Perspectives on 'What Reading and Reading Habits Entail?'

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ABSTRACT Reading is relevant and important because it reflects that children move from a non-reading stage to a reading stage through a consecutive phase of skills. Actually, in reading, the learners move from a non-reading stage to a reading stage by passing through developmental stages. The ability to read is perceived as a process, which involves the use of alphabetic principles and knowledge. This study investigates reading and reading habits. The study used a systematic literature review by employing a combination of both the contextual and theoretical review methods. The findings indicated that the different components associated with reading comprehension can be developed through strategy instruction. Learners' reading habit can be developed by encouraging them to regularly read books that are interesting and in their level of comprehension. Reading habit is apparently connected with reading for pleasure in that reading for pleasure during one's leisure time needs habituation. The study recommended that teachers should encourage learners to stop reading anything that is not interesting, or when they find the reading material difficult, the learners are encouraged to work with the text individually and silently. In extensive reading, learners can choose their own reading resources such as magazines, newspapers, story books or electronic reading materials.

INTRODUCTION

"Reading is a process which starts with seeing, continues with the reception of information on the basis of attention and perception, and results in comprehension in the brain. Reading is therefore a complex language skill that requires many skills to be used at the same time" (Kusdemir and Bulut 2018: 97). Reading skill entails processing information for word recognition, finding the main idea, understanding the details, recognising the structure of the text and predicting the idea of the author, grasping the importance of the ideas in the text and evaluating and remembering all of these. According to Anangisye (2020: 23), "The onus was on all primary education stakeholders to shoulder the obligation of initiating and cultivating pupils' reading habits". Moreover, "reading habit is an activity, which entails reading on a regular basis that requires physically and mentally involvement to get the message, instruments or knowledge to be conveyed by the author" (Najnawati 2019: x). These sets of knowledge and experience are well-known schemes and they can help readers to read (Kusdemir and Bulut 2018: 97). Learning to read transforms lives. Reading is the basis for the acquisition of knowledge, for cultural engagement, for democracy, and for success in the workplace (Castles et al. 2018).

Reading is a vigorous technique of comprehending characters and image writings (Schoenbach et al. 1999). According to Mahwasane (2017c: 76),

"Reading involves coming into contact with the text and be able to understand the message brought about by those texts. It can be regarded as an intellectual procedure. When one reads, what he/she reads is supposed to make an impression. Readers supervise their intellect, and whenever they do not understand the meaning of what they are reading, they choose and utilise a reading strategy such as reading again or by asking questions that will assist them to connect with the meaning of the text. "Reading is a skill that should be properly mastered for one to be able to become a reader. For learners to become readers, they need to follow all processes that are considered critical for reading. Reading involves coming into contact with the text and be able to understand the message brought about by those texts" (Mahwasane 2017a: 88).

Objectives of the Study

In order to achieve the aim of this study, the researcher sets out to realise the following objectives:

1. To understand reading and reading habits.
2. To examine reading habits of children in the early childhood developmental stage.
3. To explore the strategies involved in reading.

Reading Habits in Early Childhood Development

There are different instructional approaches that demonstrate reading skills that teachers use

to assist learners to become successful readers, for example, straight teaching, thinking aloud, modelling, conversation, and a small group support. A reader reads with reference to a specific world of acquaintance and understanding associated to the text being read. Therefore, the text induces opinions and recalls acquaintance and experiences from the previous moment and place. When a reader reads difficult texts concerning difficult concepts or an unaccustomed kind of text, that reader is operational to comprehend that text. One's reading is utmost probably identified by numerous incorrect beginnings and considerable back pursuing. The reader is trying to associate it with his or her prevailing acquaintance and understanding. Moreover, the reader sometimes would stagger across unaccustomed words in an attempt to understand the text (Schoenbach et al. 1999). Therefore, "for learners to acquire reading effectively, it is imperative that the teachers should be conscious of the children's experiences, beliefs and capabilities so that they can offer suitable teaching" (Mahwasane 2017c: 79).

According to South Africa, Department of Basic Education (2020), there are five stages of reading development in the Early Childhood Development when learning to read:

1. The early emergent reader
2. The emergent reader
3. The developing reader
4. The early fluent reader
5. The fluent reader (South Africa, Department of Basic Education 2020: 91)

The framework of reading development in Early Childhood Development (ECD) commences with the early emergent reader, and finishes with the fluent reader at the end of the Foundation Phase. The stages are as follows.

First Stage: Early Emergent Readers

The early emergent readers are beginner readers, the grade R learners, who are still learning to read. Early readers should be motivated to read by reading to them on a daily basis, so as to help them to develop the reading habit. "The beginning of the reading stage is concerned with children acquiring reading to consider the particulars of the print as well as the printed expression" (Mahwasane 2017b: 92; South Africa Department of Basic Education 2020: 91).

Second Stage: Emergent Readers

The emergent readers are the learners who have been introduced to reading, and these are Grade 1 learners. "They are acquiring a command of the alphabet with the ability to recognise and name in upper and lower case letters. They are also developing phonological awareness skills, such as recognising syllables, and rhymes. Emergent readers are beginning to learn phonological and phonemic awareness, especially with vowels and consonants at the beginning of words and are able to read short two and three syllable words, as well as a number of short high frequency words" (South Africa, Department of Basic Education 2020: 91).

Third Stage: Developing Readers

Developing readers are the learners who are now in Grades 1 and 2, they are exposed to texts and they are in a stage that the learners are able to grasp "the alphabet, phonological awareness, and early phonics" (South Africa, Department of Basic Education 2020: 91).

Fourth Stage: Early Fluent Readers

Early fluent readers are learners who are in Grades 2 and 3. This is a stage during which, "Reading is a skill that should be properly mastered for one to be able to become a reader. For learners to become readers, they need to follow all processes that are considered critical for reading. Reading involves coming into contact with the text and be able to understand the message brought about by those texts" (Mahwasane 2017a: 88).

Fifth Stage: Fluent Readers

Piaget (1968) indicates that a grade 3 learner, in terms of years, falls under the stage of concrete operations. This stage is characterised by cognitive functions, which are necessary for understanding information. "Grade three learners are children whose ages range from seven to eleven years old. Grade three learners are learners in the exit class from the Foundation Phase to the Intermediate Phase" (Mahwasane 2017b: 5-6). "Fluent readers successfully apply their reading skills to access information and knowledge independently. Their

reading is virtually error-free, automatic and is done with expression and proper pauses. Their energy is devoted to understanding, and they have a good command and use of the various comprehension strategies" (South Africa Department of Basic Education 2020).

"The fluency stage is the stage in which learners are now capable of recognising words with more skills and ease. They can also read with a better understanding" (Mahwasane 2017a: 92). "Voluntary reading has much to do with becoming a lifelong reader. For learners to participate in voluntary reading activities, the learners must be able to read fluently without any difficulty. Voluntary reading is concerned with reading because you are willing to read, and voluntary reading in turn develops into the foundation of a reading culture" (Mahwasane 2017d: 47).

What is Reading and What do Reading Habits Entail?

Reading habit is an effective ability-based procedure of creating meaning and acquiring knowledge 'from oral, visual and written text'. According to Babu and Durgaiah (2016), and Najnawati (2019), reading habits are regarded as the knowledgeable behaviours for imbibing more information, knowledge and learning different kinds of entities and their activities. Therefore, in the modern setting where there is prompt technological modification in the international stage, reading habits are likewise gradually more crucial (Asokan and Dhanavandan 2013).

"Reading habit becomes the foundation for someone to read for pleasure. If not encouraged early, it may not be easy to enjoy reading books even when reading for pleasure. Reading habit is apparently connected with reading for pleasure in that reading for pleasure during one's leisure time needs habituation" (Ghali and Maulani 2019: 85).

Learners' reading habit can be developed by encouraging them to regularly read books that are interesting and at their level of comprehension. Recreational reading in learners plays an important role in that such a reading activity, which is known as recreational reading, is understood to be related with reading attainment (McKenna and Kear 1990; Anangisye 2020). As a result, it can be believed that recreational reading activities are crucial in inspiring the reading achievement of an individual. When this reading activity continues and become one's passion, it turns out to be one's reading habit.

From the above discussions, it can be deduced that inability to read has detrimental effects on the reading habits of learners. In this study reading can be defined as a "message-getting, problem-solving activity, which increases in power and flexibility the more it is practiced (Clay 1991: 6). "Understanding", "knowledge" and "comprehension" are words frequently used to describe what one intends to accomplish as a result of making use of the reading act. Unfortunately, the act of understanding does not happen in a piece of paper of a book, but it takes place in the human mind (Scharer 2012).

According to Clay (1991), message-getting is concerned with the part of the person who reads to construct meaning. Therefore, reading without getting meaning of what is read is not actually reading. It is like when one is reading a foreign language, being able to say a word without understanding what one has read. As a result, it is important that the library provides children with expressive, suitable typescripts for them to read. Children at their age require excellent stories that they find interesting, and at their level of reading and understanding, so as to be successful as readers.

As far as problem-solving is concerned, as readers, learners must learn to effectively familiarise themselves with words on their own. They also want to know that they have a responsibility to find out unfamiliar words grounded on what they already know concerning "letters, sounds words, language and text". Learners can also learn to use a picture by looking at it and learn to reason concerning its connotations. They can also learn to look at a part of the word that they already recognise or think around a term that is alike. It is significant that learners are encouraged to read again. This will help them to consolidate what they know about the meaning, the sentence and the word, which in turn will enable them to be self-regulated and prosperous. Learners should be encouraged to monitor their reading so as to be able to be aware if they do not quite understand what they are reading (Clay 1991).

According to Clay (1991), the more learners are exposed to reading materials, the more they master the skills of reading. Reading a passage or two during a small group instruction per day is not sufficient to develop independent readers.

Independent reading is concerned with the need to be totally involved with reading materials. Therefore, teachers and school librarians have the responsibility to have a selected range of reading materials and be able to impart learners on how to choose and retrieve books that they can read effectively and self-sufficiently.

Moreover, learners can also read the whole text on their own during guided reading while the teacher is listening and offering them teaching based on individual needs (Fountas and Pinnell 1996). The entire class can appreciate reading a choral section or rhyme, by making use of the shared reading approach with enlarged prints. This will encourage learners to read even after school when they are at home. As a result, the reading experience will develop on the previous one to strengthen the expertise of the reader. Every reading background affords learners with significant rehearsal period for reading in order to improve their reading capabilities in both the authority and suppleness.

The library is not catered for and only workbooks are in use. This does not expose learners to a diversity of reading books. In terms of literature on the use of library and its resources, Marshall (1975) and Egesimba et al. (2011) confirm that the availability and accessibility of reading resources in different formats play a vital role on the reading habits of learners because the learners' information needs differ. The information needs of a gifted child will, for example, not be the same as that of a slow learner. The child's reading interests and needs will be influenced by the various stages of reading development.

Reading Strategies

Ruddell and Unrau (1994) assert that when readers read, they start to create a conceptual demonstration or essence of the text, giving attention to contradictions that emerge as they interrelate with the text. Schoenbach et al. (1999) reveal that reading is problem solving. It is not a straightforward process of lifting the words off the page. It is a complex process of problem solving in which the reader works to make sense of a text not just from the words and sentences on the page but also from the ideas, memories and knowledge evoked by those words and sentences. Although at first glance reading may seem to be passive, solitary, and simple, it is in truth active, populated by a rich mix of voices and views, those of the authors, of the readers, and of others the reader has heard, read about, and otherwise encountered throughout life (Schoenbach et al. 1999).

Reading has also much to do with fluent reading and is not the same as coding. Fluent reading is when a reader is able to decipher and recognise each word and to rapidly process larger language units. Fluency in reading will also differ depending on the text being read. The language processing ability of a reader breaks down whenever they encounter unaccustomed linguistic arrangement and organisations of a transcript. If a learner is fluent in reading the description texts, it might happen that they are not similarly confident with another type of text such as expository texts or most importantly basic documents. Fluent reading advances learners by giving them more opportunities to read the manuscripts that are simple for them to read as well as encouraging numerous reading again of challenging texts in order to assist in widening the reader's fluency (Pikulski 1998). The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) Research Report (2012) indicated that there are components of reading that are essential in reading, namely attitude/motivation, reading fluency, comprehension, vocabulary and phonological awareness/phonics.

Motivation is concerned with the learner's keenness and willingness to read. Teachers should also encourage interest and inspiration to read by offering learners texts that are exciting and rich, making right choices of texts, providing chances to discover, cooperate and experiment with the manuscripts. Moreover, motivated readers need a safe and reassuring tutorial room surrounding, one which is conducive to reading in which equally the corporal features and the principles encourage chances to utilise and mix written, articulated, pictorial and numerical scripts. Learners feel free to read if the surrounding makes them feel self-assured in conquering vulnerabilities, in contributing texts, in countering openly to texts and in working collaboratively with other learners (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) Research Report 2012).

The Department of Education and Training in Western Australia (2004) states that fluency is the ability to read aloud with the expression to demonstrate an understanding of the author's

message. There are three main elements of reading fluency, namely precise word identification, automatic processing of information, and suitable tempo and accentuation of oration. In as far as precise words identification is concerned, learners should be able to read at their teaching reading height, which is between ninety to ninety-five percent exactness, so as to enhance their reading fluency. The automatic processing of information is concerned with the proficiency to read out words with no cognisant interpreting. In automaticity one's reading permits one to read out terms effortlessly in such a way that one can focus on understanding the texts. Mental energy is needed for the purpose of deciphering meaning. As a result, extremely small intellectual strength may be bequeathed for comprehension. Lastly, the rhythm and intonation is also known as prosody and has much to do with the competence to read with particular kind of intonation (McKenna and Stahl 2009).

Comprehension Strategies

"Comprehension strategies are plans that readers consciously apply while reading in order to help better understand the text. The different components associated with reading comprehension can be developed through strategy instruction. Teaching comprehension strategies especially helps learners to develop their thinking skills during reading, and there six common and useful comprehension strategies, namely activating background knowledge, making predictions, making inferences/connections, visualising, identifying the main elements in a story, monitoring comprehension and using fix-up strategies" (South Africa Basic Education 2020: 54).

Reading goes hand in hand with comprehension because reading without comprehension is useless. The ultimate objective of reading is comprehension or the reconstruction of meaning (Department of Education and Training in Western Australia 2004). A variety of comprehension strategies are required in teaching reading. A comprehension strategy can be defined as intellectual processes that appropriate readers employ to comprehend the text. These strategies are clearly taught to learners with respect to developing self-regulated readers who participate significantly with script. In actual fact, comprehension starts

sooner than one starts to read and carries on after reading is completed. Teachers can prepare events for every phase. This will enhance the learner's comprehension and offer teachers the chance to model the strategies that readers can utilise at each phase (Pardo 2004).

Comprehension strategies should be established from the initial levels of the elementary school through a variety of categories and possibilities in both print and electronic materials, so that the child could create a collection of strategies that they can self-sufficiently draw on whenever they are reading. As a result, it is important that the strategies be introduced and mastered individually by learners. Some of the reading strategies include predicting, connecting, comparing, inferring, synthesising, creating images, self-questioning, skimming, scanning, summarising and paraphrasing, re-reading, reading on, adjusting the reading rate, sounding out and chunking. Krashen (2001: 16) indicates that the "free voluntary reading, which is encouraged by the availability and access to reading materials plays an important role in reading comprehension, vocabulary, grammar usage and writing style".

Ludwig and Wittgenstein (1953) reveal that "the limits of my language are the limits of my mind. All I know is what I have words for". Therefore, the expansion of vocabulary is the improvement and expansion of the learner's world intelligence and comprehension. Vocabulary is made up of words that one can comprehend when one reads or hears them, which is referred to as receptive vocabulary. It also includes words that one inscribes and communicates, which is referred to as expressive vocabulary. Learners build vocabulary by means of selecting words when they read or hear and through exact teaching from teachers or other professionals like teacher librarians. According to Mehigan (2009), learning as a language-based activity is fundamentally and profoundly dependent on vocabulary knowledge, that is knowledge of words and word meanings. He also indicated that there are four types of vocabulary namely, reading vocabulary, speaking vocabulary, listening vocabulary and writing vocabulary. Moreover, there is a strong relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension. Young persons who start attending a kindergarten or preschool with a productive and different terminology are inclined to clearly comprehend

the literature that they read, and as their reading understanding improves, their vocabulary knowledge in turn increases accordingly. Young persons who start to attend school with limited vocabulary knowledge tend to struggle with their reading comprehension, which also negatively affects their terminology development.

Jalongo and Sobolak (2011) further stressed that vocabulary teaching can inspire the youngster's reading competence also in the tender age of a youngster's life in different learning areas as well as during the course of their school livelihoods. On the other hand, Beck et al. (2002) asserted that there are three tiers of vocabulary, which are important in reading. There is the first level, which is made up of fundamental words such as nouns, verbs and adjectives. Initial reading takes place in this tier. The second layer is made up of regularity words that are significant for reading comprehension as well as verbal announcement. It also comprises numerous connotations and improved explanatory terminology.

According to Teale (2003), reading is an introductory skill that all learners require in order to be successful in life. Reading is one of the four basic language abilities in which learners have to be knowledgeable during their initial years in official schooling by forming the basis for all official studying in the school environment. Stahl (2004) is of the opinion that reading forms the foundation of all verbal abilities, especially writing since the skill to inscribe is conditioned by the skill to read. As a result, reading and writing go hand in hand. Both reading and writing are important for the achievement of every community, and it is also extremely esteemed and essential for communal and economic progression. According to Rasheed (2012), a reading habit can be defined as engaging oneself regularly in reading books, magazines and journals, available in print or electronic format in order to derive pleasure that is both blissful and addictive. It is contrary to forced reading that aims to achieve academic purpose. It is intrinsic rather than extrinsic. Reading habits usually develop during childhood, as it appears to flourish in primary school years (Rasheed 2012).

Reading Monitoring Projects

South Africa participated in different reading monitoring projects in an attempt to improve the reading skills of learners in order to develop the reading habits in them.

The Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ)

The Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) has carried out three investigation projects, that is, SACMEQ I, SACMEQ II and SACMEQ III with the aim of evaluating the states of schooling as well as the value of education at the primary school level. There is a connection between the three SACMEQ Projects because SACMEQ I offers an indispensable starting point data for SACMEQ II and SACMEQ III. South Africa did not participate in the first SACMEQ project I, which took place between 1995 and 1998 (The SACMEQ (Project) II Report 2004).

Both, international and national studies, which concentrated on systemic evaluation, have revealed that South African learners are at a lower level than the international standards in both mathematics and literacy. Between 1994 and 2004 South Africa participated in the second study conducted by the Southern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ II) in which grade 6 mathematics and literacy achievement were found to be poor. Out of fourteen countries South Africa came ninth with 49.9 percent of the grade 6 learners being unable to "understand the increasing of basic written information" (Equal Education 2010: 5). SACMEQ 2004 indicated that the reading level of learners from grade 1 to grade 6 is two grades below their reading level in both English and the mother tongue.

Between 2000 and 2002 the SACMEQ supported by the ministries of education from fifteen countries evaluated reading and numerical competence of about 46,560 grade 6 learners from 2,493 schools. The study investigated the achievement of the school system and determined criteria for least and required performances throughout the countries. The results indicated that 91.1 percent of South African learners did not achieve the least reading stage and as a result would not be able to accomplish the following stage of schooling effectively. The initial reading problems have a tendency to persist as time goes on. Learners with reading difficulties are not yet ready for the high

school curriculum and as a result cannot achieve effectively in school (Mothibeli 2005; UNESCO PRESS 2002).

In 2007 South Africa participated in the third study by the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ III). Grade 6 learners were tested in reading and mathematics. The results were not that encouraging, because there was just a slight improvement in their achievement in reading and mathematics (Makuwa 2010; South Africa Department of Basic Education (DBE) 2010). In this study South Africa was found to have achieved lower than the economically poor countries like Tanzania, Botswana, Kenya and Swaziland (South Africa Department of Basic Education (DBE) 2010).

The Progress in Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS)

The PIRLS study relates strongly to the author's focus because Foundation Phase (Grade 3) learners were also involved in the PIRLS. This study makes a significant involvement, as it explains trends and international evaluations for literacy performance. The Progress in Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) was also established in order to assist in advancing the teaching of reading as well as the attainment of reading expertise across the world. This was recommended by the International Association for the Evaluation of Education Achievement known as (IEA) General Assembly as an important element of the IEA's consistent series of main studies, which also incorporate mathematics and science referred to as The Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). PIRLS offers countries the exceptional chance to get international comparative information covering how well their learners can read after four years of primary schooling (Mullis et al. 2006).

The PIRLS commenced in 2001 with three countries only. In 2006 the number of the countries participating in PIRLS increased to forty (PIRLS 2006). Mullis et al. (2003) and Mullis et al. (2004) asserted that PIRLS concentrated on three features of reading literacy, that is the process of comparison, purposes of reading and reading behaviours and attitudes. According to the PIRLS study, South Africa although better off economically as compared to other countries, performed the poorest out of forty countries that participated in the study. Nearly eighty percent of South African primary school learners were unable

to accomplish the least possible benchmark. In as far as the reading achievement is concerned, the general scores position of South Africa is at the bottom of the list.

In as far as reading comprehension is concerned, learners scored 307 in repossessing and making clear-cut conclusions, which causes South African learners to be the weakest achievers. The study also revealed that eighty-six to ninety-six percent of learners who use African languages in communicating were unable to achieve the bottom benchmark (Mudzielwana 2012). Since the study was in all languages spoken in South Africa, in this case the language was not a challenge, which it might be a indication that South African learners have a reading problem. South Africa's grade 4 and 5 participated in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) in 2006 and achieved the lowest score of all the forty-five countries, which were tested by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement South Africa (Department of Education (DBE) 2008).

The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)

The Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS 2002-2003) is the newest in a sequence of international studies of mathematics and science carried out under the auspices of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). TIMSS concentrates on curriculum. TIMSS 2000/03 focuses on two groups that are learners in year four and learners in year eight. The international comparative studies of attainment enable national consideration on educational procedure and proficiency. These types of studies utilise complicated evaluation devises, comprehensive questionnaires, compound scaling approaches and rigorous excellence regulatory system to yield comparable data. These data facilitate international ranking of countries founded on a common assessment framework, the identification of indicator variables and the modelling of achievement. South African learners achieved badly on the TIMSS 2003 science items. The use of TIMSS scale to compare South African learners with learners from other countries was reprimanded (Australian Council for Educational Research 2002-2003). This is because the South

African learner performed poorly as compared to other competing countries, even those from other African countries who are less advantageous as compared to South Africa. This is also evidence enough that South African learners are performing below both the national and international standards.

The international comparative assessments can have a considerable consequence on the national education systems, sometimes with the intention to further the political agenda (Brown 1999; Adler and Lerman 2003). For example, TIMSS has compelled Cypriots to confess that their "education system is not working" (Papanastasiou 2000). Howie and Hughes (2000) reveal that South Africa responded to TIMSS's ninety-five poor outcomes through the Minister of Education proclaiming that special focus would be "paid to the mismatch between the South African and international curriculum" (Howie and Hughes 2000).

The three studies that have been undertaken in previous years that is the SACMEQ Mothibeli (2005), the Grade 6 International Phase Systemic Evaluation Report South Africa, Department of Education (2005) and PIRLS 2006 (2007) reinforced that South African learners achieved lower than the specification in reading and numeracy. It is shocking that it appears as if there is slight improvement despite different endeavours and proposals by the government. The above studies are a clear reflection that South Africa is not competitive to the world as a whole as well as its neighbouring African countries in as far as reading and numeracy is concerned.

CONCLUSION

Reading and the reading habits in South Africa are still a challenge. It seems that to support reading so that learners develop the reading habits, South Africa participated in different reading monitoring projects in an attempt to improve the reading skills of learners as well as develop their reading habits. The reading monitoring projects included the Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ), the Progress in Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). Moreover, the South African Department of Education took all the initiatives to improve reading among learners such as the different reading strategies and many others as well as all

the proposals that the South Africa Department of Education has initiated and implemented, to assist the learners' reading level to improve.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that for learners to develop reading habits, teachers should encourage them to stop reading anything that is not interesting, or when they find the reading material difficult. The learners are also encouraged to work with the text individually and silently to consolidate the comprehension strategies and be able to read with understanding. In extensive reading, learners can choose their own reading resources such as magazines, newspapers, story books or electronic reading materials, as this will also assist in exposing them to various types of texts. Reading can be a social activity in the classroom, where books are deliberated and argued, and where learners learn about the components of story reading in motivational books of their own preference. Teacher librarians should reveal this awareness to teachers who are responsible for teaching reading in order to cultivate reading habits in their schools. To support the reading habits of learners, the importance of the availability of library resources in supporting classroom reading instruction should be taken into consideration. This implies that a full-fledged library service should play an important role in the reading habits of learners, starting as early as preschools to secondary schools.

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