The Foundations for Learning Campaign is a call to schools, teachers, communities and learners to focus on reading, writing and numeracy.

Parents, the future of your children is in your hands! As responsible parents, the most worthwhile investment you can make is in your children’s education. Join teachers and the Department of Education in laying sound foundations for learning, especially during the early years. A solid foundation in reading, writing and numeracy will provide opportunities for success for our children throughout their lives.

Remember that the future lies in your hands! Help to lay a solid foundation for learning for a bright, South African future.

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Teachers, to ensure our children get a quality education, we need committed teachers, like you. Make every effort to keep informed and knowledgeable on what learners need to learn and also understand of the ways in which this can be taught and learnt.

I appeal to you to be part of the Minister of Education’s call to action. South Africa needs you and is depending on you because our children, who are our future, are in your hands.

I have big plans! But first I need to make sure I am the best I can be. How do I do this? Easy! I work hard at school, I learn to read, write and solve problems. It’s not as hard or as boring as it sounds! Learning can be fun. Have you heard about the Foundations for Learning Campaign?

It’s all about how teachers, parents, communities and us are coming together to bring about a change in education. What changes, you ask? Well, we have been challenged to improve our reading, writing and numeracy skills. This will bring about good changes, not only to our lives, but also to our country. Are you up to the challenge? I sure am!

What do you want to do when you grow up?

This supplement is in support of the Foundations for Learning Campaign, launched by the Minister of Education, Minister Naledi Pandor, in 2008. The campaign is a response to persistent poor performance in reading, writing and numeracy by many children in classrooms across South Africa – critical learning areas that are a necessary foundation to further learning and lifelong success.

The goal we in the Department of Education have set ourselves is to ensure that, by 2011, all learners in our schools demonstrate age and grade appropriate competencies in literacy and numeracy and that average learner performance in all primary schools in these areas is at least 50%. Working together with you, we know we will achieve this.

I hope you find this resource useful in your teaching and that you take as much pleasure in using it as we did in putting it together!

We look forward to 2011 with great anticipation – and to the nationwide celebrations of our children’s improved performance in literacy and numeracy.

Palesa Tyobeka
Deputy Director General
General Education and Training
### Why is a daily programme important?

It is important to structure each day. This determines what kinds of interactions children have with their classmates and with the teacher during specific times. A well-structured daily programme, with time blocks, ensures that:

- Children develop a sense of safety and security.
- Children know what will happen next and can prepare themselves for the next activity.
- Children’s needs are catered for, including those children with special needs.
- Children spend their time on stimulating and challenging learning experiences and teachers can spend more time with them.
- Teachers can prepare children for unexpected changes such as visitors, weather conditions, educational trips, and special events or traditions.

### The Daily Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>What children do</th>
<th>What teachers do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Welcome to school!</strong></td>
<td>Arrival time</td>
<td>Children arrive and pack away their bags. They gather together on the carpet or chairs set in a circle. While waiting for their friends to arrive, children may explore the different areas of the classroom. Children show their presence at school by placing their name cards or symbols in a colour-coded container (same colour as their small group).</td>
<td>Welcome children and be available to chat to any parent who may need to relay a message.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Good morning!</strong></td>
<td>Health check</td>
<td>Children say good morning to their friends and teacher. Children answer questions about any health problems, for example, they show plasters over any cuts and bruises. Children discuss the weather and the programme for the day.</td>
<td>Register of attendance. Check which name cards or symbols were not placed in containers, get children to identify who has not yet arrived. Run a quick head to toes check of each child. Keep a health record of any signs of illness observed or medication given. Refer cases that need attention. Fill in the weather chart for the day. Mention any birthdays. Go through the daily programme and mention the activities and events for the day. Do this throughout the day, any time a new activity starts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Morning circle</strong></td>
<td>Morning circle</td>
<td>Children participate in the activity.</td>
<td>Introduce new material (new theme for the week), ideas, songs or rhymes, announcements, concepts or skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Let's work!</strong></td>
<td>Work time</td>
<td>Children choose what to do, interacting with materials in the interest area of their choice. Children must count how many are already at an interest area before joining in. If too full, they need to choose somewhere else to play.</td>
<td>Provide stimulating materials and challenging activities. Observe, interact, join in, support and assist children. Place signs at the various interest areas, indicating how many children can play there (a card with pictures of children cut out from magazines will work well). Assess popular areas and materials. Add interesting items to attract children to areas less used. Give children five minutes’ warning before the end of an activity – especially work time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Small group time</strong></td>
<td>Small group time</td>
<td>Six to eight children meet the teacher to engage in a particular activity planned by the teacher on a mat or around a table.</td>
<td>Present special activity, for example, working with numbers, experimenting with materials or using materials and objects to solve problems. Make the materials available for further use the next day. Use the small groups already allocated to the children for arrival time (for example, red, green, blue and yellow). Attempt to see all children each day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tidy up time</strong></td>
<td>Tidy up time</td>
<td>Children pack away all material and equipment.</td>
<td>Join children in packing materials and equipment away. Sing a clean-up song to indicate when it’s time to clean up. “It’s clean-up time, clean up time. We all join in to clean up now.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Register of attendance.**

Check which name cards or symbols were not placed in containers, get children to identify who has not yet arrived. Run a quick head to toes check of each child. Keep a health record of any signs of illness observed or medication given. Refer cases that need attention. Fill in the weather chart for the day. Mention any birthdays. Go through the daily programme and mention the activities and events for the day. Do this throughout the day, any time a new activity starts.
Planning the indoor learning environment

Choosing materials:
- Choose materials that will interest the children and reflect their experiences and cultures.
- Children love to use real things because these objects enable them to imitate the roles of adults.
- See more on resources for the Grade R classroom on page 6.

Fantasy corner
Create various fantasy situations for children to explore. Ideas include hospital, post office, kitchen, tea party, fire station and police station. This area needs to be changed regularly to keep the children’s interest and to widen their experiences. Keep a stock of clothing and other props available. Decide on a theme and then get help from parents and carers in the community for resources to fill the space.

Blocks and puzzles area
This area should be somewhere where the blocks will not be knocked over by children walking past. Building blocks of various sizes and shapes can be made available in this area. Mover cars, plastic animals and airplanes can also be added to make this a more interesting and imaginative play area. Well-labelled and stored puzzles can also be available here. Make sure the puzzles are clearly marked in separate containers.

Storing and labelling materials:
- Store materials in places where they will be used, within reach of the children. Store in clear or open containers such as see-through plastic containers, trays or baskets.
- Store materials in the same place to give children a sense of security and independence.
- Write labels on containers and shelves, using easily understood symbols or drawings, magazine pictures, real objects, tracings or even catalogue pictures. This makes it easy for children to take and return materials on their own. Label both the shelves and the containers.

Organise the space:
- Lay out interest areas to provide activities such as block play, art and writing activities, pretend play and reading activities.
- Provide space for transition activities such as greeting time, story time and snack time.
- Make visual borders to separate the areas by using low shelves, chairs, mats or carpets, rope or low homemade cardboard screens that children can see over and be seen.
- Allow enough space in each area for a small group of children to play comfortably. Make signs indicating how many children can play in one area at a time (a picture of three children, a hand with three fingers held up, etc).
- Allow space at children’s eye level to display their own drawings, paintings or any other work. Provide a space on a small table or low shelf to display children’s own models.
- Constantly change and adapt these spaces throughout the year.
- Have a display or interest table near the carpet area. This table can display the theme for the week, or a new skill to be learnt. Sometimes the table can be a “touch and learn” table (instruments, shoes, materials, etc) and other times it can be a “look only” table. All items on the table should be labelled.
- Allocate a space in the classroom for children to store their personal belongings. Lockers or shelves should be labelled with the child’s name or symbol.
Teachers – make 12 symbols. As each month passes place a symbol next to it to show progression. In this way, children can see how many months have passed and how many are still to come. Butterflies or birds flying around the animals will work well as symbols.
Adequately resourcing your Grade R classroom may seem like a daunting task. However, many of the equipment needed can be donated by parents, businesses in the community or even handmade.

Below is a list of the minimum educational equipment needed for both indoor and outdoor use, as prescribed by the Department of Education:

### Indoor equipment
- 10 pairs of blunt-nosed scissors
- Floor mats/blankets
- Paper, at least three colours, and paint brushes (enough for one group of 6-8 learners)
- Large wax crayons (10 packets)
- 5 packets water-soluble wall-paper glue
- Paper glue (non toxic)
- 1 box of paper (computer or waste paper)
- 10 storybooks (could be homemade) [Look out for ReadRight storybooks in the Sunday Times magazine]
- 1 teacher resource book of poems and rhymes
- 1 pack of shapes
- 1 set of blocks
- 6 peg boards with pegs and patterns
- Beads and laces for threading
- Stacking cups of different sizes
- Puppets – a set of family puppets
- Balls (at least 3)
- Bean bags (enough for 1 group)

Quantities are for a Grade R class of 30 learners.

### Outdoor equipment
- Climbing apparatus: jungle gym, nets, ladders
- Swings: swings, monkey ropes, tyre swings
- Sliding: slide, ramps, flattened cardboard boxes
- Play house, large boxes, tunnels (cement pipes or large drums)
- Sand and water play: sand pit or sand tray, bath or basin, tins, plastic containers, mugs, cake pans, funnels, sieves, colanders, spoons, jugs, plastic bottles, squeeze bottles, sponges, containers with holes, straws, egg whisks
- Painting: paper, paint and brushes and string and pegs to hang up paintings to dry
- Small plastic tables and chairs
- Balls
- Jumping: skipping ropes, tyres, tubes, old mattress
- Pulling, pushing and riding: boxes, plastic crates with a rope to pull it along, tyres, tricycles, wheelbarrows and prams
- Balancing: balance beam, planks supported by bricks, tyres, see-saw and stilts (rope and tins)
- Bean bags
- Pretend play: traffic signs and tracks, steering wheels of old cars, hats, helmets, adult-sized clothes, bags, empty boxes (cereal, food, etc), tins, plastic containers, sunglasses, binoculars, old suitcases

### Other equipment to be provided (could be homemade or donated by parents)
- Cups and saucers, pots and pans (for fantasy play)
- Posters (could be cut from old magazines or newspapers)
- Puzzles (at least for two groups – 12, 20, 36 and 48 pieces)
- Games (sequencing, memory, matching, etc)
- Mechanical construction set (wheels, screws, nuts and bolts)
- Dolls
- Maths blocks (at least one set)
- Dice (numbers and shapes)
- 2-D shapes, for example, pattern blocks, tangrams, cardboard cut-outs
- 3-D objects, for example, blocks, collection of different-shaped boxes
- Collection of containers of different shapes and sizes
- Plastic balance scale
- Teacher’s abacus
- Coloured sticks of different lengths
- A4 sized chalk boards and coloured chalk
- Wooden cars (enough for one group)
- Board games
- Lego or other construction apparatus
- Containers to store apparatus in
- First aid kit

### Adding resources to your classroom
Through careful planning, you can easily add more materials to the interest areas in your classroom.

Planning helps us to think about what we want to add, how we will get the materials, by when do we want them and who can help.

**Step 1:** Make a list of all the materials you already have in the various areas.

**Step 2:** Make a list of all the materials you would like to add to the various areas.

**Step 3:** Make a list of people who can help you collect the materials, for example, parents, learners, staff, factories, shops, banks, churches, family members and friends.

**Step 4:** Call a parent meeting to explain what you need and why you want those materials.

**Step 5:** Invite parents to help you label and store the materials.

**Remember – Safety is important! Always make sure that the outdoor play area and equipment is safe and clean.**
Welcome to school!

15-30 minutes
While waiting for their friends to arrive, children may explore the different areas of the classroom.

My Times
Children show their presence at school by Register of attendance. Check which name cards or symbols were not placed in containers, get children to identify who has not yet arrived.

Health check
Good morning!
Run a quick head to toes check of each child. Keep teacher.
Children answer questions about any health problems, for example, they show “band-aids” over any cuts and bruises.

Children fill in the weather chart for the day. Mention any birthdays. Go through the daily programme and mention the programme of the day.

It is important to structure each day.
This determines what kinds of interactions children have with their classmates and with the teacher during specific times. A well-structured daily programme, with My times
• Children develop a sense of safety and security.
• Children know “what will happen next: and can prepare themselves for the activity
• Children’s needs are catered for, including those with special needs.

Present special activity, for example, working with numbers, experimenting with materials or using materials and objects to solve problems. Make the materials available for further use the next day.

Small group time
Six to eight children meet with the teacher during Work time
Children spend their time on stimulating and challenging learning experiences and
Use the small groups already allocated to the children for teachers can spend more
- time with them.

Tidy up time
10 minutes
Children pack away all material and equipment. Join children in packing materials and equipment away.

Sing a cleanup song to indicate when it’s time to clean.

Display the daily programme low enough for children to reach. Encourage them to follow the programme and discuss the activities for the day.

My times
Personalise the daily programme by filling in the times in which you complete the allotted activity.

Washing up
Hand washing
10 minutes
Children wash their hands.
Provide clean water, soap and towels.

Let’s eat
Snack time
10 to 15 minutes
Children enjoy a morning snack.
Talk to children about what they did during work time. Prepare the room for the next activity.

Sing and dance
Music and movement
15 to 20 minutes
Children participate in music and movement activities.
Present music and movement activities.

Sing and dance
Here is a fun, active song for you to sing and move to:
Hokey Pokey
You put your left foot in...
You put your right hand in...
And you shake it all about.
You do the Hokey Pokey
And you turn around,
That’s what it’s all about.
You put your right shoulder in...
You put your left shoulder in...

Children enjoy energetic, noisy, physical play.
Join in children’s play, talk to them and assist where needed.

Story time
Story time
10 to 15 minutes
Children listen to and participate in storytelling. Children share own stories or work completed during work time.
Engage children in stories being told, ask responsive questions, allow and encourage children to be actively involved in the story.

Collect your own ReadRight storybook in the Sunday Times magazine
Why is play important?

Children engage in many types of play based on the development of their thinking, reasoning, language and social skills. There are different types of play:

### Exploratory play:
Children enjoy exploring the properties and functions of materials such as wool, string, glue, playdough, sand, stones and water.

- Develops self-control and social skills: As children share materials and play together, they learn to co-operate, listen to others and to stand up for their own ideas.

### Constructive play:
Children enjoy building and making things with blocks, cardboard rolls and tubes, scrap pieces of wood, Styrofoam, plastic bottles, boxes or tins.

- Develops experimental and logical thinking: When children play with materials such as blocks, clay, sand and water, they develop skills in logic. They experiment with cause and effect, with counting and sorting things and solving problems.

### Pretend play:
Children enjoy pretending and role play with real materials such as dress-up clothes, hair dryers, mirrors, helmets, suitcases, kitchen utensils and tools.

- Pretend play helps children to learn to think abstractly and to look at things from someone else’s perspective. Pretend play is also connected to early literacy, mathematical thinking, and problem-solving.

### Games:
Children enjoy card and board games, and they enjoy using materials to make their own games such as cards, dice and game counters.

- Learning to enjoy learning: When children do activities they have chosen, learning is enjoyable. It’s based on their own interests and gives them a sense of competence.

### At home parents can:

- Provide materials that children can use in a variety of ways: blocks, paper and crayons, dolls and toy animals, balls, playdough, etc.
- Encourage children to play with ordinary household objects like pots and pans and outdoor materials like sticks and stones.
- Provide simple toys that encourage children to be active and use their imagination, not just to watch or listen while the toy does tricks.
- Play with your children, ask them questions about their play (“What are those animals doing?”), and point out things you notice (“You used a lot of bright colours in that picture!”)

### What can you do as a parent to help your children succeed in school?

Encourage your children to explore and learn in your home environment the way teachers help children at school. Help your children become independent, enthusiastic and curious learners. You don’t need to buy a lot of special toys or equipment to turn children into creative thinkers. The best thing you can do is to be a good listener and to talk with your children as you go about your normal, everyday household routines. Here are ideas to turn everyday activities into rich learning experiences for your children.

- **Count objects correctly**
- **Follow simple instructions**
- **Accept responsibility**
- **Match one-to-one when counting**

### Read storybooks together.

After you’ve read a book to your child, discuss it.

- **Who is this story about? What happened to him? What did he learn? How do you think he felt?**
- **Now it’s your turn to read this book to me. You can read the pictures.**

This helps your child learn to...

- Listen to a story and explain what happened.
- Use language to describe events and express feelings.

### Look at family photos together.

Try looking at an album together with your child as if you were reading a book.

- **Who’s that? What’s she doing? What do you think he’s saying? How do you think she feels?**
- **Do you remember going to this place? What did you do there?**

This helps your child learn to...

- Identify himself as a member of a specific family and cultural group.
- Use language to describe events.
- Interpret pictures.