

File no.: 21/2/5/2/EGRA

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Curriculum GET Minute: 0004/2023

To: Deputy Directors-General, Chief Directors, Directors, Heads: Curriculum Support, Circuit Managers, Deputy Chief Education Specialists, Foundation Phase Subject Advisers, Principals and Departmental Heads of ordinary public schools

Subject: Benchmarks for Early Grade Reading Assessment in the Foundation Phase

1. The Department of Basic Education (DBE) introduced an Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) to strengthen reading and comprehension in the Foundation Phase. The EGRA is conducted by class teachers and is a diagnostic tool.
2. Since 2015, all schools in the Western Cape have received training on the EGRA programme, and the EGRA is currently being implemented in all schools in the province.
3. The EGRA data is recorded on the provincial EGRA dashboard.
4. During 2022, the DBE, the Research on Socioeconomic Policy (RESEP) group at the University of Stellenbosch, the Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit (SALDRU) and the University of Chicago conducted research on the benchmarks for the Nguni languages, Afrikaans Home Language and English First Additional Language (EFAL). Xhosa Home Language is part of the Nguni languages.
5. The research is a first to determine authentic benchmarks for the specific language groups and brought new insights about the benchmarks learners should be able to reach during a one-minute assessment in the different assessment categories. Annexures A, B and C are attached as reference in this regard.

6. The research has culminated in the establishment of the following benchmarks:

| Xhosa Home Language | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Assessment | New benchmark |
| Recognition of letters and sounds | No change to current benchmarks |
| Recognition of words | No change to current benchmarks |
| Paragraph reading | By the end of Grade 2, all learners should be able to read at least 20 words per minute correctly when reading a paragraph. By the end of Grade 3, all learners should be able to read at least 35 words per minute correctly when reading a paragraph. |
| Afrikaans Home Language | |
| Assessment | New benchmark |
| Recognition of letters and sounds | No change to current benchmarks |
| Recognition of words | No change to current benchmarks |
| Paragraph reading | By the end of Grade 2, all learners should be able to read at least 50 words per minute correctly when reading a paragraph. By the end of Grade 3, all learners should be able to read at least 80 words per minute correctly when reading a paragraph. |
| English First Additional Language | |
| Assessment | New benchmark |
| Recognition of letters and sounds | No change to current benchmarks |
| Recognition of words | No change to current benchmarks |
| Paragraph reading | At the end of Grade 2, all learners should be able to read at least 30 words per minute correctly when reading a paragraph. At the end of Grade 3, all learners should be able to read at least 50 words per minute correctly when reading a paragraph. |

7. Grade 1 learners will only be assessed on the recognition of letters and sounds in April (Term 2). In October (Term 4), Grade 1 learners will be assessed on the recognition of letters and sounds as well as the recognition of words. There will be no assessment of paragraph reading in Grade 1.
8. This minute serves to inform schools that these new benchmarks will be implemented from April 2023.
9. Annexures D, E, F and G are attached as examples of the new recording sheets for the different languages.
10. The benchmarks for English Home Language remain the same as in previous years.

11. Principals are requested to bring this minute to the attention of all Foundation Phase teachers and School Management Teams at their schools.

SIGNED: H MAHOMED

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT MANAGEMENT

DATE: 2023-03-29