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Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

EARLY GRADE READING ACTIVITY

READING INTERVENTION PROGRAM

Teaching Reading with Supplementary Readers

MARCH 2015

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Early Grade Reading Activity

Teaching Reading with Supplementary Readers

Module 3

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

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Abbreviations

EGRA	Early Grade Reading Activity
LB	Learners' book
MoEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
NPC	National Primary Curriculum
PEA	Primary Education Advisor
PTA	Parent teacher association
SMC	School management committee
TALULAR	Teaching and learning using locally available resources
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 Chichewa and English 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 use of **supplementary readers in Chichewa and English** that can be used to strengthen reading skills and develop a culture and love of reading, in class, at home and in community reading centres. This training manual provided guidance in the managing the stock of readers, using them for guided reading and for children to take home to read with parents and in community reading centres.

Teaching Reading Using Supplementary Readers

Programme

Time	Session
8:00–8:10	1-Welcome, devotions and introductions
8:10-8: 15	2-The objectives of this training
8:15-8:30	3- Why do we need supplementary readers?
8:30-9:00	4- Overview of the supplementary reading materials provided in EGRA
9:00-9:30	4.1- Complete list of texts and quantities
9:30-10:00	4.2- The materials register
10:00-10:15	Break (15 minutes)
10:15-10:45	5- Taking care of the books
10:45-11:15	6- When to use the supplementary readers
11:15-12:00	6.1- Tiwerenge Nkhani: whole class, one text
12:00- 1:00	Lunch (1 hour)
1:00–1:45	6.2-Tiwerenge Nkhani and story cards: differentiated group reading
1:45-3:00	7-Practicum and feedback
3:00-3:15	Break (15 minutes)
3:15-3: 45	8- Managing the use of the readers for home and community reading
3: 45-4:15	9- Storage and management of supplementary readers
4:15-4:30	10- Summary and closure

Teaching reading using supplementary readers

1. Welcome, devotions and introduction (10 mins)

For head teachers, this is the third and final day of training, for others it is the second and final day. For others, it is the only day of training. Whichever applies, you are welcome! If new people are present, make brief introductions.

2. Objectives of this training: (5 mins)

Participants will:

- ❖ Be familiar with all the titles, their levels, and the quantities provided of each.
- ❖ Know how to store, care for and provide books/story cards to learners for home reading
- ❖ Practise teaching a guided reading session with the whole class
- ❖ Practise facilitating a guided reading session with groups reading different texts
- ❖ Develop guidelines for management and use of the supplementary readers

Read through the above objectives and in plenary, discuss or ask questions for clarification.

3. Why do we need supplementary readers? (15 mins)

The term *supplementary readers* refers to reading materials that are additional, or supplementary to the core curriculum materials; that is, the Teachers' guide (TG) and the Learners' books (LBs).

So why do we also need supplementary readers?

Whilst there are five key components of reading (phonological awareness, alphabetic principle, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) the ability to read **fluently** and with **comprehension** are the two components that prove that a learner is able to read. Supplementary readers assist with the development of fluency and comprehension by:

- ❖ Exposing learners regularly and often to reading texts.
- ❖ Providing multiple opportunities to practise reading.
- ❖ Expanding access to different types of texts.
- ❖ Developing learners' critical thinking skills.
- ❖ Arousing learners' interest in books, so that they actively want to read, in and out of school, for information and enjoyment.
- ❖ Enabling children to become 'good readers'.
 - 'Good readers' read a lot. The more they read, the more **vocabulary** words they know, the more their **fluency** increases, and the more they are able to **comprehend**.
 - The more learners develop ease and **automaticity** with reading, the more they enjoy it, and want to read more.

4. Overview of the supplementary readers provided in EGRA (30 mins)

- **Decodable readers- Tiwerenge Nkhani**
 - Sets of 30 short stories in Chichewa, packaged in three volumes, each with ten stories.
 - The name *decodable* means that the texts have been developed according to the sequence that letter sounds are taught. In this case we are referring to Maziko a Kuwerenga and to the National Primary Curriculum (NPC) Chichewa Standard I course.

- **Levelled readers**
 - Sets of 10 Chichewa and 5 English readers.
 - The difference between decodable readers and levelled readers is that levelled readers resemble the books in libraries or sold in book shops for reading pleasure. They have colourful illustrations, and the language of the text is not as carefully graded as in decodable texts. So, in general, levelled readers may be harder to read, but the content may be more complex and interesting.

- **Story cards**
 - Sets of 10 Chichewa and 5 English laminated cards with stories on one side and questions on the reverse.
 - The Chichewa texts are taken from the Tiwerenge Nkhani series, and the English texts are taken from the levelled readers series. The re-utilisation of these texts will provide enhanced opportunities for learners to read on their own. This will encourage the fluency that is so necessary for them to become fluent, independent readers; making meaning from text.
 - The main purpose of the story cards is for home and community-based reading. The questions about the text on the back of the card develop learners' reading comprehension skills.

4.1. Complete list of texts and quantities

All schools have been provided with the following books and story cards in the following quantities: In total each school has received 856 supplementary reading books/cards.

Tiwerenge Nkhani (decodable readers)	Quantities per school
Vol 1 (10 stories)	48
Vol 2 (10 stories)	28
Vol 3 (10 stories)	18
	94
Story cards: Chichewa	Quantities per school
Amina	28
Ife	28
Utaka	25
Mudzi	25
Fulu	25
Amalume ndi Akwenda	25
Khama amakonda sukulu	25
Mitengo	25

Padwale	25
Nyanja ya Malawi	25
	256
Story cards: English	Quantities per school
Pat had a cat	25
Ben and Ken	25
Clap clap clap	25
The cat on the mat	25
My family	25
	125
Levelled readers to all schools: Chichewa (to be delivered in Term 3)	
Mazunzo ndi Chifuniro	40
Banja Lathu	40
Thoko ndi Ziona	40
Ndimakonda sukulu	20
Madzi ndi odabwitsa	20
Ulimi	20
Nyama zosiyanasiyana	20
Mphuno za nyama	18
Madzi ndi moyo	18
Kodi anzanga ndi ati	18
	254
Levelled readers to all schools: English (to be delivered in Term 3)	
Pat had a cat	32
Ben and Ken	32
Clap, clap, clap	21
The cat sat on the mat	21
My family	21
	127

4.2. The materials register

(30 mins)

Facilitator: Ensure that all participants are able to see a copy of the register

These books are allocated to the Standard I teachers, all of whom have been issued with 4 materials registers for management of the books, and for record-keeping of each learner's reading progress.

Activity: Getting to know the materials register

In your groups, take 10 minutes to look at the materials register and answer the following questions:

- ❖ What is the colour coding for each level?

- ❖ How many Chichewa story card titles are there?
- ❖ How many English levelled readers are there?
- ❖ Where should the teacher write the number of copies of each title?
- ❖ What should the teacher write when a learner takes a book/story card?
- ❖ What should the teacher write when the learner returns the book/story card?
- ❖ Where are the guidelines for teaching a guided reading session?

Although these books are developed for Standard 1, children's reading abilities develop at different paces, and there are probably Standard 2 and 3 learners who will enjoy or may even find some of these texts difficult to read. So the schools are encouraged to make the books and story cards available across Standards 1, 2 and 3.

Schools can make their own plans, and it is a good idea for the head teacher to convene a meeting with staff from Standards 1-3 to plan how to share the books. However the following is a proposed strategy:

Three boxes are acquired for three book collections for Standard 1, 2 and 3 (one plastic box will be provided by EGRA in Term 3, but for now, the school should adopt a TALULAR approach to accessing the necessary boxes).

If the classroom is not secure, the boxes should be carried to a safe place at the end of the school day, and brought back again the following morning.

The Standard 1 teacher(s) consider the reading skills of their learners, taking note of the very able readers as well as the average and slow readers.

A selection of decodables, story cards and levelled readers is made for Standard 1. These are kept in the Standard 1 book box.

On the materials register, the Standard 1 teacher records the quantities of all the titles that have been retained in the Standard 1 book box.

The Standard 2 and 3 teacher(s) together consider the reading skills of their learners and from the remaining books, allocate some the Standard 2 book box and some to the Standard 3 book box.

The Standard 2 and 3 teachers each complete a different materials register, indicating the number of each title in the box.

5. Taking care of the books

(30 mins)

Books last longer if:

- ❖ They are covered.
- ❖ Children wash their hands before reading.
- ❖ They are not used as a fan to keep cool with.
- ❖ They are not used as a weapon to bash other children on the head with.

- ❖ Children are taught how to turn the pages carefully.
- ❖ Children do not read with a pen or pencil in their hands.
- ❖ ... can you think of any other indicators?

Activity: Making a presentation about taking care of books

Because learning by doing is more powerful than learning by telling, in your groups, with everyone holding one book, practise correct handling of books. Then have two volunteers come forward and demonstrate how they will teach the learners to care for books (correct picking a book from the box, holding the book, page turning, and returning the book to the box).

After each demonstration, participants should provide constructive feedback.

Break (15 minutes)

6. When to use the supplementary readers:

6.1. Tiwerenge Nkhani: whole class, one text

(45 mins)

There are 48 copies of Tiwerenge Nkhani Volume 1. This should be enough for one between two learners in the class. So you can use Tiwerenge Nkhani with the whole class to demonstrate the guided reading process.

When to teach a guided reading session using Tiwerenge Nkhani Volume 1.

In Standard 1, the Maziko a Kuwerenga course involves a review lesson every Friday. This is the best day for a guided reading session.

Likewise in Standards 2 and 3, the guided reading sessions should take place once a week during the review lesson.

The guided reading session takes about 30 minutes, following the sixteen steps indicated below.

Teacher	Teacher and learners	Learners
<p>Preparation before reading: Pre-read the story and prepare in advance to teach 3 or 4 vocabulary words that are key to the story, and that you think learners may not already know, or that may be difficult to read.</p> <p>1. Hand out copies of the reader so</p>	<p>3. Read the title, or ask learners to read the title.</p> <p>4. Ask learners to tell you what they see in the illustrations.</p> <p>5. Invite learners to predict from the title and the illustrations what they think the story will be about. Refer to these predictions for consideration after reading.</p> <p>6. Pre-teach any words that you think the learners will not know. Limit this</p>	<p>13. Now give the learners chance to read the story again on their own, at their own pace.</p> <p>14. Learners will be reading at the same time, so to limit the noise in the class, show them how to read aloud softly. Demonstrate how you can modulate your own</p>

<p>that all learners can get to see the text. Because the print is large, it should be possible for 3 learners to read together.</p> <p>2. Ensure that all learners have opened the book at the same page.</p>	<p>to no more than 4 words.</p> <p>7. Say: I will read the story. Whilst I am reading you should listen and follow, putting your finger under the words as I read.</p> <p>8. Read at a pace that learners can follow, but not too slowly that the meaning of the story gets lost.</p> <p>9. After reading, discuss if their predictions were accurate or not.</p> <p>10. Read the story again with the learners.</p> <p>11. Ask one or two comprehension questions.</p> <p>12. Invite groups, pairs and individuals to read the story aloud on their own. If it is a long story, have different combinations of learners read different sections.</p>	<p>reading voice from very loud to very soft.</p> <p>15. As the learners read, move around to help where necessary.</p> <p>16. Ask learners to give their opinion about the story. If they liked it – why; if they didn't like it- why not.</p>
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When to teach a guided reading lesson using Tiwerenge Nkhani Volumes 2 and 3.

There are fewer copies of Volumes 2 and 3, because learners progress through the books at their own pace. So the whole class will not be ready at the same time to progress to Volumes 2 and 3. By the time learners have gone through the guided reading process with the ten stories of Volume 1, they will have developed the habit of independent reading. So this habit will be encouraged for the reading of Volumes 2 and 3.

Activity: Practise teaching a guided reading session

In groups, choose one of the stories in Volume 1 to practise teaching a guided reading session, following the sixteen steps listed above. All the other participants are to role play as learners.

Note to facilitator: Select at random two participants from two different groups to teach a guided reading session. It should not last for more than 20 minutes, so stop the demonstration for feedback and discussion after 20 minutes.

LUNCH BREAK (60 mins)

6.2. Tiwerenge Nkhani and story cards: differentiated group reading (45 mins)

With fewer copies of books or story cards, you can facilitate a group reading session with groups reading different texts. This requires careful management. Learners, who are used to reading as a whole class, will need to be trained in this approach. It will take patience and a few repeated tries of practising the routines before you and the learners adapt to it.

However, this activity is very important because it helps learners to develop independent reading strategies, which are necessary for all areas of the curriculum.

Before going into groups to prepare for a differentiated group reading session, consider the following:

- Learners need to be grouped according to their reading levels.
 - Unless you plan to do paired reading where you deliberately pair a stronger learner with a weaker learner for peer support. However, this might be difficult to manage with more than 64 learners per class.
- Decide on the grouping before the group reading session begins.
- Group leaders should be used to collect, distribute, gather in and return the story cards or books. Before the session begins, call the group leaders to you, and take a little time to explain what you expect them to do.
- It should not take more than five minutes for the learners to move to their groups, and for the books or story cards to be handed out. If you need learners to move to different groups for reading, practise a few times getting them to move quickly and quietly.
- Choose texts that are just at the right level or even slightly easy for most of the learners in the group.
 - If the text you choose is too difficult, learners will become demoralised, distracted, and start to disturb other groups.
 - If the text is too easy, learners will read through it too quickly, and become distracted and start to disturb the other groups.
- Choose one learner in each group to play the part of ‘the teacher’. She/he should lead the group in trying to predict what the story will be about by referring to the title and to the picture(s).
- Learners should then read aloud softly, following steps 13, 14, 15 and 16 of the guided group reading guidelines (see above and on the back of the materials registers).
- After some weeks of this type of activity, you may wish to give special attention to one of the groups. However, until the learners have become familiar with this approach, do not stay with one group. After providing clear instructions to all the groups, making sure that the books or story cards have been distributed, move around the class to listen to the reading and provide support where needed.

Activity: Presenting a group reading session with learners reading different titles

Select four different stories, story cards or books with stories in them. (They should all be the same language, ie either all Chichewa or all English). Referring to the bulleted guidelines above, prepare as a group to give instructions to the ‘whole class’ and then have four different groups doing shared reading.

Facilitator’s notes: Have at least two groups present, more if you have time. After each presentation, take feedback about the achievements, challenges and learning points for implementing this activity with learners in the practicum.

Break (15 mins)

7. Practicum

(75 mins)

Draw on the preparation from the previous session to facilitate a guided group reading session with real learners. This is the opportunity to practise and receive constructive feedback from fellow teachers, as well as from your facilitator. If you are not selected as the one to teach the learners, make sure that you watch, learn and take notes so that you can actively participate in the feedback session after the practicum and demonstration. Your facilitator will lead the feedback session to get maximum benefit from the practicum. S/he may decide that there is need for a whole or partial lesson demonstration to clear up any misunderstandings. Participants should be encouraged to share their observations and ask any questions for clarification about the methodology of the lesson routine or of the individual learner assessment.

Facilitator’s notes: Unless participants are really confident with guided group reading, it is advisable that they demonstrate a guided reading session where learners are using the same text.

8. Managing the use of the readers for home and community reading (30 mins)

While Nditha Kuwerenga and the Chichewa Learners’ books are meant for whole class use, the supplementary readers are meant for individual use and for taking home to read with families and in the community reading centres. The story cards in particular have been laminated so that they are durable enough for home reading and use in reading centres.

Teachers are encouraged to set aside time at the beginning and end of each school day to hand out and take back the story cards that learners take home. If the teacher has an assistant, this is a task that she/he can be responsible for. The materials register is the means of keeping track of the stock of books and story cards and also of recordkeeping about learners’ reading progress. It is the role of head teacher and the PEA to assist and continually support the establishment of a book/story card borrowing system in the school.

Each school is expected to ensure that learners take book/story cards out of school for reading at home and in the community.

Activity: Establishing guidelines for taking readers home and into the community

All schools should sit together as a team to draw up guidelines for taking the decodable and levelled readers and story cards for home and community reading. The guidelines should be clear to learners, teachers, the SMC, mother groups and the PTA.

First discuss the schedule and then take a flipchart sheet to write up the guidelines. These should be clear and understandable by learners and parents.

When the guidelines are completed, each school should post them on the wall for others to read and learn.

To round up this session, ask participants to indicate how the guidelines from others' schools have helped clarify their own strategies.

Facilitator's notes: For this session in ToF, the PEAs should work in groups to develop PEAs guidelines for schools on the same topic

9. Storage and management of supplementary readers (30 mins)

Ideally, the readers should be stored in a secure box in the classroom. The box should be available to the learners so that they can learn how to choose books, and how to be responsible for taking books and bringing them back.

Store the decodable readers, levelled readers and story cards in separate sections of the book box. Where there is colour-coding, keep all the same colour-coded titles together.

You also need to record on the materials register the books taken home by each learner, and tick the register when it is returned.

10. Summary and closure (5 mins)

Thanks to all participants. We will all be excited to see the children's reactions to the availability of so much new and different reading material. PEAs during coaching visits will provide support where challenges arise; success stories about improved learner reading and interest in reading will be most welcome. Good luck with your use of the supplementary readers.