



Zimbabwe
Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

LITERACY



IGATE Module 6

Working with longer
texts / Review



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This material has been funded by UK aid from the UK government.

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Revised Module 6 (MoPSE)



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Foundational literacy

Module 6: Working with longer texts / Review

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About these modules

This is the sixth and final in a series of six Teacher Professional Development (TPD) modules for all teachers working with learners whose attainment in literacy is below their Grade or Form level. The modules are also appropriate for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) – particularly during school placements or practicum.

Module 1: Single letters sounds and first steps in writing

Module 2: The sounds of letter pairs/threes and ‘tricky spellings’

Module 3: Assessment and more on reading/writing words

Module 4: From longer words to short sentences

Module 5: Comprehension of short texts

Module 6: Working with longer texts / Review

The modules were collaboratively developed for the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) by The Open University, World Vision, and CARE international. The modules have been tried and tested in hundreds of primary and secondary schools across Zimbabwe, strengthening the teaching of foundation skills and improving learning outcomes. Our thanks to everyone who contributed – especially teachers, school heads, and schools’ inspectors.

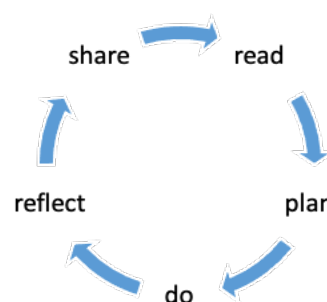
MOPSE’s highest priority is to empower ALL learners through strong foundations in literacy and numeracy. Whatever their Grade or Form, all learners need strong foundations in literacy and numeracy to succeed in other learning areas.

Learners must *learn to read and use number* so they can *read and use number to learn*.

Using the modules

Teachers will benefit most by using the modules within reflective-practice cycles in their schools, as shown below.

Read	an activity.
Plan	how you will use the activity.
Do	the activity with your learners.
Reflect	what did learners learn from doing the activity?
	➤ What worked well?
	➤ What would you change next time?
Share	your experiences with your colleagues.



The modules can be used by

- individual teachers.
- pairs or groups of teachers.
- whole schools.
- cluster meetings or district workshops.

The modules provide classroom activities and guidance for effective use.

Learner attainment

We describe learners who can do an activity confidently and successfully as 'higher attaining' and learners who cannot do an activity well as 'lower attaining'.

No one knows what a learner will be able to do given the chance. Every learner has the potential for growth. Teachers have often been surprised when they found that a learner who was 'higher attaining' for one activity was then 'lower attaining' for another—and vice versa. So we don't label learners with words like 'fast' or 'slow'.

A learner may have different levels of attainment in different learning areas, or in different aspects of one learning area. That's why assessment is a big part of the activities. It is important to find out, as often as possible, what learners know and can or can't do. Then they can be given activities at a level that will help them progress.

Working in groups

Learning takes place as a result of **doing** an activity, **thinking** about it, and **understanding** the ideas it contains.

In order to make sure that all learners are **doing**, many activities are designed so learners work together in pairs or small groups for most of the lesson. Pairs, or groups of four to six learners work best because everyone can take part. The activity will usually need to be demonstrated by the teacher first.

There are several ways in which learners can be put into groups. Teachers should choose the one which works best for the activity and their learners.

1. Learners choose themselves. Sometimes this can result in friends working (or not working!) together, while other learners are left out.
2. Learners at a similar level of attainment work together. This can work well, as learners are working at their preferred pace, but learners who need help have to find it from outside the group.
3. Learners at mixed levels of attainment work together. This type of grouping has the advantage that higher-attaining learners can help lower-attaining ones. This gives lower attaining learners personal and prompt support, and higher-attaining learners a chance to talk about what they have learnt which helps to deepen their understanding.

Introduction: Finding suitable texts

Resource A (page 29) of this module features some longer texts with comprehension questions. These may be a useful start, but to really give your learners the reading practice they need, you will need to find more texts for them to work with. Here are some suggestions.

Textbooks

Your school may have a collection of various textbooks. Any textbook may be useful for practising reading – the subject does not matter, and it usually doesn't matter if the textbook is a bit out of date. All that matters is that the book includes some texts that your learners can read and understand.



A collection of books in a primary school. Many of these have texts that can be used for reading activities!

Storybooks

Your school may have a collection of storybooks. There probably won't be enough copies of any one book for every learner, but you can do activities where the class works with several different storybooks at the same time.



The internet

If your school has an internet connection and a printer, then of course there is a huge range of texts available. Alternatively, you could copy a text from the internet onto the chalkboard before the lesson. Here are some good places to begin searching. All these resources are free.

African Storybook

Storybooks for children: africanstorybook.org

Storyberries

Stories and poems for children: storyberries.com

British Council

Stories for children: learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/short-stories

Factual texts for children: learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/reading-practice

Wikipedia simple English version

Factual articles written in simple English: simple.wikipedia.org

FunDza

South African reading text project, which can be delivered via WhatsApp:
fundza.co.za / WhatsApp 00 27 623 221 466

Choosing texts

When you are searching for texts to use, consider the following questions.

Topic

Will the class be able to understand the topic? It should be appropriate for the learners' age, and it should be something that they will all be able to understand, based on their knowledge of the world.

Interest

It is important that the learners feel motivated to read the text. So as well as being understandable, it must also be interesting for them.

Level of English

The level of English must not be too difficult for them to read. How many words does the text have that your learners probably don't already know? If it is more than a few, then the level of English may be too difficult.

Length

For the activities in this unit, a maximum length of 200 words is recommended. If you find a text that is suitable but much longer than 200 words, consider using just part of it.

Foundational literacy

Unit 1: Reading longer texts

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Key words

early literacy, assessment, reading comprehension, longer texts

1.1: Creating comprehension questions

This activity is an activity for teachers rather than learners, and it aims to develop teaching skills in using found texts for reading comprehension in the classroom.

Being able to create good comprehension questions means that suddenly a wide range of texts that are available locally can be transformed into resources for teaching literacy.

Aim

To provide learners with comprehension questions to accompany a reading text.

What the learners will do

Read texts that the teacher has found, and then answer comprehension questions that the teacher has created.

Resources

The reading text examples in **Resource A** (page 29)

Activity

1. Look at one or more of the texts with comprehension questions in **Resource A**. Find questions that ask about:

- what type of text it is (e.g. story, news report, letter, etc.)
- what the main topic is
- the most important points in the text
- smaller details in the text
- (for some stories) the 'message' or the 'moral' of the story

For each question, find the words in the text which give that information.

2. Write questions for the text below. If you are using this module with other teachers, work in pairs. Try to use various different types of question. Use the examples in **Resource A** as a guide. (**Note:** The highlighted words in the text may be unfamiliar to learners.)

Keeping traditions alive

Esther Mahlangu was born on a farm in a Ndebele village in 1935. She began painting when she was ten years old. Her mother and grandmother taught her how to paint walls, and to work with brightly coloured beads in the traditional Ndebele style.

She spent her life painting large wall paintings. When she was 61 years old, Esther Mahlangu became a famous artist. Her work was shown at important exhibitions around the world.

After she became famous, lots of people wanted to buy her work. She also made patterns for cars and aeroplanes.

Even though Esther became famous, she didn't change her way of life. She still lives in her village, and teaches young people about Ndebele art and culture.

3. (If you are using this module with other teachers) Compare the questions you wrote in your pairs with those of the whole group. Discuss which questions work best, and why.
4. Now compare your questions with the examples in **Resource B** (page 38). **But don't look at these examples until now, or there is no point in doing this activity!**
5. Repeat the process with the following text:

Lessons with my cousin

My cousin Nyaha recently came to live with our family in the city. She is two years older than me. She lived in the country, so she doesn't know much about city life. I explained to her how things work here. She has been teaching me, too. She is showing me how to dance traditional dances.

Dancing is a new thing for me. Nyaha is good at explaining what to do with my arms and legs. It is difficult to move as quickly as she can, because she has been dancing for many years. At the moment she is teaching me a really funny dance about a greedy baboon who steals food. You use a lot of energy in the dance, but it makes us laugh and laugh. You can't think about anything bad when you are dancing! I can't wait for my next dance lesson.

Assessment

If you use comprehension questions like these with your learners, you can check how well they are able to answer them, and this will help you to judge their current level of literacy skills.

Into practice: Collaborating with colleagues

Mrs Chigumbu sometimes finds reading texts she can use with her class, and writes comprehension questions for them. She believes it is very important that the questions are clear and easy to understand, and that they will produce clear answers. However, it is not always easy to write questions like this.

When she has found a text and written some questions, she asks another teacher to help her to test the questions. The other teacher reads the text and tries to answer the questions. If the other teacher cannot understand a question easily, or cannot give a simple answer to a question, then Mrs Chigumbu knows that she needs to change that question.



My colleagues and I are gradually building up a good collection of texts and questions. We share these with each other, and organise them in boxes so it is easy to find them and use them again in future lessons.

1.2: Shared reading with longer texts

Aim

To develop learners' skills in reading longer texts.

What the learners will do

They will follow a text with their fingers while you read it aloud.

Resources

Choose a text from **Resource A** (page 29) or **1.1: Writing comprehension questions** above or find another text and write comprehension questions for it.

Each learner needs a copy of the text. If this is not possible, then they should at least have one copy of the text between two.

Write the questions clearly on the chalkboard before the lesson.

Activity

1. Give the learners their texts. Allow them a minute or two to look at them. Ask them to say what type of text it is by asking two 'no' and one 'yes' questions. For example, if it's a factual text, ask: *'Is it a story?' (No.) 'Is it a letter?' (No.) 'Is it information about something?' (Yes.)*
2. Read the text aloud slowly and clearly. The learners must follow by pointing to the correct place in the text and moving their fingers along the lines while you read. Walk around the classroom while you read, and help anybody who is struggling to do this.
3. Repeat stage 2, reading the text again. When you come to a word that you think may be unfamiliar to some or all of the class, teach the meaning (for example, by demonstrating, acting, explaining or drawing a picture).
4. Organise the learners into pairs. Read the first question aloud. They must discuss their answer and then write it. Repeat with the other questions. Allow enough time for them to find the information in the text, or to check their answers if they answered from memory.
5. The pairs form larger groups with one or two other pairs. They compare their answers, and change any answers if they want to.
6. Ask the class for the answers to the questions. Repeat the answers you hear from learners two or three times in a loud, clear voice. This is so that all the learners can check their answers. Allow enough time for them to change their answers if necessary.

Assessment

Visit the groups of four while they are working during stage 5 above. Observe how well they are able to answer the questions, and make a note of any learners who seem to be below the average the level of attainment for the class.

Into practice: Learners reading aloud

In the past, Mrs Chigumbu often used to ask her learners to read texts aloud to the rest of the class. Then one day she asked herself if this was really a useful thing to do. The learner who was reading aloud often read slowly, and made some mistakes. It was often boring for the other learners to listen to, and sometimes too quiet for many of them to hear.

There was another problem too. When she asked, '*Who wants to read aloud?*', the same few learners always put their hands up. They were the most confident readers in the class. None of the others seemed to want to read aloud. Mrs Chigumbu realised why this was. They *knew* that they weren't especially good at reading aloud, and doing it in front of the whole class wasn't an enjoyable experience for them.

Mrs Chigumbu still wants to hear her learners read aloud, but not in front of the whole class. Sometimes, when the class is doing another activity, she asks individual learners to come and read aloud for her. This helps her to assess their level of reading skill. It is not stressful and unpleasant for them like reading aloud for the whole class sometimes was.

In some other activities, Mrs Chigumbu asks learners to read things that **they have written** to the class. This is less likely to be stressful and unpleasant for them, because they have written it, so it is not too difficult for them to read it aloud.



I want to make sure that reading is always a pleasant experience for my learners, and not something to fear!

1.3: Read, think, pair, share

Aim

To develop learners' skills in reading longer texts.

What the learners will do

They will read a text and answer comprehension questions, first in pairs and then in larger groups.

Resources

Choose a text from **Resource A** (page 29) or find another text and write comprehension questions for it. (See the **Introduction** and **1.1** above).

Each learner needs a copy of the text. If this is not possible, then they should at least have one copy of the text between two. They will also need copies of the questions. Alternatively, copy the text and questions clearly onto the chalkboard before the lesson.

Note: If there are learners with very different levels of attainment, organise them so that learners at similar levels work together. Give the lower-attaining learners an easier text, and give the higher-attaining learners a more difficult text. (See **Into practice** below.)

Activity

1. Give the learners their texts. It is not necessary to introduce the text and explain the topic. The learners need to learn to do this for themselves when they meet a new text.
2. Tell them to read the text silently. Go around the class and check that everybody is doing this. If there are any learners who are struggling to read their text, you can help them: run your finger along the text and read some or all of the text aloud in a whisper.
3. Tell the learners to read the questions and think of answers. Again, visit them while they do this, and help any who are struggling to read the questions – read the questions aloud in a whisper.
4. When everybody has had enough time to think of answers, they form pairs and compare answers. They can then change any answers if they wish to. Before they begin, demonstrate this with one learner. Ask: *'What's your answer for question 1?'* Say if your answer is similar or different. Then prompt the learner to ask you: *'What's your answer for question 2?'*
5. Next, the pairs form larger groups with one or two other pairs who have read the same text. They compare their answers. As before, give a quick demonstration of how to do this. Join one group, and say: *'My answer for question 1 is ...'*. Then prompt the rest of the group to say if their answers

are similar or different. Again, anybody who wishes to revise their answers can do so.

6. If all the learners have the same text, you could go over the answers again with the whole class, but ask yourself if this is really necessary. If everybody now knows the correct answers, then going over them again may not be a very good use of time, and could be boring for the learners.

Assessment

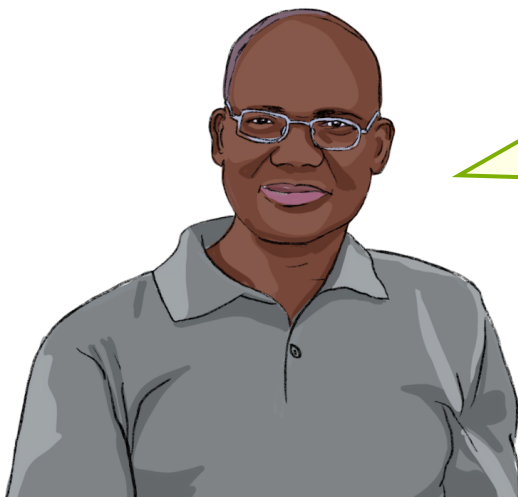
While you visit the groups as they work, judge how well the learners are able to complete the task. See **Into practice** below. Collect the completed sentences too - this will give you a permanent record of the learners' writing skills at that time.

Into practice: A special group for learners with the lowest level of attainment

The learners in Mr Utseya's class have very different levels of literacy attainment. Some have the expected reading level for their age, but some still have very limited reading skills, and a few of them are almost non-readers. Mr Utseya doesn't want his higher-attaining learners to miss the chance to work with longer, more challenging texts. But what can the learners with much lower attainment do?

Mr Utseya gets the rest of the class to do a quiet activity (like silent reading). Then he asks the lowest-attaining learners to come and sit with him in a group. He reads the text aloud (quietly, so it doesn't disturb the rest of the class) and follows the text with his finger. The learners in this group also follow the text with their finger. Then he repeats this stage.

He reads the first question aloud, and follows the question text with his finger. The learners also follow with their fingers. Then he asks for their ideas about the answer. When somebody gives the correct answer, the group must find and point to the part of the text that has the answer. He repeats this process for the rest of the questions.



I believe that helping my lowest-attaining learners in this way can help to keep them coming to school rather than giving up and dropping out.

Foundational literacy

Unit 2: Writing longer texts

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Key words

early literacy, assessment, writing, creative writing, factual texts

2.1: Guided creative writing

Aim

To develop learners' skills in writing longer texts.

Any piece of creative writing – even a very simple one by a schoolchild – needs to be planned. Where is it set? Who is the main character? What happens? Why is it worth telling as a story? Without at least some planning, learners' pieces of writing are likely to lack a clear purpose and structure. This activity aims to help them think and plan before they write.

What the learners will do

They will plan and write a story.

Resources

Before the activity, write these questions on the chalkboard.

- Where does the story happen?
- Who is it about?
- What is her/his name?
- What problem did she/he have?
- What did she/he do about this problem?
- What happened in the end?

Activity

NOTE: The ideas for the stories will come from the learners' imaginations. Encourage them to make lots of different suggestions, and encourage their creativity. Be positive about all of their ideas, even if some of them might seem 'silly' to an adult.

1. Tell the class that they are going to plan a story together. Ask them for suggestions for answers to each of the questions on the board. Listen to at least three suggestions for the first question. Choose the idea you think is the best. It may be the best because it is an interesting idea and/or it seems likely that it will take the story in a direction that leads to further good ideas.
2. Write the suggestion next to the question. Repeat this process for the other questions.
3. The learners write the story, following the structure on the board. Visit them while they work, and check that they are doing it properly. Encourage higher-attaining learners to add details to the story, and perhaps some conversation.

Do not correct minor errors – this activity is for fluency in writing. If you see a serious error, point at it, tell the learner there is a mistake, and ask how they can correct it. Only give them the correction if they cannot do it for themselves.

Assessment

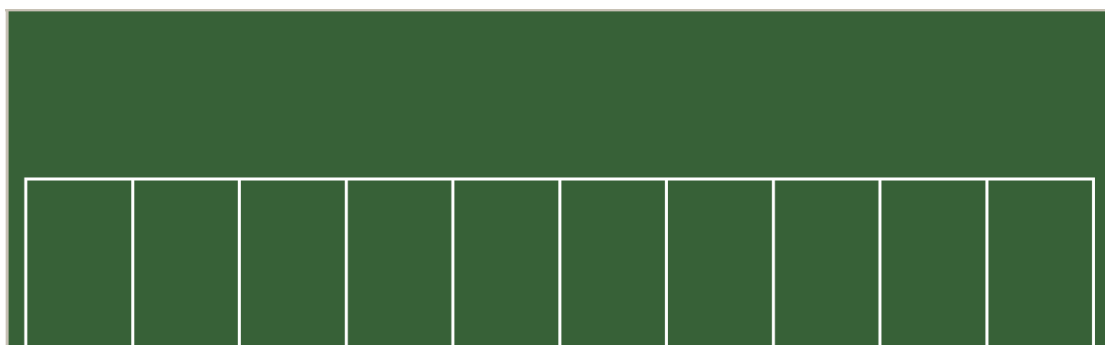
If possible, collect in all the pieces of writing and check them again. This will help you understand more about your learners' levels of writing skill. Write a positive comment at the end of each piece: *Well done! Nice story! I enjoyed reading this!* etc. And/or draw a smiley face!

Into practice: Using the chalkboard in place of writing materials

Some of Mrs Siziba's learners arrive at school without pens, pencils and exercise books.

When possible, her school tries to supply pens and paper for learners who do not have them. However, for a recent writing lesson with her class, this was not possible.

Her classroom has two large, long chalkboards, one at each end of the room. When she did the writing activity, she counted how many learners there were who had nothing to write on or with. Then she divided the board at the back of the classroom into writing spaces. Each learner without pen and paper could then write with chalk instead.



This wasn't an ideal solution, but it was better than those learners without writing materials just doing nothing in the lesson. And they enjoyed being allowed to write on the board!

2.2: Writing an informal letter or email

Aim

To develop learners' writing skills for letters/emails/phone messages.

What the learners will do

They will plan and write a letter, email or phone message.

Resources

Before the activity, write these questions on the chalkboard.

Who is your friend?

Where does he/she live? (It must be far away.)

What are you inviting him/her to?

When is it?

What is going to happen?

Activity

1. Tell the class that they are going to write a letter (or email or phone message) together. This letter is going to invite a friend to come to an event (for example a wedding). Explain that the 'friend' can be invented/imagined.
2. Ask the class for suggestions for answers to each question on the board. Listen to at least three suggestions for the first question. Choose the one you think is best, and write it next to the question. Repeat for the other questions.
3. The learners write the letter (or email or phone message) following the structure on the board. Visit them while they work, and check that they are doing it properly. Encourage higher-attaining learners to add details. If you plan to continue the activity in the next lesson, collect the letters.
4. (*Perhaps in the next lesson*) Select a good letter from one learner, and read it aloud. Write a reply on the board, which accepts the invitation, and read it aloud to the class. Then repeat the process with a letter that refuses the invitation and explains why (for example, the journey will be too long and too expensive). Allow a minute or two for the learners to read both replies again silently. Then wipe them from the board.
5. Each learner passes the letter they wrote to another learner. Then each learner must write a reply to the letter they have just received. The reply can accept or refuse the invitation as they wish. If they refuse, they must give an excuse or explanation. Visit the learners while they write, and give help and encouragement where it is needed.

6. Choose some of the best letter + reply pairs, and fix them to the walls of the classroom.

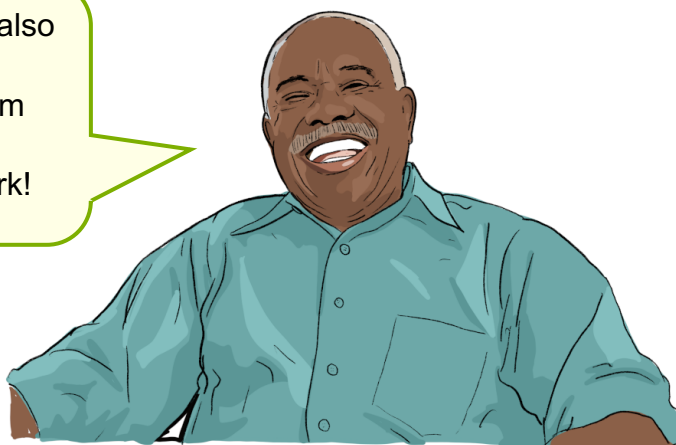
Assessment

The texts created by the learners will provide an excellent record of their current level of attainment. See **Into practice** below.

Into practice: Using learners' writing to plan future lessons

After using an activity like the one above, Mr Olonga collects the texts the learners have produced. He looks for problems that are common to many/most of the learners. He then uses this information to help plan future lessons. For example, after one activity, he noticed from the learners' compositions that many of them still did not know the basics of how to set out a letter on the page (even though he had taught them this in an earlier lesson). This told him that he needed to revisit the topic in a future lesson.

Reading their compositions also help me get to know my learners better. Some of them come up with amazingly creative and imaginative work!



2.3: Writing a factual text

Aim

To develop learners' writing skills for factual texts.

What the learners will do

They will plan and write a factual text.

Resources

Before the activity, write these questions on the chalkboard.

What interesting thing did you learn in a lesson for another school subject?

What school subject was it?

Explain the interesting thing.

What is the title for this piece of writing?

Activity

1. Tell the class that they are going to write together about something interesting that they learned in a recent lesson for another school subject. Ask the class for suggestions for ideas to answer the first question. Listen to at least three suggestions. Choose the one you think is best, and write it next to the question. Then ask for answers to the other questions. Try to collect at least four points for 'explain the interesting thing'.
2. The learners work in groups of three or four. One is the 'secretary'. They work together to produce a piece of writing based on the information they heard in stage 1. Visit the groups and give help where necessary. When the groups have finished, ask them to compare their compositions with other groups. Can the other groups help to make their text more interesting and/or more fun to read?
3. *(Additional stage for higher-attaining classes)* The learners work individually. They choose a different interesting thing from a lesson from another school subject, and write another text. Visit them while they work, and give help and encouragement where it is needed.

Assessment

As described for 2.2 above, the texts created by the learners will provide an excellent record of their current level of attainment, and can help you to plan future lessons.

Into practice: Making sure everybody contributes, not just the 'secretary'

Ms Ndlovu sometimes uses activities where the learners work in small groups with 'secretaries'. She noticed that when she allowed the group to choose the secretary themselves, the same thing often happened: the learner with the highest level of literacy attainment in the group made themselves the secretary and then did most or all of the task, while the others in the group just watched.

To fix this problem, Ms Ndlovu now does two things differently. Firstly, she chooses the secretary in each group herself. She does not choose any learner who still has significant problems with writing, but otherwise any learner can be chosen for this role.

Secondly, she insists that the secretaries only write. The other group members agree their ideas, and then the secretary writes what they have said.

Next time she does an activity with 'secretaries', she makes sure that different learners take that role.

Now a group activity with secretaries really *is* a group activity, not just one member of the group writing while the others watch.



Foundational literacy

Unit 3: Review / End of programme reflection

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Key words

early literacy, reading, writing, phonics, teacher development

Unit 3 Introduction

This final unit reviews key points from the programme, and suggests ways to develop your teaching skills further.

All previous units in these modules have described activities for learners to do. The activities in this unit are for **teachers** to do, in order to develop their teaching skills further and to reflect on using all six modules.

These activities will work best if you do them with one or more of your colleagues. However, they can also be completed alone if necessary.

3.1 Review: teaching with phonics

In classes at any level, there may be learners who are still struggling to read words – and especially unfamiliar words. It is important for those learners that you continue teaching with phonics, even though it is more associated with the earlier grades.

Can you sound-talk it?

‘Sound-talking’ is saying just the sounds of the single letters and digraphs/trigraphs in a word without adding any extra sounds. You can sound-talk any words that have regular spellings. For example, *morning*, *teacher* and *right*. All these have common relationships between sounds and letters. Practise sound-talking them: say the individual sounds (with no added sounds) and then blend the sounds together to make the whole word:

m-or-n-i-ng t-ea-ch-er r-igh-t

You can also sound-talk most words that have double letters. It’s not too difficult for the learners to understand that a double letter sounds the same as one letter. For example, *spell*, *bigger*, *sitting*. Practise sound-talking them:

s-p-e-ll b-i-gg-er s-i-tt-i-ng

You can also sound-talk words with the ‘magic e’. Just remind the learners that the final e changes the sound of the previous vowel. For example, *make*, *smile*, *stone*. Practise sound-talking them:

m-a-ke s-m-i-le s-t-o-ne

You can also sound-talk words with letters that have a second, less-common sound. For example, *price*, *happy*, *magic*. Practise sound-talking them:

p-r-i-ce h-a-pp-y m-a-g-i-c

However, there are many words with irregular spellings (sometimes called ‘tricky spellings’). It would be confusing to try to sound-talk these words, because they do not follow the normal rules of spelling. Find the parts of each of these words which are irregular spellings in these words. (Answers in **Resource C**, page 39.)

said there come little through

Find the ‘tricky spellings’

Eight of the words below are suitable for sound-talking, and eight are not because they have ‘tricky spellings’. Can you find the words with tricky spellings? And can you find the individual sounds in those words that have irregular spellings? (Answers in **Resource C**.)

people down thing one children know
 could under chicken round doesn't their
 white daughter window friend

Extra phonics help for learners

If you find your learners are struggling to understand how words with regular spellings are made of up of single letters, digraphs and trigraphs, you can use this method to give extra support. For a review of digraphs and trigraphs (and also tricky spellings) see **Resource D** (page 40).

When you write a word on the chalkboard, put a dot below each single letter that makes one sound and a dash below each digraph and trigraph and most double consonants. For example:

jump look thirsty quicker happening
 _ . _ _ . . . _ . _ _ . . _ . . . _

Note: If you are not sure whether a word has a regular spelling or a 'tricky spelling', do not use this method.

Add the dots and dashes

Add the dots and dashes to the words below. Sound-talk the word while you point at the individual sounds, then blend the sounds together to make the whole word.

If you are using this module with other teachers, take turns to write one of the words below with dots and dashes (ideally, on a chalkboard). The others act the role of the learners. When you have the teacher role, sound-talk the word while you point at the individual sounds, and then blend the sounds together to make the whole word. Then the 'learners' do this together as the you point at the sounds. (The correct dots and dashes are in **Resource C**, page 39.)

with then brown cheap better speaking
 found difficult shopping wheels Thursday

Into practice: Using the 'dots and dashes' method

Some of Mr Tembo's learners are still struggling to read individual words, especially longer words and words that are new to them. He sometimes helps these learners by using the 'dots and dashes' method to show them how the word is divided into individual sounds, and to sound-talk it with them.

At first, he found it difficult to divide the words into their sounds, and sometimes he made mistakes. He also found that sometimes he thought a

word had a regular spelling, but then found it was actually a 'tricky' spelling. However, with more practice, these things became easier.



I don't use this method all the time. The learners need to learn how to read words without this extra help. But I find it is useful for giving extra help to those learners who are still having problems with basic literacy, and for sound-talking long and/or unfamiliar words with the whole class.

3.2 Review: teaching the meanings of new words

Research suggests that many learners struggle to read texts well because they do not know the meaning of many of the words.

Try reading the text below. Some of the key words have been replaced with nonsense words. How does trying to read it make you feel?

Vimbai's dunersel home

Vimbai and her family live in an old waglamp garpin. It was in a waglamp korfdip until ten years ago. Then the korfdip staced, and they sold all their waplamp urpells and garpins. Vimbai's grandfather bought one of the garpins. He depilted it and made it barghollery to live in. Vimbai's family love their dunersel home.

1. Where do Vimbai's family live?
2. Why did the waglamp korfdip sell the garpin?
3. What did Vimbai's grandfather do to the garpin?

Did reading this text make you feel very confused? This is how learners are likely to feel if they do not understand some of the important words in a text. It may also make them feel that they are failing, and that reading is not something they will ever be able to do well.

This section offers an opportunity to practise this essential part of teaching foundational literacy, and to develop skills in doing it. ('Translations' of the nonsense words are in **Resource C**, page 39.)

Over to you

1. Imagine that the words below are the key words from a reading text you are using with your class. Which of these words do you think *all* the learners already know?

big supermarket road elephant empty enough

2. **If you are working with a group of colleagues**

In pairs, think of ways to teach all six of these words. Then share your ideas as a group. See **Resource E** (page 41) for ideas of ways to do this.

3. Now take it in turns to act the role of 'teacher'. The others in the group are the 'learners'. Choose one of the words or phrases below. Teach the meanings to the learners. After each word, discuss how clearly the word or phrase was taught. Would everybody in a class of real learners now know the meaning of the word or phrase?

strong motorbike use ill every even though
thunder excited before describe enough find out

If you are using this module alone

Think of ways to teach the meanings of all the new vocabulary words above. Perhaps make notes about how you could do this. See **Resource E** (page 41) for ideas of ways to teach the meanings.

Into practice: Preparing to teach the meanings of new words

When Mrs Mhlanga is planning to use a reading text with her class, she reads the text carefully before the lesson. She makes a list of all the words she thinks will be new to some or all of her learners. If she is not sure whether a word will be new to them or not, she includes it anyway.

Then she thinks about how she can teach the meaning of each of the words. She makes a note of her idea for this beside each word. Then in the lesson, teaching the new words is much easier. She doesn't have to think about which words are new and how to teach them. She only has to think about doing her teaching in a clear and effective way.

Sometimes Mrs Mhlanga meets a word that doesn't seem to go with any of the ways to teach meaning that she knows. Last week, a reading text included the word *brave*. She could not think of a way to teach the meaning that did not involve a lot of explanation that would be difficult for her learners to understand. So she translated the word into the learners' home language. But Mrs Mhlanga only uses translation if she really cannot think of another way to teach the meaning of a word. One reason is that an English word may not have exact translations into the learners' home language. Another reason is that to do well in English-medium education, her learners need to use English as much as possible when they are in lessons.



It's important to remember that my learners aren't just learning to read and write. They're learning the English language at the same time.

3.3 End of programme reflection

Discuss these questions with one colleague. Then share your ideas as a group.

- What do you think are the three most important things that you have learned from **Literacy Modules 1– 6**?
- What are your top three ways that your literacy teaching is different now to how it was before you started **Literacy Module 1**?
- What differences have you noticed in your learners' literacy skills that you believe are a result of using activities from these modules?
- What improvements do your learners still need to make with literacy in order to ensure a good pass rate in their exams, and to have the reading and writing skills they will need in their future lives?

Discussion point 1: Making the most of the literacy activities from these modules

Read the strategy below and then think about the questions that follow:

Every teacher of English / Mathematics in the school timetables at least one hour per day for Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLAN) activities from these modules (half an hour for literacy and half an hour for numeracy).

What benefits would this bring to your learners? Would this strategy work in your school? If yes, how could you make it happen? If not, why not? Could you change the reasons why it couldn't happen? Discuss your ideas.

Discussion point 2: Using these activities to implement the syllabus

The activities in these modules are not separate from or additional to the MoPSE syllabus for English. They are well-tested and effective ways to implement the MoPSE syllabus. Can you find examples of things from the syllabus that are taught by activities from these modules? Look at the current version of the syllabus, and share your ideas.

Discussion point 3: Using methods from these modules when teaching other school subjects in English

Read the strategy below and then think about the questions that follow:

When teaching lessons in other subjects, use methods from these modules to help learners read about, understand and write about the topic of the lesson. For example:

- Use phonics sound-talking to help learners read unfamiliar words.
- Use the methods described in this unit and in **Resource E** (page 41) to help them to learn the meanings of unfamiliar words.
- Create your own comprehension questions for textbook texts, as described in **Unit 1** of this module.

Would this strategy work in your school? If yes, how could you make it happen? If not, why not? Could you change those reasons why it couldn't happen? Discuss your ideas.

Discussion point 4: Continuing with TPD

Now that you have completed these modules, what can you do continue with your Teacher Professional Development in teaching foundational literacy? Discuss your ideas.

Whether we meet face to face or by WhatsApp group, we can all help each other to teach better so our classes learn better!



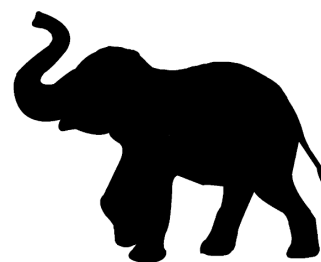
Resource A: Texts and questions for Activities 1.2 and 1.3

You may need to teach the meanings of the **highlighted** words.

1. Elephant nursery

Introductory questions to ask the class:

- What is an orphan?
- What happens to baby animals if their parents are killed?



Primrose is a baby elephant. She is an orphan, and she lives in the Zimbabwe Elephant Nursery. Primrose's mother was killed by **hunters**. When somebody found her, she was alone and hungry. When she arrived in the elephant nursery she was very ill and sad.

After two months here, she is much better. The other elephants are teaching her what to eat and how to **behave**. She is eating a lot, and she likes playing in water.

Primrose will probably live for four or five years with us at the nursery. When she is ready, we will take her to a place where there are lots of other elephants. We feel sad when our baby elephants leave us, because we love them. But we are very pleased they are going to be back in **the wild**. In the wild they can be free and happy.

1. What is this?
 - a) a person talking
 - b) a story with a message
 - c) a letter
2. What is it about?
 - a) baby elephants
 - b) elephants in the wild
 - c) a place for elephant orphans
3. Who is Primrose?
4. Why is Primrose an orphan?
5. How was Primrose when she arrived at the nursery?
6. What is Primrose doing now?
7. How long has Primrose been at the nursery?
8. When will she go back into the wild?



2. Rindai's statues

Introductory questions to ask the class:

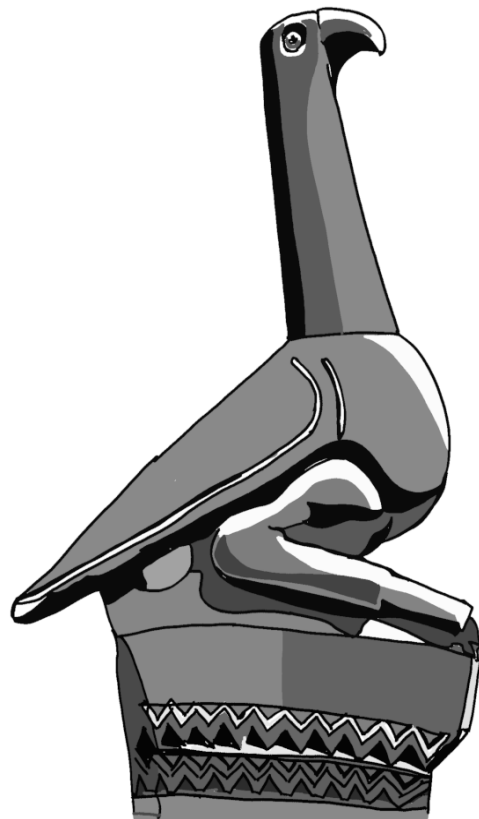
- What do you know about Great Zimbabwe?
- Who lived there?
- When was it built?

Rindai is twenty-three years old. She has been a **sculptor** since she was a small child. She grew up in the mountains. Her grandfather taught her to cut **rock** into the shapes of different animals.

Now Rindai sometimes makes **statues** of people, but most of her statues are animals from Zimbabwe. Rindai likes the eight famous statues of birds from the **ruins** of Great Zimbabwe. These bird statues were probably made more than nine hundred years ago. They have long necks, and they are sitting on eggs. These bird statues are a **symbol** of the country. Rindai makes copies of them.

She makes her statues out of soft rock called soapstone. It isn't very difficult to cut the rock, but her statues are quite large. It usually takes her three or four days to finish one. She sells her statues in a **handicraft centre**. Visitors from other countries buy many of them. Rindai's stone birds fly all over the world to live in people's homes!

1. What is this?
 - a) a story
 - b) information about somebody's job
 - c) a letter
2. What is it about?
 - a) making statues
 - b) Great Zimbabwe
 - c) rock
3. How did Rindai learn to make statues?
4. Where does she sell her statues?
5. How many famous statues of birds are in Great Zimbabwe?
6. How old are these statues?
7. What does Rindai use to make her statues?
8. How long does it take Rindai to make one statue?



3. Jabu and the lion

Introductory questions to ask the class:

- What are the most dangerous animals in Zimbabwe?
- Who has ever seen a lion?
- What did you do when you saw a lion?



One day, Jabu's father said to him, "Take the cows to the river to drink. Be careful. People say there is a lion there."

Jabu took the cows to the river. Suddenly, he heard a loud **roar**. It was the lion! The lion was **stuck** in a **thorn bush**.

"Please help me!" said the lion. "If you help me, I **promise** I won't eat you or your cows."

Jabu helped the lion out of the thorn bush. Then the lion said, "I'm hungry. I'm going to eat you, and then I'm going to eat your cows."

"No!" shouted Jabu. "Everyone knows that you must never **break your promises**. Look, here's comes **Jackal**. Ask him."

"What do you think, Jackal?" said the lion. "This boy **freed** me from the thorn bush and I promised not to eat him. But I'm the king of all the animals. I don't have to keep my promises!"

Jackal smiled. "I don't believe the king of the animals could get caught in a little thorn bush. Show me."

The lion jumped into the thorn bush to show how it happened.

"Now do you believe me?" said the lion. "Help me out again, and I can have my dinner."

Jackal smiled again. "No," he said. "We're going to leave you there."

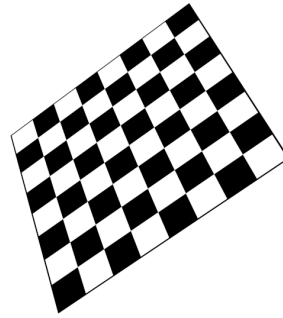
1. What is this?
 - a) a person talking
 - b) a story with a message
 - c) a letter
2. Where does most of the story happen?
 - a) by a river
 - b) on Jabu's farm
 - c) in a **forest**
3. Why did Jabu go to the river?
4. What did he hear and see?
5. What did the lion promise?
6. What did the lion do when he was free from the thorn bush?
7. How did the jackal trick the lion?
8. What happened at the end of the story?



4. A special talent

Introductory question to ask the class:

- What is chess?
- What do you need to play chess?
- Who can play chess here?



Phiona Mutesi was a ten-year-old girl from Uganda. She came from a very poor family. Her father was dead and she had lots of brothers and sisters. Her mother couldn't pay for the children to go to school.

One day, Phiona and one of her brothers went to a centre for **education** in the city. In the centre, her brother learned to play football and Phiona learned to play **chess**. She soon became the best chess player in the group. One of the centre **organisers** took her to a chess **competition** at a local school. She won every game easily.

After that, she **took part** in many other chess competitions and she got better and better. Eventually, she became the best chess player in her country! Then she went to **Russia** to play against chess players from all over the world. Her mother and brother were very **proud** of her.

Phiona became famous, and a **film** was made about her. With money from the chess competitions and from the film, she bought her family a house. Now Phiona is an **adult**, and she teaches children how to play chess.

1. What is this?
 - a) the rules of a game
 - b) a person talking
 - c) information about a person
2. What is it about?
 - a) a chess player
 - b) a chess school
 - c) a chess competition
3. Where is Phiona Mutesi from?
4. Why didn't she go to school?
5. Where did she learn to play chess?
6. What did she eventually become?
7. Why did she go to Russia?
8. Why could she buy a house for her family?
9. What does Phiona Mutesi do now?



5. Balancing rocks

Introduction for the class: Draw a simple picture of balancing rocks on the chalkboard, and ask the class to guess what you have drawn.



A kilometre outside my village, there is a hill. On the hill there are two piles of rocks. These rocks are balanced one on top of the other. One of the piles of rocks looks like a mother holding her child. The other looks like a face.

The balancing rocks are very old. The rocks are very hard. In the past, they were covered by softer rock. After millions of years of wind and rain, the softer rock wore away. This left the hard rock standing in piles, like strange statues.

My friends and I sometimes sit next to the rocks. We practise balancing small rocks ourselves. It is not easy to put rocks on top of each other. You need to have a steady hand, and you have to think carefully about where every rock goes.

When I was a young child, I thought that the rocks were put there by a giant. That's a nice story, but now I know why they are really there.

1. What is this?
 - a) the rules of a game
 - b) a person talking
 - c) a story with a message
2. What is it about?
 - a) a giant
 - b) piles of rocks
 - c) a game with rocks
3. Where are the piles of rocks?
4. What do the piles of rocks look like?
5. How were the piles of rocks made?
6. What do the writer and the writer's friends sometimes do?
7. What did the writer think about the rocks in the past?

6. Learning to cook

Introductory questions to ask the class:

- *What is your favourite food?*
- *Do you know how to make it?*

My favourite meal is the **pumpkin porridge** that my grandmother makes. I want to learn how to make it as well as she does, so I watch her carefully when she is cooking.

First of all, she takes a big pumpkin. She asks me to take the **seeds** out, and cut all the **skin** away. Then she cuts it up into small pieces. I can't do that part, because it's quite hard, and my grandmother's arms are stronger than mine are.

After that, she **boils** the pumpkin until it is soft. Then the mealie meal goes into the pot, and I **stir** it until all the pieces of pumpkin are broken up. Then the magic **ingredient** goes into the **pot** – **peanut butter**. My grandmother's pumpkin porridge is so good, that whenever she makes this **recipe** for the family, everybody asks for more!

1. What is this?
 - a) a letter
 - b) a story
 - c) how to make a meal
2. What is it about?
 - a) eating
 - b) cooking
 - c) shopping
3. What is the writer's favourite meal?
4. Who makes it?
5. What are the ingredients?
6. How does she make it?
7. What happens when she makes it for her family?



7. A formal letter

Introductory questions to ask the class:

- Have you ever read a letter?
- What was it about?

Chinkani Primary School
Chinkani Village
Binga
19th November

Dear Parents

I am writing to tell you that the school will be closed on Monday 24th and Tuesday 25th of November.

As I am sure you know, the school buildings were **damaged** in a **storm** last month. The worst damage was to the Grade 6 and Grade 7 classrooms, and there are now holes in the roof of that building.

The roof will be **repaired** on November 24th and 25th. It would not be safe for children to come to the school then, and so the school will be closed.

I hope the work will be finished by the end of Tuesday 25th, but it is possible that it will continue into Wednesday 26th. If your child has a long **journey** to school, it may be best if your child does not return to school until Thursday 27th.

Yours sincerely

Loveness Moyo

Mrs Loveness Moyo
School head

1. What is this?
 - a) a letter to a friend b) a letter to parents c) a letter to a school head
2. Where is the school?
3. What is the date of the letter?
4. Who is the letter from?
5. What is going to happen on November 24th and 25th?
6. What happened last month?
7. Why is the school going to close?
8. What does the school head say about Wednesday 26th?

8. An informal letter

Introductory questions to ask the class:

- Have you ever written a letter?
- What was it about?



Dear Ngoni,

Thanks for your letter. It was good to hear your news. **Congratulations** on having a new sister. It's nice to have a girl in the family, to join you and your brother! I'm happy to hear about your new teacher, too. She sounds very nice. The reading and writing games you are playing sound fun. It's great to play games while you are learning. I hope you will teach me the games next time we meet.

I am writing to invite you to come and visit our family next month. We are all very **excited** because my oldest sister is **getting married**. She is going to marry someone you have already met. He is the man who repairs cars and bicycles in the village. He repaired your bicycle last summer. Do you remember him? His name is Perseverance. He tells **funny jokes** and he is always kind to us.

The wedding is going to be on the 15th May, and we hope that you and your family will come. There will be good food to eat and there will be singing and dancing too. Write to me soon and tell me if you can come.

Love from

Kuda

1. What is this?
 - a) a letter to a friend
 - b) a letter to parents
 - c) a letter to a school head
2. What has happened in Ngoni's family?
3. What is Ngoni doing at school with his new teacher?
4. Why is Kuda's family excited?
5. Who is Kuda's sister going to marry?
6. When is the wedding?
7. What is going to happen at the wedding?

Answers to the reading comprehension questions

1. Elephant nursery

1. a
2. c
3. Primrose is an orphan baby elephant.
4. Her mother was killed by hunters.
5. She was ill and sad.
6. She is learning from the other elephants, eating and playing.
7. She has been there for two months.
8. She will go back to the wild in four or five years.

2. Rindai's statues

1. b
2. a
3. She learnt from her grandfather.
4. She sells them in a handicraft centre.
5. There are eight famous statues.
6. They are more than 900 years old.
7. She uses soapstone / soft rock.
8. It takes her three or four days.

3. Jabu and the lion

1. b
2. a
3. to take the cows to drink
4. He heard a lion's roar and saw a lion stuck in a thorn bush.
5. The lion promised not to eat him or the cows.
6. He tried to eat Jabu.
7. He pretended not to understand how the lion got stuck in the bush.
8. They left the lion in the thorn bush.

4. A special talent

1. c
2. a
3. from Uganda
4. Because her mother couldn't pay.
5. She learnt at a centre for education.
6. the best chess player in her country
7. to play against other chess players all over the world
8. Because she had money from the competitions and the film.
9. She teaches chess to children.

5. Balancing rocks

1. b
2. b
3. a kilometre outside the writer's village
4. They look like a mother holding her child, a face and strange statues.
5. They were made by the wind and the rain wearing away the softer rock.
6. They sometimes balance rocks.

7. The writer thought they were put there by a giant.

6. Learning to cook

1. c
2. b
3. pumpkin porridge
4. the writer's grandmother
5. pumpkin, melon, mealie meal and peanut butter
6. She boils the pumpkin, then adds the mealie meal. Then she stirs and adds the peanut butter.
7. Everybody asks for more.

7. A formal letter

1. b
2. Chinkani Village, Binga,
3. 19th November
4. the school head
5. The school will be closed.
6. Some classrooms were damaged in a storm.
7. The roof will be repaired. / It's not safe.
8. On Wednesday the work might continue. / Don't send your child into school if they have a long journey.

8. An informal letter

1. a
2. Ngoni has a new sister.
3. He is playing reading and writing games.
4. His sister is getting married.
5. Perseverance, a man who repairs cars and bicycles.
6. The wedding is on the 15th May.
7. There will be food, singing and dancing.

p. 23: Keeping traditions alive

1. c
2. a
3. 1935
4. on a farm in a Ndebele village
5. She became a famous artist.
6. She didn't change her way of life.
7. She teaches young people about Ndebele art and culture.

p. 23: Lessons with my cousin

1. b
2. a
3. in the city
4. her cousin Nyaha
5. Her cousin is teaching her.
6. She is teaching her how the city works.
7. A funny dance makes them laugh.

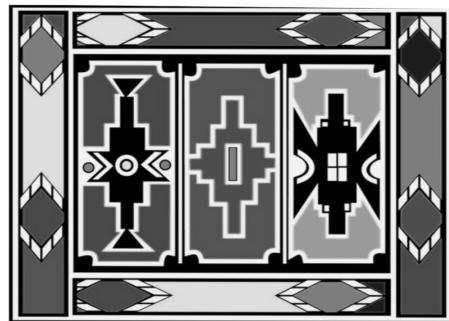
Resource B: Example questions for the texts in Activity 1.1.

Keeping traditions alive

Example activity introduction and questions

Introduction for the class: Copy the pattern (or simplified version) in the picture below onto the chalkboard, and ask the class to guess what it is. (Traditional Ndebele pattern)

1. What is this?
 - a) a funny story
 - b) a person talking
 - c) information about a person
2. What is it about?
 - a) an artist
 - b) wall paintings
 - c) Ndebele art
3. When was Esther Mahlangu born?
4. Where was Esther Mahlangu born?
5. What happened when she was 61?
6. What happened after she became famous?
7. What does she do now?



Lessons with my cousin

Example activity introduction and questions

Introductory questions to ask the class:

- *Who likes dancing?*
- *What dances do you know?*

1. What is this?
 - a) a story
 - b) somebody writing about her life
 - c) a letter
2. What is it about?
 - a) learning to dance
 - b) living in the country
 - c) baboons
3. Where does the writer live?
4. Who came to stay with her family?
5. Who is teaching her to dance?
6. What is the writer teaching her cousin?
7. What makes the writer and her cousin laugh?



Resource C: 3.1 and 3.2 answer keys

3.1 Can you sound-talk it?

irregular spellings highlighted – said, there, come, little, through

3.1 Find the 'tricky spellings'

people, one, know, could, doesn't, their, daughter, friend

3.1 Add the dots and dashes

with then brown cheap better speaking
 . . _ _ _ . . _ _ . . . _ _ . . _ . . _
 found difficult shopping wheels Thursday
 . _ _ _ . _ . _ _ _ . . _ _ . . _

3.2 'Translations' of nonsense words

dunersel = unusual

waglamp = railway

garpin = carriage

korfdip = museum

staced = closed (permanently)

waglamp urpell = railway engine

depilted = repaired

barghollery = comfortable

Resource D: Review of digraphs, trigraphs and ‘tricky’ spellings

Common digraphs and trigraphs with consonants

ck:	clock, sick, neck	sh:	shop, shoe, wash
ch:	chicken, child, choose	tch:	match, watch, kitchen
ng:	bring, going, wrong	wh:	what, wheel, wheat
th ‘soft’:	thanks, three, path	th ‘hard’:	the, theirs, mother
ph:	phone, elephant, alphabet	qu:	quick, queen, quiet
dge:	bridge, edge, lodge		

Common digraphs and trigraphs with vowels

ai:	train, wait, paid	ea:	eat, mean, teacher
ee:	see, green, meet	igh:	high, night, right
oa:	soap, boat, road	oo ‘long’:	food, tool, soon
oo ‘short’:	book, good, stood	ar:	car, arm, part
er:	her, river, person	ir:	bird, girl, thirty
or:	for, pork, corner	ur:	turn, hurt, burnt
ear:	near, hear, ears	air:	pair, hairy, stairs
ou:	out, cloud, about	ow (1):	now, how, town
ow (2):	show, own, grow	oi:	noise, oil, coin
oy:	boy, toy, annoy	ay:	say, may, play

Examples of double consonants. There are many more.

ss:	class, miss, possible	ll:	call, yellow, ill
rr:	marry, carriage, carrot	tt:	better, sitting, attack

Some common words with irregular or ‘tricky’ spellings

the	said	was	you	they	all
we	are	what	some	go	do
little	don’t	come	people	were	here
water	would	school	know	can’t	every
thought	through	door	laugh	because	any
friend	there	one	two	four	eight
once	mother	brother	aunt	could	so

Resource E: Ways to teach the meanings of new words

Show an example

Point to an example in the classroom. For example, point to an object that is **old**, or bring an example to the lesson, such as **soap**.

Mime

Mime using an object, for example, pretending to cut with a **knife**. You can also mime adjectives such as **tired** (you are tired) and **funny** (you pretend to laugh at a joke).

Demonstrate

Ask: 'What am I doing?' Then, for example, **jump**, **look for** something or **open** and **close** the door. You can also demonstrate adverbs such as **fast** and **carefully**. (Ask: 'How am I doing this?' and then do something fast/carefully.)

Put a word into a context

For example, pretend that you are trying to lift a desk, but you can't because it is **too** heavy. Or draw a happy face of a girl. The ask, *Why is she happy? She is happy **because** she is enjoying a lesson.*

Draw a picture

Draw a simple picture of almost any object on the chalkboard. For example, a **plane**, **flowers**, cooking with **fire**, a **computer**.

Give a sentence that demonstrates the meaning

January comes **before** February.

Harare is the most important city in Zimbabwe. It is the **capital** city.

Compare words with opposite meanings

For example, write two sums on the chalkboard: $2 + 3 = 5$ / $8 \times 64 = 512$. One is **easy**, the other is **difficult**.

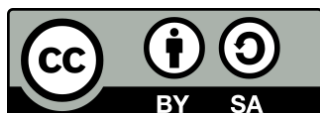
Give an instruction with the word

Touch your **chin**. Look at the **ceiling**. **Bend** your arm. **Pick up** your books.

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