READING

Encouraging Intermediate Phase Learners to Read More

1. What's going on when we read?
2. How can we help our learners read more?
3. What reading materials can we make and use?

PRIMARY SCIENCE PROGRAMME

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READING

Encouraging Intermediate Phase Learners to Read More

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Encouraging Intermediate Phase Learners to Write More is also available from the PSP.

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INTRODUCTION

We are surrounded by print. Events are advertised through posters as well as on TV and Radio. Companies advertise their products and special offers through posters and flyers that are included in local free newspapers. There is print on the packaging of many of the products we buy – even if it's only the name of the manufacturer. And cigarette companies are required by law to include a health warning on the packets. Medicines tell us how much to take and what the side-effects might be. We receive bills for the use of electricity and other municipal services, and for our accounts. There is print everywhere.

We frequently hear teachers say that their learners struggle to read and write. And as teachers, we know how useful Reading and Writing are. We know that when a child has learned to read and write, s/he can often teach her/himself many other things. Being able to read and write can open many doors. So as teachers we want all our learners to be able to read and write with confidence and fluency.

In response to this concern, the PSP presented a series of Language Workshops that focused on **Reading**. Although these workshops focused specifically on *Reading*, we know that Reading and Writing are like two sides of the same coin. Each side is a part of the whole process. You can't really have one without the other. When we write, we read what we've written to check that we're happy with it. And often when we read, we also need to write.

When you plan Reading sessions with your learners, make sure that there is time for them to **talk about** the text (passage, book, poem, play, story, etc) and to **write**. Plan writing activities that will give the children an opportunity to create similar texts. This will help them to deepen their understanding of how a particular text is constructed. Expect to work on a particular text for two or three lessons.

Look for texts (stories, poems, plays, books) that are really interesting. In our past there have been some fantastic South African writers. In 1930 Sol T Plaatje's novel, *Mhudi*, was published. And it has recently been re-issued. AC Jordan (Pallo Jordan's father) wrote a very famous novel called, *Ingqumbo yeminyanya* (*The Wrath of the Ancestors*). WK Tamsanqa wrote a wonderful play with a universal theme, *Buzani kuBawo*. I remember seeing it performed in the late 1970s by the students at Lovedale. Bessie Head wrote beautiful books in the second half of the twentieth century. And now in the twenty-first century, there are many more texts available to us, including those of performance poets like Mzwakhe Mbuli.

There are many more texts available to us, including those of performance poets, and the messages our ancestors left behind on rock faces in the Cedarberg.

This booklet has come out of our Reading workshops. In the workshops we thought about what goes on when we read – what the process is. We also looked at ways to get Intermediate Phase learners to read more. And then we spent time making materials to get children in this phase reading and writing.

1

How we read and the importance of the texts and materials

2

How to get Intermediate Phase learners to read more.

The first section of this booklet focuses on how we actually read and the importance of the texts and materials we give our learners to read.

The second section includes suggestions on how we can get Intermediate Phase learners to read more and more.

The third section describes everyday materials that an Intermediate Phase teacher can use to create meaningful reading experiences for her/his learners to read.

When you use this book, don't feel you have to work through the book from the **beginning** to the **end**. Flip through the pages. If something catches your eye, stop and read. Look for an interesting idea that you would like to try with your learners. DON'T get bogged down with the first section that focuses on some of the theory around the reading process. There are lots of ideas about ways you can get your learners excited and 'hooked' on reading!

And if you get excited about one or more of the ideas you find in the booklet, share your experiences with a colleague. We have found that it really helps to talk with a colleague or a 'critical friend' about what you're doing with your learners.

3

Everyday materials that an Intermediate Phase teacher can use

You can use the ideas in this booklet whether you are working in your learners' home language or through a first or second additional language. We hope you will find them exciting and useful.

What's going on when we Read?

1

There are many approaches to teaching reading, and a great deal of money has been spent on research to find the 'best' approach. But how do we learn to read? Nobody really knows how we learn to read, and it is more than likely that we all learn to read in different ways, just as we all have different learning styles. So what is actually happening when we read? What do we do?

Thinking about your Reading History

How did you learn to read? Where did you learn? What was the first book you remember reading? What kinds of texts do you enjoy reading now? When do you read? Why do you read?

How do you think beginner readers feel when they first see writing? Look at the text below. Try to work out what it's about.

Δεμανε ανδ Δεμαζανε

Ονχε υπον α τιμε τηερε ωερε τωο χηιλδρεν, α βροτηερ ανδ σιστερ. Τηεψ ωερε ορπηανσ ανδ

βεχαυσε τηεψ ωερε βαδλψ τρεατεδ βψ τηειρ ρελατιϖεσ, τηεψ ραν αωαψ, φαρ, φαρ αωαψ. Τηε βοψ σ ναμε ωασ Δεμανε ανδ τηε γιρλ ωασ χαλλεδ Δεμαζανε.

Τηε τωο χηιλδρεν φουνδ α χαϖε τηατ τηεψ χουλδ λιϖε ιν. Ιτ ηαδ τωο ηολεσ το λετ ιν αιρ ανδ λιγητ

ανδ τηερε ωασ α στρονγ δοορ ωιτη α φαστενινγ ινσιδε. Δεμανε ωεντ ουτ ηυντινγ ιν τηε δαψ, ανδ

Δεμαζανε μαδε τηε πλαχε χομφορταβλε ανδ πρεπαρεδ φοοδ φορ τηεμ το εατ ιν τηε εϖενινγ.

Δεμανε ωαρνεδ Δεμαζανε νοτ το χοοκ μεατ ιν τηε δαψτιμε ωηιλε ηε ωασ ουτ ασ τηερε ωερε Ζιμ

λιϖινγ ιν τηε φορεστ νεαρβψ. Ιφ τηε Ζιμ σμελλεδ τηε μεατ χοοκινγ, Δεμανε κνεω τηατ τηε Ζιμ ωουλδ δισχοϖερ τηεμ.

Ωηεν Δεμανε λεφτ ιν τηε μορνινγ ηε σηυτ τηε δοορ τιγητλψ ανδ Δεμαζανε φαστενεδ ιτ τιγητλψ φρομ τηε ινσιδε. Ωηεν ηε χαμε ηομε ιν τηε εϖενινγ ηε ωουλδ σινγ:

Δεμαζανε, Δεμαζανε,

Χηιλδ οφ μψ μοτηερ,

Οπεν τηε δοορ το με.

Βυτ ονε εϖενινγ τηε Ζιμ ηεαρδ τηε σονγ.

Is it a story? Perhaps it's some instructions. What do you think?

How did you feel when you looked at the text? How did you make sense of it? What helped you? What did you look for? What information do you already possess that you could bring to this experience?

How do you think this compares with how a beginner reader might feel when they first try to make sense of words they see written down? We think this is what a page of text might look like to a beginner reader!

Did you simply give up when you looked at the text? Did you start trying to make sense of the text? Were you actively looking for clues that would help you understand the print? Or did you try to predict what might follow?

Find ways to work with your learners that allow them to TALK about what they do when they read.

These are some of the strategies that many young readers use. And they are important strategies. They show us that our minds always try to understand and make sense of what is going on. Have you ever asked your learners to tell you what they do when they read? How do they make sense of a text?

What do your learners think about reading?

Take some time to have a discussion about reading with your learners. Find out if they read in the same way, or whether the children use different strategies. Ask them

- What is reading?
- How do you read? What do you do when you read?
- What do you like to read?
- When do you read?
- Why should we read?
- Do you enjoy reading? Why?

Make a mind-map of what your children tell you. We are sure you will find what they have to say is very interesting. Your learners may well surprise you.

On the page opposite is a mind-map of what the children of teachers who attended the workshops said.

What Learners think about Reading

What is Reading?

Reading is reading a book
Getting information

How do we Read?

I use my eyes and mouth
Word-by-word
Point at words
Silently
I sit down, sound and spell
and then I read

Learners' Ideas about Reading

Why do we read?

To become clever
Teacher asks us to
For pleasure
For knowledge
For information
To pass time

What do we Read?

Story books
Songs
Adverts
Magazines
Captions in newspapers
For homework

When do we Read?

In the reading period
When we're not watching TV
In 'the loo'
At school
At night

We created this mind-map at one of the PSP workshops on Reading. We used the information that the teachers collected when they asked their learners what they thought Reading is. In many cases we have used the exact words that the children used!

It's really important to get learners to think about what they do when they read and write. If they discuss something like this with you, they will hear what their peers (the other children) think. And they will have a chance to learn successful ways to improve what they are doing. You could display the mind-map on the wall of your classroom to remind your learners what you have discussed with them.

Thinking and talking about language is known as metalinguistics.

The Reading Process

When we read we use 3 different sources of information:

- **graphophonic information** (our knowledge of the relationship between sounds and letters)
- **syntactic information** (what we know about language and the way language works), and
- **semantic information** (what we know about the world and our experiences of the world).

Graphophonic information is the visual information we need to be able to read. It is the print we see and recognise on the page. Our knowledge of graphophonics enables us to equate a letter, or combination of letters, with a particular sound.

Syntactic and semantic information are the non-visual information we bring to a reading experience. The syntactic information comes from what we know about the way a language works – the way we order words and so on. This information helps us to predict which word or part of speech (a verb, noun, preposition, etc) is most likely to follow, as we read.

The semantic information is about making meanings. This information comes from what we know about the world and our experiences of life. The semantic information we bring to a reading experience enables us to make sense of what we're reading.

Both visual and non-visual information are important. Visual information is not enough on it's own for us to read with understanding. The non-visual information about life and language that we bring to any reading event is essential for us to read with understanding.

When we read newspapers and magazines, they aren't difficult for us to read because of what we already know about people and the world around us. So we need less visual information. But when we read a book (or text) about something we know nothing, or very little about, we need much more visual information. And if the material we are trying to read doesn't make sense, the whole experience is very frustrating.

What are your Reading Lessons like?

How do you conduct a Reading Lesson with your learners? Who reads? Do you read? Do your children read? How do they read? Do they read, one by one? Or do they read all together?

We know that many teachers plan and conduct their Reading lessons very much like those that they themselves experienced when they were learners at primary schools. The teacher reads the first line of the text, and then the learners repeat (reading aloud) what s/he has read. Then the teacher reads the next line, and the learners repeat that line. The whole passage is dealt with in this way. Does this sound familiar?

If this is the experience your learners have when they read at school, what does this tell them about reading and the reading process? Are they really reading? Do they need to understand the words that they are 'reading'? Or are they involved in a mindless activity, simply repeating what they hear their teacher say?

How can we be sure that our learners are making sense of the text? We need to make sure that there are opportunities for our learners to TALK about what they read. In this way we create opportunities for them to bring their syntactic and semantic information into their literacy experiences in the classroom.

The importance of texts

The texts and books that we give learners to read tell the learners what reading is about. If the materials are boring and don't make very much sense, our learners will learn that reading is boring and has nothing to do with them or their life experiences. We need to look for, find and offer them materials that will interest them, and that reflect what they know. Then they will be able to bring their experiences to help them understand what they read.

Children come to school expecting to learn to read, write and to use numbers. They have learned to speak and most of them can communicate successfully in their homes and communities. They naturally expect to succeed at school. And most of them do learn to read.

When they reach the Intermediate Phase some children read and write with confidence. But other children lack confidence and for them reading is something of a struggle. What kind of materials can we give these children that will help them to gain confidence and become truly literate? If the books we give children tell them what reading is all about, then we need to make sure that the books and materials we give them interest them. The books and materials (or texts) need to reflect the children's experiences. In other words, they need to find themselves and their experiences in the texts.

If the books we give children tell them what reading is all about, then we need to make sure that the books and materials we give them interest them.

Ken Goodman

In August 2005, a wise couple, Ken and Yetta Goodman, came to Cape Town. They have worked and researched the process of reading for many many years. Ken Goodman wrote a paper in 1967 called "Reading: A Psycholinguistic Guessing Game". In this paper he described his experiences using two of the first basal readers in an American series with a young child. The first book was made up of just ten words. The second had twenty-seven and was regarded by the publishers as more difficult. But Ken Goodman found that the child could make more sense of the second book than the first, and could read it more fluently! Goodman points out that the first book didn't expect the reader to make any sense of the text. He says it just required the child to play 'a game of name the word'.

This isn't only true of early books written in English to teach young children to read. This is also true of the first books for children who are learning to read in other languages. And all too often the books children are expected to read later on in their schooling have very little to do with their lives and experiences. Even if they can read and understand the books, the content isn't very interesting or exciting. The hidden message is that reading isn't a 'cool' thing to do.

Making Reading Meaningful

So how can we make reading a meaningful experience?

- Know something about their lives and their circumstances.
- Relate reading to the learners' lives.
- Find out what interests your learners.
- Search for texts that will make your learners want to read.
- Set activities that revolve around learners' interests and what is important to them.
- Find texts that will give your learners pleasure and make them smile or even laugh.
- Draw on topics from other curriculum areas and create reading and writing activities around these topics.
- Use articles in newspapers (sport, incidents, accidents)
- Use articles about Stars (pop and sport) featured in kids' magazines.
- Get learners to bring in and share stories, poetry and songs.

How can teachers help learners work out new or unfamiliar words?

Here are some strategies that you can use to help your learners work out how to read new or unfamiliar words. When a learner stops reading when s/he meets a new or difficult word, use one of the following strategies.

- Read the word for the child.
- Say the word for the child, explain its meaning, and use the word in a different sentence to demonstrate the meaning.
- Invite another learner to help.
- Before giving the children a new passage to read, go through the text to see which words might be a problem for some (or all) of your learners. Make flashcards of those words. Then when you introduce the passage, go over these words and put up the flashcards. Get your learners to put these words into sentences.
- Encourage the child to 'sound out' the word. Ask her/him, What letter/sound does the word begin with? What letters are at the end? What might the word be? What would make sense?
- Suggest to the child that s/he misses out the word, and reads to the end of the sentence. Then ask her/him what word would fit in. Ask the child to look at the word again, and to make an intelligent guess. What word would fit and make sense in the sentence?
- Discuss with the child what s/he has just read. Ask her/him, "What word would fit in here?" Then ask the child to go back to the beginning of the sentence, to re-read what s/he has already read and to put in the missing word.
- Suggest that the child looks up the word in a dictionary.

2 How can we help our Learners Read More?

Teaching learners to read is not enough. Many people learn how to read, but they don't choose to read. In other words, they read when they have to, for information, to do their work, to complete forms like an income tax form. But they rarely read for pure pleasure. We would like to see learners "hooked on books". So how can we do this? There are a number of ways we can encourage our learners to read more.

DEAR Time

One way we can encourage our learners to read more is to make a special time each day for them to read. Some teachers call this "DEAR time" – Drop Everything And Read! All the children **and** the teacher read for a specific length of time, usually between 15 and 30 minutes. It is vitally important that teachers read, too. Some learners may never have seen an adult reading for pleasure. You will be providing an important model for your learners when they see you reading, and reading for pleasure.

Each person can read whatever s/he wants to read. The idea is that everybody reads for *enjoyment*. Some children may choose to share a book. Others may choose to read alone.

Try to make sure that this special time devoted to reading for pleasure has *status*, or importance. If something crops up, try not to let this time give way for another activity. When DEAR time falls away for something else, it suggests that DEAR time isn't very important.

Another very effective way to get children more interested in reading is through "Shared Reading and Writing".

What is 'Shared Reading'?

Shared Reading usually means that a group of children are reading a "big book" together. Sometimes this will be with a teacher, and sometimes the children are reading together without a teacher or more fluent reader. Active Reading is similar to Shared Reading because learners share a text and support one another.

Active Reading

Marlene Rousseau introduced us to this process. Marlene has been working in some township schools and has found this strategy to be really effective in helping children to develop and extend their reading.

Marlene reading an SMS

First Reading

- Hand out one copy of the text between two children.
- Ask the children to read in chunks and talk as they go along. (It's a good idea to ask them to stop at the end of a page and to talk about what they have been reading. Use texts that are 1 - 3 pages long! Give the children choices about how they will read. Will each child read a paragraph, then the partner? Or will each child read a column of text? Or will each one read a line? Or any other way! The choice is theirs.)
- Ask them to look for any difficult words and make a list. They also make a list of any new words.

- What would they like to know more about? Ask them to write down 4 questions. Then they turn around and read their questions to the pair behind them.

Second Reading

The teacher reads the passage aloud to the class while the children follow, reading quietly or silently with the teacher.

The class discuss the text. This is a chance for the teacher to listen to the children talk about what they have read. Also for the children to talk about whether they enjoyed the reading or not. From the whole, they move to focus on the parts. The children call out the difficult words and new words that they listed and the teacher writes these words on the board. Then they discuss them together. Teachers are often surprised at the words the children identify. This is a chance to clear up any confusion the learners have. It's an opportunity for the teacher to take the children into their ZPD (*zone of proximal development*).

Teachers can also have a critical literacy discussion with their learners. They can ask the children what they think of the text. Do they think the text was a good one? Why? Do they think the text is well written? Did the writer use any interesting ideas or words? What would they like to know about the writer? Ask them some questions that begin, What if . . . (What would have happened if the main character had done something different?) Questions like this can encourage your learners to try to put themselves in the situation in the text. They can imagine how they would feel if they were in such a situation, and what they think they would do. What do they think the writer thinks of the different characters and their actions? How do we know this? And so on.

The process so far usually takes 2 lessons.

You could end a lesson like this by suggesting that the children draw an illustration of a part of the story that they enjoyed, or draw a frame around their written work. Many children do something small, but really enjoy this. Those who enjoy drawing will be bolder. Not everyone will choose to do this. That's fine. But sometimes it's important to give your Intermediate Phase learners an opportunity to interpret a text visually.

Extend the text and deepen the children's understanding of what they have read

When the children are familiar with reading a text in this active way (it takes a few lessons), they usually go on to do some writing. What they do depends on the text (ie what the text lends itself to – naturally, comfortably and interestingly).

When Marlene did this at a school in Plettenberg Bay, one Grade 5 class read a complete *lawwe storie* (silly story). Then they wrote a different ending to the story. They either read this aloud in their groups or to the class.

Grade 4s, 5s and 6s can read aloud to the class. When a child does this, the rest of the children and the teacher need to listen carefully. The teacher can sit with the rest of the children, while one child comes to the front of the class and reads.

The teacher can give the children feedback. She might ask a question that gets her learners to think about what they've written and read. Or she could ask the class to think about her question and then they could give the writer feedback. Or she could speak to a child on her/his own about the piece of writing.

After reading the children return to their desks and keep working on their writing, enriching it. This is what Marlene wrote about her experiences.

The mood is relaxed, quiet, almost scholarly! After this, some children naturally say, "I'd like to write it neatly now. May I?"

Working with Poetry

Grade 6 learners could read a poem in the first additional language in the above way. Then they could talk about the poem in their home language. After that they could work in pairs to translate the poem into their home language. When they have finished their translations, they could read them aloud to the class. Afterwards the teacher could discuss translations with the class – how they're done; translation as a job. Remember: It's fine to read and work in more than one language in a language lesson!

DIE BEITELTJIE

Ek kry 'n klein klein beiteltjie,
ek tik hom en hy klink;
toe slyp ek en ek slyp hom
totdat hy klink en blink.

Ek sit 'n klippie op 'n rots:
— mens moet jou vergewis:
'n beitel moet kan klip breek
as hy 'n beitel is —

ek slaat hom met my beiteltjie
en dié was sterk genoeg:
daar spring die klippie stukkend
so skoon soos langs 'n voeg:

toe, onder my tien vingers bars
die grys rots middeldeur
en langs my voete voel ek
die sagte aarde skeur,

die donker naat loop deur my land
en kloof hom wortel toe —
só moet 'n beitel slaan
wat beitel is, of hoé?

Dan, met twee goue afgronde
val die planeet aan twee
en oor die kranse, kokend,
verdwyn die vlak groen see

en op die dag sien ek die nag
daar anderkant gaan oop
bars wat van my beitel af

SOMERSAULT

On a dark morning
the earth, where night's rain s
shines more than the sky.

Lionel Abrahams

Shapiro, age 8

A CHEER SONG FOR SOCCER FANS

We come from Soweto:
From South of the border
And West of the sunshine,
A township for workers.

It's where we play soccer,
The game of the people:
More flowing than rugby,
Much faster than cricket.

We pass with the right foot
And shoot with the left foot,
Control with a knee

Using Interviews from Magazines

Another possibility is to give the learners photocopies of interviews from popular magazines to read. Then they could choose a person they admire and respect, and write their own questions. For example, what they would like to ask this person. In the discussion part of the lesson they could talk about Superstars, why we enjoy reading about them, where interviews take place, and who does them. Afterwards they could read their questions to another pair. Finally, they could add more questions to their lists.

LIFE A
4 SOUTH DEG

Somewhere between issues of black and white and being African, lies the often ignored coloured debate, which is rarely explored. KHANYI MAGUBANE chats to film-maker Maganthrie Pillay, the first black female director, about *34 South*, a locally produced film, which tackles these and other issues the South African way.

20 Questions

Sibusiso Mazibuko (Bush Bucks)

How's life in East London?
It's great. I stay at the Buffalo City Lodge with Ninja Mofokeng. I'm also learning to speak Xhosa.
That's in Quigney and from what I've heard it's a pretty rough part of the city?
I haven't experienced anything bad since coming here.
Who do you hang out with?
Ninja and I spend a lot of time with Gareth Ncaca.
What's it like staying close to the beach?
I've stayed at the beach before, but it rains too often in East London to really enjoy it.
What do you miss most about Johannesburg?
The big city buzz and my family.
Are you single?
Yes, but not for long. My girl Nomusa and I are planning to marry soon. We have a six-year old daughter.
There are a lot of beautiful women in Quigney, doesn't that distract you a bit?
I get attention but I handle it professionally. I'm not here for the girls.
Where would you like to go for your honeymoon?
Mauritius, it's a very beautiful and peaceful island.
As a father, what do you consider most important in a child's upbringing?
To give respect to others.
What is your favourite shopping spot in eMonti?
Vincent Park, it's very big and convenient.
Being a township boy, have you been to some of the *kassies* there, like Mdantsane?
I've been there twice; it's the country's second biggest *kassie* after Soweto.
We believe that the night club, the Corner Pocket, is your favourite hangout?
I've been there twice … just to calm my nerves!
Who has been most supportive throughout your career
My mother, my brothers and my girlfriend.
Why did you decide to get rid of your orange tint?
I've had it for too long and wanted a change.
Who do you think should be the country's next Presi
Mbeki can stay on; he's done well so far.
How far did you get with your education?
I finished my matric in 1999.
What's your favourite meal before a game?
Pasta and chicken.
Are you comfortable in formal wear?
No, I prefer sporty outfits.
Are you into watching movies?
Yes; and the best I've ever watched was called *Ur*
What's your favourite music?
R'nB; it's very soft and gentle.

'Lord, if you are planting
had better make it clear.

In a later lesson, each pair could role-play interviewing: one child could be the interviewer, and the other one the 'Star'! One of the teachers in Plettenberg Bay brought a small table into the class, and covered it with a cloth. Then he put out 2 bottles and 2 glasses for the 'interviewer' and 'Star'! The children had a second chance to role-play interviewing one another. It was smoother the second time around. Children are fast learners! And the second time they write out questions for an interview, they could choose a local person to interview. They might choose to interview the principal, one of the teachers, or somebody in their neighbourhood. But it's important that this remains a pair activity.

Using newspaper articles

In a Grade 7 class, the children could read a newspaper article about somebody who has been rather 'wild'. Then in the writing part of the lesson, they can work explicitly with drafts. In their groups, they can discuss who in their families is *'n wilde enetjie* (wild one). Then they can choose somebody to write about, **as a group**. When their draft is ready, they can read it to everyone. It is probably best for the teacher to first model a draft text on the board – her/his OWN writing. (**Not** shared writing). After doing this, the children can do their own writing.

Holiday excursion for orphans

More than 300 learners from six orphanages were invited to a programme on fossils and the therapod or mammal-like reptiles as part of the launch of the Stone Bones Exhibition at Iziko South African Museum, during the school holidays.

Aged between 8 and 15, the children were taken on a guided tour of the exhibits. They were told the story of each fossil – how they had died and come to be buried in the positions they were found. They were given a brief explanation of the science of palaeontology, the movement of the continents, and the stages of evolution. This was followed by a visit to the laboratory to observe technicians extracting fossilized bones from a rock.

Iziko educator Thandi Nqubelani said: "The learners were stunned by the age of the bones and the size of the teeth of the reptile fossils."

After their tour of the exhibition, the groups took part in a workshop where they made dinosaur mobiles using art materials.

The visit ended with a light lunch on the lawns of the Company's Gardens.

Marguerite Quimpo, at Child Welfare social worker, accompanying one of the groups, said the outing had been of enormous educational and therapeutic value for the children.

"So much better than most of their other holiday activities. Something that they will probably remember for a long time."
– *Edu'ndaba, Iziko Museums*

So the framework for this approach is:

- 1st reading
- 2nd reading and discussion
- Extending the reading through writing
- New reading text.

What is 'Shared Writing'?

Shared Writing is exactly what it sounds like – people sharing the writing process to create a piece of writing (or a **text**) together. Usually the teacher (or sometimes a child from a more advanced Grade) will act as scribe or secretary, and record the ideas of the child/children composing (making up) the text.

How does a teacher start?

This is one way. First of all, you need some newsprint and kokis or thick wax crayons. You can put the sheets of paper up on the wall or onto the chalkboard. Or you can write straight onto the chalkboard.

We suggest you work with the whole class when you do this for the first few times. This will give your shyer, less confident learners time to watch and see what happens when you work in this way. Then when they feel more sure of the task, they will share their ideas, too.

Next, decide what kind of text you want to compose with your class. Do you want to do something with them first, and then write about the experience you have all shared? (For example, a walk around the school, a science investigation, an outing, or some kind of celebration.) Or maybe you want to get them to re-tell a well-known story. Or you may decide to create a poem together.

If you write straight onto the chalkboard, you will have to copy the piece of writing down onto paper if you want to keep it, or use it later with your learners.

Writing about an experience

If you decide to arrange an experience, plan and arrange it carefully. Think through what your learners can 'write' about this experience.

- What will you do first?
- And then?

***Learning experience* … an outing to the West Coast Fossil Park**

Writing about a story

If you choose to ask your children to re-tell a story, you will have to decide whether or not you are going to start with a discussion once they have read the story. What will you talk about with your learners? Will you talk about the characters? Will you talk about the setting (where the events took place)? What if one or more of the characters had done something different? What would have happened? Would things have been the same if the events had happened in a different place?

Writing a poem

If you want your learners to make up a poem, you will need to think about the topic of the poem. Will you need pictures to capture your learners' interest and to motivate them to write? Will you need to bring something real into the classroom for them to 'praise' for a 'praise-poem'? Or will you invite them to suggest a topic?

Writing instructions

You may want your learners to have the opportunity to write in a different style (or genre). Perhaps you would like them to learn how to write instructions ('procedures'). Recipes are usually written as a set of instructions.

You could start off by discussing food with your class. Then you could choose one particular kind of food they like to eat. Ask them to tell you how that food is prepared and cooked to eat. As they give you their suggestions, write them up. Ask questions to help them see that they need to give very clear and specific instructions for somebody else to follow if they want to prepare and cook that particular food or dish.

How to do Shared Writing with your learners

When you have decided on the kind of text you want to create with your learners, tell them that you're going to write something together. Tell your learners the kind of text you want to write. Ask who would like to start. You probably have at least one child who is quite confident. If nobody else in the class responds, ask that confident child how you can begin. Listen carefully. Then write up EXACTLY what the child says. This is very important. Children need to see *their own words* in print.

Get your learners to read aloud with you the text you have written up. Then ask them what they want to say next. When a child makes a suggestion, check with the other children that they are happy with this suggestion. Then write this sentence down. Continue in this way until you have completed the **first draft**.

You may find that as you read through what the children dictate, that they decide to make changes to this first draft. You could use a different colour pen or crayon to write in these changes.

When the piece of writing is complete, re-read it together. *This is an important part of the process.* It is part of editing and revising their writing. Ask your learners if they're happy with what they've written. Could they use a better word in a particular place? Could they say something differently? Would it be better, or not as good, if you changed it? This is all part of the process of **editing and drafting** a piece of writing. By doing this, your children will learn to think about what they write. They will learn to reflect on words they've chosen and improve on their first effort.

Before you end this activity, invite your learners to read the whole piece aloud with you. If you have learners who struggle with reading, this will give them an opportunity to join in and read the words they recognise. In this way they will gain more confidence as readers.

Often children become excited when they see their ideas written on the board. They also enjoy listening to one another and choosing interesting words. Sometimes they even laugh about the way they say things. This is always a lovely moment; where you can share in your children's appreciation of how language can be creative and expressive. It also shows they're proud of what they've done. Their laughter, attention and comments indicate clearly how successful the Shared Writing has been.

Why do Shared Writing with your class?

When you carry out Shared Writing

- your learners see that what they write can become a text to read
- in the process of creating and editing the text, your learners have to read and re-read what they have composed
- your learners have a wonderful opportunity to talk about words – synonyms, adjectives etc
- your learners gain confidence in writing and reading.

"Shared Writing needs to be approached like any writing task, allowing time to discuss the content, time to get the ideas down on paper and then time to re-read what has been written and revise it if necessary.

... The developmental psychologist Vygotsky considered that an essential part of learning is the co-operative and social nature of it. Through collaborative learning children can tackle things that are slightly beyond their present developmental stage. Vygotsky calls this the 'zone of proximal development', and says 'What the child can do in co-operation today, he can do alone tomorrow'."

(Sue Pidgeon. 1990)

WHAT READING MATERIALS CAN WE USE?

3

1. Reading pictures

When you choose pictures to use with Intermediate Phase learners you need to look for pictures that you feel will interest your class. You also need to think how you plan to use the pictures. If you want a group or even the whole class to see a picture, clearly, it will need to be big enough.

When you choose pictures to use with Intermediate Phase learners you need to look for pictures that you feel will interest your class.

3

We can read pictures just as we read print. We look carefully, and try to make sense of what's going on in a picture. We look to see if there are people. If so, we note what they are doing, what they look like and where they are. If there is more than one person in the picture, we try to understand the connections between the people.

You can use pictures in many different ways. Here is one suggestion which we know works well.

- You will need enough pictures for each pair of learners to share one.
- Give each pair a picture. Or put all the pictures out on the tables and ask each pair to choose one picture. (If you choose the pairs, try putting a child who reads and writes well with a child who struggles. Sometimes the child who struggles is very good at 'reading' pictures.)
- Ask the children to "read" the picture, and really look at it carefully. Tell them to talk about their thoughts.
- Ask each pair to write down all the questions they can think of, and that they would like to know the answer to. Encourage them to write down questions that begin with
  - What
  - When
  - Where
  - Who
  - Why
  - How
- When the children have written down their questions (5-10), ask each pair to swap their picture and list of questions with another pair.

What?

When?

How?

Where?

Who?

Why?

- Ask them to read the questions that the other pair has written down, and to write down their answers.
- When they have written down their answers, each pair hands the picture, questions and answers that they have written back to the pair who wrote the questions.
- Each pair reads the answers that the other pair have written to the questions they listed.
- When you find a picture that you can use, make sure you cut it out really carefully and neatly. Mount the picture on brightly coloured card. This will make it look more attractive. Then laminate the mounted picture. This will protect the picture and it will last. You will be able to use it again and again and again.

2. Reading street maps

We read many things, including street maps. When you ask your learners to work with street maps you are linking Social Sciences with Literacy. In this activity, your learners can learn something more about the local area of their school.

Boys often enjoy this activity. Boys tend to be good logical thinkers, so reading maps is something that they enjoy doing. Some girls enjoy this kind of activity, too. And many teachers will know and have experienced that the boys that they teach (and have taught) seem to struggle with reading more than girls. So if we get our learners to read street maps and other maps it is a good literacy activity. Not only is it useful as a life-skill, but the boys will enjoy participating in this reading activity. And if they enjoy the activity, they will make more effort, and are also more likely to experience success.

Give each child a copy of a street map of the local area around the school. You could write some instructions and questions either on the chalkboard, or on newsprint, or you could give each pair a question card.

QUESTION CARD

Look at the copy of thestreet map.

Mark all the schools with an 'x'.

Name the schools.

_____

Mark your house with a circle.

Are any schools missing on your map?

Why do you think this is?

_____

_____

If there are schools missing, draw a symbol for each school on your map. You could write in the letter 'S'.

Mark where your friend lives on your map.

Draw the route you usually take when you come to school each day.

Do you always take the same route home? If not, draw the route you take when you go home. Make sure it's clear which route you take to school and which route you take home if they are different.

3. Reading information flyers

In life we read a variety of written material including bills. Utility bills can provide us with material that prepares our learners to read for life. What information can children get from utility bills? What knowledge do they reveal that they already possess?

Sometimes there are information flyers sent out with utility bills. The City of Cape Town sent out this notice with municipal bills in 2005.

QUESTION CARD

How many litres of water does a bath use? _____

How many litres of water do you need for a shower? _____

What could you do with bath water after you have bathed?

_____

_____

How can you save water when you brush your teeth?

_____

_____

4. Reading adverts

There are advertisements everywhere: on television and the radio, in newspapers and magazines, at petrol stations, on bill-boards, buses; absolutely everywhere!

What information can learners get from adverts? How can we use them to encourage our learners to read, and to realise that when they read an advert, they are reading?

The language used in adverts is very persuasive. Adverts use the language of persuasion. This is another genre of written language.

Collect adverts. Look for ones that you think will interest your learners. Cut them out of magazines. And if you want to preserve them so that you can use them several times, laminate them. You could even get your learners to write their own adverts.

Here is an advert we used at the workshop, together with the questions we suggested.

QUESTION CARD

Cellucity is advertising cell' phone 'deals'! Which deal do you think is the best? Why?

_____

_____

Where can you buy cheaper air-time?

_____

Which telephone Network are these cell 'phones on?

_____

Which cell 'phones have cameras?

_____

_____

Using an advert for a Supermarket Chain

QUESTION CARD

Your mother has sent you to buy some cleaning products. She has given you R50 to spend. Look at the attached advert with a friend.

What will you buy?

_____

Write a list of the things you must buy.

_____ _____ _____

How much will these products cost?

_____ _____ _____

How much change will you get?

_____

5. Reading TV Guides

TV guides are another source of reading material that an Intermediate Phase teacher could use. You can find TV guides in some newspapers and magazines that work well. We found a guide for TV in *Drum*.

TV guide fo

SATURDAY 28 May

SABC1

05:00 [N] **YOTV**
09:00 Livechart
10:00 [C] **Generations Omnibus**
12:30 [C] [N] **Jam Alley**
13:00 [N] **Imizwilili**
14:00 SABC Sport
Splash, Powersport.
15:00 Soccer
18:00 [N] **Selimathunzi**
18:30 Sokka Kings
19:30 [X] **News**
20:00 ● **Ride**
Comedy. Malik Yoba. 89 mins. (1998) (16SL)
22:00 The Entertainers
23:00 S'gubhu Sa Mampela

SABC2

05:55 [A] **Op Pad**
06:00 It's 4 Real
06:30 Drying Tears
07:00 Weekend Live
08:00 Down 2 Earth
08:30 [C] **It's For Life**
09:00 Weekend Life And Leisure
10:00 Tube
12:00 [C] **Go Open**
12:30 Family Years
13:00 Sport On 2
17:00 The Pretender
18:00 [A] **News**
18:30 [A] **Oepse Daisy**
19:00 Mazinyo Dot Q
When Charles' wispy ex girlfriend arrives, Thembi begins to flirt with Charles.
19:30 [HD] **News**
20:00 You're Hired
21:00 ● **The Peacemaker**
Thriller. A US Army colonel and a civilian woman supervising him must track down stolen Russian nuclear weapons. George Clooney, Nicole Kidman. 123 mins. (1997) (16VL)
23:00 ● **Blown Away**
Action. A revenge-crazed explosives expert escapes from prison to get to the policeman who thwarted his efforts. Tommy Lee Jones, Jeff Bridges. 121 mins. (1994) (PG13)
01:00 SABC Africa Live

SABC3

05:00 BBC World
07:00 The Golf Bag
07:30 X-treme Sports Spectacular
08:00 AM Shopping
09:30 Learning Channel
11:30 [C] **Free Spirit**
12:00 [C] **Car Torque**
12:30 Dtv
13:00 [C] **Just For Laughs**
13:30 Outrageous And Courageous
14:00 [C] **Midsomer Murders (PGVL)**
16:00 [C] **BBC Wildlife Specials**
17:00 Survivor Vanuatu (PGL)
18:00 Guinness World Records
19:00 News
19:30 ● **The Wedding Singer**
Romantic comedy. Set in 1985, the lead singer of a wedding band falls in love with a waitress who works at a reception hall. Adam Sandler, Drew Barrymore. 96 mins. (1998) (PG13)
21:30 ● **Na Thum Jaano Na Hum**
Bollywood romance. Two pen pals, who've never met, meet when the guy's best friend sends him to check out his prospective bride. Hrithik Roshan, Saif Ali Khan. 180 mins. (2002) (PG13)
00:15 ● **Mo Better Blues**
Musical drama. Denzel Washington, Wesley Snipes. 129 mins. (1990) (16)

02:15 BBC World
03:00 Jeremiah
03:45 [C] **Spyder Games**
04:30 BBC World

M-Net

07:00 K-TV
09:00 KTV-Programme Viewers' Choice
09:30 Astro Boy
10:00 Go Music Selekta
10:30 Vicious Delicious
11:15 Rugby
Super 12 final.
13:45 Variety Sport
14:00 Golf
Supersport Shootout Day 1 Action, Champagne Sports Resort, Drakensberg (live).
15:00 Variety Sport
15:45 Rugby
England vs Barbarians, Twickenham, London (live).
16:30 Rugby
Super 12 final.
18:55 SuperSport Scoreboard
19:30 Lost
A shocking prior connection between Sawyer and Jack is revealed.
20:30 ● **Bandits**
Crime comedy. Two bank robbers fall in love with the girl they've kidnapped. Bruce Willis, Billy Bob Thornton. 122 mins. (2001) (PG13)
22:30 ● **Domestic Disturbance**
Thriller. A divorced father discovers that his 12-year-old son's new stepfather is not what he made himself out to be. John Travolta, Vince Vaughn. 89 mins. (2001) (PG13)
00:00 ● **Just A Kiss**
Romantic comedy. A group of

BELOW: Makgano Mamabolo, Mazinyo Dot Q.

Star Command: The Adventure Begins
Animation. With the help of his intergalactic friends, Buzz Lightyear challenges the evil Emperor Zurg. Voices: Tim Allen, Diedrich Bader. 70 mins. (2000) (A)
14:25 [C] **The Shoulder B**

murder as he tries to dig up dirt on an affair involving two real-estate partners. Jack Nicholson, Harvey Keitel. 137 mins. (1990) (16SNVL)
00:45 ● **Butterscotch: I Am Not A Ghost**
Adult erotica. Scott Coppola

QUESTION CARD

Look at the TV Guide for Saturday 28 May. SABC 3 is screening (showing) a film at 7:30pm. What is the film called?

_____

What is it about?

_____

_____

Would you like to watch this film? Why?

_____

_____

18 films are to be screened (shown) on that day. Which one would you like to se? Why?

_____

_____

_____

Do you know who Charles and Thembi are? What programme are they in? Do you enjoy this programme? Why? When is this programme screened?

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. Reading Packaging

There is lots of print all around us. The products we buy have labels. And groceries we buy are usually wrapped up in packaging that has both words and pictures. This is another source of reading material we can use with our learners.

Get your learners to collect clean empty packaging and to bring it to school. Then plan to discuss the different packaging with your learners. Ask them to look at the print. Get them to look at the different fonts that the packaging has. What kind of print have they used? Children are very observant and like to copy different fonts and to use them when they write.

Ask your children to read the print on the packaging and ask them, What does the print tell us about the product? What can they find out? If your children work in pairs, this will encourage them to talk about what they find. In this way they are more likely to make sense of the print and the information, if the language used is not their home language.

7. Jig-saw Stories
(Filling in the missing parts)

When you use this activity your learners will need to try to make sense of the passage as they read. They can only complete the activity if they expect it to be meaningful. We suggest you get learners to work in pairs or groups of 3 or 4 when they carry out this activity.

You will need to find good stories at your learners' reading level, and which they will find interesting. I have found that the beginning of a story works best to start with. But perhaps when your learners have done this activity several times, you can use other parts of a story!

First of all photocopy the page that you want your learners to read. Neatly cut the story in half down the middle of the page – from the top to the bottom. You will have two sides of this part of the story – the left side and the right side! Put each half in an envelope and label the envelopes.

If you mount each half on some coloured card and then laminate the cards, they will look attractive and last longer.

If you choose several different stories you will also need to write something else on the envelope to help you identify each one. You may decide to number them. It would probably be a good idea to write the number and letter on the back of the story as well!

Find good stories at your learners' reading level, and which they will find interesting.

On the outside of the envelopes you need to write some instructions. We have suggested some below:

Missing Half-Page – Envelope A

- Take out the half-page inside the envelope.
- Read the story carefully, all the way through.
- Try to guess what's missing.
- Write down what you think is missing.
- Check what you have written with the other matching half-page in an envelope marked "B".

and

Missing Half-Page – Envelope B

- Take out the half-page inside the envelope.
- Read the story carefully, all the way through.
- Try to guess what's missing.
- Write down what you think is missing.
- Check what you have written with the other matching half-page in an envelope marked "A".

How well did you do?

Hand out an envelope to each group (or pair). Ask your learners to take out the piece of the story they have in their envelope and to read it. As they take out their pieces, tell them that the story has been cut in half. Now they need to read the whole piece they have, and they need to think and guess what's missing. Encourage them to talk about their piece of text. Then ask them to write down what they think is missing.

When each group has completed their piece, ask each group to read out the whole piece – that is, the piece they had in their envelopes, together with the part they guessed was missing.

It might be a good idea to give all the groups the same piece the very first time you try this activity with your learners. Then when they read aloud what they think is missing, the other children will also have thought about the same part. In this way, some of the children that have been a bit confused will understand what they need to do.

We have also found that learners find it much easier to work with the left side of the story than with the right. So for the first few times it might be better to only give your learners Envelope A to work with. They will still need to be able to refer to Envelope B to check what they have written with the original!

Intermediate Language Teachers who attended the PSP Language workshops in 2005

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Ms Mavis Ndlebe

CHUMISA
Ms Cynthia Dangazele
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W Mbitye

ENTSHONA
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Mr Thembinkosi Notloloza
ME Topo

HOPOLANG
MW Ngcobozi

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Ms Cecilia Mkhanyiswa
MM Sass

INTSHAYELELO
NF Dyubeni
PP Mathebula
Ms Nolundi Mbaba
A Shoko

ISIKHOKELO
Ms Lulama Matsaluka

KUKHANYILE
Ms NB Gubevu
XC Sigweba

KUYASA
N Mayeki
Mr Manelisi Mhlauli
Mr Sithembile Ruda
Mr Bongani Somtsewu
Mr Siphiwo Vantyu

KWAFAKU
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Nomalinge Nyeka
Nontlahla Toli
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NTWASAHLOBO
N Gaga
Xoliswa Njemla
Bulelwa Sokufudumala
M Zuma

NYAMEKO
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L Caesar
Mr Theodore Frieslaar

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YOMELELA
Ntobongwana Fika

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Inside Back Cover

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WESTERN CAPE PRIMARY SCIENCE PROGRAMME TRUST (PSP)

The PSP is an in-service education organisation that supports primary school teachers in the field of Natural Sciences and related learning areas particularly in township primary schools in the Western Cape. We are based at the Edith Stephens Wetland Park, Philippi, situated close to many disadvantaged communities in the Cape Flats.

The PSP has been operating since 1984 and has built up good relationships with over 200 primary schools from all the township areas, including the Boland and West Coast rural areas. More than 1 050 teachers from grades 4 to 7 and 126 000 children benefit from the work of the PSP.

The PSP works in an environment where most teachers and learners have to operate in a 2nd or 3rd additional language. We therefore also work on developing learners' communication skills while focusing on science related learning areas and environment.

The PSP currently operates with a complement of nine staff.

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