



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

LIMPOPO
READING FOR MEANING
IMPROVEMENT PLAN
AN OVERVIEW



2020-2025
Be part of the Reading Revolution!

The heartland of southern Africa - development is about people

Limpopo Reading for Meaning Improvement Plan:

An Overview

Be part of the Reading Revolution!

2020-2025

ACRONYMS

DBE	Department of Basic Education
DSAC	Department of Sports Art and Culture
LDoE	Limpopo Department of Education
MEC	Member of Executive Committee
RMIP	Reading for Meaning Improvement Plan
SGBs	School Governing Bodies
SMTs	School Management Teams

GLOSSARY

Reading: Reading is an “intentional thinking during which meaning is constructed through interactions between text and reader”. (Harris & Hodges 1995)

Reading for academic purposes: Reading for academic purposes is aimed at achieving the set academic learning outcomes.

Reading for pleasure: Reading for pleasure refers to the type of reading that is done of one’s free will in order to fulfil the satisfaction that is derived from the act of reading.

Reading revolution: Reading revolution refers to an organized course of transformative action comprising a series of related activities whose main aim is to inculcate the culture of reading in schools, school communities and society at large.

Reading with meaning: Reading with meaning refers to the type of reading that promotes the type of thinking that constructs understanding when the reader interacts with the text.

Writing: It is a medium of communication. It is a process of using graphic symbols (letters and characters) to convey thoughts and ideas.

DURATION OF THE READING PLAN

The duration of this Reading for Meaning Improvement Plan is five years. It is designed to be rolled out between 2021 and 2025, and coincides with the term of office of the sixth administration. It is, therefore, aligned to the 2020/2021-2024/2025 medium-term strategic framework of the education sector.

TARGET AUDIENCE

This Reading for Meaning Improvement Plan is targeted at learners who are in Grades R to 7. While the primary target is learners, parents, teachers, managers and subject advisors who support these learners are also targeted as they will need to exploit their capacities and capabilities to ensure efficient and effective roll out of this plan.

FOREWORD



In his 2019 State of the National Address, President Ramaphosa indicated that by 2030, all 10 year old learners in the country should be able to read for meaning. The President followed up this pronouncement with the launch of a virtual book club on 25 September 2019 as an effort to demonstrably promote and give resonance to reading across the country. In the same year, the President became the patron of the National Reading Coalition (NRC) which was established as the umbrella body to coordinate the delivery of the National Reading Strategy.

“Reading for Meaning across the Curriculum” is one of the six priorities of the Education Sector. This priority focuses on developing capabilities among young learners to be able to read for pleasure and for academic purposes. We welcome the Minister’s launch of reading resources in Limpopo on 4 November 2020 and view it as a foundation on which this Reading for Meaning Improvement Plan will be built. It will indeed go a long way.

In my Budget Vote Speech of 7 May 2020, I indicated that the Limpopo Department of Education will promote reading for meaning through, among others, reading competitions in Home Languages, advocacy events such as the World’s Read Aloud Day and campaigns such as establishment of reading clubs. These activities are but distinguishable components of the Limpopo Reading for Meaning Improvement Plan which comprises the following two thrusts:

- Reading for Pleasure and
- Reading for Academic Purposes

The detailed activities that form part of the above-mentioned thrusts are described in detail in a separate five year plan. The intended 2025 outputs for the above-mentioned thrusts are:

- 5% annual increase in the number of GET (General Education and Training band) learners who read and write for pleasure and
- 5% annual increase in the number of Foundation and Intermediate pupils who are able to read for academic purposes, especially in African languages.

I invite all officials, teachers, learners, school governing bodies, parents, communities, sister departments, teacher unions and professional bodies to work with Government in ensuring that this Limpopo Reading for Meaning Improvement Plan is efficiently and effectively implemented, monitored and supported. Education is a societal matter! Be part of the Reading Revolution and dare to make our province and indeed our nation a winning nation!

MEC for Education in Limpopo

Ms Polly Boshelo, MPA

BACKGROUND

International studies such as PIRLS (2016) reveal alarmingly low levels of reading ability in, among others, South African children. Calling it a crisis is no overstatement. The Limpopo provincial education system sketch is no different. Learners have great difficulty in reading and writing for meaning. In order to alleviate this lamentable situation, the Limpopo Department of Education developed a Provincial Reading for Meaning Improvement Plan (hereafter referred to as the Reading for Meaning Plan – RMIP).

When 2016 PIRLS results were analysed according to languages, the outcomes demonstrated that, for example 93% of grade 4 learners cannot read for meaning in Sepedi, 90% in Setswana, 89% in Tshivenda, 88% in Xitsonga, cannot read with comprehension.

READING REVOLUTION

The RMIP, therefore, strives to advocate for a reading revolution in the Limpopo Province by mobilising all members of society, young and old, to take part in the reading activities outlined in the Limpopo Reading for Meaning Improvement Plan. The key thrusts of this Plan are:

- a) Reading for Pleasure/Leisure and
- b) Reading for Academic Purposes.

Reading for pleasure



Figure 1: 2018
Spelling Bee Winner

Reading is an essential part of one's life. Past decades have seen steady decline in the number of people who regularly read for pleasure, enjoyment and leisure. Reading a book prescribed by the Department as part of the official curriculum is a completely different experience to reading a book you have chosen for yourself. The benefits of reading a book of your choice compared to reading a book one is compelled to read, bring a different learning experience to children and learners.

When a child or learner reads for pleasure or enjoyment, they choose what they read and therefore learn to see books as appealing or enticing. On the other hand, mandatory reading for academic purposes (as it will be discussed in the next section) takes away that choice and can create a resentment for books that could stay with the child forever and discourage reading completely. In order for the learners to experience the full benefits of reading throughout school and into adulthood, they must maintain their love of reading. Activities under this thrust are designed to build this love at an early age.

In order to create a conducive environment for activities in this thrust, children and learners will be given free reign over reading choices. In order to achieve this goal, abundance of reading materials such as cartoons, newspapers, story books, in either hard or soft copies must be ascertained. Once the children and learners have chosen reading materials, they must be given space to read at their own pace and time. Such a leisurely atmosphere can do wonders to a child's learning development and give them a love for reading that will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

Reading for academic purposes



Figure 2: Reading for academic purposes

The reading activities that comprise this thrust are usually confined to formal spaces such as classrooms and libraries. Such reading activities are designed to ensure learners attain the standards prescribed in the annual teaching plans of the official curriculum. These could include preparing answers for possible questions that may come up in a test, sourcing information for an assignment, learning how other nations solved problems in South Africa, and so on.

When reading for academic purposes, characters become stereotypes with list of traits, relationships, and themes, instead of complex people who are real to you that they leap off the page at you. You don't feel a connection to the characters which is vital to appreciating and identifying with a piece of fiction.

This is not to say that mandatory reading for school destroys the enjoyment of reading for everybody. Some schools and educators do a wonderful job of encouraging independent reading. However, the restraints caused by standardized testing, grades, and the different "hoops" learners are required to jump through at different levels in their schooling can damage their appreciation for independent reading.

READING PLAN IMPLEMENTATION/ ACTION PLAN

The activities of the Reading for Meaning Improvement Plan are organised according to the two thrusts: namely, reading for pleasure and reading for academic purposes.

Reading for pleasure -5-year deliverables

A multifaceted approach for this thrust comprises the following key deliverables:

- Setting up and reviving reading corners in schools. The process of setting up these reading corners will be managed by reading champions and educators.
- Appointing reading champions in all schools and they will be trained to assist on reading activities.

- Formation of reading clubs in schools and communities.
- Organising reading festivals by teachers and reading champions in schools once a year. Reading champions, together with community libraries and NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations) will also organise community reading festivals.



Figure 3: Reading for leisure

- Mobilising reading resources from organisations that are ready to donate readers. These reading resources will be in all languages spoken in the province and housed in reading clubs.

- Promoting digital reading to at least four schools (two primary and two secondary schools) in each district per

year. The number of schools will be incrementally increased over the period of five years.

Reading for academic activities

A multifaceted approach for this thrust comprises the following key deliverables:



Figure 4: Reading for academic purposes

- Convene reading seminars/webinars
- Introduce project-based learning approach to reading prescribed materials
- Promote research-driven teaching and learning approach to reading mandatory texts
- Use reading and writing centres to assess reading abilities

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

Reading for pleasure

Output: 5% annual increase in the number of GET (General Education and Training band) learners who read and write for pleasure.

Annual targets/deliverables: In order to achieve the annual increase of the number of GET learners who read and write for pleasure, the reading for pleasure deliverables are outlined in **Figure 5:**

- Establish baseline (2021)
- Setting up and reviving reading corners (2021-2025)
- Appointing reading champions (2021-2025)
- Formation of reading clubs (2021-2025)
- Organising reading festivals (2021-2025)
- Mobilising reading resources (2021-2025)
- Promoting digital reading (2023-2025)

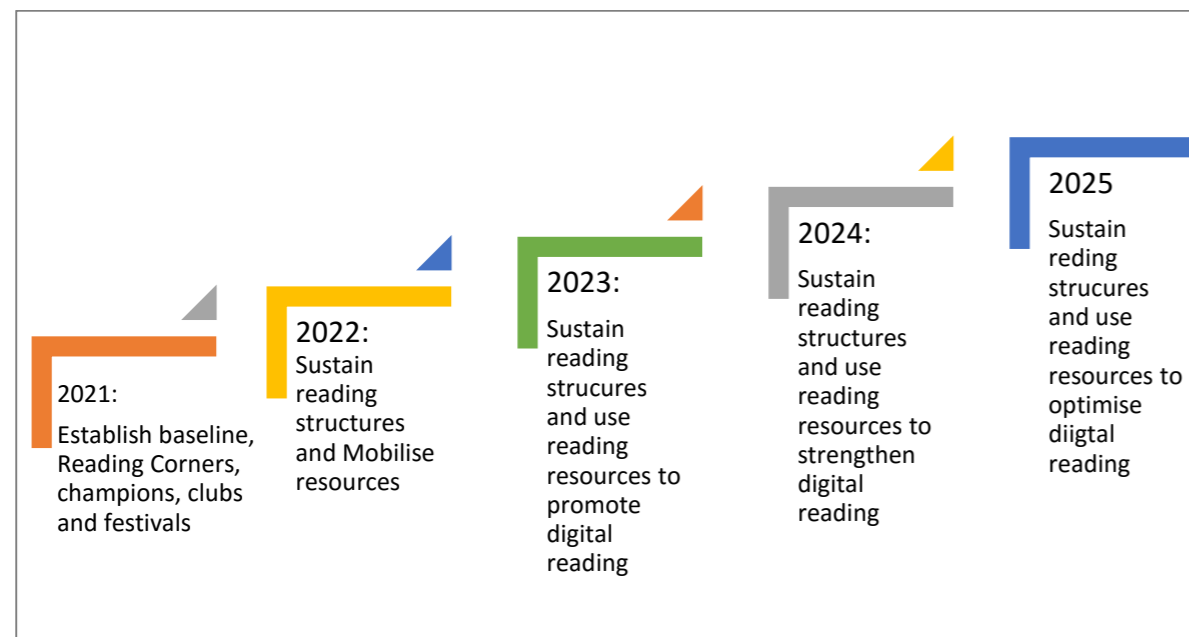


Figure 5: Annual targets for the Reading for Pleasure activities

Reading for academic purposes

Output: 5% annual increase in the number of Foundation and Intermediate pupils who are able to read for academic purposes, especially in African languages.

Annual targets/deliverables: In order to achieve the annual increase of the number of GET learners who read and write for pleasure, the reading for academic purposes deliverables are outlined in **Figure 6:**

- Establish baseline (2021)
- Convene reading seminars/webinars linked to annual teaching plans (2022-2025)
- Introduce project-based learning linked to official curriculum (2023-2025)
- Promote research-driven teaching/learning approaches (2024-2025)
- Use reading/writing centres that assess reading abilities according to official standards (2025)

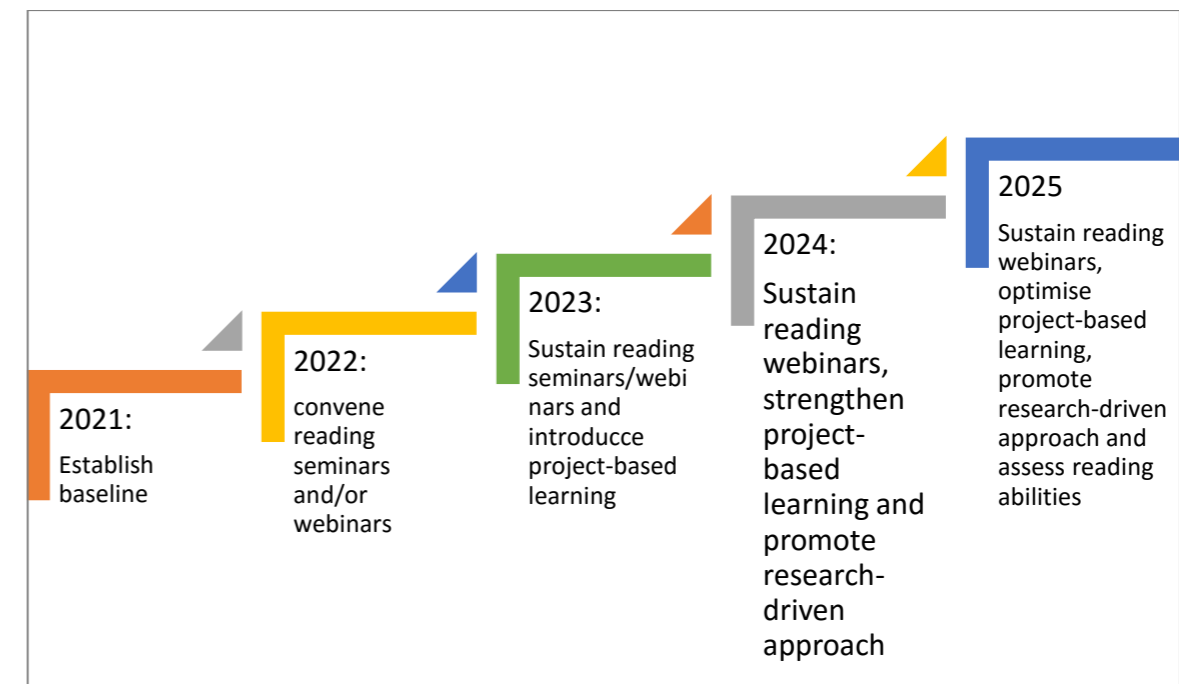


Figure 6: Annual targets for the Reading for Academic Purposes activities

CONCLUSION

The Limpopo Department of Education, in all its enthusiasm, embarks on a reading revolution to revitalise and rejuvenate children, youth and community to become a Nation of Readers. It is incorrect to suppose that there is one simple and single approach which, if taken correctly, will turn around the reading deficiency crisis. Becoming a skilled reader is a journey that involves multi-faceted strategies and approaches. Strengthening one element yields small gains. For large gains, a concerted effort must be in place. Everyone has to join hands and work together for South Africa to become a Nation of Readers. Let reading be a popular way to spend one's leisure time.

Be part of the Reading Revolution. Who Dares Wins!

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