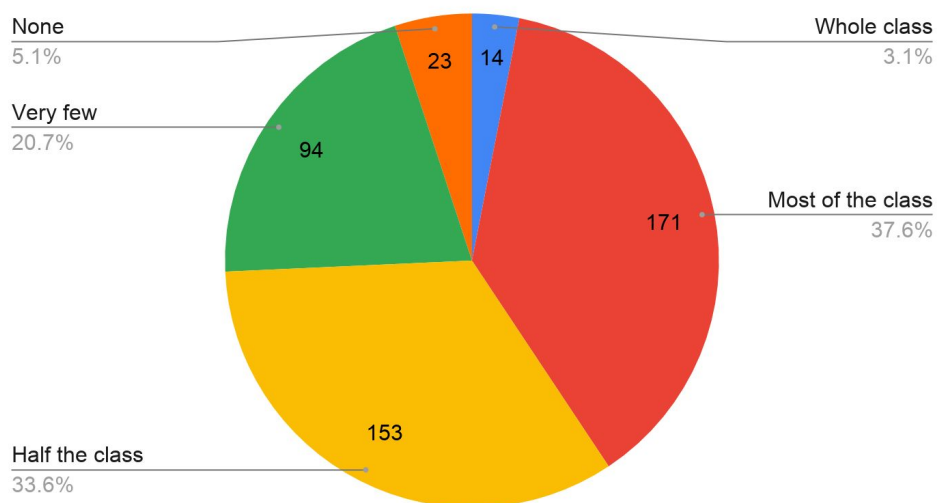
Education district	No. teachers responding	No. children in teachers' classes	No. children with Pack 2 at home	% children with Pack 2 at home
Metro South	135	4467	3959	89%
Metro North	66	2255	2023	90%
Metro Central	63	1984	1775	89%
West Coast	42	1354	1156	85%
Cape Winelands	46	1508	1147	76%
Metro East	30	1021	872	85%
Overberg	4	130	80	62%
Eden & Central Karoo	1	31	31	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>12750</b>	<b>11043</b>	<b>87%</b>

## What is the take up on materials in homes?

We asked this question, knowing that teachers would not have firm evidence of how materials were being taken up in all homes, but believing that their professional assessment would give us valuable insight. A consistent 70% of teachers felt over **half** the class was using the materials at home. This estimation is supported by the number of returned activity records which indicates a return rate of 37%. Other forms of engagement with parents remain low with only 15% of teachers reporting engagement from half the parents or more.

Figures 7 and 8: Counting teachers' ratings for "How many of the children who have the Pack 1/2 materials at home do you think are engaging or have engaged with the activities?"

### Resource Pack 1



### Resource Pack 2

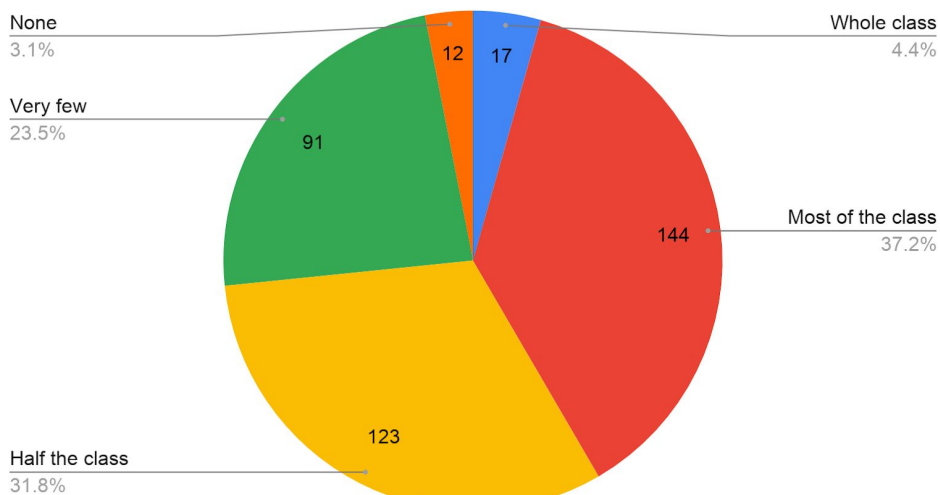
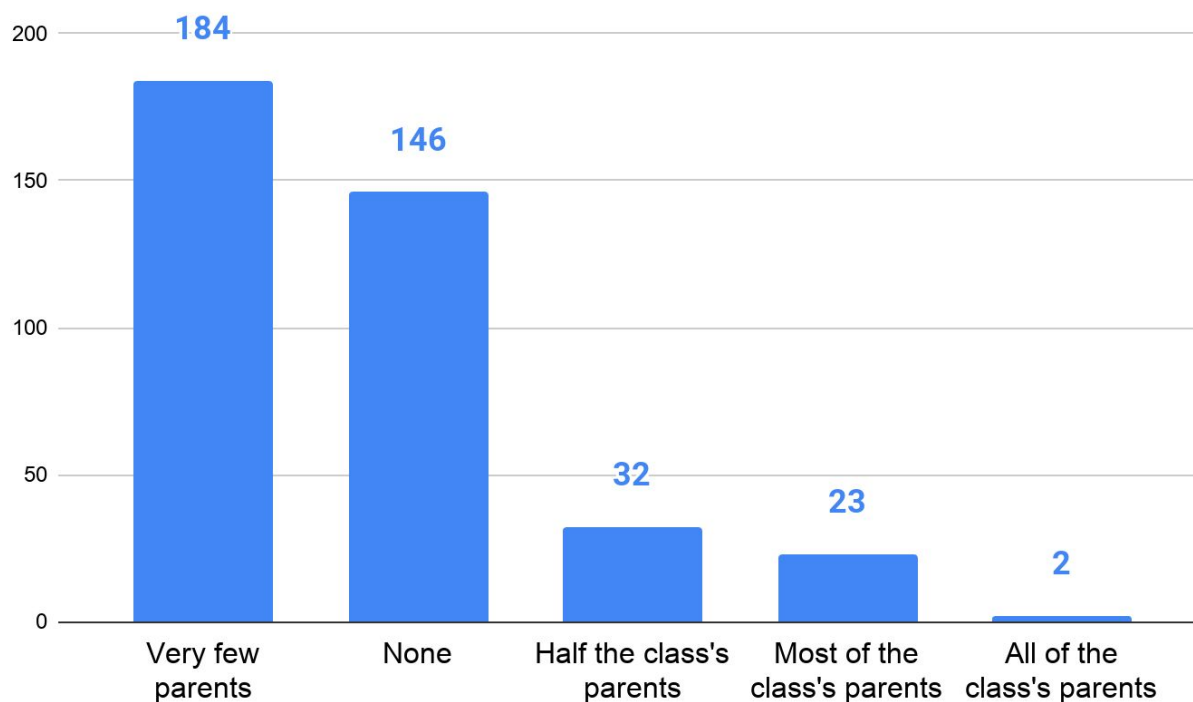


Table 13: Number and percentage of Pack 1/2 activity records received by teachers

Education district	Resource Pack 1			Resource Pack 2		
	No. children with materials at home	No. activity records received	% activity records received	No. children with materials at home	No. activity records received	% activity records received
Metro South	5139	1875	36%	3959	1325	33%
Metro North	2351	917	39%	2023	841	42%
Metro Central	2294	823	36%	1775	579	33%
West Coast	986	330	33%	1156	434	38%
Cape Winelands	771	203	26%	1147	372	32%
Metro East	478	229	48%	872	440	50%
Overberg	106	56	53%	80	25	31%
Eden & Central Karoo	239	161	67%	31	15	48%
<b>Total</b>	<b>12364</b>	<b>4594</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>11043</b>	<b>4031</b>	<b>37%</b>

Figure 9: Counting teachers' ratings for "How many parents have shared feedback with you (in the form of photos, videos or messages)?"





Photos and videos shared with teachers by parents







[Video 1](#)

[Video 2](#)

[Video 3](#)



[Video 4](#)

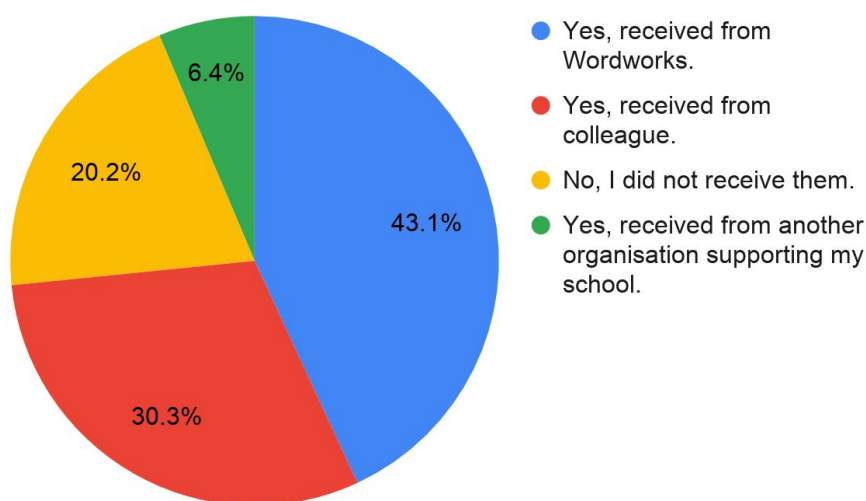
## Virtual support for teachers

We were concerned to establish communication with as many of the Grade R and Grade 1 teachers as possible, in order to offer them support and encouragement and to enable feedback to us about the programme. During Covid-19, virtual communication was necessary, and we chose to use the WhatsApp platform. It was good to see that this contact increased between Questionnaire one and two, and that more teachers were passing on support messages to parents – 95% reporting doing so in Questionnaire two.

### Have you received WhatsApp messages to support the use of these materials?

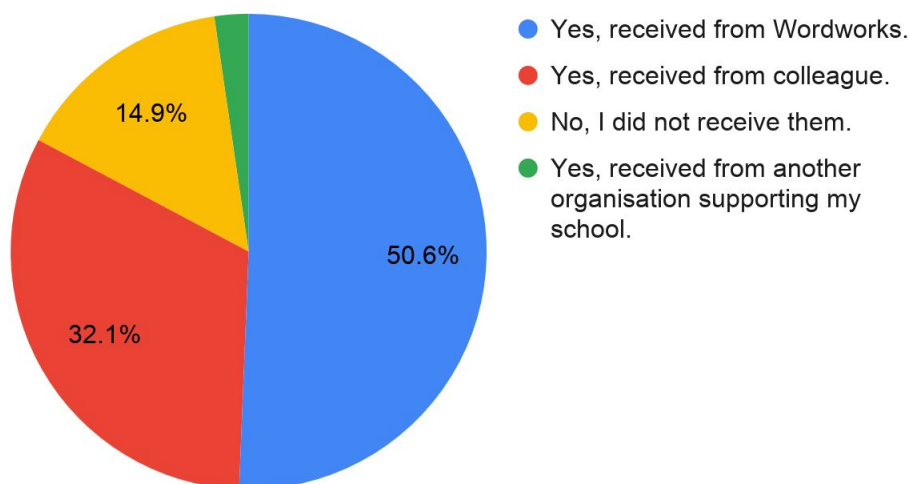
Figures 10 and 11: Counting teachers' ratings for "Have you received WhatsApp messages to support the use of the Pack 1/2 materials?"

Questionnaire 1



(Note: of the 92 teachers who chose "No, I did not receive them" in the first questionnaire, 59 provided their cell phone numbers when prompted and were then added to a relevant Wordworks virtual support WhatsApp group.)

Questionnaire 2

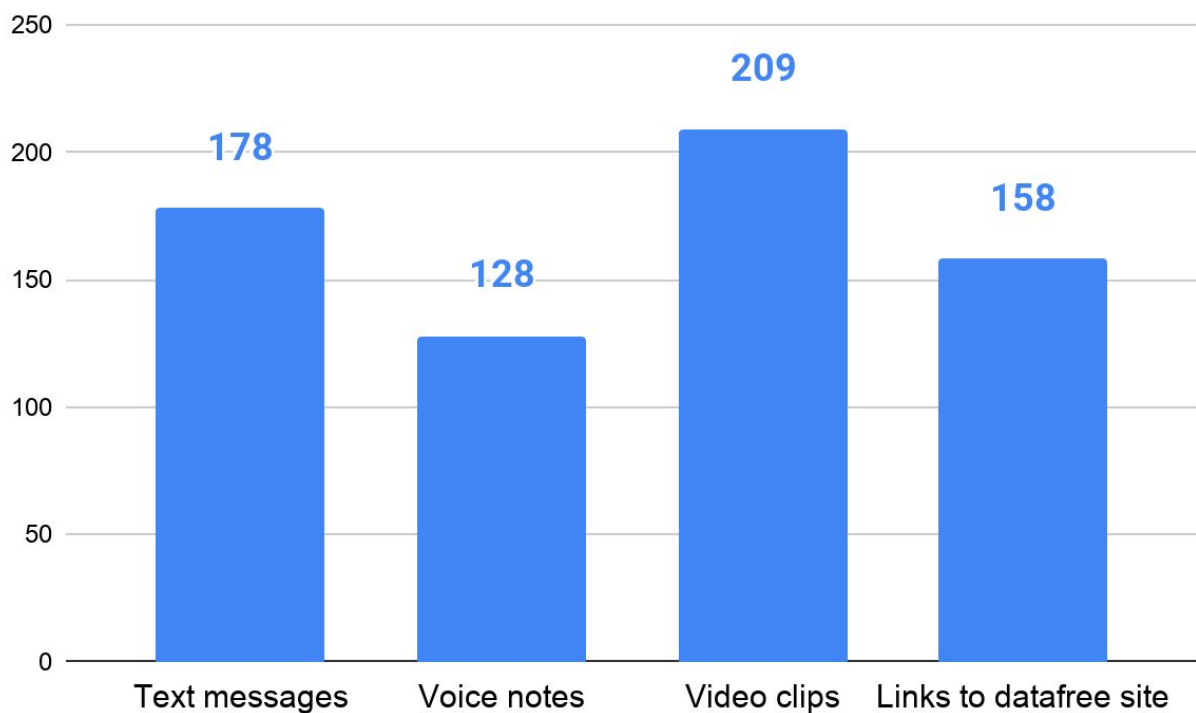


## How helpful were the WhatsApp messages you received?

Table 14: Counting teachers' ratings for "If you received these WhatsApp messages, rate how helpful you found these messages."

Education district	Rating scale: 5 = very helpful; 1 = not at all helpful					Total
	5	4	3	2	1	
Metro South	70	40	20	1	1	132
Metro Central	35	14	4	2		55
Metro North	24	15	9			48
Cape Winelands	8	16	7			31
West Coast	12	10	4			26
Metro East	10	1	2			13
Eden & Central Karoo	2	2				4
Overberg	2	1				3
<b>Total</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>312</b>

Figure 12: Teachers' responses to "Of the WhatsApp messages you received, which were the most helpful? Tick all that apply."



## How often were the WhatsApp messages shared with parents by teachers?

Figure 13: Counting teachers' ratings for "If you received WhatsApp messages to support the use of the Pack 1/2 materials, how often did you pass on these WhatsApp messages to the parents/caregivers of the children in your class?"

### Questionnaire 1 and Questionnaire 2

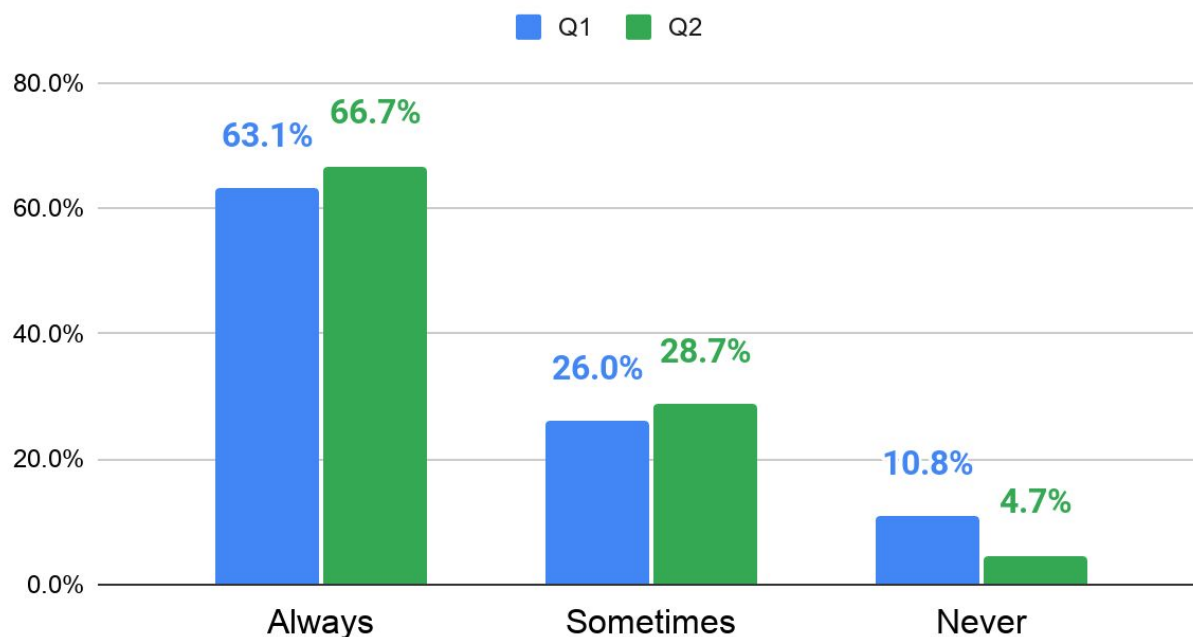
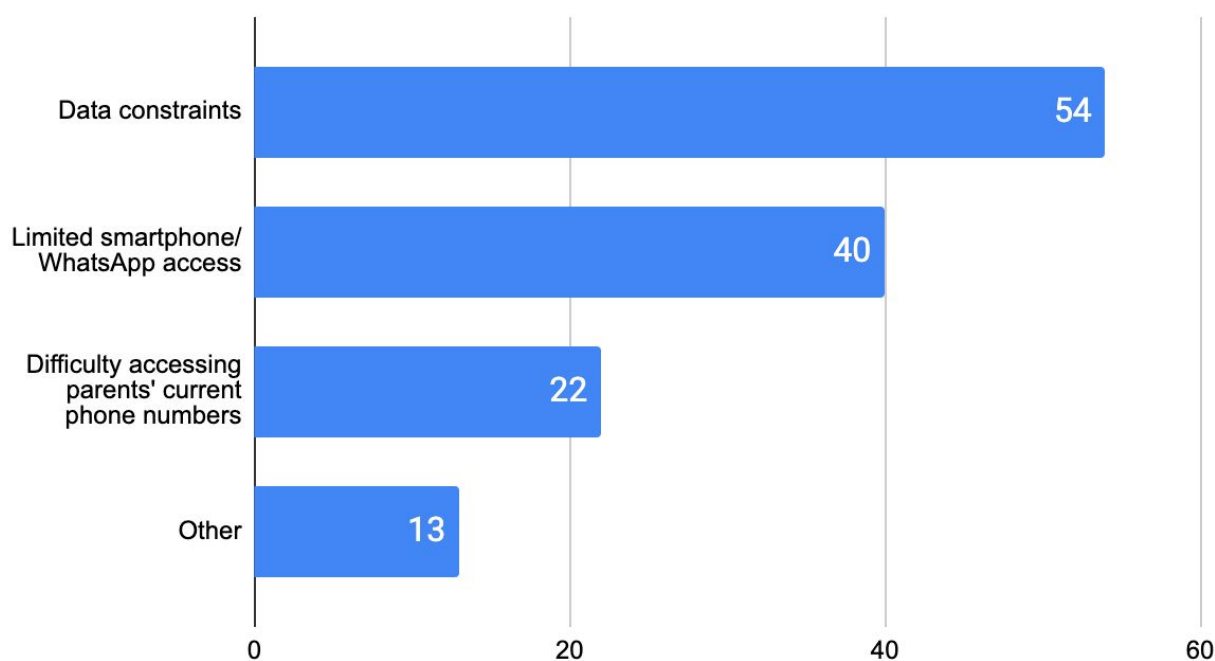


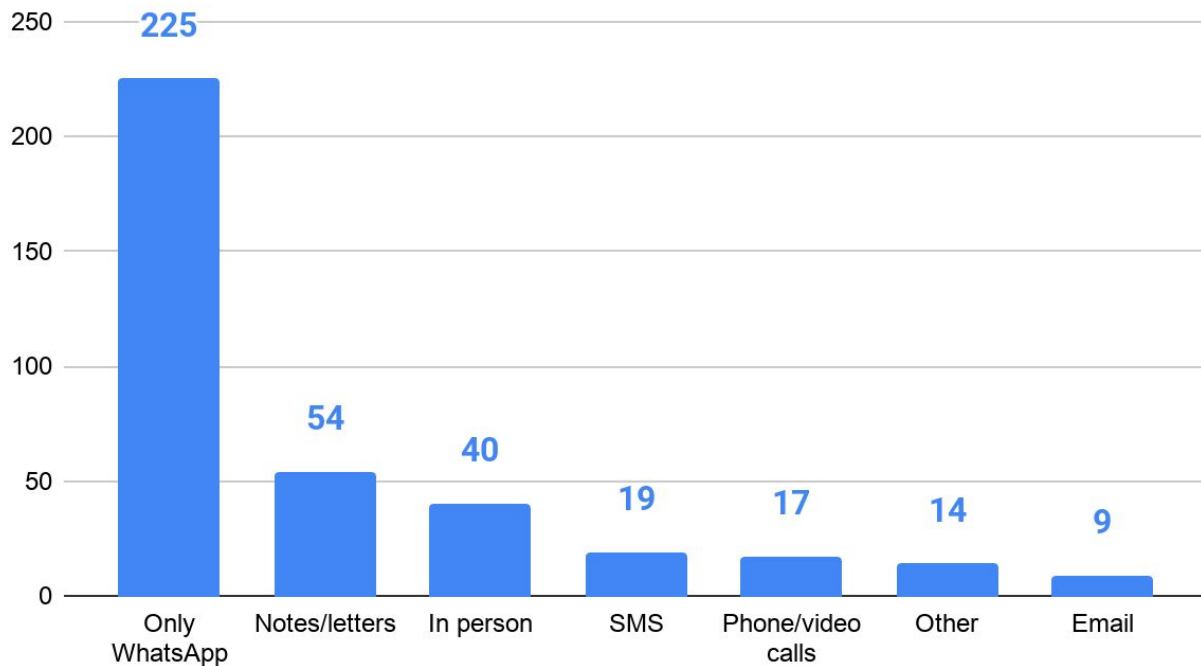
Figure 14: Teachers' reported challenges with sending the WhatsApp messages to parents

(Note: Constraints relating to data access were reported on the sides of both the parents and teachers.)



## What alternatives to WhatsApp were used to share messages with parents?

Figure 15: Teachers' responses to "Have you found ways other than through WhatsApp to communicate the messages with parents? Please explain."



## Teachers' feedback on the materials

Rate how effective you think the **READ AND WRITE WITH ME Pack 1** is for the development of language skills as outlined in the National Revised Annual Teaching Plans (ATPs).

Table 15: Counting teachers' ratings of perceived effectiveness of materials for the development of language skills as outlined in the National Revised Annual Teaching Plans (ATPs).

Education district	Rating scale: 5 = very effective; 1 = not at all effective					Total
	5	4	3	2	1	
Metro South	92	67	30	1		190
Metro Central	40	31	9	1		81
Metro North	34	24	19			77
Cape Winelands	8	18	13	3		42
West Coast	14	16	5	1		36
Metro East	9	2	3	1		15
Eden & Central Karoo	4	5	1			10
Overberg	4					4
<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>455</b>



Rate how easy/difficult do you think the READ AND WRITE WITH ME Pack 1 is for parents to use with children.

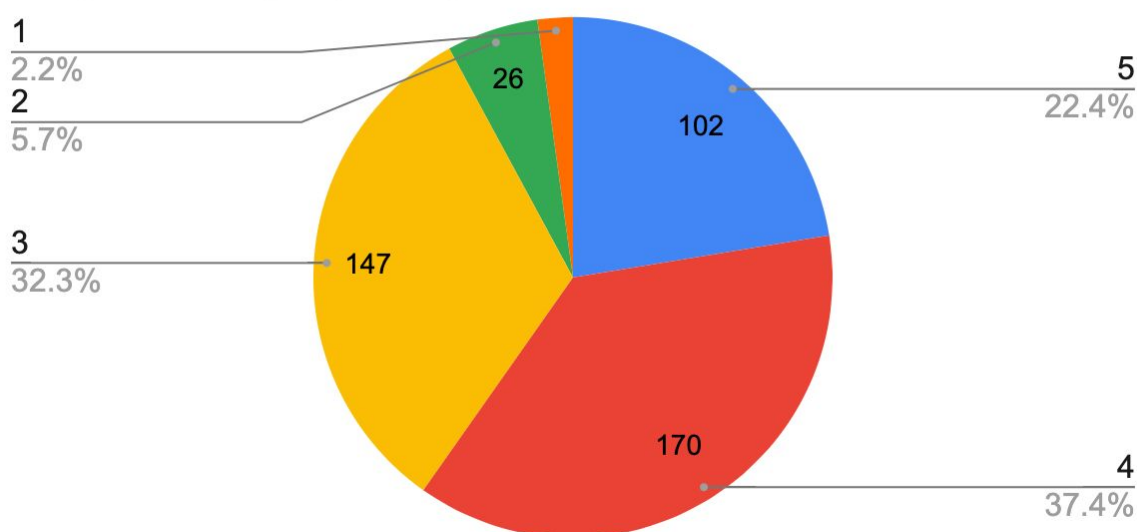
Table 16: Counting teachers' ratings of perceived ease of use of materials by parents with children.

Education district	Rating scale: 5 = very easy; 1 = very difficult					Total
	5	4	3	2	1	
Metro South	50	75	54	9	2	190
Metro Central	19	29	26	7		81
Metro North	14	29	31	3		77
Cape Winelands	6	12	11	6	7	42
West Coast	6	12	16	1	1	36
Metro East	4	7	4			15
Eden & Central Karoo	2	3	5			10
Overberg	1	3				4
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>455</b>

Figure 16: Distribution of teachers' ratings of perceived ease of use of materials by parents with children.

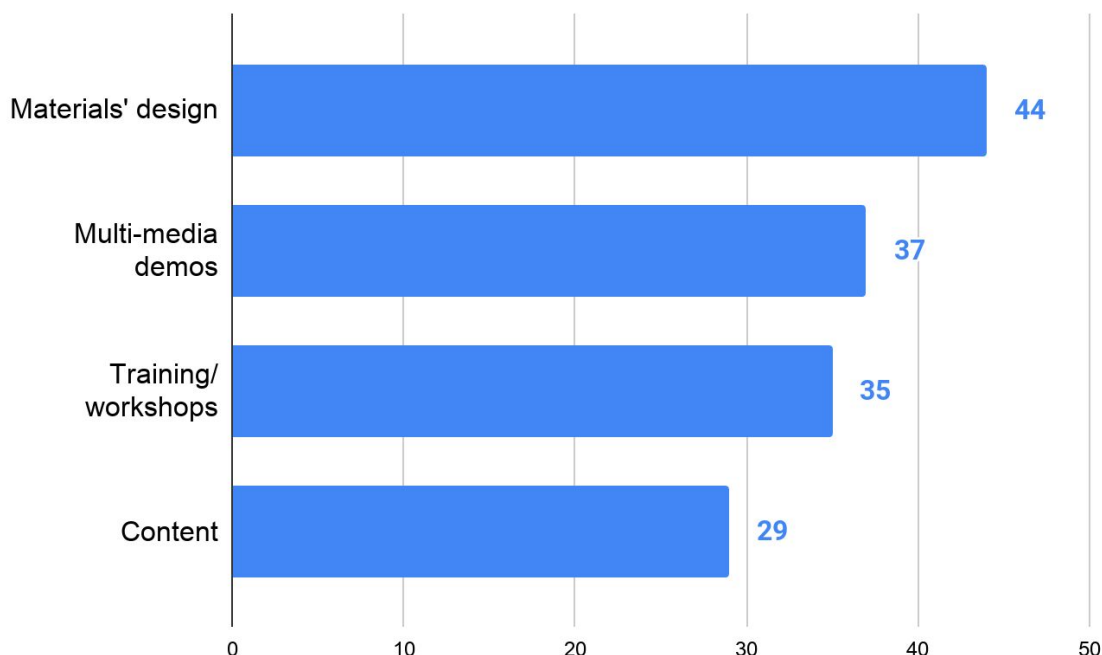
## Teachers' rating of ease of use of materials by parents with children

Rating scale: 5 = very easy; 1 = very difficult



## Do you have any suggestions for how we could improve the READ AND WRITE WITH ME materials in the future?

Figure 17: Distribution of teachers' suggestions for improving the RWWM materials and programme by theme



Responses from teachers around suggestions for improving the READ AND WRITE WITH ME materials were coded by theme. The four themes in Figure 9 above were derived from the most commonly occurring groupings of comments and/or suggestions by teachers.

### Materials design

Of the 44 teachers who gave suggestions around the design of the materials, the majority of suggestions were related to the printed materials with requests to enhance the format of the hard-copy packs and to provide supplementary resources. Incorporating such suggestions would have an obvious impact on the low-cost nature of the materials.

Some examples of suggestions are:

- "Giving concrete objects for learners to work with."
- "Bigger story posters and pictures / props"
- "The size could be A3. e.g the games."
- "More reading books"
- "In a book format. Bigger print"
- "Packaging maybe in plastic ziplock bags"
- "Create hard board games for learners to keep and even bring to school. Have it in a book form so learners won't lose or tear pages."
- "Laminate it. I could see the parents were working with their kids at home by the condition of the pages."

### Multi-media demos

While 37 teachers made suggestions around using various modes of media to support parents' use of the materials with their children, most of the suggestions referred to tools that had already been developed and shared by Wordworks for this purpose, indicating that in some cases, the cascade of messaging from HODs to teachers to parents was not taking place effectively. The virtual mentoring discussed earlier in this report made use of voice notes and videos shared with teachers via WhatsApp. These audio and video files, as well as electronic versions of the materials themselves, had also been made available on Wordworks' data-free website <https://wwhomeliteracy.org.za>, where links to this website had also been shared via WhatsApp.

Some suggestions included:

- "A voice note or video clip with the instructions as many did not understand or read the instructions properly."
- "Perhaps a CD added for parents to listen to. Especially those who have not attended the Wordworks training. Showing them how to read to their kids."
- "Have the instructions on the website or portal for parent's to access easily."
- "A link which are data free so that parents can access themselves"
- "Including an electronic copy."

### Training/workshops

There were 35 teachers who made comments around training and workshops to support the use of the materials. While the majority of these comments were requests for training sessions for parents, a smaller number of teachers requested to receive training themselves on the materials.

Suggestions included:

- "My suggestion is that we can work better with parents if you provide them with workshops before they get the pack because some of them doesn't care about school work because of lack of knowledge"
- "We could do sessions with the parents play the videos and go to the library"
- "Parents to attend a Read & write session at school facilitated by the teachers."
- "Parents need a platform where they can go to as guidance for implementation of this material at home"
- "The teachers need training with the materials before we present it to learners and parents"
- "It would be great to get these packs for the classroom too and incorporate it into our planning"

## Content

Of the 29 teachers who gave suggestions around the content of the materials, 11 teachers indicated that they felt the instructions for parents should be simplified:

- “Make the instructions less because most of my parents struggle with understanding the wording”.

A small number of teachers also indicated that parents were struggling to manage all the activities with their children:

- “Maybe extend the weeks because some parents work and it’s difficult to complete all the tasks set out for the week to do using a weekend.”
- “There are too many booklets and activities to do.”
- “Minder storievolgorde”
- “Please simplify resources and activities for more effective learning and understanding. Especially because parents are the ones who will be engaging with learners.”
- “Parents get lost among the various pages and activities.”

A few teachers requested additional or extended activities:

- “More comprehension and phonics”
- “Especially for grade 1- more stories”
- “More writing activities would be nice”
- “More games that the learners can play at home. They don't always have literate parents at home that can read and explain the activities to them.”

Other suggestions were:

- “The readers for gr 1 are too difficult for learners to read themselves so we trust parents read for them and it could be more soundbased.”
- “Give more guidelines and instruction on how and when you can make any experience a learning one.”
- “Please continue to send it early in the term to ensure that teachers can support learners and parents effectively. To also include some Jolly Phonics sounds.”

## Praise for Read and Write with Me

- “Everything was set out very well and it was reader friendly. Parents and learners alike would easily participate in these packs if the circumstances around COVID 19 normalize, as many people are paranoid and do not really think about schoolwork much, but playful learning as with WordWorks makes learning fun. I would say be consistent in sending materials in order for ALL our learners to become more "literacy aware" as WordWorks

creates a fun way and a phenomenal love for reading and writing and using our imagination. THANK YOU WORDWORKS FOR EVERYTHING YOU DO!!!"

- "What you are doing is brilliant. It is on a level that the parents can understand the activities in order to help their children. So I thank you!!"
- "I think that it provides excellent detailed activities for learners and parents alike as many parents find sounding the alphabet challenging. These are also fun activities which families can enjoy and learn from together."
- "Very helpful and effective for phonics. Easy to understand."
- "No, it was very suitable for Grade R learners although we did not send home, we used it in class when our learners returned to school. We found that parents were not working with the children at home as the homework was often returned incomplete and therefore we decided to rather use the Wordworks packs in the classroom, as we didn't want the beautiful packs to go wasted. The children love using the alphabet chart."
- "So long READ AND WRITE WITH ME is doing great on our learners."
- "Not to stop sending materials to schools because we do try to reach parents. Maybe all the parents will engage in it and not just some parents. It is also a way to strengthen child and parent relationships."
- "It's perfect as is, very good explaining to parents."
- "It is a lovely pack. Parents in my class have been encouraged on a regular basis to use it as consolidation of work used in class as well."
- "It's very clear and parents enjoy working with it."
- "Thank you so much for such amazing, colorful and age appropriate resources put together for the learners."



## Participation and input from WCED Officials

We asked Foundation Phase Co-ordinators, Advisors and ECD Advisors to complete a short questionnaire and received 34 responses. The questionnaire which was sent out in a Google form can be viewed at [Appendix C](#).

### Dissemination and uptake of the materials

25 Officials said they had not had difficulty with the dissemination of the materials to the Offices while 22 were positive about distribution to the schools. Issues included that there was not administrative capacity or systems in the district, difficulty with transport and sufficient storage. Teachers struggled to get to district offices during office hours. Suggestions included more schools collected from Wordworks, Wordworks delivered to Circuit offices or directly to the schools. 23 Officials felt that all or most of their schools were using the resources while 7 felt that about half or very few of their schools were using them.

### Relevance and accessibility of the materials

Most of the Advisors said they thought the materials were effective for the development of language skills as outlined in CAPS and in the National Revised Annual Teaching Plans (ATPs). 23 rated them very highly and 8 highly. 24 thought they were very easy or easy for parents to use while 10 thought they were moderately difficult.

### Quality of the materials

District officials were asked if they had any suggestions for how we could improve the materials in the future. Of the 34 respondents, 26 stated they were happy with the materials as they were. Of the other eight, one recommended parent workshops, one had not yet seen the materials, three wanted first to consult teachers, one asked that we increase font size and number of colour pages, one asked that we present the resources in book form and one that we develop concrete resources. These latter proposals have cost implications but will certainly be carefully considered.

The majority of advisors had strongly positive opinion as expressed in the following comments:

- “The materials and parent guide are easy/ clear and understandable to use. Instructions are clear. Games were wonderful. Thank you so much that you are supporting the District in such a wonderful way. We appreciate all your efforts.”
- “Extend to more Grades as learners are at different levels in Grades - now more than ever and definitely in 2021. Thank you Wordworks Team!!!!!!”
- “Word works is a fun programme which will assist learners to read and write. It is very interactive and caters for all the learning styles”

- “Thank you for assisting our schools”
- “Thank you for the amazing resources. They are very clear and user friendly for all stakeholders that are making use of them. It was reported that a mom in the Atlantis area who has no reading and writing skills really enjoyed using the resources. Thank you for this amazing resource”
- “All good. Thanks for these wonderful resources. Much appreciated.”
- “The materials you provided deemed a valuable support during the pandemic. Thank you and please continue with this exciting and stimulating resource.”
- “The material is superb I don't see anything that needs to be improved”
- “Please continue to develop the materials as they are more helpful.”

### Quality of the support

Advisors liked the Wordworks WhatsApp support and explainer messages, with 20 advisors rating them 5 and 6 rating them 4, with one Advisor noting that Wordworks had ‘really gone the extra mile with the support given’. They appreciated the range of messages which had included text, video and links to the data-free website. There were suggestions for additional support ideas – that Wordworks consider on-line courses, schools conduct workshops to demonstrate the resources, and that advisors should increase their support at schools. At the same time, it was clear that advisors were engaging with the project by following up on deliveries and distribution to parents, sharing all Wordworks support messages, engaging in discussions with teachers on WhatsApp, providing ideas for how to incorporate the materials into Home Language planning and homework, including in Emergent Literacy manuals and support, asking for evidence of engagement by schools and parents such as photos and videos.

To conclude our engagement with WCED Advisors in 2020, Wordworks was invited to a meeting of the Foundation Phase Co-ordinators on 5 November where we received a strong mandate to continue with the materials into 2021.

## Conclusion

We have been pleased to see that some challenges have been addressed between questionnaire one and two through improved communications and administration. We continue to hope that the use of the @ home resources will become more routine in schools, with support systems taking root and take-up improving as parents/caregivers and learners become more familiar with the programme methodologies and expectations, and build their confidence and competence with the activities and resources. One additional report will follow including parent feedback received through a questionnaire shared by teachers at the end of the fourth quarter 2020.

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