



Stellar Home Language

Supporting early language and literacy teaching in Grade R

An early literacy programme by Wordworks

Stellar Home Language programme

The Stellar Home Language programme is for Grade R teachers working with 5–6 year old children. The programme is designed to strengthen language and emergent literacy in Grade R classrooms. It is interactive, activity-rich and CAPS-aligned and is built around a 2-week story-based framework. Wordworks trains trainers to offer this resource-based programme to Grade R teachers. The teacher training integrates theory and practice, giving opportunities for reflection and planning. It deepens teachers' understanding of the vital role they play in building language and literacy, and equips them to partner with parents.



Programme goals

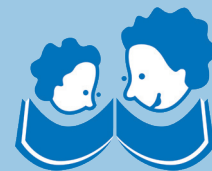
- Address the literacy crisis in South Africa by providing children with learning experiences that build language and early literacy.
- Provide high quality resources and lesson guidance to teachers so they can build early language and literacy skills in Grade R.
- Ensure children experience well-balanced,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

How the programme works






- Training is not a prerequisite for the use of the Stellar programme and the teacher materials are available to purchase from Wordworks. We do, however, encourage training by the Department of Education or one of the certified Stellar trainers in our partner network.
- If training is required, teachers, education districts, schools or organisations will need to apply for advertised training or engage with a Stellar trainer to set up a training course for an interested group.
- Training time and models will vary depending on context but a course generally provides up to 60 hours of resource-based training over a year of classroom implementation.

Overview of the Stellar two-week teaching cycle






(This example is for one story cycle.)

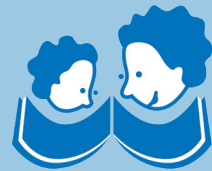


Week 1

Whole class activities	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Story-based activities	Storytelling and building vocabulary	Storytelling and singing	Storytelling and role play	Sequencing pictures	Make, draw and write
	Learners hear the story for the first time while learning new vocabulary.	Learners listen to the story again and sing a song related to the story.	Learners take on different roles and use the story language themselves, while the story is narrated.	Learners retell the story by using pictures.	Learners represent their ideas about the story by making an object, drawing a picture or participating in shared writing.
Letter and sound activities	Introducing a sound from the story	Forming the letter	Letter boxes	Listening for focus sounds	Blending and segmenting
	Learners are introduced to a focus sound linked to words from the story.	Learners form the focus letter using different materials which give them a rich sensory experience.	Learners see, hold and talk about objects and pictures that start with the focus sound.	Learners identify focus sounds in words.	Learners blend sounds to make words and break up words into sounds.
Small group activities	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Stella indicates which small group activities are teacher-guided each day.					
The blue group	Activity 1: Drawing and emergent writing 	Activity 2: Puzzles and games	Activity 3: Independent reading	Activity 4: Fine motor skills and handwriting	Activity 5: Pretend play
	Learners record their ideas through drawing and emergent writing.	Learners do puzzles and play language games.	Learners read independently and enjoy books and other printed material.	Learners do fine motor activities and practise forming letters.	Learners build on the story language and theme through pretend play.
The green group	Activity 5: Pretend play	Activity 1: Drawing and emergent writing 	Activity 2: Puzzles and games	Activity 3: Independent reading	Activity 4: Fine motor skills and handwriting
The yellow group	Activity 4: Fine motor skills and handwriting	Activity 5: Pretend play	Activity 1: Drawing and emergent writing 	Activity 2: Puzzles and games	Activity 3: Independent reading
The red group	Activity 3: Independent reading	Activity 4: Fine motor skills and handwriting	Activity 5: Pretend play	Activity 1: Drawing and emergent writing 	Activity 2: Puzzles and games
The purple group	Activity 2: Puzzles and games	Activity 3: Independent reading	Activity 4: Fine motor skills and handwriting	Activity 5: Pretend play	Activity 1: Drawing and emergent writing 

Week 2

Whole class activities	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Story-based activities	More sequencing pictures	Shared reading – Big Book	Learning to listen	Read and do	Make, draw and write
	Learners consolidate their story knowledge by sequencing pictures more independently.	Learners listen to a familiar story being read as the teacher models the reading process.	Learners listen carefully and follow verbal instructions.	Learners interpret written and picture cues.	Learners represent their ideas about the story by making an object, drawing a picture or participating in shared writing.
Letter and sound activities	Introducing a sound from the story	Forming the letter	Letter boxes	Listening for focus sounds	Blending and segmenting
	Learners are introduced to a focus sound linked to words from the story.	Learners form the focus letter using different materials which give them a rich sensory experience.	Learners see, hold and talk about objects and pictures that start with the focus sound.	Learners identify focus sounds in words.	Learners blend sounds to make words and break up words into sounds.
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The purple group	Activity 2: Puzzles and games 	Activity 3: Independent reading	Activity 4: Fine motor skills and handwriting	Activity 5: Pretend play	Activity 1: Drawing and emergent writing



Programme results

Children benefit

Children become confident listeners and speakers, build their knowledge of letters and sounds and begin to express their ideas through drawing and emergent writing. They develop a love of books and stories and build foundations to meet the demands of the Grade R curriculum.

Grade R teachers benefit

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

Education Departments, teacher 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 Grade R.

Programme resources

The following programme resources are available from Wordworks, in all official languages:

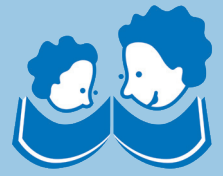
- A Concept Guide
- Four Activity Guides (one per term)
- 19 story packs which include a big book, puppets and sequence pictures
- A resource pack which includes game boards and templates

The following training resources are available from Wordworks:

- Workbooks for teachers
- Facilitator Guides for trainers
- Slide packs



Would your organisation/department like to partner with Wordworks to use the Stellar Home Language programme?



Wordworks warmly encourages institutions/organisations to use the Stellar Home Language 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 Stellar into their own school networks. We ask partners to share their learning with Wordworks and other organisations that are using Stellar.

Here are some key partnership elements that we offer you:

- 1 Training:** Wordworks can offer Training of Trainers courses for Stellar. Graduates will receive a certificate after they have trained a group of teachers 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 Stellar Workbooks 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 monitoring and evaluation (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: Complete the Expression of interest form to receive registration details: *Wordworks programmes: expression of interest form*.

You can find it here: <https://forms.gle/foNch9ycRnnvYUsr5>

Or by scanning this QR code:



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.

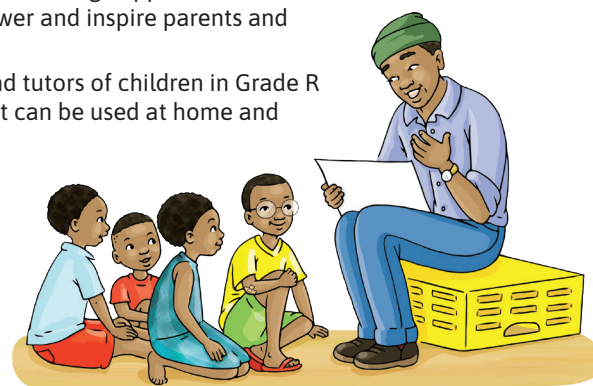
We are working collaboratively to grow an informed, capable, resourced and motivated network of schools, organisations and institutions that promote the importance of, and work effectively, for the improvement of children's early language and literacy, through their association with our programmes and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