

Little Stars



Supporting early language and literacy teaching in pre-Grade R

An early literacy programme by Wordworks

Little Stars programme

The Little Stars programme is for pre-Grade R teachers working with 4–5 year old children. The programme is designed to strengthen language and emergent literacy in pre-Grade R classrooms. It is interactive, activity-rich, NCF-aligned and is built around a 2-week story-based framework. Wordworks trains trainers to offer this resource-based programme to pre-Grade R teachers. The teacher training integrates the Every Word Counts core training so that the Little Stars focused teaching time is part of a holistic approach to building strong language across the daily programme.



Programme goals

- Address the literacy crisis in South Africa by providing children with learning experiences that build language and early literacy.
- Provide high quality resources and lesson guidance to teachers so they can build early language and literacy skills in pre-Grade R.
- Ensure children experience well-balanced, active, creative and effective language lessons centred around a story.
- Strengthen children's oral language, listening skills, phonological awareness and emergent reading and writing skills.

How the programme works

- Training is not a prerequisite for the use of the Little Stars programme and the teacher materials are available to purchase from Wordworks. We do, however, encourage training by one of the certified Little Stars trainers in our partner network.
- If training is required, individuals, education districts, schools, ECD centres, forums or organisations will need to apply for advertised training or engage with a Little Stars trainer to set up a training course for an interested group.
- Wordworks offers annual Training of Trainers courses.
- Training time and models will vary depending on context but a course generally provides up to 30 hours of resource-based training over a year of classroom implementation.



Overview of the Little Stars two-week teaching cycle

(This example is for one story cycle.)

Day	Week One	Week Two
Monday	Storytelling	Reading a Big Book
Tuesday	Building vocabulary	Learning to listen
Wednesday	Singing and listening for sounds	Make, draw and write
Thursday	Sequencing pictures	Little Book
Friday	Storytelling and role play	Drawing and emergent writing

Programme results

Children benefit

Children become confident listeners and speakers, and begin to express their ideas through drawing. They develop a love of books and stories and build foundations for the CAPS curriculum.

Pre-Grade R teachers benefit

Teachers receive carefully developed lesson plans and beautiful classroom resources. They have the opportunity to implement the ideas in a cycle of teaching and reflection that builds their confidence and develops their expertise.

Education Departments, ECD training organisations and institutions benefit

Department officials, NGO trainers and tertiary lecturers have access to carefully researched and tested theoretical and methodological course materials focused on the teaching of language and emergent literacy in pre-Grade R.

Programme resources

The following programme resources are available from Wordworks, in bilingual packs isiXhosa/English; isiZulu/English; Afrikaans/English.

- Six Activity Guides with 3 story packs each
- Each story pack includes a big book, puppets and sequence pictures

The following training resources are available from Wordworks:

- Workbook for practitioners
- Facilitator Guide for trainers
- Slide pack





Would your organisation/department like to partner with Wordworks to use the Little Stars programme?

Wordworks warmly encourages institutions/organisations to use the Little Stars programme and materials in their work. Our materials are open source and our model is one of partnership.

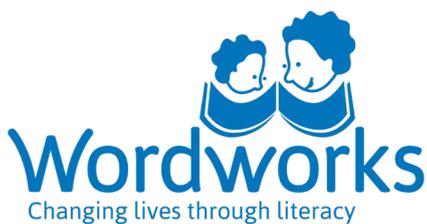
We offer training, resources and support for partners who wish to take Little Stars into their own school and ECD networks. We ask partners to share their learning with Wordworks and other organisations that are using Little Stars.

Here are some key partnership elements that we offer you:

- 1 Training:** Wordworks can offer Training of Trainers courses for Little Stars. Graduates will receive a certificate after they have trained a group of practitioners and completed a portfolio.
- 2 Materials:** Wordworks provides programme materials at a competitive price to partners. We will also offer e-versions of the slide packs and pdf's of the Little Stars Workbook 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 receive 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 and to train on the Little Stars programme in your networks, please contact us at info@wordworks.org.za



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.

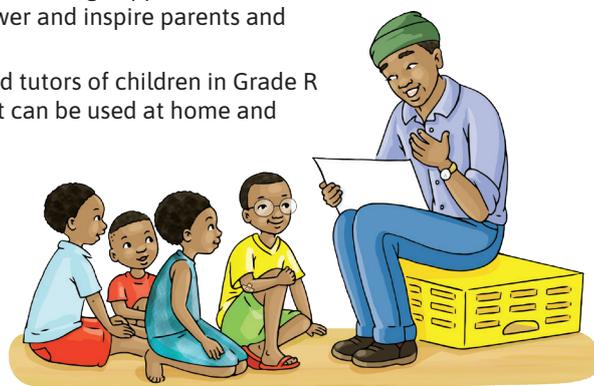
Wordworks offers training, resources and support for partners who wish to use our early language and literacy programmes in their own networks. Programmes are sustained through ongoing relationships with Wordworks, including refresher training and events, input and guidance, access to resources and opportunities, 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 and caregivers 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 and caregivers 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 and caregivers to support informal learning at home.
- **TIME programme** (5–8 years): This programme is for parents, caregivers and tutors of children in Grade R and Grade 1. It consists of carefully developed, CAPS aligned activities that can be used at home and in after-school programmes to build language and maths foundations.

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.

Should you need any more information, please do not hesitate to contact us using the details below:



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Free Wordworks App: search for WORDWORKS in the Google Play store (or use this link: <https://bit.ly/2GzvRF3>)

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