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Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

EARLY GRADE READING ACTIVITY

READING INTERVENTION PROGRAM

Training Manual: Module 3

English Standard I

MARCH 2015

Contract No.: AID-612-C-13-00002

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Early Grade Reading Activity

English Standard I

Training Manual

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Abbreviations

DTC	District Training Co-ordinator
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Activity
LB	Learners' book
LSEN	Learners with special educational needs
MoEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
NPC	National Primary Curriculum
PEA	Primary Education Advisor
TG	Teachers' guide
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Introduction

The Early Grade Reading Activity (EGRA) is a 40-month United States Agency for International Development (USAID) intervention aimed to enhance the quality of primary education in Malawi. EGRA provides technical assistance to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) in implementing teacher education support and literacy materials development. Building on the achievements of previous activities and in particular on the Malawi Teacher Professional Development Support Program, it also features a strong element of community mobilisation and of inclusive education for learners with special learning needs. EGRA targets teacher trainers, teachers, school administrators, parents, and other key community members in 11 districts, with a special focus on improving literacy skills at the lower primary level.

To improve early grade reading, EGRA and MoEST are implementing an early grade literacy intervention in these 11 districts that is geared toward the development of basic literacy skills and knowledge. Focusing on schools and the wider community within which the schools operate, the program provides training to teachers, head teachers, and primary education advisors (PEAs) on how to effectively teach reading in the early grades. An additional focus is the teaching of English as a subject and in preparation for later learning of all subjects through the medium of English.

For parents, caregivers, and other key community members, EGRA provides training and ongoing support so that young learners' reading can be encouraged and improved both within school and at home. The English Standard 1 teachers' guide has been developed in collaboration with the MoEST, and is based on the National Primary Curriculum (NPC) learners' book. The focus of teaching and learning in this course is the development of speaking and listening skills. It is important for learners to build a vocabulary of familiar words and to understand and be able to respond to a range of classroom instructions in English. Phonological awareness and alphabetic principle are also addressed, preparing learners to be able to read and write in English in Standard 2 and beyond.

This training module has been designed to strengthen the skills and knowledge, already established through modules 1 and 2. This third and final module in the series for Standard 1 teachers provides the opportunity for participants to reflect on their practice, to share experiences about what works well and to develop strategies for dealing with challenges that have emerged in their teaching of English so far. Continuous assessment is also a focus of this course so that teachers can consider how to assess learners' progress in English at the end of Year One.

Programme

English Standard One, Module 3

Time	Session
8:00–8:15	1-Registration, Welcome, and Introductions
8:15-8:35	2-Participants' expectations
8:35-8:45	3-The objectives of this Module 3 training
8:45–10:00	4- Achievements and challenges experienced and observed in Term 1
10:00-10:15	Break (15 minutes)
10:15-12:00	5- Practice of the more challenging lesson activities
1200- 1:00	Lunch (1 hour)
1:00–2:30	6- Assessing learners
2:30-3:00	7- A recap of the letter sounds and names
3:00-3:15	Break (15 minutes)
3:15-3:45	8- Songs in Term 3
3:45-4:15	9- Action planning for completion of the course, assessment of all learners and strategies for peer and head teacher support
4:15-4:30	10- Review of expectations, final Q&A, closure

1. Registration, welcome, introductions, and ground rules (15 mins)

Welcome to module 3 of the Standard I English training course. It follows on from modules 1 and 2 workshops which took place in August/September and December 2014. Now that you all have had experience of observing and implementing English teaching and learning according to this learner-centred approach, this workshop will draw a great deal on your own experiences. We expect that this will ensure lively participation in problem-solving, and information-sharing about best practice. Time limitations dictate that this is only a one-day workshop. So the topics to be covered are all about key challenges identified by you, PEAs, DTCs and other officials observing and coaching in classrooms.

Please note also that this is probably the last training in English that Standard I teachers will receive under EGRA. So all the more necessary that you participate fully, and also ensure that all of your questions or challenges experienced so far in this course are addressed by the end of the day.

Activity: Introductions

Let us take time to introduce ourselves. Please say your name, the institution you are from, and one skill you now have in English teaching that you have gained from teaching this revised NPC Std I English course.

Ground rules:

To ensure that all participants benefit from the workshop, please observe the following ground rules:

- Turn off or have your mobile phones on silent.
- Avoid taking calls during sessions.
- Arrive on time, and don't leave early.
- Sign the attendance register each day.
- Respect all questions asked and opinions expressed.
- Participate fully in all activities.

You may wish to add to this list in agreement with the other workshop participants.

We know that the songs in this English course have been very popular with both the teachers and learners. So to start this training day, let's have one participant volunteer to lead the group in singing one of the English songs from Term 1 or Term 2.

2. Your expectations of this training (20 mins)

Thank you for devoting time to attend this training. Having implemented or observed implementation of English in Terms 1 and 2, you must have expectations as to what you will

gain from this training. Share these expectations with your facilitator who will write them on a **flipchart sheet**. This will be posted on the wall, and as the training progresses, we will try to ensure that all or most of the expectations are met.

3. The objectives of this training (10 min)

By the end of this training, participants will have:

Knowledge:

- Improved their understanding about how to deal with challenges experienced in the teaching of the English Standard 1 course.
- Revised Term 1 and Term 2 songs and learned the new songs of Term 3 that help with vocabulary, listening and speaking development.
- Learnt how to correctly pronounce the letter sounds and names in English from t-z.
- Improved their understanding of how to assess oral English.

Application:

- Reflected on achievements and challenges from Terms 1 and 2 to strengthen teaching and learning of English in Term 3.
- Practised teaching units from Term 3 demonstrating skill in all three elements of the ***I Do, We Do, You Do*** routine.
- Developed and practised using assessment strategies to assess and record learners' progress and provide enrichment or remediation accordingly.
- Planned how to respond to the needs of all learners, including children with special needs, and ensuring equal attention and esteem for girls and boys.
- A clear understanding of how head teachers will support and strengthen the teaching and learning of English in Standard 1.

Activity: Reviewing the objectives.

Read through the above objectives. Ask questions for clarification, if any. If after hearing about these objectives, you feel that your expectations may not be met, now is your chance to say so, there is still chance for the facilitators to adapt the training schedule for the day to ensure that all relevant issues are dealt with.

NOTE TO FACILITATORS: Take note of any issues raised here by participants. Do not address them now but consider how any relevant issues can be incorporated into the training.

4. Achievements and challenges experienced and observed in Terms 1 and 2

In the December training we discussed two case studies that focused on observed challenges. These were:

- Teachers not giving English homework.
- Most of the English class being taught in Chichewa.
- Too much time spent on teacher-led activities (and not enough independent practice by learners).

Activity: Reflecting on Term 2 teaching and learning performance (35 mins)

Number off so that you form groups of about ten people, preferably people who do not work in the same school. In your groups respond about the above three points.

1. In your groups, each of you should respond honestly about the three points. This is just an informal way to reflect on whether and to what extent there was impact from the previous training.
2. When you are ready, report back to plenary.
3. After all groups have presented, consider whether action on these points has produced better learner performance. If you think so, give examples of the improved performance. If not, say why you think that is.

English homework	<u>Teachers who give it</u>		<u>Teachers who don't give it</u>		<u>List the homework activities given.</u>
Chichewa in the English class	<u>None</u>	<u>A little in some lessons</u>	<u>A little in every lesson</u>	<u>A lot in every lesson</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Independent practice by learners (the teacher moving round to observe and help)	<u>None</u>	<u>x1 per week</u>	<u>x3 per week</u>	<u>x2 per lesson</u>	<u>Comments</u>

Activity: Group discussion and listing of achievements, challenges and possible solutions regarding Term 2 English lessons (Units 7-12) (40 mins)

For this activity, head teachers should form one group. Other participants remain in the same groups.

Each group should appoint a chairperson, timekeeper and scribe. The chairperson will ensure that everyone gets a chance to speak; the timekeeper will allocate an equal amount of time to each group member; the scribe will note down the achievements, challenges and solutions. When all the achievements and challenges have been listed, the group should then address each challenge and suggest strategies to address them.

Each group's discussion and report should also indicate successes and challenges in meeting the needs of learners with special needs.

Focus on the challenges directly related to the teaching of English, which we have power to change (ie not those which are beyond the teacher’s control, such as large classes, weather-related absenteeism etc).

Consider also: are these challenges different from the ones mentioned in August and December 2014? Or, are the same challenges remaining unresolved...

Now share these in plenary. The facilitator will write the challenges on the chalk board or chart paper, until all challenges are mentioned.

Break (15 mins)

5. Practice of the lesson routines (90 mins)

By now, you are familiar with the lesson routines of English, and most teachers’ and PEAs’ feedback suggests that the English course is going well. So, in this session, we focus on particularly challenging activities in Term 3 so that when you teach them with your learners, you have already had chance to practise.

In six groups, so that each is assigned one of the activities below, use the TG and LB to practise to presenting the following:

<u>Unit 13</u>	<u>Unit 15</u>	<u>Unit 16</u>
Activity 13.2.2 Solving a puzzle Activity 13.5.2 Answering questions	Activity 15.2.1 Identify letters of the alphabet up to u Activity 15.5.1 Identifying objects of different sizes	Activity 16.2.3 Matching letter sounds with initial letters Activity 16.6.2 Sorting objects by colour

Read through the lesson preparation information, the advance organiser and prepare as a group to present the activity. Where resources are needed, take the time to find or make those resources. The experience will benefit you once back in the classroom (also in the ToF, make the resources, so that you have an example to show the teachers during teacher training or when coaching in classrooms).

Consider when preparing: how best to make the activity accessible to learners with visual or hearing impairment:

- Types of activities (concrete/abstract).
- Reinforcement of key ideas.
- Clarity of instructions.
- Pacing.
- Are you able to access specially adapted equipment for some learners to enable them to participate fully? If not, can an alternative way be found?
- How will you organise and group learners in lessons?
 - Friendship groupings?
 - Mixed gender or same gender groupings?
 - Mixed ability or same ability groupings?
 - Specific pairs of learners working together, e.g. a stronger learner with a weaker learner?

- Learning disabled with non-learning disabled learners?

After 15 minutes of preparation, your facilitator will select one person from each group to present the activity.

When all six activities have been presented, discuss the key features of these activities, and what you have learnt from watching others present:

- The need to prepare in advance
- The value of real items/actions/gestures
- The importance of the three aspects
- Teacher/ Teacher & Learners/ Learners
- Limited or no use at all of local language
- How to respond to the needs of all the learners

Lunch (60 mins)

6. Assessing learners (90 mins)

This session is particularly important as teachers prepare to teach and assess learners in Term 3 in readiness for moving on to Standard 2. In this session we will read through the teacher guidelines on assessment in Unit 13 lesson 10, and in Unit 17, the final review unit.

a) Lesson 10 – the review lesson

Turn to page 20 (Unit 13, lesson 10) and skim read through the unit.

Noting that these review lessons are not new to you, discuss in your group and then share in plenary your answer to these questions, based on your own experience. Note, that good ideas and good practice need to be shared!

How have you so far used the time in Lesson 10 of each unit to assess your learners?

How have you used the assessment checklist on page 23?

Facilitator's notes: Allow participants to share experiences. Ensure that what comes from the discussion are the following:

- Note that in addition to the two listed review activities, there should be revision of one oral activity from the unit.
- The assessment checklist on page 23 is comprehensive. The teacher does not have to assess all learners on all these criteria. He/she can choose different ones during each review lesson.

The best time to assess individuals or groups is during Activity 13.10.2 when learners are writing in their exercise books.

Noting that some classes have 100, 200, or even more learners, individual assessment of every learner may not be possible. In these situations, pair or group assessment may need to be done.

b) Unit 17 – The review unit

Read pages 85 and 95 of the Teachers’ guide. Page 85 reminds teachers how to organise the class for each review lesson in the unit. Page 95 gives guidance about how to assess a group of learners whilst the others are busy with independent activities. Page 95 refers to assessment of the remediation group, but in fact this model applies to assessment of all the groups.

Activity: Practice teaching of an assessment lesson

In groups, prepare to teach the last lesson of Unit 17. Prepare all the materials needed ahead of time for the independent group work, and the items for assessing the learners, including the assessment checklist/learner progress tracker. Make sure that even the group being assessed is given work to do so they don’t cram what they are to be assessed on.

Facilitator’s note: Allow sufficient time for preparation of the materials.

The practice teaching should involve some participants in role playing as learners doing independent activities and some as the group being assessed. At least two groups should present their assessment lessons. It is challenging to manage independent group work at the same time as assessing one group, so practising this in the training is very important.

At the end of each demonstration, make comments and constructive criticism.

7. A recap of the letter sounds and names

(30 mins)

In Term 3, learners learn the following letters:

Unit	Letter(s)
13	tT, uU
15	vV, wW
16	xX, yY, zZ

Here the letters t, v, w, y and z are pronounced the same as in Chichewa. The letters u and x in English have more than one sound. The only sound for u displayed in the NPC Standard I Learners’ book is u as in uniform. In different words the letter u can have a different sound eg *sun* or *put*.

The letter x as in *taxi* or *box*, does not have one separate letter sound. Tell learners that it sounds like the sounds /k/ and /s/ joined together to form /ks/.¹ However, for Standard I learners it is not necessary go into detail about the different sounds. We can say to the learners, “In English some letters have more than one sound. We will learn these later”. The alternative sounds for the letters (especially the vowels) will come in Standards 2 and 3.

¹ That said, the x in the Learners’ book, at the beginning of the word xylophone is pronounced /z/ like in zoo. This, though, is not a common sound correspondence for the letter x.

Activity: Practising the pronunciation of the letter sounds and names in English

In your groups, take 10 minutes to practise the letter sounds and names for the letters of the alphabet that occur in Term 3, t-z, and any others that participants raise as particularly problematic. Then have 2 or 3 volunteers come forward to demonstrate pronunciation of these letter sounds and names.

Break (15 mins)

8. Songs in Term 3 (45 mins)

Turn to page 97 in the TG. Here are the songs that feature in Term 3. There are only four new songs; the rest are from Terms 1 and 2. Practise the new songs and any others that participants are still not sure of. Remember as always, the importance of gestures and actions to reinforce the meaning of the words.

9. Action planning for implementation (30 mins)

In closing this course, get into school cluster groups. The head teacher should take the lead in this activity. He/she, should co-ordinate the planning which should include details of his/her actions to supervise and support the intervention, as well as other strategies for the school to implement, eg team teaching, in-school materials development workshops, or inter-school visits. Discuss and write down what you are going to do in Term 3 to ensure that learners finish Standard 1 and are on the road to becoming confident communicators in English. The facilitator will ask the groups to share what they have written.

Facilitator's note: These action plans should be written in duplicate, one for the PEA and one to remain in the school.

10. Review of expectations and closure (15 mins)

Check to see whether your expectations of this course have been met. If not, discuss if they were realistic expectations. If yes, discuss how best these can be met through PEAs coaching or school-based CPD. When all questions have been answered, close the training, wishing all participants good luck in the support, teaching and continuous assessment of English in Term 3.

