



# Quality learning @ home

LET'S STOP THE SPREAD

## Part 3: Quality Reading @ home

Minister Debbie Schäfer | 7 April 2020

If I were put on the spot and asked one very simple question: “What is the best education activity a parent can do during lockdown with their children?”, my answer would confidently be: “READING”.

The ability to read and write is the foundation on which all further learning is based, and the ability to read for meaning and pleasure is without a doubt the most important skill that children can learn in primary school.

So today, I would like to focus on “Quality Reading @ home”, and how simple, pleasurable activities can yield positive educational results for our children, despite the circumstances we now find ourselves in.

During lockdown I strongly encourage parents to promote reading as a daily activity in their homes. This may include dedicating a special time for reading on their own or as a family.

A child can learn using a variety of reading materials in one’s home – be it a book, magazine, newspaper, recipe or even the back of a washing powder packet.

Words are everywhere. Let them practice reading constantly!

Families can end their day with a play that their child has written or based on something they have read. They can read to you, you can read to them, they can write about what they have read. You can debate an article in a newspaper.

There is a variety of reading exercises that one can do each day to practise reading and writing in one’s home.

The Directorate: Curriculum (General Education and Training) has suggested that parents should try to do at least three reading exercises each day with their children. These could include:

- **Re-telling a story:** Ask your child to re-tell you a story they have read.
- **Sequencing:** Ask your child what happened first? What happened last?
- **Role-playing:** Ask your child to act out a story they have read or written.
- **Word building:** Build words with sounds e.g. c - a- t cat.
- **Comprehension activities:** Ask specific questions about the content in the story - What is the moral of the story or the point that a character is making and the consequences of it?

- **Story writing:** Ask your child to write a story for you, or keep a diary about their day.
- **Book making:** Make and write a book or draw a story.

Below is a guide for parents of learners in Grades 1-3 on how they can measure their child's reading skills.

Their child should be able to read:

- **Grade 1**
  - By end of term 1 - 10 words per minute
  - By end of term 2 - 20 words per minute
- **Grade 2**
  - By the end of term 1 - 50 words per minute
  - By the end of term 2 - 60 words per minute
- **Grade 3**
  - By the end of term 1 - 100 words per minute
  - By the end of term 2 - 120 words per minute

Parents should keep track of the words per minute their child is reading and see if there is improvement.

The WCED has put together a list of free reading resources for learners and activities for parents at home. For links to these sites, please visit: <https://wcedportal.co.za/partners>

This includes audio books, free digital book downloads, picture storybooks for early reading, materials on how to teach reading or advice on how to be a better reader.

There has been much debate on the provision of free data and access to e-learning materials for all learners across the Province.

We do, of course, realise that some learners do not have access to laptops, tablets, or data. Inequality levels still exist. However, it cannot and will not distract us from making progress in the area of e-learning and I continue to fight for zero-rating on education related sites.

While the free sites above are great to download and use, it is not the only way in which parents can encourage reading, as I have explained above.

If there is one gift a parent can give their child during this lockdown period, and beyond, it is igniting a passion for reading in their homes.

It is a gift that will certainly keep on giving.

Communication, Collaboration, Critical thinking, and Creativity. Unbeknown at the time of conceptualization of these concepts, these 4C skills have become as important as ever.

May we embrace this challenge as we look at new ways to communicate and collaborate, and to stimulate critical thinking by ways and means that are creative in this lockdown period.



**Quality reading at home:**

Parents have an important role to play in improving the reading skills of their children. During lockdown parents **MUST** promote reading as a daily activity in their homes.



**Tips for parents:**

- Dedicate a special time for reading in your home.
- Words are for learning – and they are everywhere! It can be a book, magazine, newspaper, recipe or even the back of a washing powder packet! Be sure to practise reading it.
- Choose three of the reading exercises each day to practise reading and writing in your home.
- End your day with a play that your child/children has/have written.

**Daily reading exercises:**

- Retelling the story: Ask your child to retell you a story he/she has read.
- Sequencing: Ask your child what happened first? What happened last?
- Role playing: Ask your child to act out a story he/she has read or written.
- Word building: Build words with sounds e.g. c - a - t → cat.
- Comprehension activities: Ask specific questions about the content of the story.
- Story writing: Ask your child to write a story for you or to keep a diary about his/her day.
- Book making: Make and write a book or draw a story.



**How to measure your child's reading skills:**

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- By end of term 1: 10 words per minute.
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**Keep track of the words per minute your child is reading and see if there is an improvement.**

