

GRADE SIX LEARNERS' SUPPLEMENTARY READING PRACTICES:

A CASE STUDY.

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Statement of originality

The contents of this thesis represent my own work and the opinions contained herein are my own and not necessarily those of the Technikon.

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Synopsis

In this thesis it is argued that attempts by teachers to 'simulate' middle class home based reading practices in working class schools is not effective in building a reading culture among young learners. The 'mismatch' between learners' home and school cultures inhibits this. Instead, an understanding of the different ways in which learners construct their view of literacy through their interactions at school should be sought. This can be achieved through an analysis of a range of literate actions and interactions in the school context.

As reading is associated with academic success more generally, it is proposed that integrating supplementary reading into mainstream academic subjects, particularly where those subjects are interesting to learners, is more effective in the promotion of reading practices than the traditional provision of supplementary reading material.

Thus, it is proposed that supplementary reading should be introduced to support mainstream academic work, particularly in those subjects which are of interest to learners at this level. But offering learners a variety of reading situations in this research project, it was found that learners felt more 'empowered' to make reading choices and to become intrinsically motivated to read.

What has emerged from this research is that children's reading is very complex – and if it is to be adequately supported, it is likely to need a 'multi-pronged' approach. By this it is meant that it is not sufficient to offer supplementary reading texts and activities at school when these are not consistent with practices in the home. Often it is the teachers or the librarians who choose texts which they think are suitable, but as several research projects have shown the children's own reading choices (for example, comics or magazines about popular music or celebrities) is a powerful route into other texts. It is counter-productive for teachers, parents or librarians to make judgments about children's leisure reading – this is an area which the children should 'own' and be empowered to make their own choices and decisions.

The role that schools play in promoting supplementary reading should be a supportive one, rather than a directive one. Traditionally, the school or the English teacher lays out a selection of what s/he considers to be 'interesting' texts. However, this approach to support supplementary reading is not particularly effective. The school's role should be one that supports learners' academic development. The field trip and site visit described in this research report exposed the learners to new horizons and learning experiences, which tended to motivate them to read about these experiences. Thus where there are school outings or other memorable events planned, the school can play a supportive role by ensuring that the learners have access to a range of reading texts on the experience.

It is far more effective to build the supplementary reading culture around school-based interests than around what the teacher or librarian assumes children's reading interests are. Exciting events and outings are opportunities for initiating reading activities and for providing the starting position for the building of a culture of reading.

Reading resources and reading support also needs to be seen as a community responsibility. Local government provides libraries and librarians – but they also need to ensure safe access to the library.

Parents also have a role to play in the support of children's reading. It is not desirable to make either parents or children feel that their reading level or reading practices are not adequate. Rather, parents and children should be encourage by the school to develop an interest in reading – through book clubs, book exchanges, story telling events, and so on. Involving parents in positive and constructive ways is necessary to support children's emergent literacy.

Finally, the children themselves need to be proactive in expressing their reading interests and needs to educators, parents and librarians. Enabling learners to choose their own reading books is affirming to the new reader and sets the learner on a path of sustainable reading practice.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to this study

This study is concerned with finding ways to support the reading practices of pre-teenage learners in a township school in Cape Town. Approximately 20 families were interviewed in their homes, and various interactions with children (sometimes together with parents) took place in the classroom. These interactions were observed, recorded and analysed. Approximately half the learners in this research project have been identified as 'slow' readers, or readers who need support with their reading – and most learners needed some form of external motivation in order to engage in any form of reading activity.

Most of the learners in this study live in poor, marginalized townships on the periphery of Cape Town: Mitchells Plain, Portlands, Tafelsig, Westridge and Heinz Park. Many parents are unemployed, and those who do have jobs, tend to work long hours and have little or no time for reading. Most cannot afford the luxury of buying books, magazines, or even newspapers. Although access to general reading matter is free to the public, it is extremely dangerous to walk to the library in the evenings with young children, due to the level of violence in the area. (The local police superintendent was consulted about the safety of the children en route to the library. He felt that a mobile library to serve the school would be preferable to the children visiting the library. The librarian explained that families tend not to use the library. It mainly serves

older learners or students in need of a quiet place to study.) There is no bookshop, or second hand book exchange, in the area. Most of the learners have never been to a bookshop with their parents. Very few parents or learners read *The Plainsman*, the local free community newspaper.

The children claim that they have little time to read, as they have to do homework and household chores. When they have free time, they prefer to relax in front of the television. Most learners say their parents do not engage in reading with them, such as reading bedtime stories, and the majority of the learners do not see their parents reading. A few learners live with grandparents, who are not literate or who have low literacy levels.

When the new grade six learners entered their classrooms in the school where I teach in January 2002, the majority of them were not members of a library or had even visited a library during their previous schooling. Most of the learners had never brought reading material to school in their schoolbags, such as a storybook, a children's magazine or a children's supplement in a newspaper or adult magazine.

I have taught grade six learners at the same school for the past 10 years and I believe that there has been a decline in supplementary reading patterns among the learners over the past five years. This is cause for concern as supplementary reading is associated with academic success more generally

(Heath, 1983, Street, 1997, 1999). There are still a number of issues with regard to social reading practices for which the evidence is inconclusive and which are of critical importance for ongoing research (Baynham, 1995). One of these issues involves identifying 'mismatches' between learners' home and school cultures and understanding the different ways in which learners construct their view of literacy through their interactions at home and at school. Developing such an understanding requires detailed analysis of a range of literate actions and interactions in home and school contexts.

1.2 Research focus

The object of this research is the current supplementary reading practices of grade six learners in a community-based school in the Western Cape.

1.3 Problem statement

The purpose of this research is to study grade six learners' supplementary reading practices in order to establish whether there is a relationship between supplementary reading and academic success more generally using both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

1.4 Research objectives

The primary research objective is the development of classroom based strategies to improve learners' general and academic reading skills. This will be achieved through a study of the supplementary reading practices of grade

six learners in a community based school in the Western Cape (see below under 'Research Methodology). The primary research objective can be divided into the following sub-objectives:

- 1.4.1 To explore the impact that the learners' socio-economic context and home culture has on supplementary reading practices;
- 1.4.2 To investigate incentives and disincentives for supplementary reading in the local community context;
- 1.4.3 To document the current supplementary reading practices of the learners and their families;
- 1.4.4 To investigate the relationship between learners' supplementary reading practices and their general academic levels and abilities; and
- 1.4.5 To make recommendations that could build and improve learners' supplementary reading practices.

1.5 Definitions of terms

1.5.1 Supplementary reading

This term refers to reading which takes place outside of the prescribed textbooks. This would include reading for enjoyment, for information or for other personal reasons. This type of reading is sometimes known as 'extra curricula' reading or as 'extensive' reading in the literature on this topic.

1.5.2 'Incentives' and 'disincentives'

By the term 'incentives' I refer to support structures for supplementary reading in the community – such as libraries, mobile libraries, book exchanges (both formal and non-formal), the reading practices that learners are exposed to in the home environment, etc. By the term 'disincentives' I refer to the difficulties that learners might experience in accessing supplementary reading support structures – for example, the presence of gangsters or other conditions which make access unsafe, unsuitable library opening times, practices at the home or among peer groups which might not support supplementary reading and other constraints.

1.5.3 Reading practices

By this term I refer to the culture of reading in the learners' home, the literacy levels of parents or other adults and the value given to the act of reading in the home environment.

1.6 Delimitations of this research

This research project focuses on reading outside of the formal school curriculum, thus I will not be focusing on learners' academic reading skills. There is, however, a relationship between learners' home based reading practices, or the family or community reading culture; and the learners' academic success (Heath, 1983). Therefore one of the reasons why supplementary reading is important and worthy of investigation is because it

underpins academic achievement more generally. Thus there is a need to compare learners' academic results with supplementary reading practices.

1.7 Research questions

I have identified the following research questions, to guide the research activities:

- 1.7.1 What are the learners' current interests?
- 1.7.2 What does the learners' current supplementary reading consist of?
- 1.7.3 What – and how often - do learners' parents and families read?
- 1.7.4 Is the community 'reader-friendly'? – Where and how do the learners find or obtain the texts that they currently read?
- 1.7.5 What are the reasons for learners' current reading practices?
- 1.7.6 What is likely to support or build a reading culture among learners?

1.8 Possible beneficiaries of this research project

It is my hope that this research project will help me to understand the causes of the decline in learners' supplementary reading practices and help me to put programmes or structures in place that will assist in building a reading culture amongst the learners. It is also my intention to share my research findings with the Western Cape Education Department and other teachers in order to ensure that as many schools as possible are able to benefit from this research project.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The New Literacy Studies (NLS) is the name given to recent research into reading practice - and literacy acquisition more generally from a socio-cultural perspective. The NLS have helped language teachers to re-conceptualise learning as a social practice, as interactive and collective, rather than as individual and independent. The basic idea put forward by the NLS is that reading and writing need to be understood in the context of the larger socio-cultural practices of which they are a part. In the literature review, I explore how these theories are able to contribute to an understanding of the reading practices of learners and their parents with regard to their socio-cultural context.

2.1 Current ideas on what constitutes 'literacy'

Researchers in the NLS have brought the disciplines of sociology, ethnography, anthropology, linguistics, and cultural studies to the study of reading and writing. Their influences have changed our understanding of what learning is – and what supports learning. Traditionally, we would draw on the disciplinary base of psychology in order to understand the complex cognitive processes of reading and writing. While the importance of this discipline and cognitive development should not be minimised, the new discipline of anthropology – with its emphasis on the social acquisition of literate practices

– helps to broaden our understanding of what reading and writing skills are and how they are best supported.

The insights achieved in theorising adult and child literacy in the NLS suggest new opportunities and new ways of tackling the issue of literacy. Issues emerging from NLS research draw our attention to the socio-economic status of learners, their social class, social practices, geographic locations, gender, their forming identities - and the effects of these on reading and writing practices.

NLS researchers have identified four basic components of literacy: 1) a technical component, 2) a functional component, 3) a socio-cultural component and 4) a critical component. These four elements of literacy have been described in different ways, with different terms, such as Freedbody and Luke's (1990) description of four literacy 'roles': code breaker (which implies technical, coding competence), meaning maker (which implies semantic or functional competence), text user (which implies pragmatic and social competence) and text critic (which suggests critical competence). Becoming literate, then, involves shaping and mastering the repertoire of capabilities called into play when managing texts in ways appropriate to various contexts.

2.1.1 The technical component

The technical component of literacy refers to the ability to read and write - in the sense of decoding and encoding texts (Freedbody and Luke, 1990; Street, 1984). At the grade six level, the level of decoding texts would go beyond 'sounding out' letters in words. Children at this level should be competent at word recognition and have a vocabulary that enables them to read continuous text at the 11 – 12 age level. It must be pointed out this is separation into the different components of literacy is for schematic purposes – and should not be taken literally. Clearly all levels of literacy are interrelated and the action of 'decoding' usually implies engagement with all the aspects of literacy.

2.1.2 The functional component

Being 'functionally literate' means being able to use or draw on a wide repertoire of reading and writing strategies to perform specific functions (Martin, 1997). For example, a grade 6 learner should be able to perform reading and writing tasks such as writing a story, a personal letter or a shopping list.

2.1.3 The social component

The third element of literacy refers to the social framework in which the literacy practice is acquired. The literacy events that have shaped learners' lives - and how they have dealt with those literacy events - will influence how they deal with literacy events at school. Learners who have not been

acculturated into practices of reading and discussion of books and other texts will find it difficult to achieve and sustain academic literacy in the school context. Thus we should think not just in terms of what Wenger (1998) and others call 'in-the-head knowledge' - or what was referred to above as 'technical' knowledge - but also of learners' behaviours and practices in relations to texts.

Heath (1983) observed that both parents and children of mainstream, middle class families are 'consumers' of literacy. She provides some initial evidence concerning the nature of family and community literacy practices. In middle class homes children see adults and siblings reading for various purposes and in different ways. However, children in working class communities tend to be listeners and observers in a stream of communication which flows about them and is not channelled or modified for them.

Literacy 'events' within the home are related to differences in culture and language (Heath, 1982) and that this is closely related to school success. There is preliminary evidence suggesting that the way teachers shape classroom discourse is at times limited in scope and not reflective of the diversity of student language and culture (Cairney, 1994; Street, 1996). As well, there is preliminary evidence to indicate that changes in classroom programmes and environments can be made to make them more reflective of the cultural and linguistic diversity of students (Barton & Hamilton, 1998).

2.1.4 The critical component

The fourth component of literacy refers to the student's understanding of the operations of literacy itself (Freire & Macedo, 1987). A critical approach at the grade six level, for example, might be the critical 'reading' of advertisements so that learners understand how advertising works to persuade us to buy particular products.

It is important to note that, though presented separately, the four components of literacy co-exist and can be simultaneously acquired. While the four elements suggest a hierarchy of literacy levels, it should be remembered that in classic Freirian methodology, for example, the critical level would be tackled first, with learners being 'conscientised' (that is, engaged in a dialogue around a critical issue – such as drug abuse in schools) before they engage with the technical literacy practices needed to engage with the particular issue at the level of text (Freire, 1970, 1973).

In addition to building on the research traditions of ethnography and anthropology, NLS researchers drew on earlier educational theories, such as Vygotsky's (1962) socio-cognitive understanding of learning. Vygotsky emphasises the important role of culture in influencing how individuals learn and think and his work has had a significant impact on research demonstrating that cognition is 'situated', that is, it occurs in and is related to specific

contexts. Vygotsky's work shows us that we need especially to understand and respond to the cultural contexts in which students' knowledge is embedded and which significantly affect their expectations about learning and their identities as learners - or what Luis Moll (2002) refers to as their 'funds of knowledge' and Bourdieu has referred to a 'cultural capital' (quoted in Carrington & Luke, 1997). Vygotsky particularly emphasises the role of culture in mediating learning - that is, in providing the tools (words, conventions, symbols, signs, etc.) through which knowledge is mediated and communicated. Vygotsky has thus influenced the current understanding that learning and knowledge are to a large extent culturally and socially influenced.

2. 2 The relationship between general reading skills levels and abilities and academic success

Research from a broad range of disciplines and perspectives has contributed to our understanding of the relationships between culture, language, literacy and school success. It is not my intention to attribute the failure of children from disadvantaged backgrounds to deficits in their family environments, linguistic use, or the children themselves; but rather to understand the role that home culture plays in education – particularly when there might be significant differences between the school culture and the home culture.

Freire and Macedo (1987) point out that literacy is part of the process of becoming critical about the historically and socially constructed nature of one's experience. To be able to 'read the world' and to begin to understand the political nature of the limits and possibilities that make up the larger society, one must be able to 'read the word'. Freire and Macedo thus emphasise the link between reading ability and generally critical or intellectual ability.

Bernstein (1996) talks about 'vertical' (or academic) and 'horizontal' (or everyday) discourses – and the important relationship between them.

'Horizontal' discourses are those which we engage in as part of our everyday conversations, reading and writing practices. Bernstein believes that the richer these discourses (which include supplementary reading activities), the less challenging it becomes for the individual to manage the difficult 'vertical' or academic discourses.

Gee (1992) believes that all people have both 'primary' (or home based) discourses and 'secondary' (outside of the home) discourses. An example of a secondary discourse would be the discourses that other people use in their homes, those used in church, in shops and offices, in libraries, in banks, in science laboratories, in schools and other institutions. Gee feels that the more varied the discourses that children are exposed to, the better prepared they will be for academic study.

Gee suggests that 'short of radical social change' there is 'no access to power in society without control over the social practices in thought, speech and writing essay-text literacy and its attendant world view' (1992). This has implications for the way literacy is defined and used at school, the programmes we set up with and for learners and their families, and the relationships that exist between schools and communities (Cairney, 1994). The match or mismatch in literacy level between home, community and school is of vital importance in addressing the specific needs of all learners, but in particular, of those who experience difficulties with schooling.

However, there is still much to be learned about this topic. What we do know is that classrooms are not simple places; they are dynamic interactional spaces where individuals come together for the purpose of schooling. They are influenced by teachers, learners, and their different areas of knowledge, skills and cultures (Freire & Macedo, 1986). Classrooms are a forum for negotiating culture. But whose culture, and on what (and whose) terms is this culture negotiated? Furthermore, what impact do such practices have on the achievement of all students? (Cairney, 1994).

2.3 Ways of building and sustaining a reading culture in disadvantaged communities

A supplementary reading culture is difficult to create in a classroom context, because such a culture is more appropriately constructed in the social and cultural environment of the home and community. However, what teachers should be able to create is a more culturally sensitive classroom environments that will play at least some part in promoting a supplementary reading culture. The difficulty is in applying these understandings to the development of culturally responsive classroom environments and pedagogy. As Forster explains:

If this line of research is to have a significant impact on practice, researchers must explain and practitioners must understand the cultural, linguistic, and sociolinguistic principles undergirding [culturally responsive] practices. If teachers are going to become reflective practitioners, they need to possess both theoretical and practical knowledge of how to use cultural, linguistic, and sociolinguistic information to develop ways of teaching that not only to respect cultural diversity but insure high levels of literacy (Foster, 1992: 309).

Working within this 'social practices' model, theorists and practitioners have begun to offer some insights as well as practical suggestions for how to build

and sustain a reading culture among children (and adults) who do not practice reading as part of their normal social or cultural activities. Fingret and Drennon (1997) for example, suggest family literacy activities that can involve the whole family in meaningful events such as family histories, family reading projects, community book exchanges, mobile library facilities and other culturally meaningful activities.

Parent involvement in children's literacy education has long been accepted as a central element in effective schooling (Delgado-Gaitan, 1991; Schneider and Coleman, 1993). Scribner and Cole (1981) describe literacy as social practice in which learners are apprenticed into group membership (Rogoff & Lave, 1984; Rogoff, 1990). Can such apprenticeship be successfully initiated for children by schools in cases where parents' literacy experiences are different from those that the schools advocate? Or does this kind of initiation cut children off from their parents in sometimes tragic ways, as Wong-Fillmore, in a report on emergent literacy through the medium of English, has convincingly argued (1985). Wagner expands: 'If literacy is culture, then intervening with or "tampering" with literacy... is to change, sometimes forcibly, the way people live' (1991). Many researchers have similarly argued that the imposition of an 'autonomous model of literacy' (Street, 184; Gallimore & Goldenberg, 1993), in which literacy is seen as separate from culture, may be a significant part of the reason so many attempts at increasing literacy levels fail.

Literature on intergenerational literacy programs includes a surprising number of negative programme evaluations: critics complain of programmes that 'train' or 'coerce' parents in how to read to their children (Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988); of programmes that 'blame the victim', that imply that homes have 'no literacy', and that perpetuate the 'we know, you don't know' dichotomy (Shockley, 1995). White, Taylor & Moss's 1992 review of parent-involvement programmes is devastatingly negative: the authors conclude that programs aimed at newly increasing numbers of immigrant school going children and their parents must aim to involve supplementary parent education, careful selection of materials, and different ways for telling stories, teaching, speaking and thinking.

A meta-analysis (Bus, van Ijzendoorn & Pellegrini, 1995) comparing 29 studies on intergenerational transmission of literacy, does not support literacy enhancement through book reading unconditionally: the authors suggest that if the reading situation is unpleasant and the interaction ineffective, insistence on book reading without attention to family literacy habits is likely to be counterproductive.

Research over the past years has proposed a variety of mechanisms to improve familial effects on child literacy, some of these mechanisms for intergenerational transfer are discussed below:

2.3.1 Simple Transfer

Much research in the field of literacy development documents straightforward transfer effects (that is, that parental literacy skills and behaviours are transmitted directly to children through activities like picture book reading and writing shopping lists). It is worth noting, however, that most of these effects have been documented during the pre-school and kindergarten period - so they are effects on emergent literacy skills rather than on sophisticated reading. Story book-reading, for example, has been identified as a source of knowledge about print (Clay, 1979), letters (Burgess, 1982), and the characteristics of written registers (Feitelson, Bracha & Goldstein, 1986; Purcell-Gates, 1988). Belief in the efficacy of book-reading as a site for direct transfer of print-related knowledge has been a source of intervention programs such as family reading books for Hispanic immigrants in the US (Goldenberg, Reese & Gallimore, 1992), and Feitelson's classroom library movement (Shimron, 1994) in Israel).

The presence of refrigerator letters, posters, paper for making lists, newspapers, and books in the home, and parental efforts to direct children's attention to environmental print have similarly been assumed to promote child literacy, through a direct transfer mechanism (Toomey & Sloan, 1994; Goodman, 1984; Harste, Woodward & Burke, 1984).

Transfer explanations account for social class differences, particularly in the skills of kindergarten children. Social class differences in children's reading performance do not disappear when educational TV programmes are introduced, for example. Sesame Street and Head Start. Nowadays, most children, even those from families where the parents have little or no education, arrive at kindergarten able to sing the alphabet song and to recognise letters - but the long-term literacy achievement of children from poor families has not improved (Snow et al, 1991).

A major criticism of the simple transfer view is that literacy consists of much more than the print skills that can be transferred during book-reading, attention to ambient print, or collaborations on early writing tasks. Furthermore, many children who will go on to be successful readers have, in fact, not learned anything about letters or their shapes, names, or sounds, during their preschool years. In Scandinavia, for example, where adult literacy rates are the highest in the world, parents are discouraged from teaching their children anything about print before they enter school at age 7, suggesting that the powerful effects of collaboration go far beyond the transfer of specific bits and pieces of literacy knowledge (Svensson, 1994).

2.3.2 Participation in Literacy Practice

An alternative view of parental effects defines literacy as social practice, thus emphasising the parental role in generating a set of literate practices in which

children can participate. Literacy is seen as a natural reaction to certain societal needs, and children copy this behaviour in order to solve the problems they encounter (Goodman, 1986). According to this view, one major parental role, then, is to model literacy as a practice useful in solving problems, and to establish social literacy practices that children can participate in as a critical part of their lives, rather than simply transmitting or transferring literacy.

Those who emphasise literacy as social practice tend also to believe that literacy is so prominent in modern life that even very uneducated families engage regularly in the use of literacy (Leichter, 1974; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988), though the specific purposes for which literacy is used may differ from family to family. If literacy is a cultural practice more than a psycholinguistic skill, then children for whom the purposes and rules of school literacy are unfamiliar and obscure might well be expected to fail through unfamiliarity. It could be argued, though, that the various uses of literacy differ in level as well as in type - that families who use literacy only to make lists, recite from the Bible, or fill in forms are displaying lower-level, as well as socially and culturally distinct, literacy skills.

Some have criticised the social practice theorists by pointing out that there are many families, even in the United States, in which literacy practices are essentially absent, and the ubiquitous print of the larger environment is invisible to family members. Purcell-Gates (1995), for example, studied an

urban Appalachian family in which both parents were illiterate, and practices such as using street signs to find directions, using food labels in shopping, or noting the arrival of mail were totally unfamiliar. Needless to say, the children in this family encountered enormous problems at school, among which their lack of familiarity with the uses of literacy was as great as their unfamiliarity with letters and written words.

The social practice view of literacy, which emphasises the parental role in literacy acquisition, tends to go hand-in-hand with a view of literacy being relatively easily acquired and more or less universal. However, there are some children raised in literate homes who fail to become good readers. The explanation for failure in the acquisition of literacy at school in such cases is that the literacy practices a child knows from home are not valued at school (that is, that there is a home-school mismatch).

2.3.3 Enjoyment and Engagement

There are significant individual differences in skills of children from similarly literate backgrounds (differences even among children from the same family). These difference might be explained by the level of enjoyment which a child derives from reading. Those who hold this view would argue, for example, that the positive effects of parent book-reading, especially bed-time story telling, on child literacy derive primarily from the enjoyment that is associated with books and the linking of literacy with one-on-one parental attention and

affection. Successful parental intervention programs emphasise making book-reading fun and enjoyable – for example, selecting books of interest to the child and responding to child interests (Svensson, 1995). Children, it is assumed, learn from their parents that literacy is a source of enjoyment, and the enjoyment they experience motivates them to persist through the often difficult early stages of literacy acquisition.

Views regarding the importance of affective factors in helping to explain literacy outcomes are supported by the demonstrated increase in the complexity of the reading matter one can comprehend, if the topic is of interest (Scollon & Scollon, 1981). Furthermore, reading with engagement and expectation of enjoyment leads to more time spent reading – the reader gains more practice, and thus greater Fluency, which is a major predictor of long-term reading outcomes.

Csikszentmihalyi (1991) points out that many children have sufficient extrinsic motivation to keep them involved in literacy acquisition, since they believe parents' and teachers' precepts that literacy is a prerequisite to school success and achievement in later life. But for children who have less reason to believe in literacy as a route to success – for example children with adult acquaintances who are unemployed despite their education – reading enjoyment may be crucial to keeping children focused on literacy long enough to make serious gains.

2.3.4 Linguistic and Cognitive Mechanisms

Finally, researchers have argued that the parental role is most crucial in helping children to develop the oral precursors to literacy, such as a sophisticated vocabulary, question and answer skills, and extended conversation skills. These skills will help learners to acquire the literacy skills themselves at school.

A large vocabulary has been associated with literacy development across a variety of studies for children speaking different languages and learning to read in a variety of instructional settings (Anderson & Freebody, 1981). One of the ways that a larger vocabulary might promote reading is obvious in a language like English, where the pronunciation of words is not easily predictable from their spelling. In this case, knowing what the word might be can help eliminate mispronunciations and misidentifications in most cases. However, vocabulary also predicts literacy in languages like Spanish, in which the spelled form is absolutely unambiguous as to pronunciation. It seems likely, then, that vocabulary knowledge in these cases provides the background information that the reader can use to help in the task of comprehension.

One might expect that children in families who talk a lot have larger vocabularies. In fact, talking a lot might not correlate with talking in ways that

introduce relatively sophisticated words. In a study of 75 low-income families with pre-school aged children it was found that families who use more sophisticated or rarer vocabulary, that is the vocabulary that goes beyond the 8,500 most common words in the English language, are the families whose children score well on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, a test of receptive vocabulary given when the children are five years old (Beals & Tabors, 1995). It seems, then, that exposure to less common, more sophisticated vocabulary at home relates directly to children's vocabulary acquisition.

Beyond vocabulary, though, performance on tasks like describing pictures or telling stories in a way that is relatively complete, detailed, and comprehensible relates to reading. Telling stories and describing pictures have in common the demand to produce extended discourse. Extended discourse emerges when talk deals with complicated events or topics, when a simple story is embellished by making connections to feelings, related events, causes and implications, when talk moves beyond facts to explanation, or beyond opinion to argumentation.

One might expect that children learn how to do this sort of thing from participating in opportunities at home to hear or provide extended texts – for example, opportunities at meal times to tell family members about their day or to listen to their parents explain something complicated. Results from various

studies confirm that that this is the case (Beals, De Temple, & Dickinson, 1994; Snow & Kurland, 2000). It seems, then, that opportunities need to be created to help to engage children and adults in extended discourse in the home; this is likely to build skills in producing extended discourse of precisely the type that is needed for high levels of literacy.

3 RESEARCH METHODS

In this section of the report, I describe the different methods and approaches for the collection and analysis of the research data. I have used both quantitative and qualitative research methods, although mainly qualitative methods have been used owing to the relatively small numbers of participants in this research project.

In terms of qualitative approaches, I have made use of 'life history' or narrative methodology to enable learners and their parents to make sense of their past experiences as readers (or non-readers) – and in the process of telling their stories, many suggested directions for changes in reading practice were generated. As Sparkes (1994) points out: 'presenting moments from the lives of learners can fracture our taken-for-granted views and lead us to engage in some serious rethinking about ourselves and others as teachers'. This in itself, is justification enough for conducting life history research.

The participatory nature of the narrative methodology created the opportunity for community members, parents and learners to talk about reading, often in small informal groups, both inside and outside of the school environment. The narrative research process itself and follow up meetings with myself as the researcher/teacher acted as a further opportunities for sheltered talk, and many

of the parents used this chance to reflect on how and why they might bring more reading into their homes.

It is difficult to say exactly what the effect of the research process was. It was the first time anyone interviewed the parent - or asked them to write stories, as I did. As the research project progressed over the year, I detected changes in both parents' and learners' attitudes. I cannot ascribe these changes in attitude to the research project, but the process of interviewing, answering questionnaires, attending meetings, and so on did start a process of change because the research process is about communicating of ideas to someone else. I think that over a period of time one could build up the trust and background knowledge to discuss ideas - and that process of discussion and the evaluation of ideas would probably lead to change.

Some of the characteristics of the life history that I noted are as follows:

- Narrative data produces a 'window' on the complexity of the lived experiences of others.
- By producing narrative data, researchers and participants use can use the research process not only to reconstruct events, but to construct *meaning* from lived experience.
- The data production process can become a process of self-development through narrated reflection.

- Narrative data can produce non-narrative knowledge.

3.1 Quantitative methods

3.1.1 Learner Questionnaires

Four questionnaires were conducted with learners over the period February 2002 – August 2002. In the classroom learners were given questionnaires to complete. The questionnaires were in English and made use of simple language and large font letters, suitable for grade 6 learners. Some learners needed guidance in order to fill in these simple questions. These learners were assisted, but I tried not to influence their responses as I wanted evidence to emerge about the reading culture of learners in a non-threatening, comfortable environment.

- Questionnaire 1 concerned learners' reading habits in February (see Appendix A).
- Questionnaire 2 concerned learners' passive leisure habits (see Appendix B).
- Questionnaire 3 concerned learners' reading activities during the June/July 2002 school holidays (see Appendix C).
- Questionnaire 4 concerned learners' reading habits in August (see Appendix D.)

3.1.2 Parents'/guardians' questionnaire

I designed a questionnaire for parents/guardians to fill in, which was distributed to a variety of homes in the community. In some cases the questionnaire was conducted with parents and/or guardians when they visited the school. I assisted these parents with the completion of the questions, but tried not to influence their responses to the questions.

- Parents'/Guardians' questionnaire (see Appendix E).

3.2 Qualitative Methods

3.2.1 Qualitative methods used with learners

The finding of information on learners' supplementary reading required 'field research' – observations of learners' reading practices during class and outside of the classroom. I designed several 'literacy events' (such as several trips to the library, visits to book shops, and a visit to the Doulos – the floating bookshop). I also designed qualitative research instruments, such as structured observation charts, to capture this data. I used a variety of interview techniques – such as focus group interviews and individual interviews to find out more about learners' reading practices.

Drawings on the theme of reading

The learners were requested to describe by means of drawings how they felt about reading. They then discussed their drawings with me.

The library corner

Learners were requested to assist in building a library corner in the classroom. I observed how they arranged this – as well as how they subsequently made use of this space.

Reading time observations

Learners were allocated a 35-minute period of silent reading time. A 35-minute period was also allocated to reading aloud and story telling. In this period, I read a segment of a book aloud. Learners were then requested to follow this up with silent reading on the same book and then I asked different learners to give a brief synopsis of the book, which everyone read. This is followed with a general class discussion on the book. For example, I read from simplified versions of *A Christmas Carol* and *Great Expectations* and placed 20 of these readers (that is, 20 copies of *A Christmas Carol* and 20 *Great Expectations* readers) in the library corner. The choice of reading texts was determined by the books which the school and the public library was able to provide.

Stories on audio-tapes

Learners were also introduced to the audio cassettes of children's classics, such as *Black Beauty* by Anna Sewell, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll, *Just so stories* by Rudyard Kipling, *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett.

Library Visits

Together with the chief librarian, I planned a literacy event at the Town Centre library in Mitchells Plain. This enabled me to do field research by observing the learners' reading practices as well as the general interest they showed in the library.

Field Trip: Table Mountain

On the 22nd of April 2002 the learners were taken on a guided tour of Table Mountain. They were provided with reading material based on the plants and animals found on the mountain. I followed this up with a discussion on the outing and the readings.

The MTN Science Centre

In June the learners visited the MTN science centre at Canal Walk where the instructors also gave them a short 'lecture' on the centre. The children were given worksheets and various tasks had to be completed. The instructions had to be read and followed. They were shown and played with computers. They

read maps and did some technological experiments with equipment provided by the centre. This was accompanied with hands on experience. I observed how they were able (or not able) to integrate reading into the general experience at the MTN Science Centre.

The Doulos: The biggest bookshop on water.

In August the Doulos missionary ship came to Cape Town. This ship has the biggest bookshop on water in the world. The children visited the ship and I observed their behaviour with the books in the various displays.

'Trip into Fairyland'

In order to motivate the children's interest in the fictional world of fairy tales the annual school concert's theme was 'A trip into Fairy land'. It was held in June 2002. The learners performed 'Red Riding Hood' at the Mitchells Plain hall. They created their own story line and a video was taken of the concert, which I studied in order to find out something about their attitudes to the world of fantasy and stories.

3.2.2 Qualitative methods used with parents

I conducted family interviews to find out about the family's reading practices. Parents were asked to write stories about their own reading practices and experiences. I also designed structured observation charts to capture field data from learners' homes.

Interviews

I conducted interviews with 18 parents in their homes. This also gave me the opportunity to observe their home environments. The interviews took place in Mitchells Plain, Portlands, Tafelsig, Westridge and Heinz Park.

Narratives

Parents were invited to a parent meeting on reading and children's academic performance. At this meeting, I asked parents to write short narratives about their own views on reading and their own reading practices and experiences.

3.2.3 Environmental scan

I spent several days collecting data on how 'reading friendly' the environment was. This entailed field work to find out about reading support structures – as well as possible 'disincentives' to reading in the community.

Interview with librarian

One in-depth interview was conducted with the chief librarian of Town Centre Library, which is the library that is closest to the school.

Interview with police superintendent, Mitchells Plain

A short interview was conducted at the police station to find out about safety in the area with regard to library visit. This visit was followed up with a letter from the superintended (see Appendix F).

3.4 Research Ethics

As I have been working with young children, I ensured that parents' or guardians' permission was obtained in writing for interviewing or observing the learners. Parents were given information about this research project by letter and were also addressed on the project at a parents' meeting. I explained the possible benefits that the reading research project could have on their children's reading and academic success in order that they are able to make informed decisions about whether or not to participate in the research project.

In conducting the research, I respected the confidentiality of all parents, learners and schools involved in the research. I also ensured that information with regard to the research findings was given to the research participants, both learners and parents, in a way that was appropriate for their level of understanding.

4. PRESENTATION OF DATA

I have presented the data from the Quantitative and qualitative research separately. In the next section on analysis, I synthesise the findings from the different data sets.

4.1 Quantitative data

In this section I have presented the data produced by the qualitative research instruments, starting with the learner questionnaires, which are as follows:

- Appendix A: Learners' reading habits in February 2002
- Appendix B: Passive leisure habits
- Appendix C: 'Me, myself and my reading – part 1': Learners' reading activities during the June/July 2002 school holidays.
- Appendix D: 'Me myself and my reading – part 2': Learners' reading habits in August 2002

The learner questionnaires attempted to ascertain what reading activities the learners were currently engaged in, the quantity and the quality of the reading, and the importance or value which learners gave to reading as a leisure or supplementary activity. By 'quantity' it was meant, how much leisure time was devoted to reading as well as how many texts were read. In terms of

'quality' it was meant what types of texts and what types of reading practices learners engaged in.

4.1.1 Data from learners' questionnaires

The average age of learners in grade 6 is 11 years.

Time spent reading

These are times as estimated by the learners themselves (see 'Reading Habits' questionnaire, Appendix A):

n = 40	Minutes
The average total amount of time spent reading in a school day	24
The average amount of time spent reading on weekends	24
Amount of time spent reading books daily	25
Amount of time spent reading magazines daily	18
Amount of time spent reading newspapers daily	15

The MODE (that is, more commonly occurring score) for each category is 15 minutes.

It must be pointed out that this data is not mathematically consistent, as the daily totals (406 minutes) and the overall total estimation (168 minutes) do not agree. However, it must be remembered that these are estimates done by the

children themselves. Despite the roughness of the children's estimations, these findings are supported by other research, for example the survey conducted by Head Start (2000) and the US National Assessment of Educational Progress (1985). What is notable in these reports, as well as the findings reported in this project, is that the daily and weekly estimations are low. This can be seen more clearly in the following frequency table, which shows how many learners fall into each category: reading 15 minutes per day or less, reading approximately 30 minutes per day and reading for 60 minutes or more each day:

n = 40	>15 min	+ - 30 min	<60 min
Number of learners/total reading times	21	16	3
Number of learners/weekend reading times	18	13	4
Number of learners/daily book reading time	18	16	4
Number of learners/daily magazine reading time	21	10	2
Number of learners/daily newspaper reading time	18	6	2

Reading quantity

The amount of reading done was estimated by the learners themselves (see 'Reading Quantity' questionnaire, Appendix A). The following table shows the average amounts of books, magazines and newspapers read per month:

n = 40	No. of items
The average amount of books read per month	2.5
The average amount of magazines read per month	2.1
The average amount of newspapers read per week	1.71

The MODE for each category is 2 items.

The frequency table gives a clearer picture of the number of items which most learners (according to their own estimates) read on a monthly basis:

N = 40	No. of items			
	>1	+2	+3	<4
No of learners/amount of books read per month	9	14	5	12
No of learners/amount of magazines read per month	9	11	7	8
No of learners/amount of newspapers read per week	17	16	4	2

As can be seen, most learners estimate that they read less than 2 books per month, read less than 2 magazines per month and read less than 2 newspapers per month.

Passive leisure

Learners were asked about their leisure time preferences (see 'Passive Leisure' questionnaire, Appendix B). A frequency table was then drawn up, as follows:

N = 40

NUMBER OF LEARNRS WHO:	Always	Yes	Sometimes	No	Never
Listen to the radio	4	14	19	1	1
Watch television	16	17	5	1	1
Listen to music	7	14	17	1	1
Read books	6	6	26	0	2
Read pamphlets and newsletters	4	5	15	6	9
Read magazines	7	9	18	3	3
Read newspapers	1	2	22	1	13

As can be seen, most learners claim to do the following 'sometimes':

- Listen to the radio
- Listen to Music
- Read Books
- Read Pamphlets and newsletters
- Read Magazines

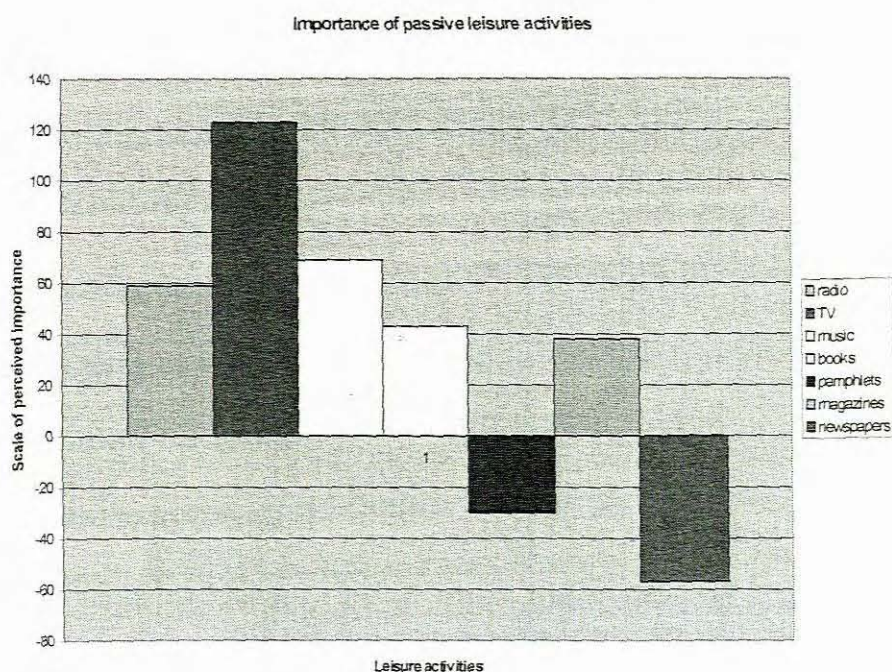
The only passive leisure activity that all learners partake of is watching television. This is an international phenomenon, as several studies on how children spend their time outside of school show (Anderson et al, 1988).

From the questionnaires, a weighting of relative importance was given to learners' passive leisure activities, according to the following scales:

Description	Numeric value
Always	+5
Yes	+3
Sometimes	0
No	-3
Never	-5

A total weighting was then given to each of the categories:

Leisure item	Numeric value
Radio	59
TV	123
Music	69
Books	43
Pamphlets	-30
Magazines	38
Newspapers	-57



The graph illustrates the relative importance which learners ascribe to the various leisure activities. TV viewing clearly plays an important role in learners' leisure, but books along with radio, music and magazines are also seen as leisure activities. Newspaper and newsletters are not perceived as leisure activities.

Learners' activities in the June/July school holidays

Upon returning to school after the June/July school holidays, learners were asked to fill in a questionnaire, in which they ticked 'Yes' or 'No' to a list of activities (See 'Me, myself and my reading' questionnaire, Appendix C). On average, the following were the activities which the learners participated in during the June/July 2002 school holidays:

n = 41

ACTIVITY	No	%
1. Reading books	26	63
2. Visiting the library	18	44
3. Visiting the library with parents	11	27
4. Reading as a family	3	7
5. Reading the newspaper	22	54
6. Read to by parents	7	17
7. Visiting book shop	12	29
8. Discussing books	5	12
9. Reading magazines	32	78
10. Reading comics	21	51
11. Read once a week	15	37
12. Read daily	14	34
13. Read more than once a week	18	44
14. Watched more TV than reading	33	81
15. Played more games than reading	23	56

Few of the learners participated in social aspects of reading: reading as a family, being read to or discussing reading. Television, again, dominated holiday activities. As confirmed by the graph (above), magazine reading was also an important holiday leisure activity. These findings are similar to those

found in others studies on home influences on emergent literacy (Snow, 1993; Snow et al, 1991)

Nature of reading activities

During the third term, learners were given another questionnaire on 'Me, myself and my reading' to fill in (see Appendix D). This questionnaire tried to find out more detail about the type of reading activities which the learners engaged in, as well as the quality of their reading practices.

ACTIVITIES N = 39	No	%
Learners who have a library book	26	67
Learners who are 'forced' to read	9	23
Learners who read a book after watching a video on the book ¹	21	54
Learners who read a book with the help of an audio cassette ²	14	36
Learners who read regularly	20	51
Learners who take a long time to finish a book	20	51
Learners who read books with no pictures	34	87
Learners who read books with pictures	4	10
Learners who use dictionaries	29	74
Learners who choose own books	36	92
Learners who read <i>The Plainsman</i>	25	64
Learners who read more magazines than books	21	54

¹See section (4.2) below for more detail on this activity

²See section (4.2) below for more detail on this activity

The table above indicates that many learners choose their own leisure reading books, most are reading books without pictures, most learners use dictionaries, most learners have library books and most learners read the community newspaper. Approximately half the class, however, are slow readers, or readers who need support with their reading or some form of external motivation for reading.

Reading mark

The learners were each awarded a 'reading mark', which was based on two sets of questionnaires (Appendices B and C) as these questionnaires contained the children's names. The mark was then adjusted according to my knowledge of the children's reading levels and practices.

Reading mark and academic results

The reading mark which was developed, was then correlated with the various academic results, as follows:

n = 129

ITEMS CORRELATED	R
Overall academic mark (June, 2002) AND 'reading mark'	0,759
English mark AND 'reading mark'	0,796
Afrikaans mark AND 'reading mark'	0,616
Mathematics mark AND 'reading mark'	0,501
Science mark AND 'reading mark'	0,555
Geography mark AND 'reading mark'	0,476
History mark AND 'reading mark'	0,725

The table above shows strong correlation between the 'reading mark' and learners' overall academic mark, their English mark and their history mark.

There is a weaker correlation between the 'reading mark' and the learners' Afrikaans marks, Mathematics mark, Science mark, and geography mark.

4.1.2 Data from parents'/guardians' questionnaires

Parents and guardians were asked to complete a questionnaire:

- Appendix E: 'How lost in reading are you?': Parents'/Guardians' reading habits.

This questionnaire was given to parents to find out what their own reading habits consisted of, and to what extent the parents supported their children's

reading through family based reading activities. The aim of the questionnaire was to find out something about family reading practices and the home reading environment.

The results of the questionnaire are tabulated below:

N = 40

NUMBER OF PARENTS WHO:	Always	Yes	Sometimes	No	Never
1. Read to their children	2	4	13	6	16
2. Buy books with children	3	6	14	4	12
3. Have a 'home library'	0	9	2	14	15
4. Have library cards for themselves	1	17	2	8	4
5. Have acquired library cards for children	1	34	2	3	1
6. Visit the library regularly	5	8	20	4	3
7. Read books as a family	1	1	9	19	11
8. Discuss books with children	5	8	6	16	7

The table above shows that many parents do not read to their children, or discuss their reading as a family. This finding is consistent with many other studies on intergenerational reading practices in poor or working class homes (Snow & Tabor, 1996). Like many poor or working class families, the parents

in this study is very dependent upon the library to provided children with reading material (Shimron, 1994; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988).

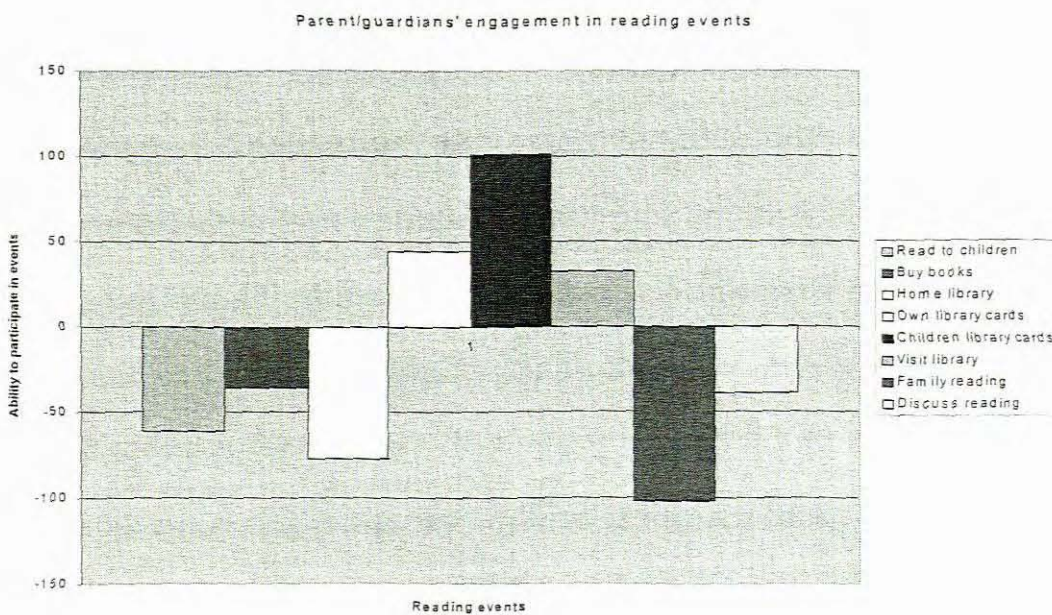
From the questionnaires, a weighting of relative importance was given to parents/ guardians' participation in reading events, according to the following scales:

Description	Numeric value
Always	+5
Yes	+3
Sometimes	0
No	-3
Never	-5

A total weighting was then given to each of the categories:

Activity	Numeric value
Reading to children	-61
Buying books with children	-36
Building home library	-77
Own library cards	44
Children's library cards	101
Visit library regularly	32
Read books as a family	-102
Discuss books	-39

The graph below highlights parents' library dependence; it also shows that parents do not value – or are unable to participate in - family/social reading practices.



4.2 Qualitative data

In this section, I present, firstly a summary my observations of learners engaging in a variety of reading-related activities; this is followed by my findings from parents' interviews, etc; the final section contains an environmental scan for incentives and disincentives for reading.

4.2.1. Qualitative data from learners

Drawings on the theme of reading

At various stages from January – September, the grade six learners were asked to do drawings of a) their leisure activities, b) things they enjoyed, c) self portraits with reading matter. It was evident from the content of their drawings – and from their discussions on their drawings - that most learners preferred music, dancing, listening to the radio and watching television to reading. Even when actually asked to draw a picture of themselves with a book, several learners drew themselves watching television or playing a game.

Observations in the library corner

The school donated most of the books for the reading corner – some were provided by me from my home, and some were on loan from the library – chosen by the librarian and myself. Most of the children did not use the library corner on their own initiative, but did use the corner when required to for silent reading times. Several other reading researchers have found a similar reluctance among young school children of poor or working class

backgrounds to read books that are chosen for them or imposed upon them by teachers of middle class backgrounds (Purcell-Gates, 1995).

Reading time observations

Many of the children were restless, fidgeted, talked or played games with each other during oral story reading periods. At the follow up time in the library corner, many children 'pretended' to read, played games or conversed with friends in preference to actual silent reading.

Listening to stories on audio- and video cassette

This system I used – whereby learners listened to an audio tape – and then read the book when the tape was handed to another learner – seemed encouraged the learners to complete a book without pressure to do so from me. I counted seventeen learners who went to the library table in the library corner to fetch books which were put onto the audio tape and which previously had been lying there untouched for six months.

Library visits

At the first library visit it was obvious that the learners were not used to the customs and standards of behaviour in the library and were not familiar with the local library. They did not know where the children's section of the library was and they did not understand library regulations. In choosing books to take home, many children did not seem to realise what book they had

chosen – for example, they were not able to distinguish between books of fiction and non-fiction. Their handling of the books was also quite rough and the librarian needed to show them how to turn pages carefully so as not to tear them, and so on. We made several visits to the library and at each visit the children became more familiar with the children's collection and comfortable with the rules and regulations of the library.

Field trip: Table Mountain

This trip was not planned as a 'literacy event' – as the English teacher, I took advantage of a science outing to encourage reading around the outing. However, the 'non-literacy' event of taking children on the cable car stimulated their interest not only in the environment and geography of Cape Town, but in reading about the mountain. Most of the learners responded positively to the texts and materials that they were provided with and asked to read as a follow up to this outing. This was one of the few times that most of the class responded enthusiastically to a reading task. The use of activity settings for stimulating emergent literacy has been documented as strategy for promoting emergent literacy (Gallimore & Goldenberg, 1993).

Field trip: MTN Science centre

Gallimore and Goldenberg's (1993) thesis on the promotion of literacy through activity setting was supported by the learners behaviour at the visit to the science centre. The various technological gadgets at the centre fascinated

the learners. As a follow up to this event many learners were unusually keen to visit the library and take out books on the technology which they had seen and experienced.

Visit to the Doulos

This visit was planned as a 'literacy event', but had many of the characteristics of the two non-literacy events described above as the bookshop was on a ship, which was accessed through the Waterfront. The 'event' thus was experienced as a highlight of the year by many of the grade six learners. By the time this visit was made (September, 2002) I observed that the most learners showed a keen interest in the books and handled the books with much respect. This was particularly noticeable in contrast with several other children from different schools – who did not show much interest in examining the content of the books and in treating them carefully. As a follow up to the visit, the learners were again keen to read books about ships, and study maps and brochures of the Waterfront.

'Trip into Fairyland'

Many learners were keen to participate in the play and to develop their own characters. This fostered an interest in some learners to read books based on fairy tales. Learning the lines of the play also helped them with their reading aloud as some learners were struggling very hard to read with expression.

4.2.2 Qualitative data from parents/guardians

Interviews with parents/guardians

Most parents complained of a busy day, the responsibilities of family life, of long working hours and leaving home early and arriving late in the evening, which made it difficult to spend quality time listening to their children read or reading to the children themselves. Most parents say they cannot afford to buy reading material. Most of the homes where I conducted interviews did not contain any books and there was not much in the way of other reading material – such as newspapers – around. I did notice some popular magazines in some homes – as well as television guides.

Parents' narratives

Parents wrote about their own experiences as learners. Many of these experiences were not particularly memorable or pleasant. Reading was associated with punishment for several parents. Some of the younger parents wrote that they found libraries 'too quiet' and 'boring' and preferred 'loud places – like discos'.

4.3 Environmental scan

Most of the learners live in disadvantaged communities, where there are high levels of illiteracy and poverty. Parents who have jobs, tend to work long hours and cannot afford to read, as they cannot afford the luxury of buying

books, magazines or even newspapers. Books are free of charge at the library - but for some parents (for example, in Tafelsig) it is extremely dangerous to walk to the library with their young children due to the undesirable characters who hang around. My own experience with the learners was not pleasant, and I was concerned for the children's safety.

On the walk to the library, the learners and I experienced unpleasant urine odours at several places, such as the entry of the bridge and the busy taxi rank. There were many people loitering, who passed rather rude comments as we walked past them. Some of these people might have been harmless, but others might have been dangerous. The language they used was not desirable for young children to be exposed to. When crossing the bridge the learners were faced with bustling hawkers and crowded stalls – with lots of pushing and shoving. Several of the learners were very nervous en route to the library.

We saw two policemen trying to catch a neatly clad man who was resisting being arrested and who was fighting with and punching one of the policemen. He fell on his buttocks in the middle of the road. The learners and I had to cross the bridge at the Town Centre, which was congested with taxi drivers and their respective guards who interfered with the learners by calling out rude remarks. Along the bridge were unsanitary conditions and strong smells of urine.

There is no book-shop, or second hand book exchange shop in the area. Most of the learners have never been to a bookshop with their parents.

With regard to the children's homes, I noticed hardly any reading material. Some learners live in corrugated iron homes in Heinz Park. Parents work late and do not have the time or inclination to read. Some parents are illiterate and others have low literacy levels – several of the parents attend adult education classes at the Westwood Adult Learning Centre in Mitchells Plain. Some learners live with guardians, an aunt or grandparents

Some learners say they have to create their own reading time. Others say they don't read because there is no time to read, as they have to do homework and household chores. They prefer to relax in front of the television. Most learners say their parents do not listen to them reading and the majority of the learners do not see their parents reading. A few live with grandparents who are not literate and therefore do not read at all. A few children complained about the danger of going to the library and that there was nobody from their homes to go with them.

Very few learners read *The Plainsman*, the local free community newspaper, or even sections of it. Magazines are too expensive and very few learners' parents can afford to buy magazines. I also asked the learners if they ever read the different notice boards in shops and supermarkets, such as the menu

items in the delicatessen, descriptions of cakes in the confectionery, lists of items on sale in the haberdashery, and so on. None of the learners practiced this exercise. When I asked them about the music shop – and the lists of pop songs and pop stars they responded more favourably.

Interview with the chief librarian

The librarian explained that families tend not to use the library. It mainly serves older learners or students in need of a quiet place to study. He noticed that when parents bring learners to the library – for example for a school project – they are unable to help their children or themselves in the library. They are not able to cope with the written instructions in the library or the written work sheets that are often given to the children by their educators. Many adults cannot become library members because in order to do so, they need to have a municipal account or a telephone account. Many families in the area are unable to produce this. The library has suffered great losses due to false addresses given by borrowers. When a follow up is done on an overdue or missing book, then finding the borrower is, according to the librarian like finding ‘a missing pebble on the beach’. The librarian also complained of inappropriate behaviour in the library and of pages being torn out of expensive and irreplaceable books, such as encyclopaedias.

Interview with police superintendent

The local police superintendent was concerned for N = 39

the safety of the children en route to the library. He felt that a mobile library to serve the school would be preferable to the children visiting the library. He wrote a letter to confirm his approval of the possibility of a mobile library due to the danger of the route to the library for young children (see Appendix F).

5. ANALYSIS OF DATA

In this section I analyse the research finding and draw out some of their implications for the learners, their parents and for teachers.

5.1 Quantitative data

5.1.1 Data from learners' questionnaires

Time spent reading

According to the children's own estimations they do not spend much time reading for pleasure. It is important for the learners to devote the time to reading in order to build sustainable reading skills (Kunesh & Farley, 2000).

Less than 60 minutes a day, as most learners estimated as the time spent reading, will not ensure that they develop sustainable reading skills and practices (Taylor, 1983).

Reading quantity

As estimated by the learners themselves they read less than 2 books, 2 magazines and 2 newspaper per month. Learners are therefore not achieving a range of reading genres in their supplementary reading. By not reading enough texts of different genres (such as information texts, procedural texts as well as stories) they will not be introduced to ideas of discourse specific language or to acquiring long term sustainable reading practices for academic studies – both at school or at higher education levels (Martin, 1997; Heath, 1999).

Passive leisure

While most learners do read books 'sometimes' for enjoyment, they are not getting enough variety in their leisure reading – particularly from newspapers, or newsletters. The factual genre is thus missing from their supplementary reading. Their main leisure reading consists of magazine reading.

Unfortunately, unlike newspapers, newsletters, and informational pamphlets, magazines will not give learners access to academic discourses, which are important for their academic work (Martin, 1997; Heath, 1999). It seems that most learners are probably watching too much television, which is a concern of parents and schools in many parts of the world (Bourne, 1999).

Although, it should be pointed out that not all television viewing is necessarily detrimental to a reading culture. Television viewing does give the children access to the 'factual genre' in the form of news and documentary programmes. It can also inspire or motivate learners to go to the library or to ask the teacher about reading resources about an interesting television programme, or even reading magazines about television celebrities.

Learners' activities in the June/July school holidays

Television watching appears to dominate leisure activities. Few of the learners participate in social aspects of reading: reading as a family, being read to or discussing reading. The social aspects of reading in the home or primary discourse environment (Gee, 1992) with primary care givers are particularly

important for building sustainable reading and academic reading and writing practices (Buz & van Ijzendoorn, 1988).

Nature of reading activities

Many learners now choose their own leisure reading books from the library, most are reading books without pictures, most learners use dictionaries, most learners have learned about libraries in the course of this research project. But most learners still do not make use of community based literacy resources, such as reading the community newspaper. Leichter (1974) points out that reading about community issues with parents is a powerful way of helping children to understand how reading helps us to mediate the world, and to understand the relevance of reading for effective social – or other – action.

The lack of newspaper reading in the learners' home again points to the fact that the learners are not covering a wide enough range of texts in their reading – particularly factual or informational texts.

Approximately half the class are slow readers, or readers who need support with their reading or some form of external motivation for reading. These learners would need special attention and support for their reading (Goodman, 1984; Goodman, 1986).

Reading mark and academic results

The strong correlation between learners' 'reading mark' and learners' English mark probably derives from the fact that both their English mark and their reading mark was awarded by me. One would expect a strong correlation between reading and History, as the latter is a largely 'reading' subject. There is a weaker correlation between the 'reading mark' and the learners' Mathematics mark, Science mark, and Geography mark. Possible reasons for this could be the different 'intelligences' (Gardiner, 1983) used by children in the more technical subjects – where logic, practical activities and visualisation play as important a role as reading. However, the weak correlation between Afrikaans and 'reading' needs further investigation.

5.1.2 Data from parents' questionnaires

Parents are clearly attempting to support children's reading by ensuring that they have library cards and visit the library. This is commendable, particularly in the light of the unsafe environment in which the library is located. The fact that parents do not go to bookshops or are not engaging in building a 'home library' for children could largely be explained by financial factors as well as environmental factors – such as the lack of bookshops in the area. However, the area in which parents could support children, that is social reading activities such as bedtime reading, family reading, discussing items in the newspaper, etc – is not addressed by parents. This creates the impression that the school, or the educator, is seen by parents to be as the initiator of any

reading activity within the disadvantaged community. The danger here, as Coleman et al (1966) point out, is in the school unintentionally reinforcing parents' and children's negative images of themselves as readers. The children need to be empowered to make their own supplementary reading choices in order to develop sustainable literacy and to become intrinsically motivated to read (Csikszentmihalyi, 1991).

5.2 Qualitative data

5.2.1 Qualitative data from learners

Drawings on the theme of reading

Judging from the content of the drawing, reading does not seem to play a significant role in their lives. The challenge for teachers and parents is for children to reconceptualise reading as an enjoyable and meaningful activity in their lives.

Observations in the library corner

The setting up of a library corner was not entirely successful in promoting reading. While some children did enjoy the books that were set out for them, I feel, that because the choice of books was not the children's own, I missed the opportunity of linking to the reading corner to the learners' interests – until the 'non-literacy' events provided an extrinsic motivation for reading and I was able to select appropriate reading resources. Before this, I think the

impression was created of the school and the educator as the initiators of reading activities, rather than the children's needs or interests driving the supplementary reading activities. I feel that this lack of 'empowerment' (Delgado-Gaitan, 1990) with regard to reading choice is of particular importance in the context of a disadvantaged community. School practices can, with the best of intentions, reinforce patterns of disadvantage and disempowerment (Carrington & Luke, 1997).

Reading time observations

My impression is that most learners found the set or suggested reading activities boring and simply tried find ways of escaping the reading process – for example by 'pretend' reading or by engaging in other activities during the silent reading time. This is in contrast to the children's behaviour when they requested texts after the various outings.

Listening to stories on audio- and video cassette

Learners enjoyed listening to the stories – perhaps because this enabled them to play with the tape recorders. The system whereby the child started listening to a book – then handed over the tape recorder to another child - seemed to encourage the learners to complete a book without being forced to do so. Seventeen learners went to the library table to fetch a book that they had listened to on cassette, when the same book had been there untouched for six months.

Library visits

It is a pity that, due to concerns for the children's safety, more visits to the library were not possible. While it was obvious that at first the learners were not used to visiting the local library, as they became more familiar with the library, it provided them with a wider range of choices and options in terms of leisure reading than the school or classroom reading corner was able to provide.

Field trip: Table Mountain

This 'non-reading' event promoted more reading activity than planned 'reading' events in that the learners were keen to read brochures and books and study maps on Table Mountain, the cable car and the flora and fauna as a result of this outing. It seems as if the outing was a particularly memorable and meaningful event, which the children wanted to either 're-live' through texts and images of the mountain – or that the outing inspired the children to seek out more information on the mountain. The reading matters provided by myself and the school was enthusiastically read. In addition, the children requested a visit to the library to find more information on Table Mountain. Research by Gallimore and Goldenberg (1993) and by Clay (1979) emphasise the importance of activities – particularly interesting and stimulating activities – as a way into literacy.

Field trip: MTN Science centre

Similarly, here the various technological gadgets fascinated the learners so much that some were unusually enthusiastic to visit the library so as to find books on the various technologies that they learned about on the visit. Snow and Kurland (2000) in a short research paper show how children's fascination with activities involving magnets stimulated reading on the topic. These 'non-literacy' events were important reading stimuli and – when followed up with learner initiated reading activities - are perhaps one of the ways in which schools can play a role in building a culture of reading amongst learners.

Visit to the Doulos

The visit to the floating bookshop is another case in point. In addition, there was quite a big difference in the children's behaviour around books from their first visit to the library and the visit to the Doulos. At this visit, they seemed much more familiar with books, much more interested in their contents and more knowledgeable on how to handle them.

'Trip into Fairyland'

Learners' attitudes towards the play were very positive. They enjoyed doing the research to find out about the characters they were portraying – so in a way staging a play – or other event – which takes its theme from a book or books, is another strategy for promoting learner directed reading activity.

5.2.1 Qualitative data from parents/guardians

Interviews with parents/guardians

Most parents do seem to understand that reading is important and that reading will contribute in some way to their children's advancement at school. Many parents, however, when confronted with the choice of a trip to the library (which is unsafe and unsavoury) or an evening in front of the television – will chose the latter any time. This is understandable, but parents need to understand the impact of the lack of reading resources on their children's academic success (Svensson, 1994).

The parents lack the financial resources to build 'home libraries' for entertainment or for information and reference. While this is understandable and expected, the parents are not imaginative when it comes to reading resources and may need support in this regard. They do not, for example, consider reading from the free community based newspaper to children, or having a family discussion about news events in the community – perhaps because they are unaware of the importance of such seemingly minor reading events (Toomey & Sloan, 1994).

This points to the absence of a reading culture, which is exacerbated by the lack of stimulating reading resources.

Parents'/guardians' narratives

The narratives written by the parents provide an insight into the complexity of parents' lives. Many work very hard at formal and/or informal jobs, with several of the parents coming home late at night, after the children have gone to sleep. Many use the television as a convenient 'baby sitter' – and allow children to watch television until they fall asleep. The tradition of reading a bedtime story to children is largely unknown in many homes – although oral storytelling at bedtime is more common. Oral story telling can become an important entry point into story reading (Harste et al, 1984; Michaels, 1986), especially when there are many library books available which are based on indigenous stories, and which contain events, characters and illustrations that children and parents can relate to.

Many parents are very young and many are single mothers, living at with their own parents. These young parents are more interested in having fun, going to dances and listening to music with their contemporaries than with reading – either for themselves or with their children. Grandparents play an important role in most of the children's lives, but many of the grandparents are not literate, or do not feel comfortable around books.

There were very few parents who had positive feelings or good memories associated with reading – most of them associate reading with unpleasant general school experiences – feeling inferior, or 'stupid' or being forced to

read books as a form of punishment. As they do not see reading as an enjoyable activity, they tend to pass these values on to the children (Scheider & Coleman, 1993). Thus very few of the parents grew up with a love of books or with a tradition of being read to by and it seems as if many of these values are being transferred to their own children.

5.3 Environmental scan

The lack of a child-friendly and safe route from the school to the library or from peoples' homes to the library is a serious disincentive to supplementary reading activities. The library is an important community resource, and one of the ways in which children can identify supplementary reading as being community driven – rather than as school driven. It is for this reason, that I am a bit reluctant to depend entirely on a mobile library resource for the school – although in the interests of the children's safety – this might be the only way to ensure that the school has a variety of up to date reading resources.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusions

6.1.1 A multi-pronged approach to reading

What has emerged from this research is that children's supplementary literacy is very complex – and if it is to be adequately supported, it will need a 'multi-pronged' approach. By this I mean, it not sufficient to only offer or encourage supplementary reading texts and activities at school, these need to be reinforced - or better still – initiated in the home. Reading resources and reading support also needs to be seen as a community responsibility. The metropolitan council provides libraries and librarians – but they also need to ensure safe access to the library. Finally, the children themselves need to be proactive in expressing their reading interests and needs to educators, parents and librarians. Often it is the teachers or the librarians who choose texts which they think are suitable, but as several research projects have shown reading comics or magazines about popular music or celebrities is a powerful route into other texts (Whitehurst et al, 1988). It is counter-productive for teachers, parents or librarians to make judgements about children's leisure reading – this is an area which they should 'own' and be empowered to make their own choices and decisions (Delgado-Gaitan, 1990).

The need for a safe environment

Most learners live within a community where there are high levels of crime and poverty, where not even the policemen are safe. The route to the library is unsafe due to the undesirable characters who loiter in the area and the unsanitary conditions on the route to the library. There is no bookshop, second-hand bookshop or book exchange in the area. Despite these difficulties, many parents are making the effort to get their children to the library – and to use the library themselves. Learners who live with their grandparents find it more difficult to attend the library, because the elderly are, understandably, less intrepid when it comes to venturing into unsafe areas.

Parents role's in promoting reading

Most parents complain about long working hours and lack of funds, which results in them being unable to buy books, newspapers or magazines. However, there are many ways in which poor or working class parents can support children's emergent literacy. Most learners have never seen their parents reading and have not experienced their parents listening to them read. Reading and texts are rarely discussed. Very few learners participate in social aspects of reading, by reading as a family, being read to or discussing reading. Reading newspaper and newsletters are not perceived as appropriate behaviours to engage in with children. Most learners read less than two books per month, read less than two magazines per month and read less than two

newspapers per month. However, many learners perceive reading magazines during their school holidays as a leisure activity. This is probably learned behaviour as parents – when they can afford it – perceive magazines as ‘entertainment’. By including literacy ‘events’ in the home, parents can make a big difference in terms of children’s attitudes to reading and reading practices.

What the parents are unwitting doing, is disassociating reading from the home and associating it only with school. Thus reading for pleasure, for one’s own reasons or research, to follow instructions and so on – is not being supported by parents.

The role of the school in supplementary reading

Schools should play some role in promoting supplementary reading, but the role should be a supportive one, rather than a directive one. Traditionally, the school or the English teacher lays out a selection of what s/he considers to be ‘interesting’ texts. However, this approach to support supplementary reading does not seem to be particularly effective. For example, during silent reading periods most of the learners in this research project found such reading a bore and tried to find ways to avoid it.

The school could, however, play a more supportive role. The field trips to Table Mountain, MTN Science Centre, the book-shops at Century City and

the visit to the Doulos exposed the learners to new horizons and learning experiences which tended to motivate them to read about these experiences. So in this regard, where there are school outings or other memorable events plans, the school can play a supportive role by ensuring that the learners have access to a range of reading texts on the experience. Enabling learners to choose their own reading books is affirming to the new reader.

Approximately half of the class in this research project were slow readers or readers who need support with their reading – and most needed some form of external motivation for reading.

The role of the library

Libraries exist to provide the reading resources to a community. The needs and interests of the community drive the acquisition of those resources. In poor and working class environments the library carries almost all the responsibility for this as community members cannot afford to buy books, etc. In this regard, the library needs to ensure that indigent families have access to the library and its resources. It needs to be a welcoming place and needs to constantly ensure that its resources meet the needs of the users. The practice of barring people who cannot provide telephone accounts, etc means that poor people are unable to use this resource, which could make a big difference to the academic success of learners. While the library does not want to lose books, it is even more important that the library does not lose its users.

It was evident at the start of this research project that the learners were not familiar with the library, and they did not visit it regularly. The librarian confirmed that many parents have the same problem as the children in finding their way around the library, finding and deciding on books. The constant demands that this placed on librarians was seen as a problem as the library is understaffed.

6.1.2. Television vs reading

The only passive leisure activity that all learners partake of is watching television. Drawings, which were done on the theme of reading, clearly indicated that most learners preferred music, dancing, listening to the radio and watching television to reading. Television dominated the learners holiday activities. Television viewing thus clearly plays a significant role in parents' and learners' leisure time - but books, listening to the radio, music and magazines are also seen as leisure activities by a few learners. The challenge is for parents to control television using, to refrain from using the television as a 'babysitter' and to model reading practices which will be beneficial to children.

Parents and teachers could encourage reading activities that are based on television programmes which are popular among learners. This might be a 'way into' reading for learners who are very dependent on television for their leisure activities.

6.2.3 Reading and academic success

There is not sufficient evidence from this research to posit a clear relationship between supplementary reading and academic success, however, other research suggests that this relationship does exist (Heath, 1982; Heath, 1983).

According to the results of this research, a 'mark', which was developed to quantify learners' reading level, frequency and enjoyment of supplementary reading texts, was correlated with various academic results. There was a strong correlation between the learners overall academic mark and the learners reading mark as well as their English and history mark. There were weaker correlations between the reading mark and the learners' Afrikaans, Mathematics, Science and Geography marks.

6.2 Recommendations to support reading.

As I pointed out above, a multi-pronged approach to supporting supplementary reading is indicated. These recommendations are thus grouped according to the different types of support needed. Many of these recommendations have already been made, for example, by UNESCO in the recommendations for early intervention in building a reading culture, or are implied by other researchers (Kunesh & Farley, 2000; Jeffers and Olebe, 1994). I have attempted to contextualise the recommendations in the light of this research project.

Supporting parents

1. Parents need to build their understanding of the important role which supplementary reading plays – for example, but receiving information or attending a parents’ meeting on this subject. Parents need to become aware of the impact they have on their children’s reading patterns by getting them to be positive interacting listeners.
2. Parents need to take responsibility for building a reading culture in the home, using freely available resources – in this regard, the school could offer a workshop on making reading resources from community newspapers, ‘Read Right’ supplements from old copies of The Sunday Times, etc.
3. Parents need to create literacy events in the home – the school could over reading material or workshop based training on reading to children in stimulating way, the importance of discussing written texts, helping parents plan family reading, etc.
4. Parents also need to be orientated to the library and the role it can play – ideally this should happen in the library and a local librarian could arrange a special parents’ library orientation – and follow up library skills training if needed.
5. Parents could assist each other. The school might be able to identify mentors among the parents who could assist families where literacy levels are low – although this would have to be sensitively.

6. Parents could start a book exchange club in the area – which would model behaviour that that reading books can be a source of entertainment, magic and enrichment.
7. Parents with low literacy levels could be encouraged to attend adult education classes at Westwood Adult Learning Centre, Westridge Mitchells Plain.

School based support

8. The school needs to make arrangements for children to attend the library at least once a month – and needs to ensure learners’ safety on the route to and from the library. Parents might be able to assist in this regard by forming neighbourhood watch patrols during the day so that learners could walk safely to the library.
9. The school can also request a mobile library to come into the school, or the area, if the safety issue cannot be resolved.
10. To encourage reading for pleasure by introducing learners to different motivational classroom strategies
11. The school can also draw on community based reading resources, such as *The Plainsmen* and involve the children in debate about community issues.
12. The school needs to allow the learners to choose their own books and to respect the books they choose to read.
13. Learners should contribute their choice of books to the library corner.

14. The school should arrange book activities and exchanges with Grade six learners at neighbouring schools.
15. The school should assume a culture of reading, for example, by dramatising a play from a book and invite parents and learners to attend the performance.
16. The school needs to take learners on educational excursions so as to enhance and enlighten their perspectives on various topics in a hands-on way – and follow this with reading resources based on the experience.
17. The school, parents and children should be involved in fundraising for the kind of books that the children are interested in.
18. The school must ensure that there is secure storage for books, as well as user-friendly ways for learners to access its books (where there is no school library).

Library based support

19. The librarian should be kept informed of school outings, etc and ensure that there are reading resources to support these.
20. The library should offer orientation to parents and workshops on reading and how to support children's reading, etc.
21. The library needs to lobby for safer and more secure conditions for adult and elderly borrowers as well as children. Some form of community transport to and from the library might be considered.

22. Librarians should consult with learners about ordering library resources to ensure that its collection – particularly its children’s collection – is appropriate to the needs and interests of the users.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Learners' reading habits in February 2002

Appendix B: Passive leisure habits

Appendix C: Learners' reading activities during the June/July 2002 school holidays

Appendix D: Learners' reading habits in August 2002

Appendix E: Parents'/Guardians' reading habits

Appendix F: Letter from the police superintendent of Mitchells Plain Station

Appendix G: Photographs

APPENDICES

Learner Questionnaires

Appendix A: Learners' reading habits in February 2002

Appendix B: Passive leisure habits

Appendix C: Learners' reading activities during the June/July 2002 school holidays

Appendix D: Learners' reading habits in August 2002

Parents'/Guardians, questionnaire

Appendix E: Parents'/Guardians' reading habits.

Appendix F: Letter from the police superintendent of Mitchells Plain Station .

Appendix G: Photographs

Appendix A

**Learners' questionnaires: Reading habits in
February 2002.**

READING HABITS A

e

Learners:- Grade 6

Total reading time per school day	1	2	3
Total reading time on weekends	1	2	3
Book time daily	1	2	3
Magazine time daily	1	2	3
Newspaper time daily	1	2	3

READING QUANTITY B

Number of books per month	1	2	3	4
Number of magazines per month	1	2	3	4
Number of newspapers weekly	1	2	3	4

A
15MIN
30MIN
60MIN

KEY B
1-NONE, 1
2-TWO
3-3

Appendix B

Passive leisure habits

Gender. M/F

PASSIVE LEISURE

DO YOU:

- | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. LISTEN TO THE RADIO | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. WATCH TELEVISION | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. LISTEN TO MUSIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. READ BOOKS | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. READ PAMPHLETS
& NEWSLETTERS | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. READ MAGAZINES | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. READ NEWSPAPERS | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

KEY

Y= YES 1

N= NO 2

A= ALWAYS 3

S= SOMETIMES 4

N= NEVER 5

Appendix C

**Learners' reading activities during the
June/July 2002 school holidays**

Gr 6

Me, myself and my reading

June holidays 2002

Please tick off where necessary

	Yes	No
1. I read a book		
2. I visited the library		
3. My parents went with me		
4. We read books as a family		
5. I read the newspaper		
6. My parent reads a story to me		
7. I visited book shops		
8. I had book discussions		
9. I read magazines		
10. I read comics		
11. I read once daily		
12. I read daily		
13. I read twice/thrice a week		
14. I watched more tv. than reading		
15. I played games more than reading		

Appendix D

Learners' reading habits in August 2002

Please tick off where necessary

Yes

No

1. I have a library book
2. I read because I am forced to do so
3. Watching a video (a part of it) on a story eg Mary Poppins motivates me to read more.
4. Listening to a story on a cassette motivates me to read
5. I read regularly
6. I take long to finish a book
7. I read books with no pictures
8. I read books with pictures
9. I use a dictionary
10. I choose my own books
11. I read the Plainsman
12. I read more magazines than books

Appendix E
Parents'/Guardians' reading habits

For Parents/Guardians

How lost are you in reading?

Do you:

- | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Read to your children? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Buy books with your children? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Build a home library? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Acquire library cards? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| a) For yourself | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| b) For your children | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Visit the library regularly? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Read books as a family? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Discuss a theme of a book? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Key

Y= yes 1

N= no 2

S= Sometimes 3

A= Always 4

Ne= Never 5

Appendix F

**Letter from the police superintendent of
Mitchells Plain Station**

SUPT. C. J. KLAASSEN
SAPD
MITCHELLSPRING

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT
IT IS VERY DANGEROUS
FOR CHILDREN TO COME
ALONE TO THE PUBLIC
LIBRARY IN TOWN CENTER
ESPECIALLY IF THEY ARE UNDER
THE AGE OF 10 YEARS.

I WILL RECOMMEND A MOBILE
LIBRARY TO HELP TO
EDUCATE THE CHILDREN.

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
MAR 28 1968	
FBI - SHERMAN	

~~Supt~~
C. J. KLAASSEN

TR 3001634

Appendix G

Photographs

