



# CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS

## Developing Literacy: Effective Teacher Techniques

### LITERACY MODULE 2



**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

Produced and published under the Malawi Teacher Professional Development Support (MTPDS) Program (**Contract No.: EDH-I-00-05-00026-02; Task Order No: EDH-I-04-05-00026-00**) by Creative Associates International, Inc., RTI International and Seward Inc. in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), Government of Malawi through the Malawi Institute of Education.



Malawi Teacher Professional Development Support Program

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Continuous Professional Development for Teachers  
**Literacy Module 2**

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## **Acknowledgements**

This teacher development manual was developed through collaboration between education professionals from the Malawi Teacher Professional Development Support (MTPDS) program and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), and the Malawi Institute of Education (MIE). The MoEST would like to acknowledge all contributions from all institutions and individuals from the above named organizations which culminated into this document.

## Acronyms

CPD	Continuous Professional Development
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
INSET	In-Service Training
MTPDS	Malawi Teacher Professional Development Support
MIE	Malawi Institute of Education
MoEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
OBE	Outcomes-Based Education
PCAR	Primary Curriculum Assessment Reform

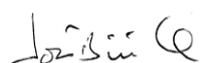
## Foreword

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology introduced the Primary Curriculum and Assessment Reform (PCAR) in all primary schools in Malawi in 2007. PCAR follows an Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) approach and has great potential for improving the quality of education in the country. The OBE approach emphasizes learner-centred/participatory methods and continuous assessment. In this way, it ensures that every learner is given the attention he/she deserves in order to attain the learning outcomes.

However, the implementation and management of the reform in schools has not been without challenges since some of the elements of the reform demand that teachers develop new skills and ways of operating in order to successfully cope with the innovations in OBE. Although teachers and school managers were oriented to PCAR in general and OBE in particular, the orientation was not sufficient due to time and resource constraints. A one-off week-long orientation session to PCAR was not sufficient for teachers to be helped on how to overcome the challenges that they encounter during the implementation of the curriculum. This is partly because new challenges keep cropping-up all the time in the classroom or school. In the face of reform, teachers need support all the time until they attain full mastery of the requisite skills. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) support for teachers is known to be instrumental in the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. CPD can best be provided in the zone, cluster and within the school itself.

In an effort to support the development of teachers in close collaboration with MoEST and the Malawi Teacher Professional Development Support (MTPDS) programme (February 2010 to March, 2013). This program is providing assistance for establishing a system for providing CPD that can be conducted in schools and clusters. The MTPDS program provides technical support to the MoEST by working with curriculum specialists from the Malawi Institute of Education and other education professionals from various institutions to identify the specific needs of school managers and classroom teachers for Standards 1-4, with a special focus on Literacy and Leadership. In order to address the identified needs, training modules are developed in the two areas. These modules are used to train Primary Education Advisors, head teachers and CPD mentors. The head teachers and CPD mentors, in turn, use the materials to support teachers' professional development in their schools.

I sincerely hope that the school heads, CPD mentors and teachers will find the modules useful in addressing their needs to ensure that PCAR and OBE are successfully implemented. This will hopefully contribute to the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning as well as learner achievement in our schools.



John J. Bisika  
**SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

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## **Introduction to *Developing Literacy: Effective Teaching Techniques***

### **Purpose and goals of the workshop**

This workshop is designed to give a broad overview on the issues teachers face in teaching reading in both English and Chichewa. Extending the best literacy teaching practices explored in *Teaching Chichewa and English: Literacy—Module 1*, this workshop presents a systematic overview of literacy skills and teaching practice that will be developed over the next three CPD trainings. As teachers begin to develop effective teaching skills, such as lesson planning, individualizing instruction, and continuous assessment, they can apply them in building their learners' skills in phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Teachers can then begin to use continuous assessment tools to improve their learning and share the learners' progress with parents and the community. At the end of this session, teachers should have a better understanding of the big picture of reading instruction, and start to develop ways for teaching specific reading skills to their learners.

## Schedule

This is a suggested schedule. Adapt it according to your local area's needs.

### Day One

Time	Task
8:00 am	Registration and Seating
8:30 am-9:45 am	Welcome and Review of Literacy Module 1
9:45 am – 10:00 am	Break
10:00 am – 12:00 pm	Effective Literacy Teaching
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 pm-2:45 pm	Overview of Reading Instruction
2:45 pm-3:00 pm	Break
3:00 pm – 3:30 pm	Review of Training and Discussion
3:30 pm	End of Day One

### Day Two

Time	Task
8:30 am–9:00am	Welcome Back and Review of Day One
9:00 am–10:00 am	Phonological Awareness
10:00 am–10:15 am	Break
10:15 am-12:00 pm	Phonological Awareness (Continued)
12:00 pm –1:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Continuous Assessment and EGRA
2:00 pm – 2:15 pm	Break
2:15 pm–3:00 pm	Continuous Assessment and EGRA (Continued)
3:00 pm –3:30 pm	Review of Training and Discussion
3:30 pm	End of Day Two

## Review of Literacy Module 1

(Estimated time - 1 hour)

### Introduction

Literacy Module 1 introduced participants to the importance of developing reading skills among learners and how reading, in both Chichewa and English, helps them in learning across all subjects in school. However, a recent study conducted by the MTPDS staff and MoEST counterparts, revealed that many learners in lower classes are still failing to read. This situation necessitates the need for Literacy Module 2 to reinforce the teaching of literacy skills that were introduced in Module 1. Hence, before going through Module 2, there is a need to review how teachers used ideas learned from Literacy Module 1 in their classrooms.

### Learning outcomes

By the end of this activity, participants should:

- describe approaches they have used in their schools in respect to enhancing the learners' acquisition of basic literacy skills.
- mention their successes and challenges while using ideas learned from Literacy Module 1.
- discuss possible ways of dealing with the challenges encountered.

### Activity 1: Sharing experiences from implementing ideas from Literacy Module 1

1. Individually, participants:
  - a. write down what they have done in their schools following their exposure to Literacy Module 1.
  - b. identify their successes and challenges during the implementation of ideas learnt in Literacy Module 1.
2. In groups, participants:
  - a. share experiences on what they have done in their schools following their exposure to Literacy Module 1.
  - b. share experiences about how they dealt with some of the common challenges reported by individual school leaders.
  - c. develop sample plans for addressing the common challenges.
  - d. report their shared experiences and plans.
3. In plenary, participants discuss presentations from each group.
4. Review and consolidate the groups' ideas.

## Activity 2: Compiling future plans

1. Individually, participants:
  - a. make plans they will use to improve implementation of ideas learnt from previous leadership trainings.
  - b. share their plans with other participants.
2. In plenary, participants discuss their plans.
3. Review and consolidate the groups' ideas.

### Lessons from Literacy Module 1 and plans for this year

#### Lessons learned:

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#### Plans for this year:

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## **UNIT 1: Effective Literacy Teaching**

### **Introduction**

Many learners in Malawi are struggling to acquire reading and writing skills. This is limiting learners' ability to learn a variety of subjects. Teachers need to identify and practice effective techniques for teaching reading and writing skills. This unit discusses three of the effective teaching practices which teachers can use in teaching literacy, namely, proper preparation of the lesson, engaging learners during lesson delivery, and promotion of individualized learning.

### **Learning outcomes**

By the end of this unit, participants should be able to:

- identify attributes of effective lesson planning for literacy lessons
- discuss ways of engaging learners during literacy lessons
- identify techniques for promoting individualized learning in literacy

**Estimated time:** 2 hours

### **Suggested resources**

- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Masking tape/prestick



## **Activity 2: Identifying planning techniques for engaging learners during literacy teaching**

1. Individually, participants:
  - a. write two teaching techniques they use to engage learners during literacy lessons.
  - b. compare their list with the list of techniques in the Brain Bank.
2. In groups, participants:
  - a. share their responses.
  - b. write their consolidated ideas on a flip chart.
  - c. compare their responses with the techniques for engaging learners in the Brain Bank.
  - d. write additional techniques in the checklist for engaging learners where necessary.
  - e. plan a literacy activity using one technique for engaging learners.
  - f. demonstrate how to engage learners in the chosen literacy teaching activity.
3. Review and consolidate the groups' ideas.

**Brain Bank:**

**Techniques for engaging learners during the lesson**

The following are some of the techniques that can be used for engaging learners:

- Utilize learners’ diverse talents, experiences and learning styles (e.g. use peer teaching, incorporate dance and music, or use examples from soccer, etc.).
- Use problem solving teaching.
- Encourage collaborative and cooperative practices (e.g. asking each other questions, sharing ideas through discussions).
- Let learners construct ideas in groups.
- Use reinforcement as a form of feedback (e.g. finding connections between learners’ responses).
- Change the pace of instruction frequently (e.g. lecture, then group work, then individual practice, etc.).

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**Checklist for learner engagement during teaching**

Indicator (for learners)	Tick each time indicator is observed									
Sharing experiences										
Asking each other questions										
Explaining a point to friends										
Developing ideas in groups										
Referring to each other’s responses										
Teaching each other										
Practicing what they have learned										
Answering questions										
Demonstrating how to work out a problem										

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### Activity 3: Identifying techniques for promoting individualized learning

1. Individually, participants brainstorm their definitions of individualized learning and why it is important.
2. As a whole group, participants review and consolidate their individual responses.
3. In groups, participants:
  - a. discuss how they use the techniques for promoting individualized learning found in the Brain Bank, or others they may come up with, in large classes.
  - b. discuss how they would use a checklist in promoting individualized learning.
4. In plenary, groups share their ideas.
5. Review and consolidate participants' ideas.

**Brain Bank:**

**Techniques for promoting individualized learning**

Individualized learning can be promoted through the following techniques:

- Provide a print-rich classroom environment.
- Give individual practice, e.g. homework, assignments.
- Give individual help and feedback.
- Let learners who know the material help struggling learners (peer-teaching).
- Give enrichment activities (e.g. games, extra reading and writing).
- Give remediation activities.
- Use teacher assistants.

**Checklist for assessing application of individualized learning during lesson**

Technique	Tick each time technique is observed									
Providing a print-rich classroom environment										
Giving individual practice										
Giving individual help and feedback										
Letting learners who know the material help struggling learners (peer-teaching)										
Giving enrichment activities										
Giving remediation activities										
Using teacher assistants										

## Conclusion

In this unit, participants explored ways of making teaching more effective. Participants had the opportunity to discuss procedures for preparing a lesson plan. They also identified teaching practices that promote learner engagement and individualized learning.

### Self-reflection

Participants reflect on how they can promote learner engagement and individualized learning in English and Chichewa topics in their classrooms.

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### Suggested INSET at cluster level

Participants suggest good teaching practices they would like to discuss further with other teachers or school leaders in their cluster.

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## UNIT 2: Overview of Reading Instruction

### Introduction

A number of studies on early literacy have revealed that most Malawian learners in government schools are not learning how to read in the early standards. Reports from these studies provide some shocking numbers on the extent of the problem and suggest factors that lead to low early reading achievement. In this unit, participants explore the importance of early reading instruction, as well as five key components of reading instruction that can help remedy the problem of low early reading performance. The unit also covers how school-based CPD literacy activities can help address problems of low early reading achievement of learners in Malawi.

### Learning outcomes

By the end of this unit, participants should be able to:

- explain the factors that lead to low early reading achievement of learners in Malawi.
- describe the importance of early reading instruction.
- describe the five key components of reading instruction.
- explain how literacy-based CPD activities address these early literacy problems.

**Estimated time:** 1 hour 45 min.

### Suggested resources

- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Masking tape/prestick
- Notecards

## Activity 1: Explaining factors that lead to low early reading achievement in Malawi

1. Individually, participants review the statistics provided in the Brain Bank concerning literacy achievement in Malawi.
2. In groups, participants discuss:
  - a. how these statistics compare with experiences in their schools.
  - b. what surprises them about these statistics.
  - c. factors that may have led to these results.
3. In plenary, groups present their responses.
4. The facilitator reviews and consolidates ideas from the groups.

### Brain Bank:

Below are some of the research findings on literacy in the early standards in Malawi based on Chichewa tests:

- In Zomba district in 2003, 70% of Standard 2 pupils were unable to read a single word from a list of 20 most commonly used words from their pupils' book (Dembele and Miaro 2003).
- In Ntchisi district in 2003, 85% of Standard 1 learners were unable to write their first names (Dembele and Miaro 2003).
- In 2007, Malawian learners scored the lowest in reading in a test administered by the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ 2010) Standard 6 test .
- The Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) of 2010 (Mejia, J 2011) found that:
  - 76.45% of Standard 2 learners and 41.86% of Standard 4 learners cannot name a single letter of the alphabet.
  - 88.8% of Standard 2 learners and 41.86% of Standard 4 learners are unable to read even one syllable.
  - only 27.2% of Standard 2 children can read a single word .
  - 97.1% of Standard 2 learners and 69.3% of Standard 4 learners cannot answer one reading comprehension question (.

### Factors that lead to low early grade reading achievements:

- Large classes
- Inadequate classroom space
- Understaffing
- Inefficient head teachers
- Teacher and pupil absenteeism
- Insufficient time on task
- Poor teaching methodologies
- Poor use of teaching and learning materials
- Lack of reading culture
- Pupil hunger
- Inadequate supervision

## Activity 2: Describing the importance of early grade reading instruction

1. In groups, participants:
  - a. choose one out of the seven case studies listed in the Brain Bank.
  - b. discuss the future of the learner described in the case study by considering the following periods of time: 5 years, 10 years and 20 years.
  - c. discuss how to assist the learner described in the chosen case study.
2. In plenary, groups present their ideas.
3. Review and consolidate the groups' ideas.

### Brain Bank:

These case studies illustrate the importance of early reading and its influence on a learner's performance in school and in later life. They are based on the statistics found in the Brain Bank for Activity 1.

**Case study 1:** Vitu is a Standard 2 learner who is unable to read a single word from a list of 20 most common words in his pupils' book. He finished Standard 1 without knowing letters of the alphabet, but was still promoted to Standard 2. In both Standard 1 and 2, the only reading material available to him has been the pupils' book he has to share with five other learners during group work. He cannot take a pupils' book home because the teacher fears for the safety of the book at home. The school has enough copies of the pupils' book for every learner in the school, but the head-teacher wants to preserve them for future learners.

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**Case study 2:** Dele is one of the bright learners in her Standard 1 class. She can write her name, as well as the names of her father, mother, brother, and sister. Right from the first day of school, her teacher reads aloud to the whole class every day. Although the school doesn't have a library, the TDC does and the teachers borrow books from there. She lets learners take these books home. Dele's parents read to Dele and her sister every night.

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**Case study 3:** Yamika is in Standard 6. She has never read an entire book before, not even a children's book. Her school has a few dozen books, but they are all hidden away in the head-teacher's office. The head-teacher is new to the school, and complains that his office is too chaotic to locate anything. He has no idea in which corner of the office the books are hidden.

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**Case study 4:** Daudi is in Standard 2. He knows all the letters of the alphabet. His school doesn't have a library, but the head-teacher says this should not be an excuse for learners not to read. She kept all the books from the old curriculum in her office. She lends them out to learners. She also encourages the community to bring to the school any reading material they no longer use. She hopes to collect enough material to start a library by the end of this school year.

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**Case study 5:** Nelia entered Standard 4 this year not knowing how to read. She can identify some letters of the alphabet, but she cannot recognize a single syllable. Despite this, each of her teachers has been promoting her at the end of every year. From Standard 1 to 4, all her classes have been very large; there were 200 learners in her Standard 1 class, 170 in Standard 2, 150 in Standard 3, and 130 in Standard 4.

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**Case study 6:** Titani started Standard 2 last term. When his teacher assessed him at the end of the first term, he could only read one word. A whirlwind blew off the roof of his classroom, and they have been learning under a tree since then. The rainy season came toward the end of the year, and all Standard 2 learners were combined with Standard 1 learners. There are 300 learners in Titani's Standard 2 class.

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**Case study 7:** Limbani was top of his class when he entered Standard 4 last term. He loves to draw. He won a drawing competition when he was in Standard 2. He learned to draw from his sister who is now in Standard 6. He likes to give names to things that he draws, and he loves to tell stories about his drawings. He says he would like to become a cartoonist and a painter when he grows up.

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### Activity 3: Describing the five key components of reading instruction

1. Individually, participants review the main components of reading instruction in the Brain Bank.
2. In groups, participants:
  - a. select one component of reading instruction.
  - b. discuss:
    - i. their understanding of the selected component of reading instruction.
    - ii. the importance of the chosen component of reading instruction.
3. In plenary, groups report their responses.
4. Review and consolidate the groups' ideas.

#### Brain Bank:

##### Phonological awareness

- Phonological awareness is the ability to recognize that words are made up of sounds, to separate words into sounds, and to manipulate those sounds to create rhymes or change words (e.g. recognizing *samba* within the word *masamba*).
- A part of phonological awareness is **Phonemic Awareness** which is the ability to break words into individual sounds or **phonemes** (e.g., the word *tree* is made of up /t/./r/./ee/, or the word *dimba* is made of the sounds /d/./i/./m/./b/./a/).
- Phonological awareness is a pre-reading skill that provides the foundation of phonics.
- A child with strong phonological awareness should be able to recognize and use word parts and sounds to understand and create other words.
- For example, learners need to know that there are three sounds in the word *anu*: /a/./n/./u/. They also need to be able to manipulate the sounds in words (for example, knowing that *dovu*, *dimba* and *diso* all have the same first sound).
- Phonological awareness develops orally, without text. Once learners develop phonological awareness, they can begin to link sounds with letters.

##### Phonics

- Phonics is the *method* of teaching and learning the **Alphabetic Principle**, which is the understanding that words are composed of letters that represent sounds.
- Two essential skills needed in developing the alphabetic principle in early reading are 1) **Letter-Sound Correspondence**, which is the connection of letters to particular sounds, and 2) **Word Reading**, which is being able to combine individual letters into syllables and words.
- When using phonics, it is logical to begin with easy words (with a consonant + vowel + consonant, like “bat” or vowel + consonant + vowel, such as *inu*) and progress to harder words with many syllables.
- As learners understand the alphabetic principle, they can “crack the code” (or **decode**) the meaning of unknown words as well as spell (or **encode**) unknown words.
- Students will need to memorize common “sight words” that they can read automatically and do not require decoding (e.g., *ine*, *iwe*, *uyo*).



### Activity 4: Discussing how literacy-based CPD activities can address early reading problems

1. Individually, participants:
  - a. analyze the schedule of literacy CPD Modules 2-4 in the Brain Bank.
  - b. describe what they think are the main issues addressed by each module.
  - c. prioritize the issues according to their usefulness in meeting the needs of their schools.
2. In groups, participants:
  - a. share and merge their ideas.
  - b. identify challenging issues which are not addressed in the scheduled modules.
  - c. develop a poster of their ideas.
3. In plenary, groups take a gallery walk to view other groups' ideas. Group members can take note of ideas they would take to their schools.
4. Review and consolidate participants' ideas.

[Note: Facilitators can use these suggestions to adapt future CPDs to the specific needs of teachers in their zones]

<b>Brain Bank:</b>		
<b>Schedule of future literacy CPD workshops.</b>		
<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Date of Training</b>	<b>Topics</b>
<b>Literacy 2</b>	26 March to 9 April 2012	<b>Day 1</b> Review past ideas, check in <b>Unit 1:</b> Effective Teaching <b>Unit 2:</b> Overview of Reading <b>Day 2</b> <b>Unit 3:</b> Phonological Awareness <b>Unit 4:</b> Continuous Assessment and EGRA
<b>Literacy 3</b>	16 July to 31 July 2012	<b>Day 1</b> Review past ideas, check in <b>Unit 1:</b> Phonics 1: Letters <b>Unit 2:</b> Phonics 2: Syllables and words <b>Day 2</b> <b>Unit 3:</b> Phonics 3: Teaching syllables in Chichewa <b>Unit 4:</b> Fluency
<b>Literacy 4</b>	22 Sept to 4 Nov 2012	<b>Day 1:</b> Review past ideas, check in <b>Unit 1:</b> Teaching Grammar for Reading <b>Unit 2:</b> Vocabulary <b>Day 2:</b> <b>Unit 3:</b> Comprehension <b>Unit 4:</b> Next Steps and Resource Guide

## Conclusion

In this unit, participants learned that many Malawian learners are failing to read in the early standards and they explored what factors lead to this low early reading achievement. This unit focused on the five key components of reading instruction, and outlined how literacy-based CPD can begin to address these problems in Malawi.

### Self-reflection

Participants reflect on the literacy instruction problems in their own school, and write down specific ways they hope to use what they have learned to solve them.

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### Suggested INSET at the cluster level

Participants suggest reading instruction topics they would like to discuss further with other teachers or school leaders in their cluster.

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## Review and Close of Day One

(Estimated time – 30 min)

### Suggested resources

- Pens
- Notecards (one for each participant)

### Activity 1: Completing exit cards for formative feedback

1. Give participants exit cards and inform them they do not need to write their names on them.
2. Remind them that this is not a test, and their answers are anonymous. These cards are used to help the facilitator know how to prepare for the next day of the workshop. Ask participants to write the answers to the following questions:
  - a. What is one method for effective teaching?
  - b. What are the 5 key components of literacy?
  - c. What was your favorite part of today's workshop?
  - d. What is one thing that could be improved in tomorrow's session?
3. Participants leave their exit cards in a stack before departure.
4. The facilitator reviews their answers that evening or before the next day and determines if there are things that need to be reviewed or adapted in the second day of the workshop.

## UNIT 3: Phonological Awareness

### Introduction

Before learners can begin to read, they need to have a clear understanding of the role of sounds in words. Knowledge of the role of sounds in words is called **phonological awareness**. Even though phonological awareness does not include any printed letters (only sounds), research shows that learners' awareness of sounds in words can help predict their success in learning to read. This unit focuses on how teachers can help learners develop phonological awareness. It also introduces ways for helping Standard 3 and 4 learners develop reading and writing skills.

### Learning outcomes

By the end of this unit, participants should be able to:

- discuss the importance of phonological awareness in developing literacy.
- use strategies for developing rhyming and alliteration skills.
- use strategies for developing blending, segmenting and manipulation skills.

**Estimated time:** 1 hour 45 minutes

### Suggested resources

- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Masking tape/prestick

## Activity 1: Discussing the importance of phonological awareness in developing literacy

1. Individually, participants:
  1. review the characteristics of phonological awareness in the Brain Bank.
  2. write briefly about the importance of phonological awareness in developing literacy.
2. In groups, participants:
  - a. discuss the characteristics and importance of phonological awareness in developing literacy
  - b. review the examples from English and Chichewa of one of the five elements of phonological awareness listed in the Brain Bank.
  - c. discuss other possible examples from English and Chichewa from the element selected.
3. In plenary, each group presents its work and receives feedback from other groups.
4. Review and consolidate participants' ideas.

### Brain Bank:

#### Characteristics of phonological awareness

- Phonological awareness refers to the ability to separate words into sounds, blend sounds into words, and manipulate sounds by adding to or subtracting them from a word.
- There is a strong connection between the ability to manipulate sounds and the ability to learn to read and write. This relationship works both ways, i.e. as learners gain phonological awareness their reading improves, and as they become better readers their phonological awareness improves.
- Phonological awareness usually develops naturally in children as they hear adults speaking or singing, but it can be taught to children who struggle to develop these skills.
- Understanding that words are made up of sounds helps learners “crack the code” or discover the secret of reading.
- In early stages of literacy, the process of reading is similar in different languages. Strategies for teaching phonological awareness will be the same in English and Chichewa.
- Children need to know how to manipulate and blend sounds in words so they can link sounds to letters and begin to develop the alphabetic principle, an important stage in literacy.

Note: Teachers need to help learners to realize that sounds made by letter combinations in Chichewa may differ from those in English.

## Elements of phonological awareness

Phonological Awareness Skills	Examples
Rhyming	Identify a series of rhyming words. Chichewa: gule and chule, galu and nsalu English: car and star, flower and hour
Alliteration	Identify words beginning with the same initial sound Chichewa: <b>t</b> enga and <b>t</b> ama, sukulu and <b>s</b> ewero English: <b>c</b> ar and <b>c</b> ut, <b>f</b> lower and <b>f</b> ish
Blending	Blend syllables to make words (e.g., /ta../ble/, table). Chichewa: /a../ta../te/ = atate, /ka../ne../ma/ kanema English: /ba../na../na/ = banana, "/an../im../al/" = animal
	Blend "onset" and "rime" to make words (e.g., /p../an/, pan). Chichewa: /g../ula/ = gula, /k../anema/ = kanema English: /p../an/ = pan, /b../anana/ = banana
	Blend phonemes to make words. Chichewa: /g../o../n../a/ = gona English: /s../a../t/ = sat
Segmenting	Segment words into syllables (e.g., table, /ta../ble/). Chichewa: <b>kodola</b> = /ko../do../la/, <b>kalata</b> = /ka../la../ta/ English: <b>table</b> = /ta../ble/, <b>elephant</b> = /el../e../phant/
	Segment words into "onset" and "rime" Chichewa: <b>genda</b> = /g../enda/, <b>kalata</b> = /k../alata/ English: <b>pan</b> = /p../an/, <b>elephant</b> = /e../lephant/ -
	Segment words into individual phonemes Chichewa: <b>gona</b> = /g../o../n../a/ English: <b>sat</b> = /s../a../t/
Manipulation	Change initial sound of a word to make a new word. Chichewa: <b>aka</b> → ika, English: <b>cat</b> → mat
	Change final sound of a word to make a new word. Chichewa: <b>aka</b> , → ako English: <b>cat</b> → cap
	Change vowel sound in a word to make a new word. Chichewa: muli → malo English: <b>cat</b> → cut
	Remove initial sound in words. Chichewa: <b>kulima</b> , → ulima, <b>lake</b> → ake

## Activity 2: Developing rhyming and alliteration skills in learners

1. Individually, participants:
  - a. review the early stages of phonological awareness found in the Brain Bank.
  - b. write down any questions they have about rhyming and alliteration in English or Chichewa.
2. In groups, participants
  - a. discuss their understanding of rhyming and alliteration and any questions they may have.
  - b. discuss ways of helping learners to develop rhyming and alliteration skills.
  - c. develop games, poems and songs that promote rhyming and alliteration skills in Chichewa and English for early grades.
3. In plenary, groups present their ideas and discuss how they can improve their ideas.
4. Review and consolidate group responses.

**Brain Bank:****Early stages of phonological awareness**

- **Rhyming** is one of the first steps in developing phonological awareness. When children learn to rhyme, they learn to break words into parts smaller than a syllable.
- Distinguishing between words that start with the same sound or different sounds (e.g., bat vs. cat) is an early and important stage in phonological awareness.
- **Alliteration** is the repetition of the same initial sound in a phrase or sentence (e.g., **B**etty's **b**rown **b**all **b**roke). Like rhyming, it requires sensitivity to parts smaller than a syllable.

**Ideas for teaching phonological awareness through rhyming and alliteration**

- Tell the class a well-known nursery rhyme, using pictures if available. Recite the rhyme and have learners help you sequence the pictures. Help the learners practice reciting the rhyme. Focus on the words that rhyme and write them on the board. Demonstrate how the endings of the words look the same.
- Play rhyming games. For instance, pretend you are a monster that can only eat nonsense words. Come up with names of things to eat with nonsense rhymes (English: "gread" for "bread", "shrice" for "rice"; Chichewa; "tuledi" for "buledi", "myama" for "nyama", etc.). Learners have to guess what the real food is.
- Sing a song with the same letter for every word (e.g., English: "Sappy Sirthday so Sou", for "Happy Birthday to You", etc., Chichewa: "Chosano chasa chusutita" for "Tsopano tatha kuphunzira", etc.).

**Activities for promoting phonological awareness through rhyming**

- Using nursery rhymes
- Reading books which have rhyming words to learners
- Asking learners to listen to songs which have rhyming components
- Asking learners to listen to poems which have rhyming words in them
- Asking learners to identify names that rhyme
- Matching pictures of words that rhyme
- Asking learners to recite poems
- Asking learners to sing rhyming songs

Adapted from: Syverson, O'Connor, and Vadasy, (2007)

### Activity 3: Developing blending, segmenting, and manipulating skills

1. Individually, participants:
  - a. review the early grade stages of phonological awareness with a focus on blending, segmenting, and manipulating skills.
  - b. identify challenging concepts they will need assistance from others on.
2. In groups, participants:
  - a. discuss their individually identified challenges.
  - b. suggest how to use blending, segmenting, and manipulating sounds in English or Chichewa lessons.
  - c. demonstrate their ideas while other groups observe and take note of successes and challenges encountered by presenters.
3. Participants consolidate this activity by discussing:
  - a. what went well.
  - b. challenges and their causes.
  - c. suggestions for improvement.

#### Brain Bank:

##### Early stages of phonological awareness

- **Blending** is combining sounds orally to create words (e.g. /c/ and /a/ and /t/ makes “cat”) and is an essential part of early reading instruction. Most learners can blend without training, but some Standard 2 learners can have difficulty with blending orally. Research suggests that teaching learners to blend orally before introducing reading instruction can facilitate reading.
- **Segmenting** is the ability to break words down into sounds. Many learners can segment orally before reading. Breaking words into syllables makes reading longer words easier and can be used through adulthood. After breaking a word into syllables, learners can usually segment words after the first sound, or onset, and the rest of the word, or rime (e.g., /c+/at/). Later they can divide words into 3-4 individual sounds, or **phonemes** (/c+/a+/t/).
- **Manipulating** sounds includes replacing one letter with another (“car” to “cat”), adding or subtracting a letter (“car” to “cart”), or changing the order or syllables (“bicycle” to “cyc-bi-le”).

##### Ideas for teaching phonological awareness through rhyming and alliteration

- Use an old sock and markers to make a turtle hand puppet. The turtle only knows how to say words slowly. Play guessing games with the learners, letting the turtle give clues that are segmented, and learners have to blend them together (e.g., /h+/ello/).
- Learners draw an object from a bag without letting the other learners see it. The learner says the name of the object in a drawn-out manner (e.g., “/r/.. /o/../ck/”). Other learners get to guess what the object is.

- Riddle guessing game: Choose a word. Give learners clues, such as “I’m thinking of an animal that lives in the water and is a /f/ /ish/. For more advanced learners, you can divide the word into smaller parts (or phonemes) such as /f/ /i/ /sh/, or you can tell them the word “starts with the letter F.” Ask the learners to repeat the segmented version, and then say the whole word (“fish”). The learner who says the word correctly picks the next word.
- Teach learners to clap out syllables. Explain to them how to segment words. “Uka has two beats. U-ka. Do you hear the two beats in uka? U-ka.” Clap people’s names (e.g., “Ta-da-la! Ta-da-la! Tadala has three beats.”). Afterward, more learners can join along. Then try stamping to the syllables. Include other items in the room (ta-ble). Select some big words and have learners count syllables: “Hip-po-po-ta-mus! How many parts did you count? Correct, 5!” Model correct behavior, and then guide learners as they segment words into parts. For more advanced learners, you can tell them “Say ‘banana’ in little parts”. The person who states the correct word can choose the next word, and so forth.
- Practice manipulating sounds by letting learners reorder the syllables of words (Ma-la-wi becomes wi-la-Ma, etc.). Give learners some words, and let them reorder the syllables.
- Encourage learners to use manipulation as a part of other activities (science, reading, etc). Ask learners, “What is a word from the book? (Wachiwiri). What is a sound in that word? (Wa, chi, wi, etc.) How would you say that word without a `wa’? (chiwiri) What if you changed `chi’ to `a’? (awiri).” You can use words that still have a meaning after you change it (e.g., English: brain-rain, cup-up, or Chichewa: wachiwiri-chiwiri, awiri-chiri).
- Encourage learners to play with sounds, change words, and invent nonsense words on their own. Let them play with their names, or compound words (e.g., “Pea-nut. What if we called it a bean and not a pea? Would it be a Bean-nut?”).

#### **Ideas for developing phonological awareness in Standards 3 and 4**

As learners develop further reading skills, it is important that they have a strong foundation in phonological awareness. Successful reading in higher standards requires children to know how to segment, blend, and decode multisyllabic words. The following are some examples of ways to continue the development of phonological awareness in Standards 3 and 4:

- One learner chooses a word and says it like a ghost: English: “ddddooooooooorr” or Chichewa: kkkkaaaaaalle, etc. Let learners write what they hear. It’s ok if they don’t spell it correctly (e.g., using k instead of c, etc.).
- Choose words they know and can spell, and have them spell other words. Write one word, like “play” on top of a sheet of paper. Let learners come up with rhymes and write them below the word (e.g., English: stray, spray, clay, delay, betray; Chichewa: mlenje, chikwanje, lalanje; or nyumba, umba, kumba)

Adapted from: Syverson, O’Connor, and Vadasy, (2007)

## Conclusion

In this unit, participants learned strategies they could use for developing phonological awareness in their learners. Participants discussed the importance of phonological awareness to reading and how it can be developed. This unit introduced the skills of phonological awareness, such as rhyming, alliteration, segmenting, blending, and manipulating sounds and syllables. This unit also provided ideas for developing these skills in class. This unit then presented ways teachers in Standards 3 and 4 can use phonological awareness to develop more advanced literacy skills in their learners.

### Self-reflection

Participants reflect on how they might adapt the strategies they learned today for developing phonological awareness in a future lesson and then write their ideas.

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### Suggested INSET at the cluster level

Participants suggest aspects of phonological awareness they would like to discuss further with other teachers or school leaders in their cluster.

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## **UNIT 4: Continuous Assessment and EGRA**

### **Introduction**

The aim of this unit is to provide teachers with information about how to assess literacy skills using ideas adapted from Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA). The tools are used to assess letter recognition, syllable recognition, word recognition, and sentence meaning recognition (comprehension).

### **Learning outcomes**

By the end of this unit, participants should be able to:

- identify procedures for assessing learners in literacy.
- describe the importance for continuous assessment in literacy instruction.
- demonstrate correct use of EGRA tools.

**Estimated time:** 2 hours

### **Suggested resources**

- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Masking tape/prestick
- EGRA assessment tools (found in the Brain Bank in Activity 3): letter recognition, syllable recognition, word recognition, sentence reading, and comprehension

### **Activity 1: Identifying ways of conducting continuous assessment in literacy**

1. Individually, participants:
  - a. write the skills that they assess in English lessons.
  - b. describe procedures they use for assessing the skills.
2. In groups, participants:
  - a. share their individually processed responses.
  - b. review the brain bank and then discuss skills and procedures for assessing the following in literacy:
    - i. Phonological awareness/Phonics
    - ii. Fluency
    - iii. Vocabulary
    - iv. Comprehension
3. In plenary, groups report their ideas.
4. Review and consolidate participants' ideas.

**Brain Bank:**

**Ideas for continuous literacy assessment**

Literacy skills can be assessed by looking at the following:

**Phonological awareness**

- The ability to match words that rhyme
- The ability to recognize words that start with the same sounds(alliteration) and those that start with different sounds
- The ability to divide words into syllables
- The ability to divide words into individual letter sounds (phonemes)
- The ability to blend syllables and phonemes into words
- The ability to manipulate or change starting letters, syllables, or phonemes

**Phonics**

- Number of letters learners can name correctly
- Number of sounds learners can correctly match to letters
- Accuracy in pronouncing two or more consonants or vowels together (consonant clusters, diagraphs, vowel diphthongs, etc.)
- Accuracy in pronouncing short syllables or nonsense words
- Accuracy in pronouncing words from common word families

**Reading fluency**

- Number of words read from a set per minute
- Phrasing (reading the passage in meaningful chunks)
- Accuracy (pronouncing the words accurately)
- Reading with expression (adding appropriate expressions to the tone to depict what is happening)
- Fluent reading of words (ease at which words are read)
- Comprehension (reading with understanding)

**Vocabulary**

- Number of words read from a set
- Describing the meaning of words
- Dictation or spelling of the words/syllables

**Comprehension**

- Identifying facts from a passage
- Stating cause and effect
- Creating questions about the main ideas in the passage
- Drawing conclusions from the story
- Making generalizations
- Predicting what will happen next
- Identifying main characters in the passage/story

## **Activity 2: Using and adapting literacy assessment tools**

1. Individually, participants review the literacy assessment tools in the Brain Bank.
2. In groups, participants discuss:
  - a. questions they have about using these tools.
  - b. how they would plan and implement an assessment.
  - c. how they can adapt these tools for their own lessons.
  - d. how they share results on learner progress with parents and community members.
  - e. how they would use results to refine lessons and prepare remediation.
3. In plenary, participants share responses.
4. Review and consolidate participants' ideas.

**Brain Bank:****Letter Recognition Tool**

- This tool can be used to determine two things: 1) whether the learner recognizes and can name the letters, or 2) whether the learner can associate the correct sound with the letters, both of which are an important part of phonics.
- Let learners name the letters or letter sounds without prompting or help. Mark only if the learner was correct or incorrect.
- The assessment can be timed so that you have a better indication of the learner's fluency. You can then calculate how many correct letters or letter sounds the learner can recognize at the end of one minute.
- To create or adapt this tool, you can use any letters the learner is familiar with at that point in your course. For instance, if it is early in the year and the learner only knows a few letters, you can include only those letters they have learned. Use capital and small letters.
- The letters should be in a random (NOT alphabetical) order to prevent learners from reciting only by rote memory.
- Some letters may not be useful in Chichewa, such as Q or X, which have been shaded on this example. A separate sheet for English and Chichewa may be necessary.
- Use a font that the learner will be familiar with and which is clear to read.

**LETTER RECOGNITION SHEET**

<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>b</b>	<b>c</b>	<b>e</b>	<b>g</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>i</b>	<b>j</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>d</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>L</b>
<b>k</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>r</b>	<b>t</b>
<b>u</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>Z</b>	<b>Q</b>	<b>q</b>	<b>h</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>U</b>
<b>w</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>y</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>l</b>	<b>o</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>S</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>w</b>	<b>k</b>	<b>Z</b>	<b>s</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>b</b>	<b>f</b>

**Syllable Recognition Tool**

- This tool is used to measure how well learners can combine letters and sounds (phonemes) to create syllables, an important part of phonics.
- As with the letter recognition tool, let learners name the letters or letter sounds without prompting or help. Mark only if the learner was correct or incorrect. The assessment can be timed to assess fluency (e.g. mark how many correct responses the learner gives in one minute).
- This tool has several different levels for different learner abilities. Level 1 includes simple syllables with one consonant, and on up to Level 4 with four or five consonants.
- To create or adapt this tool, you can use syllables that are in words learners may know, or that use letters the learner is familiar with at that point in your course.
- The syllables should be in a random (NOT alphabetical) order to prevent learners from reciting only by rote memory.
- Use a font that the learner will be familiar with and which is clear to read.

**SYLLABLE RECOGNITION SHEET**

Level 1 – (Out of 15)				
<b>Fe</b>	<b>Si</b>	<b>Ba</b>	<b>me</b>	<b>pu</b>
<b>Di</b>	<b>pa</b>	<b>Ma</b>	<b>sa</b>	<b>ne</b>
<b>Ko</b>	<b>Ta</b>	<b>Nu</b>	<b>le</b>	<b>wo</b>
Level 2 – (Out of 10)				
<b>Mwa</b>	<b>phi</b>	<b>njo</b>	<b>bwe</b>	<b>nda</b>
<b>Mba</b>	<b>khu</b>	<b>nga</b>	<b>zwe</b>	<b>dwa</b>
Level 3 – (Out of 10)				
<b>Nza</b>	<b>khwe</b>	<b>ngwa</b>	<b>nthe</b>	<b>ntho</b>
<b>Nkha</b>	<b>ntha</b>	<b>mphi</b>	<b>nkha</b>	<b>thyo</b>
Level 4 –(Out of 5)				
<b>Nkhwe</b>	<b>ntche</b>	<b>nkho</b>	<b>nthya</b>	<b>Mnkhwa</b>

**Word Recognition Tool**

- This tool measures learners' ability to combine syllables to create words. This skill is an important part of phonics, fluency, and vocabulary.
- The directions are the same for other tools.
- As with syllable recognition, the words in Level 1 include no more than one consonant per syllable. Words in Level 4 include as many as 5, or contain difficult consonant combinations.
- You may consider asking learners for the meaning of the words to assess their vocabulary knowledge.

**WORD RECOGNITION SHEET****Level 1**

<b>ine</b>	<b>bafa</b>	<b>ufa</b>	<b>agogo</b>	<b>tola</b>
<b>iwo</b>	<b>amayi</b>	<b>ana</b>	<b>ababa</b>	<b>kalulu</b>

**Level 2**

<b>idya</b>	<b>nyemba</b>	<b>chikho</b>	<b>phindu</b>
<b>nyema</b>	<b>zanga</b>	<b>chanu</b>	<b>njole</b>
<b>njerengo</b>	<b>khola</b>		

**Level 3**

<b>Nkhani</b>	<b>nkhuku</b>	<b>nthano</b>	<b>mphongo</b>
<b>mphambe</b>	<b>khuntho</b>	<b>thyola</b>	<b>nkhululu</b>
<b>nthungo</b>	<b>nthiwatiwa</b>		

**Level 4**

<b>Ntchentche</b>	<b>nkhwere</b>	<b>nkhwangwa</b>	<b>ntchedzero</b>
<b>nthyamba</b>	<b>nkhwidzi</b>	<b>nantchegwa</b>	<b>mnhkwani</b>
<b>nkhwende</b>	<b>nkhwiru</b>		

**Sentence Reading and Comprehension Tool**

- This tool measures learners’ ability to combine words into sentences as well as understand the meaning of the sentence. These skills are an important part of fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.
- The directions are the same for other tools, but include asking questions to assess understanding. Let learners only see the page with sentences, and not the page with questions and answers. This is only used for marking.
- If you choose to measure time to assess fluency, wait until the learner is finished reading to ask the comprehension questions.
- The sentences increase in complexity from Level 1 to Level 4. For instance, the sentence in Level 1 does not include descriptors or difficult words.
- You may consider asking learners for the meaning of individual words to assess their vocabulary knowledge.

**TASK: SENTENCE READING AND COMPREHENSION**

Ask each learner to read a sentence and answer questions that follow.

**Standard 1 sentence:** Galu wafa lero.

Can the learner read the sentence? Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_

Questions	Answer	Correct	Wrong
1. Kodi atchula nyama yanji muchiganizochi?	Galu		
2. Kodi ndi chiyani chinachitika chokhudza galuyo?	Inafa		
3. Galu anafa liti?	Lero		
4. Ndi chiyani chomwe chidamupha galuyo?	Nchosadziwika		

**Standard 2 sentence:** Galu wadyera wafa lero.

Can the learner read the sentence? Yes: \_\_\_\_\_, No: \_\_\_\_\_

Questions	Answer	Correct	Wrong
1. Tchulani nyama yomwe yafa ?	Galu		
2. Galuyu ndi wakhalidwe lotani?	Wadyera		
3. Kuipa kwa dyera nkotani?	Limaphetsa		
4. Kodi galuyu wamupha ndani?	Sadanene		

**Standard 3 sentence:** Mphaka wakuda wagwira khoswe.

Can the learner read the sentence? Yes: \_\_\_\_\_, No: \_\_\_\_\_

Questions	Answer	Correct	Wrong
1. Kodi mphaka anali wamtundu wanji?	Wakuda		
2. Kodi mphaka anagwira chiyani?	Khoswe		
3. Khoswe anali kuti?	Sananene		
4. Atchula nyama zingati muchiganizochi?	Ziwiri		

**Standard 4 sentence:** Mwana watenga nkhwngwa yakuthwa.

Can the learner read the sentence? Yes: \_\_\_\_, No: \_\_\_\_

Questions	Answer	Correct	Wrong
1. Kodi mwana watenga chiyani?	Nkwangwa		
2. Kodi nkhwangwayo ndiyotani?	Ndiyakuthwa		
3. Ntchito yankhwangwa ndi chiyani?	Kudulira zinthu		
4. Kuopsya kwa nkhwangwa yakuthwa kwambri ndikotani?	Ikhoza kumutema munthu akayigwiritsa ntcito molakwika		

Sentences to be read by children

1. Galu wafa lero.
2. Galu wadyera wafa lero.
3. Mphaka wakuda wagwira khoswe.
4. Mwana watenga nkhwangwa yakuthwa.

### **Activity 3: Demonstrating the use of EGRA-based literacy assessment tools**

1. In groups, participants:
  - a. choose group members to demonstrate the use of one of the tools for assessing literacy skills through role play.
  - b. practice using one of the literacy skills assessment tools (letter recognition, syllable recognition, word recognition and sentence reading and comprehension).
  - c. discuss successes and challenges experienced in practicing the assessment.
2. In plenary, each group presents their results.
3. Review and consolidate by ensuring participants are comfortable using the assessment tools.

## Conclusion

In this unit, participants learned how to continuously assess learners' literacy abilities and discover what areas learners need more work in to successfully learn to read. Participants explored how to use and adapt continuous assessment tools in their schools as well as with parents and community leaders to improve literacy instruction. This unit also provided opportunities for participants to practice using EGRA-based tools for continuous literacy assessment.

### Self-reflection

Participants reflect on what approaches they will use to improve literacy assessment in their own classes.

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### Suggested INSET at the cluster level

Ask participants to think about aspects of assessment they would like to discuss further with other school managers at the cluster level.

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## **Review and Closure**

(Estimated time – 30 min)

### **Activity 1: Reviewing Literacy Module 2**

1. Individually, participants:
  - a. List things they learned from the workshop.
  - b. Write down 2-3 things from the workshop they intend to apply in their own teaching at their school.
2. As a whole group, participants share their plans.
3. Review and consolidate participants' ideas by assessing the feasibility of participants' plans.

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