

Self-regulated strategies for writing engagement with Intermediate Phase learners

by

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explored the efficacy of a self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) programme implemented at a primary school in a community impoverished by the historical after-effects of apartheid and the current government's ongoing inability to address these injustices. The SRSD programme was implemented to investigate whether it improves the creative writing skills of learners and at the same time encourage critical thinking. This investigation balanced a sensitivity to the challenges of a wider school community surrounded by gang warfare, drug addiction and unemployment, against a need to empower young learners and instil a sense of self-worth. A broadly Freirean background was set against a meticulous examination of the daily writing of learners. The main research questions underpinning this study were: i) *How can self-regulated strategy development improve Intermediate Phase learners' creative writing skills?* ii) *What factors inhibit motivation during creative writing?* Observations, interviews and an intervention programme comprised the data collection method. Through observation of learner interaction during the intervention programme and by monitoring the steps implemented by the SRSD programme, it was shown that learners improved their writing skills and self-image. A learner-centred learning environment was sustained throughout the investigation. This atmosphere of security and care proved that unruly behaviour and a sense of despair could be overcome. Behavioural inconsistencies and inability to write and think freely were gradually resolved in a holistic manner which supported the efficacy of the SRSD programme as well as the Freirean priorities underpinning it.

DECLARATION

I, hereby declare that the content of this thesis represents my own work and that the dissertation has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification. It represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. I further declare that all sources cited or quoted are indicated or acknowledged by means of a comprehensive list of references.

Signed:



Kay Roberts

Date: 21 October 2022

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DEDICATION

To my late father and grandmother, your support and investment in my education will continue to extend into the future. To my dear mother, thank you for believing in me. My daughter, may this be a testament that all things are possible if you believe and work hard.

“And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

Colossians 3:17

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANA	Annual National Assessment
ANC	African National Congress
BLA	Balanced Language Approach
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Statement
CEA	Centre for Evaluation and Assessment
DoE	Department of Basic Education
ePIRLS	Electronic Progress in International Reading Literacy Studies
FET	Further Education and Training
IEA	International Association for the Evaluation for Educational Achievement
ISP	Individual Support Plan
LOLT	Language of Teaching and Learning Learner Participants
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NIAF	National Integrated Assessment Framework
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Studies
PSFA	Peninsula School Feeding Association
RANA	Report on the Annual National Assessments
SGB	School Governing Body
SRSD	Self-Regulated Strategy Development
THRASS	Teaching Handwriting Reading and Spelling Skills
WCED	Western Cape Education Department

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Background and Context

This study was conducted in a community of poverty, crime and unemployment. These conditions are the result of apartheid which sought to elevate whites to be the ruling class while consigning Coloured people to specified areas where they could be trained to be servants and artisans. The education of Coloured people was purposely kept to a minimum because Coloured people were to be the servant class (Lubisi& Murphy, 2010: 256). After the democratic elections of 1994, the task of the new government was to undo these wrongs. Education was one of the most promising means of doing so. The government implemented Outcomes Based Education (OBE) which rested on the socialist foundations of theorists such as Paulo Freire (1978: 90). The new dispensation changed the old system of authoritarian education which had been engineered to keep suppress the non-White population. The African National Congress (ANC) government introduced learner-centred education which aimed to create a constructivist environment in which learners were enabled to develop as critical individuals who felt free to question and explore the landscape of knowledge. Creative writing is uniquely suited to this pedagogy in that it particularly seeks to liberate the imagination and critical faculty of the learner. This thesis emphasises the significance of creative writing as a means of liberating the talents and potential of the learner. Intellectual freedom empowers the individual by allowing her or him to emerge as an independent thinker who can play a vital role in uplifting the family and community.

Creative writing is an integral part of language skills at all academic levels. Writing is stipulated by the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). CAPS (2011:11) grew from OBE, and state that “writing encourages learners to process language, compels them to think about grammar and spelling, and accelerates acquisition of language”. Creative writing allows learners to communicate thoughts and ideas that are at times captured in their imagination only. Ogundokun (2013:12) argues that creativity is an essential part of social construction since it “entertains... and expresses human emotions,

cultural values as well as teaching morals.” Creative writing functions at a national and international level in our society. It enables the person to reach out beyond the self and imagine the condition of others, to gain a moral compass. Shelley (1821) writes: ‘the great secret of morals is love; or a going out of our nature, and an identification with the beautiful which exists in thought, action, or person, not our own.’ Going outside the self and identifying with the plight of those around us builds a society of selflessness, concern for others and care. Writing has always played an important part in the holistic development of learners’ language and has an even greater part in how learners demonstrate academic achievement in school and future careers. To develop the ability to become a successful and an astute creative writer is, however, not an easy task.

Education in South Africa under the apartheid regime was characterised by delineation of race, where non-white learners received fewer resources, poorer academic level instruction and were forced to learn in a language that was not their mother tongue. The Apartheid education system had nineteen different education departments run by the Department of National Education which resulted in great inequality (Lubisi & Murphy, 2010: 256). The core focus of the unequal education system was for people of colour to be educated in a systematic and rudimentary manner in order to serve their white oppressors (Kanjee & Sayed 2013: 443). The then education system focused on black oppression by discouraging learners from becoming critical thinkers, forcing rote learning, turning learners into passive recipients of knowledge (Kanjee & Sayed, 2013: 446).

Since the democratic election of 1994, an educational transformation occurred in South Africa. Reviewing how education has evolved in South Africa from the apartheid to post-apartheid era, a myriad of changes has affected how learning and teaching take place today. The new education system adopted the principles and beliefs of socially committed theorists such as Freire, (1978: 90) who believed that education is “*a social process... that cannot be forgotten or even be devalued.*” He contended that the oppressed have the potential to understand their world and maintain their position in society regardless of what they have (Shor & Freire, 1987: 105). Pre-apartheid education policies prevented learners of colour from becoming independent and critical thinkers. Creative writing is an expressive form of writing and as such is part of the school syllabus that is completely

proof against the kind of mindless rote learning enforced from 1948-1994. Creative writing is an active way of helping the writer to release thoughts and ideas to the world.

It has been reported on an international level in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Studies (PIRLS) 2016, that South African learners' literacy levels remain poor compared to international standards. On a national level in the annual national assessments (ANA) conducted by the Department of Basic Education (DoE) literacy levels among Grade 3 learners were lower than 40%. Systemic testing conducted by the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) on Grade 3, 6 and 9 learners, which are the receptive years for a new phase, revealed that learner writing levels are not improving as learners progress in their grades. Learners are tasked with ever more challenging topics as they proceed in their grades often before the steps have been completed. This process leaves many learners to stumble at later stages. They are left feeling that language is a recalcitrant puzzle.

In particular, many learners struggle to write creatively. Creative writing does not receive adequate teaching time or attention. Teaching of language is compartmentalised into language structures and conventions, vocabulary teaching and, lastly, creative writing. In many classes language structures and conventions are taught in isolation. Many teachers do not explicitly teach the linking loops of how language structures, conventions and vocabulary form the basis of writing sentences. Learners are not taught explicitly how to self-regulate their learning. Learners do not spontaneously use self-regulation procedures (Zumbrunn & Bruning, 2013: 93). According to Rish and Caton (2011:21) creative writing is a higher order skill that learners are expected to have mastered by the time they enter the senior phase of their schooling career.

According to Bloch (2009: 197) there are a variety of factors that hamper the progress of learners in academic writing. Problems are either macro-level challenges that are societal and systemic, while others are micro-level challenges that are intrinsic to the learner such as cognitive skills and language capabilities. Reasons seem to be increasing with the ever-changing demands of our curriculum and society, but Bloch (2009:179) maintains that creating proficient learners in reading and writing is not out of reach. It requires

committed and quality teaching. Teaching literacy should therefore not be restricted to the classroom environment but should be regarded as a societal function. Education is an enabler for social change in South Africa whereby communities can take it upon themselves to be agents of social upliftment.

1.2. Motivation for the study

Section 1.1 explains the significance of teaching creative writing in the historical context of a democratic South Africa. In order to ensure that learners are adequately prepared for creative writing, they need to be fully familiar with parts of speech, the rules of grammar and motivation to complete creative writing tasks independently. As an Intermediate phase teacher, the researcher noticed that many learners in Grade 6 had a low confidence level and lacked the motivation and skill to complete creative writing tasks independently. Since creative writing involves many processes, from planning, drafting, editing, and preparing the final draft, many other cognitive roles are at play when a learner is preparing a creative writing text. Learners have to envisage the story in their mind. (Dreascher, 2007:132) consider creative writing to be one of the “higher order” writing levels. With today’s easy access to online videos and gaming, many of the imaginary play processes of children have diminished. They are lured into passivity by a dependence upon online gaming, videos and cell phone usage. Quick-fix early stimulation has made children lazy to use their brain and imagination.

This difficulty led the researcher to research the self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) programme developed by Harris, Santangelo and Graham (2008a: 81). The goal was to assess whether the SRSD programme could improve the ability of Grade 6 learners to write creatively. This thesis presents findings from a qualitative study that was conducted in a Grade 6 class at a predominantly English medium school in Cape Town, although many learners do not have English as their home language. The study did not focus on helping learners who had other literacy barriers, such as spelling, reading or grammar. The focus of this study was on learners who struggled to write creatively, or had simply never been afforded the opportunity to do so. This study aimed: (i) to identify factors

that inhibit creative writing in learners, and (ii) to define whether intrinsic or extrinsic factors play a role in the challenges which learners encounter in terms of creative writing.

Learners worldwide find it difficult to prove their academic ability when challenged to express what they know or imagine or feel in the form of correct prose. This difficulty has become an important factor in the South African curriculum. The current CAPS (2011:11) document prescribes creative writing as one of the assessment criteria to test the writing skills of learners. The problem that teachers in higher grades frequently face is the fact that many learners are unable to complete writing tasks. They hand in creative writing pieces that lack detail and engagement. This task to some seems to be the easiest form of writing. In creative writing, the writer has the opportunity to write freely and expressively, and engage in a dialogue with the reader that is completely controlled by the writer. This is not the case, however, with many learners. Children often lack the motivation and imagination to be creative, to think of the situation of others, of places and times beyond their ken.

1.3. Importance of the problem

The annual national assessment (ANA) which is implemented by the Department of Basic Education (DoE) is a standardised national assessment. The systemic testing which is conducted by the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) was implemented to evaluate literacy and numeracy levels of learners in the province, and targets grades 3, 6 and 9. Even when teachers devote more time and effort to preparing learners for these tests, many learners still fail to meet the pass requirements for these tests. In Chapter 2 a detailed and broader view of the literacy problem faced in South Africa is set out. The poor performance of learners in literacy in South Africa is stated below to provide a deeper contextual background.

Table 1.1: ANA results Grade 3, 6 and 9

Grade	Annual National Assessment (ANA)		
	PERCENTAGE OF LEARNERS ACHIEVING 50% OR MORE: HOME LANGUAGE		
	2012	2013	2014
3	57	57	66
6	39	68	77
9	39	37	48

(Source: Department of Basic Education 2014)

The results in Table 1.1 for the ANA tests over the three years, 2012, 2013 and 2014, are alarming, especially if the progress of the learners is tracked as they progress through the grades. The ANA tests ceased in 2015 due to various unions boycotting the tests, but a concern for developed. Literacy levels are declining as learners proceed to higher grades. In May 2017, the current Minister of Basic Education announced that the ANA tests would be replaced by a National Integrated Assessment Framework (NIAF) to help teachers identify and remedy barriers in learning (Gerber, 2017).

Table 1.2: SYSTEMIC RESULTS: Home Language 2018 and 2019

Grade	Systemic Results	
	PERCENTAGE OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE: ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE	
	2018	2019
3	45,8%	44,9%
6	38,5%	42,8%
9	52,6%	53,6n%

(Source: Report on the Systemic results, Western Cape Education Department PORTAL 2020)

The Systemic results for 2018 and 2019 registered a decrease in learner performance in the foundation phase. Grade 3 learners dropped by 0.9 % from 2018-2019. Grade 3 learners struggle to write independently. Grade 6 learners showed a 4, 3% increase but the overall improvement did not constitute a pass mark for Grade 6. The pass mark for home language is 50 percent and above. Grade 9 improved in results but a significant improvement still needs to be made. There was only a 1 percent increase in results from 2018 to 2019. No Systemic tests were written in 2020 due to the COVID 19 pandemic

when many learners were home schooled. Many returned to school later in the year. Systemic results are to resume in 2021.

Despite all efforts with regards to testing learners' ability to read and write, two issues became evident: (1) Too little is done in classrooms to motivate learners to write creatively. Many teachers think that either a child has or does not have the ability to write. They do not invest extra time to help those struggling to reach the same level as the rest of the learners. (2) There is a lack of research on how to help learners become self-regulated writers in creative writing (Dreascher, 2007:132). There is a lack of proper teacher training on motivating learners and about self-regulation instruction. These two types of instructions work hand-in-hand. Both types of instruction stimulate learners to become independent, critical thinkers. In general, teachers lack the skills needed to teach learners to become self-regulated writers.

According to Floress, Beschta, Meyer and Reinke (2017:227) teachers are expected to “teach and include learners with diverse academic needs into a generalised education setting. However, many teachers are not able to meet and manage this and may regard it as the most difficult part of their job”. This is true when trying to manage learners who are reluctant to grasp a new topic and who are already finding it challenging to complete a task from which they feel disconnected. It is for this reason that teachers should be able to identify strategies that promote positive behaviour in the classroom. Motivating learners through praise, in the form of verbal or physical gestures, can result in favourable outcomes for learners. Sutherland, Lewis-Palmer, Stichter and Morgan (2008:223) state that praise can be effective for a range of behavioural outcomes, enhanced teacher-student relations and a positive teaching environment.

Floress et al. (2017:229) posit that there are two main types of teacher training, direct teacher training and indirect teacher training, citing that indirect teacher training might not be as effective as direct teacher training. Direct teacher training is more intentional and allows for intervention, and provides feedback. As with both methods mentioned, more research into the field is needed in terms of how to praise and motivate learners to write.

1.4. Aim of the study and research question

The aim of this study is to investigate how Grade 6 learners can exploit the SRSD programme to self-regulate their own creative writing.

The main research question that this study attempts to address is as follows: *How can self-regulated strategy development improve Intermediate Phase learners' creative writing skills?*

In order to identify and investigate self-regulated strategies to help learners to write independently in the Intermediate phase, it is essential to identify challenges experienced with creative writing and how self-regulated strategy development can help with learners' creative writing.

1.5. Overview of Research design

According to Kumar (2019:16-19) and Creswell and Creswell (2017:20) the main purpose of the research design is to explain how the researcher will find and select appropriate methods to answer the research question by using a logical plan. The qualitative research approach means that the researcher is able to explore and gather data from sources first hand and it enables the researcher to understand concepts, experiences and opinions first hand. By using a case study method in this research project, the researcher was able to: (i) employ multiple instruments for gathering data, in the form of observations and interviews, and (ii) monitor learner progress during the intervention programme (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:77).

The study used a two-phased approach to gather data. The criteria for learner participation were for learners who: scored between 40-49 percent in English Home Language in the first term and learners who were identified by their teachers as those who found it difficult to write creatively. The selected learners then wrote a pre-test to determine that they were suitable candidates for the study. Learners who scored below forty percent and above forty-nine percent were eliminated from the study. All data collected from this research

study were drawn from personal opinions and experiences of teachers expressed in semi-structured interviews, observations and concrete evidence gathered from the work of learner participants. Creswell and Miller (2000:100) emphasise that the aim of qualitative data is to summarise what has been observed and heard, analyse and interpret common patterns or themes in order to make sense of what is emerging. Analysis of the documents highlighted similar themes. Similar responses from the interviews were grouped together and assigned a code in order to formulate themes.

Monitoring processes were put in place to identify areas in which learners were weak. In this research study, the researcher became an observer since the researcher immersed herself in the site with the participants (Creswell & Miller, 2000:85). To monitor the progress of the learners, a pre-test and post-test were implemented to compare learner performance before the SRSD intervention programme and after the intervention programme. This gave the research study valuable input. The researcher was able to compare the progress of learner participants (LPs) before and after the intervention programme.

1.6. Chapter outline

This research study is presented across six chapters.

Chapter 1 focuses on the rationale for the research study and the origins of the research question. It defines how self-regulated strategy can help writing engagement in intermediate phase learners. The study seeks to identify and understand the impact that SRSD can have on intermediate phase learners.

Chapter 2 provides a literature review of existing research into topics related to the study topic and research question. Learner literacy performance levels on an international and a national level are examined to provide an overview of what constitutes literacy writing in CAPS, detailing specifically the writing process and the use of SRSD. The main objective of the literature review is to provide evidence from existing research that relates to the use of and effectiveness of the self-regulated strategy development programme.

Chapter 3 reviews the methodological approach undertaken to conduct the research study. It identifies the site, participants selected, and explain the data collection methods employed to determine the context of the problem. This chapter also reports on the ethical clearances obtained, as well as the validity and reliability of the study.

Chapter 4 presents the data collected from interviews, observations, pre-test, post-tests and a detailed and in-depth discussion of the SRSD programme and the lessons presented to learners.

Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the data. It reflects upon the themes that have emerged from the study. It discusses and demonstrates to what extent the research questions have been answered.

Chapter 6 summarises the overall findings of the research study. Limitations to the study are indicated, with concluding recommendations for further research.

1.7. Conclusion

In this chapter, the background to the study explained the historical and social significance of teaching creative writing. The research questions were stated. This research study seeks to explore how the SRSD programme could shape the self-regulation process of learners' creative writing ability, but most importantly, it seeks to define how learners in this programme were able to self-explore and develop their own critical thinking despite their own personal circumstances and barriers to creative writing (Freire, 2000: 72). By navigating through the intervention programme, they were able to navigate through their own learning experiences and embark on a journey of self-discovery. They were able to develop their own experiences.

Section 1.1 details why the researcher embarked on this study and reveals the current literacy levels in South Africa. It unpacks the motivation for the study in section 1.2. The impact of problems experienced in the classroom upon learner performance in the classroom is set out in section 1.3. Learner ANA performance was tabulated from the year

2012 until it ceased in 2014. Systemic results for learners are tabulated from the last two years. The aim and research question are stated in section 1.4 together with an overview of the research design undertaken. Section 1.5 previews the chapter outline.

Chapter 2

Literature review

2.1. Overview of chapter

This chapter presents a survey of the research study. Section 2.2 introduces the research study itself and the literature review undertaken to address the research question. In section 2.3 literacy performance levels are examined at an international and a national level. In section 2.4 what constitutes literacy writing is unpacked and discussed in terms of how it forms an integral part of the curriculum. Section 2.5 examines how CAPS sets out the home language curriculum regarding teaching approach, writing as a process and allocation of time. Challenges that learners experienced with creative writing are discussed in section 2.6. The self-regulating strategy development (SRSD) model is explained in section 2.7 with supporting literature on how it is used to help learners with creative writing. Section 2.7 explains the role that the teacher has to take to teach the SRSD programme in the class and the advantages that it offers. Section 2.8 sets out the motivational challenges that learners face in the classroom each day. The steps needed regarding pedagogy of teacher training at an institutional level are explained. The impact that this training has on learner engagement is discussed in section 2.9. Section 2.10 considers the South African classroom and how the SRSD programme fits in with existing strategies and theories. Section 2.11 concludes the chapter and presents the key issues that emerge from the literature review.

2.2. Introduction

Chapter 2 discusses literature on self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) and examines how this programme can enable learners to write independently within a coherent structure. The National Curriculum Statement (NCS) stipulates that learners need to be able to write independently. The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) as set out by the Department of Basic Education (DoE, 2011), lists creative writing as part of the focused language skills to be taught in *Writing and Presenting*. Although CAPS (DoE, 2011) stipulates the writing process and defines its stages, namely planning,

drafting, revising, editing and presenting, it mentions few strategies to equip learners who struggle with the planning process and sustaining the writing process. Many South African teachers teach learners whose language of teaching and learning (LoLT) is English. But, in the majority of cases, English is the first or second additional language (Dixon, Place & Kholowa, 2008:9). Teaching language and creative writing involves various strategies and learners differ widely in their ability to acquire knowledge and master language skills.

The literature review chapter provides an overview of existing literature which considers the move towards self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) to help learners become independent creative writers. The literature shows that creative writing involves various processes. It poses various carefully phased challenges for the learner who is unable to motivate herself or himself, or plan and draw from ideas.

2.3. Literacy performance

Writing independently is an important part of the skills that learners need to acquire in order to demonstrate writing competencies for assessment purposes. Many learners progress to high school with limited competencies to write independently and creatively. Bush and Gail (2015:16) comment on the difficulties that learners frequently encounter. They explain that writing involves a complexity of cognitive processes which require “drawing from memory, ordering and applying linguistic and operational skills.” The challenges experienced place even more strain on the learner, should the task of creative writing be performed under examination or test conditions. Since so much emphasis is placed on literacy development in South Africa and the below average results that learners achieve in the Systemic tests and Annual National Assessments (ANA), an intervention strategy is needed to help teachers foster a different learning strategy which assists learners who are underperforming.

2.3.1. Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) report

There is a world-wide movement to improve literacy levels. Developed countries place great emphasis on increasing learner competence in writing and reading. The difference

in learner literacy levels in South Africa and the rest of the world is highlighted in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). PIRLS is conducted under the auspices of the International Association for the Evaluation of Education Achievement (IEA) and managed by the International Study Center in Boston College. The study is overseen by the Centre for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA) in South Africa. The PIRLS study provides an accurate indication of the literacy levels in the country. PIRLS is administered every five years since its inception in 2001 and provides a reliable benchmark against which to assess South African learners compared to other learners around the world. The PIRLS assesses learner reading literacy in Grade 4 and Grade 8 from various participating countries. It then summarises learner performance under four levels: low level benchmark, intermediate level benchmark, high level benchmark and the advance level benchmark.

In 2006, the PIRLS test revealed that the South African Grade 4 and Grade 5 learners, who participated, fared the poorest from all the participating countries. The PIRLS 2007 report ranked South Africa last of all the forty countries who participated in the PIRLS assessment (Mullins, Martin, Foy & Drucker 2012: 133). The 2006 PIRLS test reported that 78 % of the Grade 5 learners who participated, did not achieve the lowest reading level benchmark (Mullins et al., 2012:133).

The 2011 PIRLS assessment showed no significant improvement in South African learner performance. Howie, Van Staden, Tshele, Dowsa and Zimmerman (2012:19) reported that in the international assessment of educational achievement, South Africa scored the lowest of all the countries, even lower than the other low-income countries who participated. Mullins et al. (2012: 133) highlight that, although there were countries with high performing marks in literacy, only 20% managed to reach the advanced level category. The results clearly state that an overall improvement in literacy is urgently required.

In 2016, PIRLS (2018) added an electronic extension simulating the internet environment, called ePIRLS. This was done to keep pace with the world of digital media inside and outside the classroom environment, and to evaluate how well learners read, interpret and

critique on-line information. South Africa did not partake in the 2016 ePIRLS (2018) evaluation but partook in the PIRLS standardised test. The results from the 2016 report were read by the Minister of Education, Angie Motshekga (2017). They did not reveal a significant increase in the reading levels of learners. The results for Grade 4 learners were below the PIRLS 500 centre point and failed to reach the lowest benchmark. An important observation from the 2016 PIRLS report demonstrated a disparity in gender in that girls outshone boys in the PIRLS test. South Africa is now preparing for the pilot study in 2021.

2.3.2. Literacy performance at national level - ANA test results and Systemic results

In 2001, the Department of Education embarked on their first national systemic evaluation across all nine provinces in South Africa. The rationale for the systemic test is to assess and monitor learner Literacy and Numeracy levels across South Africa. At the inception of the programme, Grade 3 learners scored 38 % for reading and writing in home language. These results highlighted the plight of learners struggling to read and write in South Africa. The systemic test conducted by the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) and the Annual National Assessment (ANA) administered nationally by the DoE include writing as one of the assessment components that requires learners to demonstrate their independent and creative writing skills. Learners are expected to start off the planning process and deliver a final written piece within the allocated examination time.

Table 2.1: ANA 2014 RESULTS: Average performance in each of the Grades in Home Language at national level

Grades	Average
Grade 1	63%
Grade 2	61%
Grade 3	56%
Grade 4	57%
Grade 5	57%
Grade 6	63%
Grade 7	n/a
Grade 8	n/a
Grade 9	48%

(Source: Department of Basic Education 2014)

Foundation Phase (Grades 1-3) reached averages above 50% yet the results do not reflect an increase in averages across the Grades. Instead, there is a decrease in each respective Grade, with the exception of Grade 6 which attained an average of 63%. Grades 7 and Grade 8 do not participate in the ANA tests - see Table 2.

2.3.2.1. Report on the Annual National Assessment 2012, 2013, 2014

The results and analysis of the Annual National Assessment (ANA) published in the Report on the Annual National Assessments (RANA, 2014: 9) provide analysis of learner achievement results in Mathematics, Home Language and First Additional Language at a national, provincial and district level. In 2014, Grade 3 and 6 learners obtained more than 50%. This percentage increased significantly with each year in the Grades 3, 6 and 9. This is seen as an acceptable achievement in Grades 3 and Grades 6, with the exception of Grade 9, where learners achieved below the average levels. There was, however, a slight increase in percentage over the past three years.

Table 2.2: ANA RESULTS: Percentage of learners attaining at least 50% of the Home Language marks 2012 – 2014

Grade	PERCENTAGE OF LEARNERS ACHIEVING 50% OR MORE: HOME LANGUAGE		
	2012	2013	2014
3	57	57	66
6	39	68	77
9	39	37	48

(Source: Report on the Annual and National Assessment, Department of Basic Education 2014)

The RANA (2014: 10) report identified challenges that learners in Grade 9 Home Language encounter with writing: learners demonstrated “limited editing skills when writing letters”. If learners in Grade 9 underperform in writing tasks, as Grade 9 is a transitional grade, it becomes challenging to prepare learners for the Further Education and Training (FET) band, Grades 10 – 12.

Adequate preparation of learners for the FET band is crucial because learners require higher cognitive thinking skills and need to engage in abstract thinking and writing. Development of abstract thinking and writing assists learners in language writing, and report and information writing required in subjects such as History and Sciences. Learners take on the role of authors of creative texts and reporters of facts. In 2015 the ANA tests were suspended due to various teacher unions raising concerns about the administration process of the tests (Nkosi, 2015). The tests were scheduled for February 2016.

2.3.2.2. Report on Systemic Test results

In a bid to ascertain provincial Literacy and Mathematics levels within the Western Cape, the WCED conducts the Systemic tests each year to determine learner level and school level performance in Literacy and Mathematics. The tests are conducted in Grade 3, 6 and 9. Systemic tests are independently administered and marked to maintain credibility. The Systemic results highlight barriers to learner performance and provide schools the opportunity to take remedial measures to improve Literacy and Mathematics in the classroom. Schools are required to submit improvement targets to the WCED. These targets allow the Department to identify and provide support to schools in need of

assistance. A pass rate in Home language is obtained by scoring 50%. In 2011, 31, 5% passed the test with a steady increase over the past seven years to 40, 8% in 2015.

The WCED systemic provincial results for 2015 registered an increase in learner performance in Mathematics and Home Language. Results in Grade 6 Home Language 2016 and 2017 have shown a steady increase over the past seven years since the systemic tests were introduced. The most recent results from the systemic tests conducted in the Western Cape are reflected below.

Table 2.3: SYSTEMIC TEST RESULTS 2018, 2019: Percentage of learners in Home Language

Grade	Systemic Results PERCENTAGE OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE: ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE	
	2018	2019
3	45,8%	44,9%
6	38,5%	42,8%
9	52,6%	53,6%

(Source: Report on the Systemic results, Western Cape Education Department PORTAL 2020)

The Systemic results of 2018 and 2019 indicated a significant decrease in learner performance in the foundation phase. Grade 3 learners' English home language marks dropped 0.9 % from 2018-2019. This is an insignificant drop since the pass mark for home language according to CAPS (Department of Basic Education 2011a:103) is 50 %. Grade 3 learners find it difficult to write independently although they were able to conduct language structures and read.

Grade 6 learners showed an increase of 4,3% but the overall improvement did not constitute a pass mark for grade 6 since the pass mark for home language is 50% and above. The senior phase marked a minimal improvement for the Grade 9's, with a 1% per cent increase in results from 2018 to 2019. No Systemic tests were written in 2020 due to the COVID 19 pandemic. Many learners were home schooled and returned to school later in the year.

2.4. Literacy-writing

Makihara (2013: 440) explains that the word *literacy* refers to a learner's capability to read and write at a sufficient language proficiency level in order to communicate. Neeta and Klu (2013: 257) explain that in order for language communication to be successful, a strong reading and writing climate should be created. A high expectation is placed on learners to be on par with an "ought to know this" perception when learners start a new grade. This assumption is unfair to a child who has not been identified as having a writing barrier at the beginning of the school year. Larger classrooms create an opportunity for teachers to identify areas of weakness in writing early on.

Literacy forms an integral part of the curriculum since learners' literacy competency is tested throughout their schooling career. Early literacy development such as familiarity with authentic books, exposure to a variety of writing and teacher scaffolding, all play a valuable role in early literacy development. According to Dixon et al., (2008:9) a teacher who "encompasses shared reading in class and develops learners' phonemic awareness through play... incites the developmental stages of early literacy development". The premise is that it is necessary to develop an effective and comprehensive writing policy which focuses upon implementing writing strategies at secondary level as well as at primary school level (Harris, Graham & Mason 2006:296). Promoting early literacy development at Foundation phase level requires important conditions such as a print-rich classroom and full language immersion at home and within the broader community (Dixon et al., 2008:9).

2.5. Home Language Curriculum

2.5.1. Teaching approach in the language classroom: BLA

Language educators in South Africa follow a "balanced language approach" (BLA) which is outlined in the CAPS Home Language document as a methodology for teaching language. The balanced language approach (BLA) is a model for learner-centred teaching

to teach learners to read and write in different group settings (Fountas & Pinnell, 2011). CAPS (Department of Basic Education 2011a:13) subscribes to a text-based approach and communicative approach to produce texts. The text-based approach considers how learners construct a text and depends on how the teacher “models, supports and scaffolds the text producing process” (Department of Basic Education 2011a & 2011b). Through the text-based approach, learners should be able to produce different types of texts suited for the specific audience and their ability to engage with exiting texts.

A communicative approach focuses upon how a learner acquires language skills through exposure to the target language (Qian 2010:15). Neeta and Klu (2013: 257) postulate that sufficient exposure to the target language aids learner communication for social and practical purposes. Writing on its own is a communicative act which the communicative approach establishes: learners need to write with a purpose and for an intended audience.

The BLA approach is underpinned by the communicative approach to language learning and it sets out clear steps on how reading and writing should be scaffolded in the classroom. The BLA approach stipulates that, within the writing process, there is a shared writing phase which is guided by the teacher, followed by an independent writing phase.

2.5.2. Writing as a process

CAPS (Department of Basic Education 2011a: 11) defines writing as a “powerful instrument of communication”. Harris, Santangelo and Graham (2008:395) posit that writing promotes self-expression, personal development and an ability to synthesize knowledge and understanding through communication. It explains that “writing also connects us to our families, communities and the global world”. CAPS (Department of Basic Education 2011a:11-12), expands on the approach to writing as “a process where the writing process is scaffold using writing frames to support the writing process in order to generate well organised, grammatically correct texts”. The process approach to writing eventually leads to learners who are independent writers and have the ability to write a variety of text genres.

CAPS (Department of Basic Education 2011a: 11-12) explains the process approach to writing stages as follows:

- pre-writing/planning
- drafting
- revision
- editing/proofreading
- publishing/presenting

2.5.3. Outcomes for writing in CAPS

The NCS, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (2011: 11) explains that “learners who regularly practice writing a variety of text genres and utilise writing frames, will produce learners who are not only competent writers but learners who will possess the ability to communicate in a variety of writing media texts confidently.”

In Grade 6 the prescribed word count and length for an essay to be produced range from 140 – 150 words, equating to 4 – 6 paragraphs. The requirement for short stories increases to a word count of 160 -170 words, with a total of 6 – 8 paragraphs (CAPS 2011a: 32).

2.5.4. Time allocated to writing instruction

The CAPS document sets out a clear total of hours allocated to language teaching in the Intermediate Phase and Senior Phase, with a total of 6 hours’ instructional time per week for Home Language in Intermediate Phase (Department of Basic Education 2011a:6). The instructional time for Senior Phase is 5 hours per week for Home Language (Department of Basic Education 2011b:7). The curriculum sets out four skills necessary for language development: Listening and Speaking, Reading and Viewing, Writing and Presenting and Language structures and Conventions.

CAPS (Department of Basic Education 2011a:11) describes writing as a “powerful form of communication which allows learners to order and communicate their thoughts in a logical

and coherent manner “. CAPS allocates specified writing times for Home Language in Grades 4- 9 (Department of Basic Education 2011).

Table 2.4: Allocated writing and presenting times per two-week cycle for Home Language, Intermediate phase and senior phase, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)

Writing & Presenting: Home Language		
Phase	Intermediate phase Gr 4 – 6	Senior phase Gr 7 – 9
Time	4 hours	3 hours 30 min

(Source: Department of Basic Education 2011)

Clear guidance is offered in the CAPS document to support teachers on how they teach the process approach to writing. Many teachers, however, do not utilise the time efficiently: they do not start the writing process with a shared writing activity for each genre of writing. Shared writing allows learners to participate in a new writing genre under the guidance of a teacher. Scaffolding allows whole class participation and prompts learners to ask questions and share ideas. Shared writing causes less anxiety among learners.

2.6. Purpose of writing

Writing is a powerful form of communication which allows writers to transfer ideas and thoughts. It is as a liberating process which enables freedom of expression. Writing for communicational purposes has been fundamental for humans since the beginning of time as a way of conveying ideas, thoughts, feelings and information. Qian (2010: 14) highlights that within the modern approach which combines the communicative approach and the process approach, two assumptions are made: people write to communicate and people write to accomplish a specific task.

The NCS, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (2011: 11a) explains writing as a “powerful instrument of communication” which allows learners logically and coherently to organise their thoughts and ideas. At primary and high school level, learners write to communicate ideas and to express their knowledge of the subjects. Moh (2014: 126) is of

the opinion that communication and interaction comprise a key factor in building a successful educational system.

Troia and Olinghouse (2013: 344) state that writing allows learners to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of themselves which enables them to comprehend and accommodate the world. Learners who underperform in writing are disadvantaged at high school level and later when attending university or college (Graham & Perin 2007: 445). Writing extends to primary and secondary school as a means of determining academic progression and is a crucial factor for tertiary education to assess the success of students graduating (Cerasoli, Nicklin & Ford, 2014:2).

Writing is necessary for employment purposes. Applicants need to write a motivational report or letter. These are practical examples of expressive forms of writing. McVey (2008:291) reports that employers often complain about the literacy level of their employees. Workers are expected to write reports, letters, bids and even summaries. All these responsibilities require editing or limited correction processes. Writing is a means of obtaining promotional positions in the employment sector (Graham & Perin, 2007: 445). Writing is a key instrument of communication in today's life.

2.6.1. Purpose of creative writing

According to Cramer, Moduto, Ntobong and Randa (2012: 140) creative writing is the ability to express thoughts and ideas in a creative and original way, with the emphasis on originality rather than perfection. As part of the CAPS (Department of Basic Education 2011a:11) policy, it is important that learners are exposed to a variety of genres. Creative writing in the class provides a form of escapism to learners (MacArthur & Philippakos, 2013: 178). Creative writing forms a pivotal role in every learner's path towards writing competency. Creative writing requires learners to formulate their own ideas, be original and express themselves. Creative writing is a creative process. McVey (2008: 289) explains that the original term "creative writing" denotes a writer's response to literature and not an activity to interpret.

All learners carry a variety of experiences, perceptions and opinions. Often, when a topic is discussed and input from the learners is required, teachers receive a varied response to the topic. Each learner is unique and contributes personal experiences and knowledge to the conversation. The same form of thinking applies to creative writing where learners contribute a myriad of ideas to a topic. Being able to express personal thoughts or experiences without fear is a necessary process in creative writing. According to McVey (2008:289) creative writing today could refer to instructions published, literary texts and poetry and ideas and imagery brought into existence by the author as creative writing. This in essence means that all forms of writing could be creative writing.

2.6.2. Challenges with creative writing

Creative writing is a multifaceted task that involves cognitive processing and language skills to produce a successful written text (Lane, Graham, Harris & Weisenbach, 2006: 60). The problem that many learners face in producing a creative writing text is not always linked to their literacy levels in reading and writing but often begins at the start and when sustaining the writing process in a meaningful way. According to Cramer, et al. (2012: 144) learners often struggle to express themselves and produce their own original work. Learners tend to compensate for shortcomings in their writing by repeating the same idea to get the required number of words for a required written text (Helsel & Greenberg, 2007: 756). MacArthur and Philippakos (2013:179) propound that common problems which unskilled writers encounter include poor planning, disorganisation of content and ideas, lack of genre knowledge and weak editing of their work.

2.6.2.1. Macrolevel challenges

Despite efforts made by the Department of Basic Education, a gap in creative writing still remains in: (i) implementing the DoE textbooks in Home language, (ii) conducting First Additional Language and Mathematics as an additional resource material to support learners and (iii) holding a balanced language approach (BLA) in workshops in 2013 to teach teachers how to utilise the BLA approach in language teaching.

- Teacher training

Teachers spend a number of years studying for a degree yet recent reports state that teacher preparedness to teach creative writing remains an area of concern. In a study conducted by Condy, Chigona, Chetty and Thornhill (2010: 270) pre-service teachers were interviewed about areas in literacy and writing which they found difficulty in teaching. The pre-service teachers were part of the Teaching Reading Hand and Spelling Skills (THRASS) programme which teaches learners phonics, word and spelling strategies. Most respondents commented that they feel “least prepared to teach creative writing” as opposed to reading. One respondent cited that stimulating learners to write creatively was a task the respondent “did not know how to do” (Condy et al., 2010: 270).

Cramer, Moduto, Ntobong and Randa (2012: 153) concur that teachers are not properly equipped to teach creative writing. They confuse creative writing with other genres of writing text where learners copy the format and substitute their detail, for example when writing a letter. Learners often think this is creative writing and fail to realise that creative writing is about expressing original thoughts and ideas. Many teachers express their lack of preparedness to teach creative writing. Janks (2014:10) elaborates that merely upgrading teachers’ skills can at times be more inspirational than practical.

Teachers’ perceptions underline the importance of developing a writing programme where teachers focus upon spelling, punctuation and learners write the required length of text. It is, however, more difficult to teach learners explicitly to express themselves and describe events and objects in detail when writing.

- Language

According to Pretorius and Currin (2010: 68) South Africa is a multilingual country with eleven official languages. The majority of African mother-tongue speaking learners change to English as their Language of Learning Teaching (LoLT). Although schooling in home language is suggested by the Department of Education, schools are not compelled to adopt this language policy. Schools which do present an African home language as a LoLT, can do so up until Grade 3 only. From Grade 4, Afrikaans and English alone are recognised as LoLT. Although African languages are presented as a language subject,

implementation has yet to occur where any of them are employed as a LoLT beyond Grade 3.

This lacuna poses a greater problem when learners who have a challenging LoLT environment enter Grade 4 with insufficient decoding and comprehension skills to read and write as an English Home language learner (Pretorius and Currin 2010: 68).

- Research

Graham, Harris, Mason, Fink-Chorzempa, Moran and Saddler (2008: 52) and Graham and Harris (2005:111) report on writing strategies taught in class, yet no research has been undertaken on the pedagogical approaches to the key elements of self-regulated strategy development. MacArthur and Philippakos (2013: 177) highlight that research on effective writing instruction at an institutional level is needed to investigate factors which hinder learners from becoming better writers. They identify only which factors deter teachers from teaching creative writing effectively.

Most research is based on strategies to improve the academic self-regulation of learners. There is, however, too little research invested in teacher training in terms of self-regulated learning. In order to support teachers, it is important to identify which aspects of self-regulated learning have proven feasible (Dignath and Büttner, 2008: 232).

2.6.2.2. Mesolevel challenges

- Resources

There are many gaps in the teaching of creative writing, so it is important that government initiatives are aimed at providing teachers with resource books and workshops on how to teach learners explicitly how to express themselves. Teachers who incorporate the shared writing approach allow learners an opportunity to witness creative writing in action and areas where learners actively share their thoughts and ideas to construct a story. Dixon et al. (2008:9) posit that:

"...learners exposed to a variety of different book genres and writing materials and a teacher who constantly models reading and writing creates a safe environment for learners to experiment in writing which aid in learners being expressive of ideas and thoughts. "

- Time management

The most important aspect of ensuring that optimal teaching and learning take place is the structuring of the timetable. Prescribed times are set out by the CAPS document for 4 hours for Writing and Presenting. Many teachers still feel, however, that there is not enough time to teach creative writing in the class adequately. Creative writing is an intense and intensely personal form of writing which includes thinking, planning, drafting, editing and final drafting which requires teachers to spend a large amount of time to teach and prepare learners during each step (Bangert-Drowns, Hurley & Wilkinson, 2004:32). Not enough research has been invested into monitoring how well teachers utilise the Writing and Presenting times allocated by CAPS. Ensuring learners are optimally scaffolded through the process of creative writing requires adequate teaching and learning times.

Thinking involves time and drawing on information from memory. What learners think when they are presented with a topic and how it pertains to their lives is pertinent for the learner in overcoming the first cognitive barrier in thinking so that they can complete the given task. Learners who are rushed to think of what to write when they are presented with a topic, fail in the first step of the planning process.

- Rubrics

Evaluating and moderating written pieces is often an intense and time-consuming task for teachers. According to Andrade, Wang, Du and Akawi (2009:287) rubrics used to assess written texts should be specific and accurately match the instructions presented to the learner. Andrade et al. (2009:287) define rubrics as "a document that communicates the expectations for an assignment or activity by listing the criteria". Andrade et al. (2009:287) posit that using a rubric improves the quality of the learner's writing and heightens learner awareness of the quality of creative writing. Many learners, however, do not take note or even read the criteria that they are assessed against.

Understanding what needs to be done at the start of an assignment is important because once the learner comprehends and establishes what is expected, it will influence the execution of the assignment.

Andrade et al. (2009:287) explain that, by presenting learners with a rubric and explaining the rubric at the start of the writing task, learner knowledge of the criteria for writing is improved. A lesson in rubric reading should be a skill that teachers learn and pass to learners to make sure that before learners start with any written activity, they know what is expected. Teaching learners how to read and answer a rubric creates mindful writing when completing a task. This should be the first step that teachers take. Many rubrics contain common criteria such as evidence of planning, spelling, grammar and sentence construction, content and word count. Focusing on word count requires a critical review because assessing word count sharpens the focus of the required number of words and need to demonstrate knowledge on a given topic.

2.6.2.3. Micro-level challenges

Writing is a common instrument used to complete an assessment. Learners need to feel confident enough to use it to communicate what they think and to convey their knowledge in concrete form. Many learners, however, are unable to plan and complete the writing task within the prescribed time.

- **Metacognition**

Kirk, Gallagher, Anastasiow and Coleman (2006: 142) explain metacognition as the “ability to think of one’s own thinking and monitoring of how you use it”. Metacognition refers to the reflective process of language and the ability to think of how we use language. It involves all forms of language usage; speaking, reading and writing with writing being the highest form of language usage (Polloway, Patton & Serna, 2008: 154). How learners process a topic and respond in writing requires an intense thinking process. Learners have to understand what the topic is about. They need to think how the given topic relates to other topics, how it relates to the learner personally and what can be written about the given topic in order to meet the requirements of the writing activity. The learner has to

think of how to transfer thoughts into concrete form, namely writing. Lastly, the learner has to review and edit the written text, which could be the most difficult part since it requires knowledge of grammar rules and sentence structuring. Kirk et al. (2006: 143) rationalise that creative writing requires learners to be skilful thinkers first before they become skilful writers.

Writing requires learners to think first of an idea, then the order and process needed to express that idea. They must think in logical order and apply certain linguistic and written skills to execute in text form. The ideas and thoughts being communicated are then influenced by spelling and fine motor ability to write at an adequate pace. Factoring in all of the above conditions can result in learners producing texts that are logically ordered and which meet the criteria of the rubric.

- Cognitive challenges

The challenge with creative writing for many learners is that writing is a complex task that involves a multiplicity of cognitive processes and language skills (Lane et al., 2006: 60). Many problems occur in written language when learners' spelling and handwriting are taken into account. This could affect the quality of the learners' overall production of a text.

The problems that learners encounter involve organising their ideas, setting goals and sustaining or self-regulating their writing (Ennis, Jolivet & Boden, 2013:82). Learners may have the linguistic competencies to structure sentences and know what they want to say, yet the anecdotal comments and questions from learners often amount to “where do I start? how do I organise my ideas? what can I write more?”.

The BLA approach depicts the stages in writing starting from shared writing which leads to independent writing. Many learners still grapple with the independent writing phase; specifically when they need to plan and organise their own ideas in a logical manner when producing the first draft. Saddler and Asaro (2007:223) express their concern that less skilled writers may not “fully engage in mindful planning” but revert to “knowledge telling”

behaviour where any information they recall about a topic is written down, with no end goal in mind.

The inability to engage at the start of the writing process, results in many learners producing poor texts which might not include basic elements of story-telling. These learners often struggle with spelling, when the crux of the problem is not their linguistic inabilities but rather their lack of motivation to start off in a meaningful way and sustain it (Leineman, Graham, Jansen and Reid, 2006:68). This sparks a writing task which has no goal because the learner lacks the skills of self-instruction and motivation (Helsel & Greenberg, 2007: 755).

a) *Sentence construction*

The most basic skill required to produce a written text is the ability to write, and possess basic language skills and reading comprehension (Lane et al., 2006: 60). MacArthur and Philippakos (2013:179) concur and explain that a good understanding of grammar and sentence structures correlates with successful writers. Most insecure learners try to write as little as possible to avoid spelling mistakes and to complete the writing task as quickly as possible. Many learners tend to repeat the same ideas in a paragraph, resulting in essays and stories lacking depth.

b) *Planning*

Most learners encounter their first obstacle in creative writing with the planning process and generating content. Learners often struggle at the start of the planning process because they do not know where to start and what to write. Most learners who struggle to generate content may not even know who the intended audience is. Harris, Graham and Mason (2006: 298) posit that planning is an essential component in skilled writing since skilled writers spend considerable time setting goals, generating ideas and organising ideas into a writing plan.

Planning provides an external visual and concrete memory, where ideas and thoughts are stored, without running the risk of losing them (Harris et al., 2006: 299).

c) *Organising and structuring story*

According to McVey (2008: 290) learners are often unaware of how to structure content. The challenge which learners most commonly face is with structuring, and composing ideas and content. Learners struggle to capture the reader's attention at the start of the introduction. MacArthur and Philippakos (2013:179) highlight other areas of concern in the introduction such as being unable to identify who the character or main characters are; where and when the story is set. Little information of how events unfold and lack of explicit character detail are common errors that learners make when writing a creative text.

d) *Parts of speech: adverbs*

From an early grade, learners are taught the parts of speech, starting with nouns since they are the most common words that children learn from infancy. There are eight parts of speech: nouns, verbs, pronouns, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections.

Cinque (1999: 13) describes the term 'adverb' as referring to a single word that modifies verbs and adjectives. For many learners, understanding and using adverbs correctly is a difficult task since there is more than one meaning that qualifies as an adverb. Hernández (2006: 272) posits that the understanding of adverbs is complex since it has various classifications, meanings and positions in a sentence. Ernst (2014: 346) posit that poor use of adverbs can change the meaning of a sentence or render it grammatically incorrect. This is reiterated by Parrot (2000:176) who states that choosing where to place an adverb in a sentence becomes problematic to many writers.

Hernández (2006: 272) points out that the misplacement of adverbs is one of the most common mistakes made by writers. Positioning the adverb in the wrong place in a sentence can change the meaning of the sentence. Since adverbs express different meanings, the more easily recognisable adverb is the adverb of manner because it mostly contains the suffix *-ly* at the end of the word.

e) *Revising and editing*

MacArthur and Philippakos (2013:179) state that learners do not invest enough time in revising and editing of their work. McVey (2008: 291) explains that the reason learners do not revise and edit their work is that learners are frequently uncertain about how and what to edit. They do not possess the skills to identify their own mistakes. Qian (2010:14) posits that learners need to “learn the value of formulating their ideas and writing a few drafts”. Qian (2010:14) emphasises the value of learner discussions during planning and revising since it provides valuable feedback to the writer. Discussions enable active participation when generating ideas. The writer receives feedback on any parts of the text that are not clear. Response from the audience creates a sense of constructive criticism to the author (Troia and Olinghouse, 2013: 343). Schunk and Zimmerman (2007:14) posit that proficient writing involves goal setting, self-monitoring, self-evaluation and task management skills, cognitive skills which struggling learners lack.

f) *Audience*

An important part of being a good writer is to determine whether the produced text is appropriate for the intended audience or reader. Saddler and Asaro (2007:224) point out that revising allows a writer to be more reflective and observant in identifying any conflicting ideas which were not part of the writer’s intention. Most academic writing requires that learners write to the teacher. Certain writing genres require that the learner write to an imagined friend. Learners seldom take the audience into consideration or are even aware of the audience. Writing to the “imagined friend” offers no opportunity for the writer to receive feedback. Learners are asked to keep the intended audience and purpose in mind (Qian 2010: 14).

g) *Engagement*

Often learners regard creative writing as a chore and not as a rewarding activity (McVey, 2008: 291). MacArthur and Philippakos (2013:179) explain that unskilled writers frequently lack the ability to engage in the task analysis process and goal setting during planning and when generating content. The primary reason that learners feel disengaged stems from the fear that they may not write a satisfactory text. This fear creates another fear, of failing the writing task.

2.6.3. Class size

South African is commonly known for overcrowded classrooms in public schools, resulting in high learner to teacher ratios. Higher learners to teacher ratios result in unfavourable conditions for effective learning to take place. The 2013 statistics compiled by the Department of Education, revealed that schools in urbanised provinces tend to have fewer schools with more learners, compared to rural schools where there are more schools and fewer children (DoE 2014: 6).

Table 2.5: 2013 SNAP Survey: Number of schools, educators and learners in the public school sector, by province 2013

Province	Schools	Educators	Learners
Eastern Cape	5562	63137	1 881 605
Western Cape	1458	32347	1 005 466
Northern Cape	553	8725	279 445
Free State	1327	23721	649 806
Gauteng	2056	59 357	1899 542
Kwazulu-Natal	5937	91285	2 798 975
Limpopo	3924	54 708	1 662 106
Mpumalanga	1768	33 380	1 025 859
North West	1551	25 169	773 040

(Source: Department of Basic Education 2015, 2013 SNAP Survey)

Troia and Olinghouse (2013: 345) explain that writing is an “emotional process” which sometimes takes place in “constrained environments”, resulting in learners not being able to concentrate effectively. Large class sizes prevent teachers from identifying struggling writers at the outset of the school year. With an increase in learner numbers, the task of the teacher to engage with, and focus upon, the individual needs of a learner becomes a complicated task of managing learner barriers each day.

2.6.4. Pedagogy

The salient factor in teaching creative writing is the teacher and lesson presentation. A confident teacher can support and motivate learners to be optimistic and confident to

tackle any academic problem. A teacher provides visual stimuli. Learners can participate in shared writing. They witness how errors are made when writing a first draft and learn how to identify and correct errors when editing.

Teacher training is essential for fostering a love of writing and it is often the most challenging task. A lack of adequate teacher training in how to teach creative writing explicitly is a major challenge in the language classroom. Cramer, Moduto, Ntobong and Randa (2012: 153) concur that teacher training in creative writing comprises knowing how to incorporate figurative language and direct speech in creative writing. They claim that this skill is often overlooked by learners who are usually trained in grammar lessons only. Shared or collaborative writing is vital for learners to understand the process of creative writing and how the teacher incorporates figures of speech or direct speech into story writing.

Saddler and Asaro (2007:224) posit that learner writing readiness is impaired when teachers verbally explain and cannot model the process of writing. Teaching learners to focus on length of text, spelling mistakes, and meeting the prescribed structure of the story such as having a beginning, middle and end, does not teach learners to be creative and expressive in writing.

2.7. Self-regulated strategy development (SRSD)

Harris et al. (2008a) developed the self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) approach over twenty-five years ago. SRSD is an instructional approach to help learners develop writing and self-regulating strategies (Harris, Santangelo & Graham, 2008b: 101). SRSD is a flexible writing model that explicitly teaches learners strategies for planning, drafting and revising (Santangelo, Harris & Graham, 2008: 78). Graham and Mason (2006: 297) explain that SRSD teaches learners strategies to complete scholastic tasks successfully but that it could improve knowledge, goal-setting, self-monitoring, self-instruction and even increase motivation.

According to Leutwyler and Merki (2009: 198) self-regulated learning has received various responses from educational institutions over the last few decades and modern advances to optimise learning: learners are required to re-adapt to optimise their learning behaviour. Educational research is at the centre of transforming the way learners produce work in the classroom and a chance for learners to be more active and take charge of their own learning. MacArthur and Philippakos (2013: 177) and Graham and Perin (2007:447) note that self-regulated strategy development helps struggling writers at primary school level and at secondary school level.

According to Leinemann, Graham, Jansen and Reid (2006:68 - 69) SRSD involves six stages where learners are explicitly taught strategies to compose a creative writing story. The teacher models the process on: (i) how to start their introduction and (ii) which questions to pose when writing an introduction, (iii) how to create an interesting middle and climax and (iv) how to add emotion, creativity and interest to the story. As the teacher moves through the six stages, *developing background knowledge, Discussing it, Model it, Memorize it, Support it and Independent performance*, the learner learns how to self-regulate the writing process by means of self-instruction, goal-setting, self-monitoring and self-reinforcement.

Leinemann et al. (2006:67) explain that early intervention and teaching of SRSD strategies could minimise the development of long-term writing difficulties. Developing a self-regulated strategy scaffolds the process of writing for learners to become better writers (Patel & Laud 2009:3). SRSD entails what the learner can produce within the classroom and guides learners to be productive in language learning (Leutwyler and Meki, 2009: 198).

2.7.1. SRSD model

The SRSD model involves six stages which are instructed by the teacher and it involves:

Stage 1: Developing background knowledge

The first stage entails teachers drawing upon what learners know about a certain topic or writing genre. During this stage, collaborative discussions are encouraged to ascertain what learners know about a certain topic and to encourage dialogue. Through dialogue, learners have the opportunity to learn from each other in a relaxed and informal setting without the fear of being judged. Learners are encouraged to share their opinions, thoughts and perceptions, and encouraged to make notes when discussing topics, to aid the planning process.

During the developing background knowledge stage, the teacher introduces learners to positive statements, and explains to learners that a positive statement is there to help. The teacher reads an example of a positive statement. Learners are then encouraged to develop their own positive self-statement. The positive self-statements act as self-assurance, should the learner find it difficult to start and complete a given task. The positive self-statement is used to reduce any writing anxiety and to assure a learner that the task can be completed (Leinemann et al., 2006: 68 - 69).

Example of a positive self-statement

I can do this, I just need to relax and plan my notes

Positive self-statements are repeated during all the stages of SRSD. These affirmatory statements help learners to self-regulate their own learning by helping them to self-regulate and motivate themselves. Positive self-statements are written down and displayed visually as a motivational message.

Stage 2: Discussing it

At this stage learners zoom in on how to set out their ideas, and organise their writing. In this step the mnemonics, POW (Planning, Organise, Write) +TREE (Topic sentence, Reason, end, Evaluate) are used in persuasive writing to teach parts to a story which are made visible to learners on cards and posters.

Persuasive writing is a powerful form of writing as it engages and tries to persuade the reader to believe and understand the viewpoint of the writer. According to Nippold, Ward-

Lonergan and Fanning (2005:126) the author put forward a particular perspective and tries to convince the reader to adopt that same perspective. Discussing the topic and recalling the mnemonic, POW+TREE and WWW, WHAT=2, HOW=2 (Patel and Laud, 2009:3) assist learners. Learners are encouraged to try and visualise when they are given a topic to discuss and write about. Visualising a topic aids learners to draw a mental picture in their minds. Encouraging learners to visualise and discuss the topic encourages less enthusiastic learners or learners struggling to focus, to start thinking and drawing mental images without actively verbally participating. Articulating what they imagined, allows learners to create richer descriptions in their stories (Patel and Laud, 2009:3).

Example:

Emma walks on the beach.

Teacher: What do you think Emma sees, hears, feels, smells as she walks on the beach?

Teacher: Think of the clothing that Emma is wearing. Is it winter or summer clothes?

Describe the colours.

During the *Discuss it* stage, learners are reminded in each lesson how to use POW when planning a written piece and to make sure that they use all the parts of a story when writing. The mnemonics serve as visual reminders on where to start and what steps to follow next.

Example:

POW (**p**lan **o**rganise write **m**ore) plus TREE (**t**opic sentence, **r**eason, **e**nd, **e**xamine).

Parts to a story: who, when, where, what, how, how (WWW, WHAT=2, HOW=2)

Using SRSD to teach persuasive and expressive writing using POW +TREE

The TREE mnemonic helps learners with persuasive writing or when writing opinion essays. The TREE mnemonic teaches learners to give reasons when stating an opinion. They are employed when the writer of the text wants to persuade the reader. According to Leinemann and Reid (2008: 476), the TREE mnemonic enables a young writer to express what the writer believes, gives three or more reasons why the writer believes this,

and shows how to end the writing text. Often in language writing, learners are asked to write about a topic where they need to express their opinion and view on the matter. Persuasive writing and Opinion writing are difficult forms of writing because learners need to express what they feel and believe. Often the topics pertain to everyday occurrences but as learners progress, topics becomes more abstract and learners need to be creative in expressing what they think and feel. Persuasive writing requires learners to plan, organise and state their arguments convincingly.

Example of a persuasive writing topic:

Do you think children should wear school uniform?

POW + TREE mnemonic process

According to Patel and Laud (2009: 3) teaching learners the POW strategy supports learners in the WWW, What =2, HOW=2)

POW can be used as a checklist plan to determine whether the learner planned and organised notes and wrote more content and detail to the text. The TREE mnemonic reminds the learner of what to write.

T - Topic sentence

The topic sentence determines what the writer of the text believes. TREE explicitly teaches learners to write a topic sentence first. Learners either agree or disagree and state what they believe.

R –Reasons

Learners need to state their reasoning and state what they believe. Learners are taught to make use of transitional words such as first, second, third, next, finally etc. Learners are taught to write more than three reasons. The teaching of writing within more than three reasons teaches learners to be persuasive and credible in their opinions and to persuade the reader.

E - End

This part of the graphic organiser reminds learners to end their story correctly. Learners are made conscious that the ending should be interesting and that it aligns with their topic sentence.

E - Evaluate

The evaluation stage checks that they have all their parts to the story. Learners need to check that they added more than one reason and described in detail why they say so.

Using POW + WWW, WHAT=2, HOW=2 to teach creative writing

Within the *POW* the teacher introduces the parts to writing a story and how to check that all the parts to the story cohere by asking the questions below:

The steps below show the process for planning and writing using POW. Through the use of POW, learners learn how to write an introduction, middle and end. With the POW + WWW, WHAT=2, HOW=2 mnemonic, learners are visually reminded to add all the parts to a story, so as to make it interesting. Below are the steps to POW + WWW, WHAT=2, HOW=2 mnemonic.

Example: POW+WWW, WHAT=2, HOW=2 mnemonic

Planning process

P=pick my own idea

O= Organise my notes

W= Write and say more

Introduction

w=who is/are the main character (s)?

w= when does the story take place?

w=where does the story take place?

Body

w=what does the main character do?

w=what happens then?

Conclusion

h=how does the main character feel?

h=how does the story end?

The purpose of the *Discuss it* stage, is to help learners gain confidence in planning and to motivate learners to think creatively and verbalise what they think (Harris, Graham & Mason 2006:296).

Stage 3: Model it

The modelling stage is the explicit teaching of how to use POW plus TREE and the parts to a story www, what, what, how, how. Here the teacher models what needs to be done. This stage involves collaborative learning where learners and teacher write together. The learners have first-hand presentations of how to start and complete a written piece. Learners are simultaneously taught how to monitor their own progress, by constantly referring back and checking that they used and answered all the steps to POW + WWW, WHAT=2, HOW=2. The mnemonics act as a writing frame and as a visual checklist. During this stage, the teacher demonstrates how to add adjectives, figures of speech, direct speech and Million *Dollar Words* to provide more detail and interest to a story.

The introduction of Million Dollar Words (MDW) is similar to using synonyms. MDW teaches learners to use alternative words to the words they already know and use. The teacher displays charts with MDW in the class to assist and prompt learners to change ordinary words to different words not used every day.

Example: Million Dollar Words

pretty=	beautiful	exquisite
orange=	rustic	amber

The orange sun glowed **pretty** in the sky.

The amber sun glowed **exquisitely** in the sky.

Stage 4: Memorize it

This stage is there to remind learners, if needed, of what to do in the task, and use personalised positive statements which the learners created in the *Developing Background* stage to motivate them. The teacher reminds the learners to repeat the mnemonics POW and the parts to a story (who, when, where, what, what, how, how). The visual aids act as a concrete reminder of what to do next should the learner forget the stage. It is a self-evaluation list to check that each learner included all the parts in their planning and writing. Visual aids can be utilised to remind learners of what to do in any of the previous stages (Ennis, Jolivet& Boden, 2013: 83).

Stage 5: Support it

This stage supports learners throughout the SRSD process and requires that the teacher offer continuous praise. Any work not clearly understood during the SRSD programme is repeated to make sure that the learner understands and is comfortable to try to work independently. The use of the graphic organisers with the mnemonics printed on them provides visual support, should learners forget any of the steps when writing a story.

During this stage, the teacher reminds learners to use their positive self-statements when struggling with an idea, leading learners to a more self-regulated learning process (Ennis, Jolivet& Boden, 2013: 83).

Stage 6: Independent performance

The advantage of SRSD is that if the teacher completes a certain stage and the learner did not fully understand that particular stage, the teacher can go back to that stage at any particular time (Zimmerman and Schunk, 2001:113). Learners are encouraged to use the stages independently, without the support of the teacher and utilise the mnemonic charts and graphic organisers. Learners are not put under any pressure to discard the charts or mnemonic and graphic organisers. Learners are allowed to refer to the graphic organisers to help them complete the task.

The last stage allows learners to use their positive self-statements abstractly to self-regulate their learning. The positive self-statements should become innate to learners to self-regulate and monitor their own learning (Harris et al., 2008: 101-102).

2.7.2. The role of SRSD in teaching learners to write creatively

The SRSD model helps learners to learn four basic self-regulation strategies: Goal-setting, Self-monitoring, Self-talk, Self-reinforcement. Zimmerman and Schunk (2001:112) are of the opinion that SRSD can improve learners' learning abilities and goal setting when writing. Helsel and Greenberg (2007: 756) state that SRSD aids with correct planning and organisational skills that should lead to learners becoming independent writers.

In the SRSD programme, learners are explicitly taught the six stages. Explicit teaching of how to start the introduction, which questions to pose when writing an introduction, how to create an interesting middle and climax, how to set out an argument and adding MDW words are taught. Learner self-regulation is reinforced by encouraging learners to set goals, self-monitor and self-motivate.

Delaying the process is successful and early intervention maximizes the writing of at-risk writers. This minimises the development of long-term writing difficulties. The sooner the SRSD process starts, the sooner the learner unlearns pre-conceptualised flaws (Leinemann et al., 2006:67).

2.7.3. SRSD Advantages

Leutwyler and Merki (2009:200) highlight that SRSD is a “proactive and intentional and reflective form of learning which entails learners becoming responsible for their own learning through using skill and a will to learn”. Xu, Benson, Camino and Steiner (2010: 238) point out that “learners are self-regulated when they are cognitively, motivationally and behaviourally active of their learning”. Ennis, Jolivette and Boden (2013: 84) along with Leinemann and Reid (2008:479) point to the benefits that SRSD offer learners,

helping them to self-regulate and improve their writing through explicit teaching of strategies.

The following are a few of the benefits of SRSD:

- ***Planning and Writing***

Particular strengths of SRSD are the explicit teaching of planning and adding more detail to a story. Learners who find it difficult to plan, compose and revise their writing, benefit from the intervention strategy. Its core focus is to teach how to plan their writing text by using the visual prompts and mnemonics of *www*, *what, what, how, how*. Using the mnemonics comprises a visual reminder in the planning process because it helps learners to: (i) identify and create the main and sub-characters, (ii) elaborate on explicit character description and personality (iii) create a suitable setting by answering when and where the story takes place and (iv) formulate creative ideas to what happens in the story and writing a suitable conclusion. SRSD teaches learners how to write, edit and how the characters felt at the end of the story. Learners consciously employ strategies to write for an intended audience.

- ***Editing***

The SRSD strategy focuses on revising and editing spelling, grammar and punctuation marks as well as steering learners' attention to self-assess their writing and keeping the intended audience in mind when writing a story. Using the mnemonic chart visually prompts learners to edit their text.

- ***Active participation***

The use of SRSD enables learners to become active participants in their learning. Constant prompting, positive encouragement by the teacher and visual reminders, through the use of mnemonics, reduce anxiety, promoting free flow thinking and writing.

Stage 1 to Stage 5, in the SRSD strategy allows learners to become actively involved in The teacher makes use of shared writing, involving active learner participation while discussions are unfolding, ideas are shared and mistakes are collaboratively identified

and corrected. SRSD simplifies the writing process to help learners gain writing confidence and ultimately independence.

- **Motivation**

The SRSD strategy teaches learners to make use of self-statements which become a self-motivating tool which lowers writing anxiety (Leinemann & Reid, 2008: 478). MacArthur and Philippakos (2013:179) explain that confident learners who perceive of writing as a meaningful process of communication, tend to persevere and cope better when faced with difficult tasks than those learners who regard the task of writing as no more than a task to keep them busy or a punishment.

2.7.4. SRSD in the class

It is important to understand that SRSD is a process and that the aim of SRSD is to enable learners to channel their own self-expression into a concrete format in order to become mindful of their learning. Harris et al. (2008b:101) support the idea that when implementing these strategies, a non-threatening environment should be created. A warm and nurturing climate harnesses positive thoughts. In a relaxed classroom atmosphere, learners feel free to ask questions and feel safe to make mistakes. SRSD teaches strategies on how to become better writers and how to change the idea of writing overall in a variety of writing genres. SRSD teaches learners to gain independence by deploying self-regulated strategy approaches, harnessing a positive outlook and monitoring academic performance (Santangelo, Harris & Graham, 2008:79).

2.7.5. Effective creative writing learners

Writing is a cathartic process. It offers a way of communicating with others and conveying ideas as well as expressing inner feelings and identity (Graham & Perin, 2007: 445). Human beings have thoughts and ideas which they wish to communicate to the rest of the world. Writing is a link between having and expressing thoughts in the present. It transcends the future and leaves a concrete mark in the past.

It is important that learners can express themselves early on in their schooling years. Creative writing requires imaginative stories, and teaches children to write about actual feelings and events in diary format which could later lead to more advanced forms of literary texts such as biographical writing.

Baker, Chard, Geller, Apichatabutra and Doabler (2009: 303) postulate that, in order for learners to become skilled writers, the learner should possess a variety of skills and knowledge such as organisational skills, be able to formulate ideas, apply writing conventions and engage the audience.

2.8. Motivation

Creative writing encourages and equips learners to become self-motivated and to give of their best, and complete the writing task. The rewards of completing a task might not be immediately seen but if teachers can instil a sense of learner self-achievement, this can lead to learners becoming motivated. According to Cerasoli, Nicklin and Ford (2014: 1) motivation can be divided into two types, extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation.

2.8.1. Extrinsic motivation

Extrinsic motivation behaviour is ruled by what the individual can gain or lose physically. Extrinsic motivation leads to the individual believing that a payment will be awarded based on a desired behaviour. This is a more concrete and tangible outcome for the individual.

- ***Extrinsic motivational challenges***

Fernet, Guay, Senécal and Austin (2012: 516) propose that, through the acceptance of new goals and values, learners can become extrinsically motivated. Challenges can occur if learners can identify and visualise new goals or values as attainable so that learners are autonomous and motivated.

2.8.2. Intrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation is a holistic view of how it makes the individual feel. Incentives are defined as anything provided by an external agent such as money, promotions or increase in grades (Fernet et al., 2012: 516). Intrinsic motivational behaviour leads the individual to attain enjoyment, purpose and the desire to persist in a given task. From the two motivational groups, extrinsic motivation is a more tangible way of persuading learners to score better grades in a subject (Fernet et al., 2012: 516). Learners who are intrinsically motivated, however, achieve a more balanced sense of achievement. The desire for self-fulfilment and achievement should be the key factor in enabling our learners to become better writers.

- ***Intrinsic motivational challenges***

According to Fernet et al. (2012: 516) intrinsic motivation refers to a choice of skills to initiate positive behaviour. It is a crucial aspect to perform at optimal independent levels. Learners who do not understand the value of their work will not be intrinsically motivated. The condition where learners are not autonomously motivated requires an intensive process to change learner outlook. Understanding and changing learner perceptions might be different from learner to learner and fluctuate in severity.

Reminding and highlighting the purpose of successfully engaging in a task requires focus, diligence and the willingness to try again. With the demands of constantly achieving high marks in tests and tasks, the focus of achievement should be steered to being willing to try and engage mindfully in the task. Teaching comprises helping learners achieve academic success and promoting emotional success.

2.9. Learner engagement

Primarily focusing on the right equipment and resources does not necessarily mean that learners will be better at learning. According to Skinner, Kindermann and Furrer (2009: 494) “engagement” refers to the quality of a learner’s connection or involvement in school endeavours and people. Engagement comprises behavioural and emotional participation in the class.

Skinner et al. (2009: 494) state that “unless learners are engaged with learning opportunities, their academic career cannot be successful”. Many teachers note that engaged learners tend to achieve more and find school more meaningful (Skinner et al., 2009: 494). This is the ideal that all teachers expect of their learners in order for them to become meaningful and critical thinkers.

2.9.1. Disaffection

The opposite of engagement is disaffection which reflects learner passivity, lack of initiation and inability to try, resulting in learners giving up easily. Disaffected emotions include tiredness, boredom, frustration, anger and anxiety. Disaffected emotions are typical emotions that learners display during creative writing lessons. According to Reinke, Herman and Stormont (2013: 41) teachers who spend more time teaching are able to instil an attitude of learning in learners. Simonsen Fairbanks, Briesch, Myers and Sugai (2008: 356) corroborate that learners who are actively and consistently engaged in class are less likely to exhibit disruptive or disengaged behaviour. Academic engagement with learners and the teacher’s ability to sustain motivation by such means as specific praise, help to create a positive classroom environment.

2.9.2. Co-operative learning

According to Johnson and Johnson (2017: 23) a key strategy to move learners from being passive observers of learning to active participants in their own learning in groups is known as co-operative learning. By means of co-operative learning, learners share the same set of academic goals by contributing: ideas, having intellectual debates, and working together to solve problems (Johnson, Johnson & Holubec, 2013: 34). Co-operative learning has its roots in social interdependence theory. Lewis (1981:13) posits that the way interdependence is structured is determined by how individuals interact with each other. According to White, Robert, Dinos and Sokratis (2010: 227) co-operative learning can result in learners encouraging each other but it can result in oppositional interaction where learners distract or discourage the members in the group.

2.9.3. Teacher disposition in the classroom

When we examine the role of the teacher in the class and challenges that learners face in the classroom, teachers tend to blame the learner, not factoring in the fact that teacher motivation and attitude play a crucial role in the final academic success of learners. Browne (2013:125) and Cerasoli and Nicklin (2014: 2) agree that teachers feel ill-equipped to assist learners who lack motivation and present behavioural problems. Creating academic engagement with all learners should be key in creating a positive and interactive learning environment.

- ***In-flight thinking***

According to Paterson (2007:427) “in-flight thinking” refers to what teachers think of their learners when they engage in the classroom. This involves interactive thinking and decision- making during instruction and when problems arise. It is important that teachers possess approaches which increase learner engagement in the classroom. With a variety of learning challenges which learners encounter in the classroom, it is important that teachers do not generalise the nature of the challenges which confront learners.

Browne (2013: 125) and Cerasoli and Nicklin (2014:2) cite lack of teacher preparedness yet Paterson (2007: 428) adds that teachers do possess a generalized knowledge of learners based on prior classroom experiences during pre-service or in-service teaching. Teachers’ in-flight thoughts should be geared towards differentiated instruction and identifying individual learner needs. Paterson (2007: 432) explains that altering in-flight thoughts of the teacher can easily be changed when teachers are more observant of subtle changes in the classroom which can be made to differentiate learning by using prompts, encouragement or showing more interest.

- ***Teacher behaviour***

In order to teach effectively, verbal communication is the primary instrument to transfer information, followed by concrete transference such as writing on the board, referring to charts, books and a variety of media. Roman and Kay (2007:206) and Skinner et al. (2009: 495) postulate that non-verbal gestures such as attentive listening, patience or nodding

encourage the learner. Maintaining eye-contact when the learner speaks symbolises a level of interest in the learner and increases behavioural and emotional participation in the classroom.

Non-verbal gestures and acknowledgements establish a safe and motivational environment for learners to feel comfortable to take chances and make mistakes. Roman and Kay (2007: 206) explain that teacher motivation provides a sheltered and safe environment and generates intellectual curiosity amongst learners. Teacher motivation creates a platform to discuss mistakes openly without feeling judged or the teacher being biased.

2.9.4. Self-efficacy

- ***Teacher***

Having the best resources, most sophisticated structure and the ideal teacher to learner ratio might seem as the most important aspect to create a positive learning environment. Roman and Kay (2007: 205) are of the opinion that a good teacher establishes a sound learning context even with limited resources. Bandura (1989:134) explains that “self-efficacy is the mediating variable” between the knowledge the person requires and the actual behaviour of the person. Self-belief is crucial for achieving a specific goal (Bandura, 2003: 15). Self-efficacy can improve how teachers manage their classroom and utilise their strategies and instructional practices (Reinke et al., 2013:40). Teachers who do not feel effective in their classroom management skills may be less likely to utilize effective strategies. A teacher’s self-efficacy influences the implementation of new intervention strategies and has been linked to learner motivation and increase in academic performance.

- ***Learner***

Andrade et al. (2009: 288) are of the opinion that heightened learner self-efficacy is one of the tools by which rubrics provide an advantage. Andrade et al. (2009: 287) explain that learners who are familiar and understand how to read and comply with the requirements of a rubric, gain self-efficacy and therefore improve their writing.

2.9.5. Learner attitude and behaviour to creative writing

Learner behaviour and attitude towards learning play a crucial part in learner academic performance. According to Browne (2013:126) the increased demand on teachers needing to manage learner academic success and maintain learner behaviour and attitude, could result in teachers being less tolerant of learner behaviour. Teachers who are less tolerant of behaviour problems could revert to punitive and reactive measures, and could lead to regressive behaviour of the learner.

2.9.6. Supporting learners who struggle with creative writing

Delaying early intervention in creative writing can lead to various and sometimes more serious challenges for the learner (Chen, Wang & Chen 2012:103). Myrberg (2007: 146) states that children who lag behind in reading and writing encounter more difficulties in later grades when the texts become longer and difficult. Delaying intervention means that the learner is constantly lagging behind academically but on a psychological level, the learner could become content with the idea of not being able to perform as the rest of the class, and therefore becomes discouraged to even try to better writing skills.

2.9.7. Supporting SRSD in South African classrooms

With the many challenges learners and teachers face within the South African class, a deeper understanding of classroom antecedents and language barriers needs to be observed to gain a more accurate viewpoint. The main challenge that South African learners face is the language of learning and teaching (LoLT). Often learners are taught in their second or even third language. The SRSD model employs a planned programme of stages to reduce writing anxiety in learners. The SRSD acts as an extension to build on what CAPS prescribes in the process of writing. SRSD gives learners an efficient and logical way to approach any complex writing task.

South Africa comprises a diversity of cultures and languages with eleven official languages and the influx of foreign learners. Teachers often encounter great challenges

with teaching home language. SRSD could prove beneficial in teaching learners who struggle with creative writing. The step-by-step process of SRSD provides struggling writers with a systematic set of strategies to increase overall writing quality (Harris et al., 2008: 401- 403).

2.10. Conclusion

Given the myriad of challenges that learners experience with creative writing, the SRSD programme provides a structured set of stages to support teachers to help learners gain independent levels of creative writing. As research suggests, SRSD can enable learners to plan effectively, edit and review and present their writing texts in a structured and logical order. In order to improve literacy in South Africa, a closer look at factors such as teacher training, learner to teacher ratio and intervention strategies implemented at primary school level needs more in-depth attention and structuring. Many learners score high marks in class assessment tasks but fail dismally at national and international assessment level.

A second critical point that needs attention is the early identification of learners with writing barriers. Generalizing learners under one umbrella and focusing on spelling, word count in a story only, does not sufficiently test creative writing skills.

Third, providing learners with a rubric may help them to score well but an understanding and application of the rubric's criteria is also crucial for writing development. Focus on certain criteria requires attention, by explaining in more detail what word count stipulates and when it is applicable to use. A learner who writes more substantive content loses a mark on word count for not achieving the required amount of words.

Considering the structures that need to be in place to create an optimal learning environment, it can be argued that the teaching of creative writing requires more research into how to train and prepare teachers for teaching creative writing.

In Chapter 3 a comprehensive breakdown is provided of the study's methodology and research design. The chapter scrutinizes the instruments used for collecting data,

selecting the site, selecting the participants, and selecting the appropriate qualitative instruments to answer the research questions and implement the SRSD strategy

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1. Overview

This study explores the effect of self-regulated strategy development (SRSD), its relevance and appropriateness for improving on the teaching of creative writing. As explained in Chapter 2, the term 'strategy' refers to a set of pre-arranged methods or procedures. In this research project, the researcher made use of the SRSD programme to help learners who find it challenging to write creatively. In this chapter a comprehensive research design and methodology is presented. The research design and methodology used in exploring SRSD to address the research problem led to the research question:

How can self-regulated strategy development improve Intermediate Phase learners' creative writing skills?

In section 3.2, the research design and paradigm explain the research process and purpose of this study. The site and sample are explained in 3.4, while section 3.5 investigates the means of collecting data and the instruments employed to address the research question. The SRSD plan and lessons that the learners were engaged in during the intervention programme are explained in detail, with a framework of all weekly activities. Section 3.6 explores how the researcher analysed the data. Section 3.7 explains how the researcher strove to obtain validity and reliability within the research process. Ethical procedures are discussed in section 3.8. Section 3.9 concludes the methodology chapter. The aim of the research study and the research problems identified formed the background of the study. This background is the foundation of the study and led to the selection of this particular methodology.

Acquiring self-regulated strategies at primary school level helps learners to become self-sufficient, set realistic goals and optimise their own learning (Leutwyler & Merki, 2009:200).

3.2. Research design

According to Kumar (2019:16-19) and Creswell (2008:20) the main purpose of the research design is to explain how the researcher finds and selects the most appropriate methods to address a research question within a logical plan. Thomas (2011:103) refers to a research design as a plan of how to set out a research project, involving specific methods and strategies. A research design outlines how the researcher is to gain access to the research site, which sampling procedures were utilised to identify the appropriate participants, the means of collecting the data, and analysis. In an attempt to address the research question, the researcher focussed on the aim of the research which is to identify two key issues: (i) why learners currently lack the motivation to complete creative writing tasks and (ii) how SRSD can enhance their creative writing abilities. To accommodate the research approach, the researcher made use of an interpretive paradigm to understand the research problem (Corbin & Strauss, 2008:47).

3.2.1. Interpretive paradigm

Corbin and Strauss (2008:47) posit that an interpretive paradigm considers interpretation of thoughts, experiences and actions of participants and the interaction of the researcher with participants in an attempt to answer the research questions. This theoretical standpoint positions the study firmly within the realm of an interpretive paradigm which seeks to understand how participants think and feel about a certain phenomenon, in this case, creative writing, and how their actions and behaviour benefit from an SRSD programme. The researcher set out to understand and find answers in a naturalistic way in order to gather a thick description of participants' interaction within their natural setting. The aim is not to be subjective since interpretivism is about understanding people and how they interconnect while the researcher is fully immersed in the environment (Thomas, 2011: 109).

To address the research questions, the researcher immersed herself in the research context. This granted the researcher the opportunity to observe both teacher and learner participants and gain an in-depth understanding of areas in which learner participants

struggle during the writing process. The researcher had the opportunity to observe every nuance of speech or body language to construct an accurate account of how participants interact within their natural context. This approach provided findings of the “real world” interaction of participants and provided valuable data for the findings (Golafshani, 2003:600).

3.2.2. Case study

A case study format was employed for the design of this study. Thomas (2011: 104) explains that the case study is a way of explaining and mapping out the case being researched. Maree (2012:76), Creswell and Creswell (2017:19) and Thomas (2011:111) affirm that a case study draws upon multiple sources to gather data to present greater insight into and understanding of a specific situation. Case studies concentrate on in-depth detail and do not draw upon generalisations. Creswell and Creswell (2017: 45) claim that case studies consider individuals and events by using one or more methods.

Employing the case study method in this research project meant that data were gathered using multiple instruments, namely observations, semi-structured interviews and teachers’ interaction with learners during the intervention programme (Maree, 2012: 77). Creswell and Miller (2000:76) state that the use of multiple sources in the process of gathering data enables the researcher in advance to gather and analyse techniques to address the research question.

Data were collected by means of interviews, observations and the intervention programme itself. All data collected were gleaned from personal opinions and experiences of teachers, as well as interactions and concrete evidence from the learner participants placed the research study within an epistemological framework of writing literacy. The epistemological assumption allows the researcher to obtain close contact with participants being studied (Thomas, 2011: 110). This process afforded the researcher the opportunity to gain deeper insight into the real and natural experience that participants encounter. Creswell and Miller (2000:20) explain this as a way for the researcher to avoid subjective evidence and acquire verifiable knowledge. Due to the versatile nature of the case study

method, the researcher can relate and interconnect information, and explain how various approaches are interlinked (Maree, 2012: 77).

3.2.3. Qualitative research method

Creswell and Miller (2000:60) state that qualitative research is a reliable means for exploring and understanding research questions. It is an attempt to explain and describe these situations from the participants' point of view. To address the research question, this study investigates how a self-regulated strategy development (SRSD): (i) influenced learners' creative writing in the planning stages, (ii) generated ideas and (iii) sustained the writing process. From the viewpoint of the objectives of the research study, this research study may be classified as descriptive. It endeavours to identify the problems faced with creative writing and put a strategy in place to increase creative writing productivity. This research study investigated what effect the SRSD strategy had on participants' creative writing skills.

McMillan and Schumacher (2001:79) describe the process of qualitative research as an approach which registers the experiences, thoughts and feelings of participants. This methodology was considered most appropriate for this study because it sought to understand which factors hindered participants' creative writing processes and how participants at the end of the study implemented the SRSD strategies independently. Maree (2012:79) explains that qualitative research is based upon a naturalistic approach that "seeks to understand the phenomenon in a real world and not in an experimental situation". In accordance with the provisions of a qualitative research, the approach to this study was: (i) to work closely with participants in their natural environment, which was their school and Grade 6 classroom and (ii) interview their previous grade teachers.

3.2.4. Purpose of qualitative research

Creswell and Creswell (2017:87) state that "the goal of qualitative research is to explore and understand a central phenomenon and understand participants' experiences." This study observed participants in their natural environment and sought to understand and

explore why learner participants struggled when it came to creative writing and the strategies they employed to overcome challenges in their creative writing. Leischer (2011:165) regards a qualitative approach from a phenomenological position since it reports upon the experiences of several participants based on the challenges they experience. It seeks to find what common challenges they face. The researcher attempted to gauge the experiences of participants in order to develop an overall view of their strengths and weaknesses. The three important factors that led this study towards a qualitative approach are set out in the Table 3.1

Table 3.1: Research objectives

Qualitative research approach objectives	Task objectives
To gain a deeper understanding of the problem	To investigate: What factors inhibit motivation during creative writing? How can self-regulated strategy development impact creative writing with Grade 6 learners?
To seek understanding and answers based on personal experience in the class.	To interpret the findings obtained through conducting interviews that seek to understand why learners progress to Grade 6 with limited knowledge on how to write a creative text. To interpret findings and understand why learners lack motivation during the planning and writing phase of creative writing and are unable to complete creative writing texts within the prescribed writing times.
To write for an intended audience based on conclusions drawn from the research study.	To report and make recommendations to teachers regarding teaching strategies to support creative writing in the classroom.

3.3. Selection of the site and participants

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000:161) stress the importance of using primary sources of data as much as possible because they eliminate second guessing from other parties which could lead the researcher in a false direction. The research site was the place of work (school) of the researcher which was the place where the problem was initially identified. All participants, both teachers and learners, were from the same school. In an attempt to gather sound primary data, the researcher worked directly with the participants, to conduct the interviews, and perform observations when during the implementation of the SRSD model. This collaboration ensured that the researcher experienced and

observed the intervention strategy first-hand through learner interaction and not through the eyes of others perceiving how learners coped during the intervention programme.

3.3.1. Site

The research was conducted in a public mainstream primary school on the Cape Flats, Cape Town. The school is, situated in a low socio-economic area, with many single-parent households, and high levels of poverty, and high rates of gang violence. The school is at the epicentre of two gang turfs. The ever-present danger of gang violence often results in parents collecting their children before school ends each day.

The school is in the Quintile 4, Section 21 band. Quintile 4 schools receive a designated amount of government funding for each learner. Schools are assigned to a quintile according to the needs of the school as categorised by the national education department. A wealthy Quintile 1 school receives less funding, whereas a school that is situated in an impoverished community with few resources is categorised as a Quintile 5 school and receives more funding. The school in this study has been a non-fee paying school since 2014 and learners receive free stationery. Learners receive a daily meal from the Peninsula School Feeding Association (PFSA) because many parents cannot provide daily meals for their children. The PFSA is a registered, non-profit organisation that provides nutritional meals to vulnerable youth and learners in dedicated feeder zones. It is an independent organisation not funded by the Western Cape education Department WCED. For many learners the PFSA meal is their main and only substantial meal of the day. Most learners come from homes where one or both parents use drugs or live with a relative who depends upon drugs. Parental drug and alcohol addiction often leads to learners being sent to school without breakfast or lunch. The school feeding scheme provides a breakfast, cooked meal, fruit and milk to learners every day.

The researcher selected this site because it provided a convenient and appropriate site for the researcher. The advantage of conducting the research on the school premises was that all participants, teachers and learners were on the school premises and that no travelling was necessary for the researcher to conduct the study.

3.3.2. Selection of Participants

The most effective method of sampling for the proposed research is purposive sampling as it enables the researcher to select ideal participants for the study (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004: 71). Purposive sampling was utilised to select one Grade 4, one Grade 5 and one Grade 6 Home Language teacher. The selected teachers all taught the selected twenty Grade 6 learner participants English home language at some point in the years preceding the study, or in the year of the study. Two of the educators have over twenty years' teaching experience. The Grade 5 educator has three years' experience. The responses of the three educators provided valuable and constructive background information regarding the behaviour of learners in class and their interaction during a creative writing lesson.

Purposive sampling was utilised by the Grade 6 teacher to select twenty participant learners and sampling allowed the researcher to select subjects for the case study, i.e. learners who would contribute most specifically to the research topic and meet the objectives of the research study (Cohen et al., 2000:116). Previous Grade 5 and Grade 4 teachers were purposively selected to gather information and determine what aspects selected learner participants found challenging about creative writing. The advantage of purposive sampling was that the researcher was able to select teacher participants who could render a true account of the behaviour of learners in the class environment.

- ***Sampling procedure for learners***

Selecting suitable learner participants for the study was important. Weak learners who had difficulty with basic sentence construction or writing basic words are not able to keep up with the pace of the intervention programme and their performance would not provide accurate findings to the study. The Grade 6 teacher selected possible learner participants for the study by identifying learners who scored between 40 and 49 percent in their creative writing. The score was derived from their baseline English Home Language test which is written by all learners in the first term. The baseline test assesses the language skills of learners from the previous year and gives feedback to the teacher on which areas demand intervention and focus.

Criteria for learners to be part of the study include:

- learners who scored between 40 - 49 percent in English Home Language in the first term;
- learners within the above group who were identified by their teachers as unable to develop and organise ideas at the start of the planning phase of the writing process;

The participating Grade 6 English Home language teacher identified the learners to partake in the study by applying the following criteria:

- learners who wrote incoherent paragraphs which led to stories that do not follow in a logical order;
- learners who did not add sufficient detail to their stories; and
- learners who were unable to sustain the writing process, resulting in incomplete texts at the end of the writing period in class.

Sampling procedure: Selection of teachers and learners:

The researcher provided the Grade 6 learners selected by the teachers with a creative writing activity to be completed in a specified time in class. The pre-test was conducted at the start of the intervention strategy. Pre-testing participants gave the researcher an accurate true account of what participants found difficult in creative writing. The pre-test was conducted after selected learners returned signed letters granting permission to take part in the study which was conducted after school and lasted one hour. During the pre-test stage, the researcher allowed participants to sit where they felt most comfortable. This consideration formed a core part of establishing a learner-centred environment.

The activity required learners to listen to the teacher's instructions and complete what was required. The aim was to evaluate whether learners were able to think creatively, use their imagination and follow instructions when planning a story. In the second part of the pre-test, learners completed the writing activity. The aim was to evaluate whether learners were able to incorporate what they had written down during the planning stage into their stories.

Learners who scored between 40 and 49 per cent were considered for the study. One of the learners scored eighty per cent in the pre-test and was excluded. The learner displayed acceptable levels of coping with creative writing tasks. Two of the participants withdrew from the study a week later because it clashed with their religious activities after school. Of the twenty learners initially selected for the study, 17 learners remained to participate in the study.

3.4. Methods for Collecting Data

Thomas (2011:192) posits that a method is a way of doing something in a systematic way. According to Kumar (2019:32), in order to collect data, various factors such as the nature of the study, ethical considerations and the research questions determine how to collect data. Thomas (2011:196) states that when gathering data, important factors such as the following should be adhered to:

- respect all participants and avoid exploitation of participants
- explain to participants what will be done
- explain what will be done with the data gathered.

Table 3.2 presents the method of collecting data and the instruments employed to gather the information

Table 3.2: Method of collecting data and the instruments employed to gather the information

Data collection method	Instruments
Select learners who scored 40-49% in term 1 English Home Language	Peruse learner report scores
Pre-test	Pre-test activity
Classroom observations	Observation schedule
Semi-structured interviews	Interview questionnaires
Intervention programme	Activities, rubric
Post-test	Post-test activity

3.4.1. Qualitative instruments

3.4.1.1. Interviews

Maree (2012:86) states that conducting interviews allows a researcher to collect data at a more personal level. Interviews enable the researcher to plumb the depths of a problem or situation. Thomas (2011: 197) concurs that interviews enable the researcher to “get to the heart of the matter”, stating that it is a popular method to gather data when undertaking qualitative research. The aim of the interviews with teachers was to establish how participating learners engaged in the classroom during creative writing lessons and to gain insight into how learners responded to creative writing strategies that the teacher implemented in class when teaching creative writing. Interviews with the three selected teachers were semi-structured and conducted with teachers in the Intermediate Phase. The teachers were purposively selected because the participating learners were taught English Home Language by these teachers. The experiences of these teachers considerably enhanced the data they provided in the interviews.

A disadvantage of the interview process was that if educators portrayed the learner as being, for example, a weak learner, such educators might try to guess what the researcher wanted to hear. For this reason, the interviewed teachers were requested to speak only from what they themselves personally experienced.

- ***Semi-structured interviews***

According to Maree (2012: 87) semi-structured interviews offer the researcher flexibility to draw out more information from interviewees. The researcher states the reason for conducting the interview at the start of the interview. The interviewee presents facts and true accounts (Leischer 2011: 160). The researcher makes sure that all interviewees understand that their responses are confidential. Semi-structured interviews (Appendix G) were formulated and conducted with Grade 4, 5 and 6 Home Language teachers. Responses from teachers gave further insight into what they perceived to be the challenges that learners faced with creative writing. Interviews took approximately one hour and in total approximately three hours were spent conducting interviews over a three-

day period. Teacher interviews took place after school in the classrooms of the respective teachers.

Semi-structured interviews granted the researcher the opportunity to probe participants if answers were not clear. It provided the researcher with the opportunity to ask new questions that may have arisen from the conversation (Cohen et al., 2000:360).

For example, in an interview with Teacher B, she revealed that the last period of the day was more challenging for some learners to complete a creative writing activity. Teachers normally expect learners to underperform at the close of the school day. The researcher then probed the interviewee on why she said so. The further questioning was not part of the initial interview questions. She explained that in her opinion it could be that some of the learners were hungry and tired of being cooped up in the class for such a long time and many teachers realised that. The semi-structured interviews afforded the researcher greater depth and understanding of the difficulties that learners faced and when learners experienced the greatest difficulty in creative writing.

The advantage of conducting a semi-structured interview was that it did not require participants to fill in any answers as opposed to a questionnaire. The interviewee could respond more rapidly and remain within the context of answering the question. Leischer (2011: 162) states that interviews do not of themselves reflect the exact experience of interviewees. They give a representation of the experience of participants. The researcher made notes of non-verbal cues from the interviewees. All interviews were audio taped and transcribed *verbatim*. A coding system was utilised to identify themes that emerged from the transcripts.

3.4.1.2. Observations

Henning (2004:86) states that a researcher has to approach a research site with care and attention to capture “sufficient aspects of the way of life of the group, which will help to construct a thick description of the situation.” Two observation sessions (Appendix H) were conducted during the English Home Language creative writing lesson presented by

the class teacher. Observations were conducted in the natural environment of the learner, the classroom, and lasted for forty-five minutes over two days. The researcher was an unobtrusive observer who had a set timetable to observe participants in their normal classroom environment. As stated by Rule and John (2011:68) and Leischer (2011:168), the researcher should be as unobtrusive as possible so as not to interfere with, or compromise, the integrity of the surroundings. The researcher should be looking in from the outside and watching the situation unfold.

The aim of the observations was to determine how selected learners interact and deal with a creative writing lesson. No disruptions were allowed while the language teacher taught. The researcher recorded, observed and made notes. Recordings of the behaviour of participating learners were captured on video to review any interaction among participants that the researcher did not capture in real time. The researcher made simple notes about the non-verbal cues and interactions of learners while writing. The video recording, using a cell phone, provided the researcher with a simple solution to review the video afterwards. This proved to be the best way to record data since it was later used for close analysis of data. Pausing and re-winding helped to record the behaviour of learners accurately during a creative writing task. Observations were conducted during an SRSD intervention programme. Results from observations in class and that of the SRSD intervention programme were compared and later provided the researcher with recommendations in the study.

3.4.1.3. The SRSD intervention programme

The SRSD strategy teaches six stages. The aim of the SRSD model is to teach four basic self-regulation strategies: Goal-setting, Self-monitoring, Self-talk, Self-reinforcement through the six stages. The aim of the SRSD programme was to utilise these strategies or phases to help participating learners with creative writing, as discussed [in Chapter 2] by Santangelo, Harris and Graham (2008:78). The SRSD stages are listed below. Each stage is a crucial part of creating a learner-centred environment.

- **Stage 1: Developing background knowledge**

The introductory stage of the SRSD process is to identify whether LPs possess background knowledge about the topic or genre to be taught.

- **Stage 2: Discussing it**

Discussions in class enable participants to express themselves freely, with no pressure upon the participant. This stage proves to be the most important stage since it allows LPs to express and freely view their concerns and difficulties. Discussions can take place in the form of explicit teaching by the educator, teaching strategies or writing techniques, or between educator and learners (Santangelo et al., 2008:78).

- **Stage 3: Model it**

Modelling involves an unequivocal way of doing something. This stage requires demonstrating how to do something. Shared writing is a good example of how to model a technique or strategy to learners. Before participants engaged in independent writing, shared writing was implemented for every new topic that was introduced.

- **Stage 4 Memorize it**

To ensure that learners remember the steps being taught, reflection is done at the end of every activity where participants need to report what they can remember (Harris, Graham & Mason, 2006:297).

- **Stage 5: Support it**

Teacher motivation and support was imperative during the intervention strategy (Helsel & Greenberg, 2007: 754). Support was provided throughout the entire intervention programme. Participants were encouraged to signal for help when in doubt or experiencing difficulty with any of the work covered during the sessions. Peers were encouraged to help each other. This sense of co-operation in particular creates a learner-centred environment.

- **Stage 6: Independent performance**

The objective of SRSD is for learners to become independent writers. At the end of every new topic, independent writing was encouraged. Independent writing enabled the learners to explore their areas of weakness and areas of strength. The last stage encouraged LPs to be independent. The SRSD strategy strongly encourages teacher support throughout the independent stage. Should participants be unclear of what to do, the researcher would explain again.

To assist the SRSD programme a variety of SRSD activities, lesson plans, flash cards and charts were used to assist the teacher in the planning and teaching of the above SRSD strategies.

3.4.2. Qualitative instruments and data collection plan

The research plan is tabulated below.

Table 3.3: Data collection plan

Data Collection Method	Sample	Time frame	Data collection Instruments
Phase 1			
Selection of learner participants	Class Educator	Aim: Grade 6 educator to select suitable learners to participate in the programme and identify the learner's limitation in creative writing. Teacher selects learners who scored between 40-49 percent in creative writing in their annual school baseline test.	Results of annual school HL assessment
Phase 2:			
Step 1 - Pre-test			
Pre-test	20 selected participants	1 hour Aim: To verify if the learners selected by the Grade 6 teacher are suitable for the research study. Learners complete pre-test. Learners who scored between 40 and 49 percent were selected for the research study.	Pre-test activity
Phase 2:			
Step2 - Observation in real classroom setting			
Observation	17 learners	Step 2: 2x 45 minutes	Pre-test activity

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		Observe selected learner participants during a creative writing lesson, presented by their class teacher.	
Phase 3: Teacher interviews			
Semi- structured interviews	<u>3 educators interviewed</u> 1x Grade 4 educator 1x Grade 5 educator 1x Grade 6 educator	45 minutes per interview session Aim: To ascertain areas of weakness in creative writing and learner motivation and behaviour during writing tasks	Interview questions Tape recorder
Intervention (SRSD)			
SRSD Learner activities Observation (during intervention)	17 learners	Total duration:4 months 3 times per week 1hour each session Observation Aim: To observe and record participants' behaviour during the implementation of the SRSD strategy and areas of difficulty in writing.	Observation schedule
Post-testing			
Activity with rubric (Same activity which was done in pre-testing)	17 learners	Post-testing 1 hour (at the end of SRSD implementation) Aim: Compare Pre-test and post-test of learners and report on findings.	Post-test

- ***Phase 1: Selection of learner participants***

The researcher handed the Grade 6 educator a list of criteria, to score and to select learners who would be most viable for the study.

- ***Phase 2: Pre-test and Observation***

Step 1: Pre-test

The pre-test (Appendix I) was conducted at the start of the intervention strategy. Pre-testing participants provided the researcher a true account of what participants found particularly challenging in creative writing. In the pre-testing phase, the researcher provided participants with a creative writing activity which demonstrated whether participants were able to read the instructions and follow instructions. The pre-test was conducted after selected learners returned the signed consent letters from their parents.

The pre-test took place after school and lasted one hour. The activity required learners to listen to the instructions of the researcher and follow while the researcher read out the instructions. This was the planning stage of the pre-test. In the second part, the learners had to complete the writing activity based on what they did in the planning stage. The aim was to evaluate whether learners were able to think creatively and use their imagination when developing a story. A rubric evaluated the performance of learners in the pre-test.

The aim was to observe selected learners who scored below 50 percent. One of the learners scored 80 percent in the pre-test. This learner was not selected for the study because the learner displayed acceptable levels of coping with creative writing tasks. Two of the participants withdrew from the study because it disrupted their religious obligations after school.

Step 2: Classroom observation

Observations (Appendix H) were conducted during the normal classroom session. Permission was obtained from the school governing body and school management team. No disruptions were allowed. The observation lasted for two 45 minutes. The researcher observed how the seventeen participants reacted in a normal classroom environment.

- ***Phase 3: Teacher interviews***

In total, three teachers from Grades 4, 5 and 6 were interviewed. The interview questionnaire (Appendix G) allowed for longer and shorter answers. Unclear answers were probed to gain greater clarity. Interviews with teachers took place after school in the classrooms of the respective teachers.

3.5. Analysis of Data

Struwig and Stead (2013: 156) posit that in any research study, in order to make sense of the raw data, the researcher needs to summarise proceedings by laying down a set of procedures for coding or scoring the data, and then entering it into a storage file to be analysed later. Creswell and Creswell (2017:183) explain that raw data comprise the

information collected. In this research study, the raw data collected stemmed from interviews, observations and the results from the pre-test and post-test.

3.5.1. Qualitative analysis of data

In this research project, the researcher analysed data from three sources: semi-structured interviews with Grade 4, 5 and 6 Home Language teachers, non-obtrusive observations held during the intervention programme, and written work of participants in the pre-test and the post-test. Creswell (2008:99) establishes that qualitative analysis of data is based on an interpretative philosophy which is an ongoing and non-linear process. Collection of data, processing, analysis and reporting are interlinked. The researcher can return to the original field notes to clarify conclusions or seek feedback from participants or to collect additional data.

The figure below represents Seidel’s (1998:44) model to explain this non-linear process (see Figure 4 below).

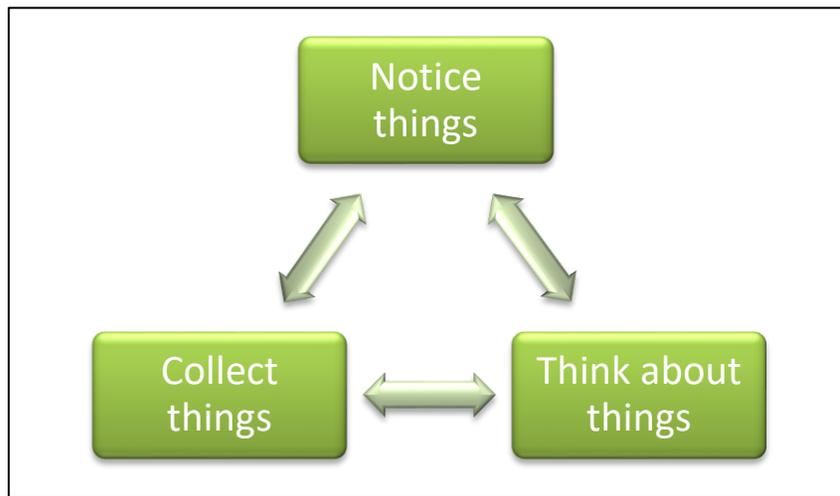


Figure 1: The process of analysing data

According to Henning et al. (2004:101) “analysis of the data is a process that requires analytical craftsmanship and the ability to capture understanding of the data in writing.” In an attempt to address the research question and derive meaning from data collected, the researcher applied a systematic approach to analyse data. Maree (2012: 101) states that

“content analysis is a systemic approach to qualitative data as it answers questions to qualitative responses sourced from interviews, written documents, journals, transcripts”. Neuendorf (2002:36) concurs that the nature of content analysis follows a systematic approach which enables the researcher to consider data from different angles. As the researcher moves through the data s/he searches for notable similarities and differences in the data sources collected. Cohen et al. (2000:112) state that using documents provides valid information when conducting a case study because the physical evidence is set out clearly. The researcher gathered information in the form of interviews, learner observations and analysis of the learner pre-tests and post-tests. Creswell and Creswell (2017:100) emphasise that the aim of qualitative data is to summarise what has been observed and heard, and to identify and interpret common patterns or themes in order to make sense of what is emerging. During analysis of the data the researcher deductively identified common or similar themes using different colours for different themes. All data collected were analysed, coded and the data collected into themes. The data were re-checked to ensure that the codes assigned to formulate themes were correct. Sub-themes emerged as the researcher better understood and made sense of the responses and observations.

3.5.1.1. Analysis of Interviews

Elaboration probes were formulated to gain a clear and thick description of the area under discussion (Creswell and Miller, 2000:89). The researcher probed when clarity was needed from the responses. Participants were at no point obliged to answer questions that they did not feel comfortable with. To show the interviewee that the researcher was clear about a certain response, the researcher used non-verbal behaviour to verify that the response was clear and understood. Non-verbal gestures in the form of nodding the head were important. They facilitated the interview process and gained the confidence of the interviewee. In order not to dominate the interview, the researcher spoke as little as possible and limited the use of exaggerated gestures. Interviews were audio recorded. Recorded responses from interviews were transcribed *verbatim* and carefully perused. The researcher compared transcripts from the three interviews. Similar responses from

interviews were grouped together and assigned a code in order to formulate themes (Maree, 2012:105).

3.5.1.2. Analysis of Observations

According to Henning et al. (2004:127) analysing data is a way of breaking up and making sense of data in order to isolate and define the problem under scrutiny. Any non-verbal cues were noted during the intervention strategy stage, especially the attitude, motivation and body language of participants such as fidgeting, playing, and daydreaming. These particulars were monitored and recorded scrupulously on an observation schedule. Monitoring the behaviour of participants afforded the researcher a keen insight into areas in creative writing which learners found difficult to complete. In this research study, the researcher became a participant observer who immersed herself in the setting, in order to design and develop the intervention strategies (Creswell, 2013:85).

The researcher took into consideration the time of the day at which observations were made. Some learners seemed more fatigued than others. Such distinctions influence receptivity to the intervention programme. Non-participation and restlessness were noted. Observation schedules were segmented and analysed to determine when, where and how learners encountered problems in creative writing and how learners responded to the intervention strategies of SRSD. Due to the nature of this research, the researcher noted how data were interpreted so as not to form any preconceived idea of what the outcome should be. Creswell and Miller (2000:85) explain that structured observations provide an opportunity to select areas or categories to be observed. Thomas (2011:172) concludes that once a researcher has organised the data, s/he needs to “capture the essence of the data” and then identify meaningful themes. In this research study, similar units of data from the observations, interviews and learners’ work were grouped together to formulate themes.

3.5.1.3. Analysis from learners' work: Pre-test and Post-test

The results of the pre-test and post-test were tabulated. The tests were evaluated by using a rubric. Each criterion on the rubric was broken down into smaller units, analysed and categorised to identify themes. The results from the pre-test and post-test were coded to determine areas of concern in creative writing and which criterion on the rubric needed to be addressed. Post-testing enabled the researcher to identify areas where development in creative writing was still required and provided a recommendation to the participants' Home Language teacher about where to support the learner in the future. The focal objective of the pre-test and the post-test was to compare learner performance before and after the SRSD intervention programme.

3.6. Validity and Reliability

The goal of data analysis is to make meaning of the data gathered from observations, interviews and learners' work and triangulate the findings in order to verify and validate the findings. Triangulation is described by Patton (2002:188) as a method devised in qualitative research to analyse a research question from multiple viewpoints. Kumar (2019: 270-271) explains validity as a "concept to measure procedures by using an instrument to measure what it was designed to measure." In this research project the researcher employed a variety of qualitative methods, namely semi-structured interviews and observations, to justify each question in relation to this research study. In order to reach the objectives of the study, the researcher developed a variety of questions (Appendix G) pertaining to how learners performed and reacted during creative writing in the class prior to the SRSD programme.

The aim of the teacher interview questions was to:

- gain insight into academic barriers faced by a learner;
- understand what a learner found challenging and what methods were used to help the learner by the teacher (background knowledge);
- assess the learner's work when under pressure;
- determine whether a learner was able to plan, write and work independently;

- discover whether a learner was able to follow instructions;
- ask ‘Can the learner set personal goals to complete a given task?’
- determine how the learner behaved in executing the given activity (behaviour and attitude)

Kumar (2019:273) posits that reliability is the ability of an instrument to produce consistent measurements. In order to obtain reliability within this research project, the researcher used the same set of interview questions to interview the three educators. In order to ensure that reliability was achieved in all interviews, the three educators were individually interviewed at the end of the day. Conducting the interviews at the end of the day resulted in a more relaxed atmosphere. The teachers were more relaxed although one educator was interviewed to give feedback about five to six learners in particular. Kumar (2019: 293) describes external consistency procedures as comparing cumulative results with each other. This research project regards parallel forms of the same test. Interview questions and observations were administered to the same participants. The results from the teacher interviews were then compared to the results of the observations obtained from the classroom, and during the SRSD intervention programme.

The goal of the researcher was to distil meaning from the data gathered from the observations, interviews and learners’ work and triangulate the findings in order to verify and validate the findings. Stake (2000: 443) posits that “triangulation is a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation”. In addition, common themes from the data analysis were compared to provide reliable findings. Cohen et al. (2000:112) emphasise that by triangulating data, a researcher can demonstrate concurrent validity and credibility. The researcher strove to prevent any bias that might distort the researcher’s view on the subject, by providing an accurate representation of the findings.

3.7. Ethical considerations

Maree (2012: 41) states that an important aspect in ethical considerations is to protect the identity of the participants and to maintain the confidentiality of the results. All participants

involved were briefed on the anonymity and confidentiality of their participation, and their rights as participants. Kumar (2019:356) explains that ethics deals with the conduct of researching individuals in accordance with principles of conduct that are considered correct. The researcher ensured that no harm came to the individuals involved at any time and avoided bias from the data gathered in the research study.

Ethical clearance was secured from the Education Faculty of Cape Peninsula University of Technology. A letter requesting consent was forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) to obtain permission to conduct research within the specified public school (Appendix A). Written consent (Appendix F) was obtained from the principal and School Governing Body (SGB) to conduct research on the school premises. Parents of the participating learners were given letters of consent (Appendix C) and teacher participants received letters of consent (Appendix D) to partake in the study. Participants were made aware that they could withdraw from the study at any given time. Written permission via electronic mail was obtained from the authors to use the online SRSD activities, lesson plans, flash cards and charts. All educators interviewed were made aware of their confidentiality and anonymity. Written permission was obtained from the authors to use the lessons via email. All participants were made aware that after the study they had full access to the results of the study.

3.8. Conclusion

In this chapter, the methodology to collect data was discussed. It was evident that as the research process gathered momentum, the purpose of the research became more evident to the learners when they started to recognise their own errors in previous writing tasks. The approach to the research was revealed, which was qualitative and the research design explained the sample, site and instruments for collecting data. The learner pre-tests and post-tests were analysed to determine whether the SRSD programme improved the writing skills of the learners and identify areas that needed consolidation after completion of the programme. The variety of data collection instruments afforded the researcher a deeper understanding of what aspects learners found particularly taxing in creative writing.

Interpretation of data and findings are reported upon in Chapter 4 with a systemic discussion of the findings from qualitative methods, namely teacher interviews and classroom observations, which afford an answer to the research question.

Chapter 4
Presentation of data

4.1. Overview

This chapter presents the data collected by means of teacher interviews, observations, pre-tests, learner worksheets and post-tests. Section 4.2 sets out the steps taken by the researcher to address the research question. The aim of this research project is to determine how the SRSD strategy aids learners who have difficulties with creative writing. The main research question is:

How can self-regulated strategy development improve Intermediate Phase learners' creative writing skills?

Section 4.2.1 presents the interview process and data obtained from three interviewees.

In Section 4.2.2 a detailed breakdown is provided of what the researcher observed. Sections 4.2.3 to 4.2.5 detail the process undertaken, to ascertain the levels of the creative writing of learner participants, in the form of: (i) a pre-test, (ii) implementing the SRSD strategy and (iii) conducting a post-test.

The goal of this study is to gauge how effectively the SRSD can assist learners struggling with creative writing and how it can be applied in an intermediate phase classroom. The class reflects a disadvantaged community from which learners are drawn and the social ailments that confront them daily. The study describes and relies upon the theoretical underpinnings of Feuerstein's (1981:127) Mediated Learning Experience (MLE) which concludes that underprivileged children possess the grit to learn and attain new opportunities of learning when provided with a learner-centred environment which acknowledges their own wealth of knowledge, and when teaching takes place in a thoughtful and sensitive way. SRSD contains elements of mediated learning, with teacher assistance available at every stage until the child reaches independent level. Increased attempts to help the learner achieve an independent level too soon or too quickly, or

without an awareness of the challenges of the school-community, may pose a barrier to a learner who is not yet ready for an intervention.

Powell & Kalina (2012: 241) remark that Piaget's (1973) cognitive constructivism is a personal process where new knowledge is internalised, made sense of, and then structured into meaningful knowledge. This study is linked to Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development ZPD which established that learning is an individual process: the input of a More Knowledgeable Other MKO is a complex system circumambient of environmental influence.

4.2. Presentation of data

The following data are drawn from interviews, observations, pre-test and post-test, the intervention programme, and material recorded *verbatim* during the research process.

4.2.1. Interviews

Interviews were done before and after the SRSD intervention? All interviews with teacher participants were semi-structured, allowing the researcher to probe interviewee responses and seek elaboration where necessary. The table below represents the number of interviews and learners discussed. Teachers were each assigned a number of learners and asked to answer predetermined questions. Teacher A answered questions pertaining to learner participants (LPs) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 16 and 17. Teacher B answered questions involving LPs 7-12 and Teacher C answered questions pertaining to LPs 13, 14 and 15.

Table 4.1: Teacher interview summary

Teacher	Total number of learner participants (LPs) used	Number of interview sessions	Number of learner participants (LPs) discussed during interview session	Total duration in minutes
Teacher A	8	3	Session 1=3 Session 2=3 Session 3=2	193
Teacher B	6	2	Session 1=3 Session 2=3	56
Teacher C	3	1	Session 1=3	23
TOTAL:	17			

As can be seen from the summary of interviews above, Teacher A had more interview sessions than either of the other two teachers. Each teacher was assigned an equal number of learners and time to be interviewed. The actual execution of the interviews did not materialise as planned. Due to extra-curricular activities and school commitments which occurred during the research study, such as extracurricular disciplinary meetings with parents and learners, teacher workshops and sport, Teacher A and Teacher C found it difficult to adhere to the interview schedule. Teacher C was interviewed on three LPs. The session was relatively brief because Teacher C had to leave early on that day. Another session was re-scheduled but after three attempts to re-schedule, the researcher was unable to establish a commitment from the teacher. Teacher A absorbed two learners from Teacher C's interview sessions.

Interview questions were based on a learner's ability: (i) to follow instructions, (ii) write independently and (iii) be motivated. An example of the interview questions is attached in Question one of the interview questionnaire (Appendix G) which deals with the reception of the learner in the grade and ascertains whether the learner was identified with writing barriers. Question one elicited more straightforward answers.

Question 2

2.1 When did you notice that there was something wrong with the learners' writing skills?

Teacher A, B and C

Teachers A, B and C noted that they observed a difference in the learners' writing ability at the beginning of the year when learners wrote their baseline tests at the beginning of the year, compared to later after the intervention. Teachers A and B asserted that it became evident as the first term progressed that the LPs found it difficult to write a complete story. Teacher C had similar experiences. . The Term one assessment marks in creative writing indicated difficulties in creative writing.

2.2 How did you intervene to improve writing skills?

Teacher A

Teacher A explained that she helped her learners with their creative writing by explaining the topic that they were writing about. The teacher then drew a mind map on the board and asked the entire class to help her map out the when, where, how and what of the story in order to start the planning process. This was done in a shared writing exercise. The teacher did not do it as a one-on-one session when the learner was at a loss as to what to do. The teacher explained that she would then tell the learners: (i) to write their first paragraph drawing upon information from the mind map to start off the first paragraph, (ii) to imagine the story unfolding in their head. She would use the same steps to complete the middle and conclusion.

Teacher B

Teacher B called learners to the table and asked each learner what their particular difficulties were. The teacher explained that she took a piece of paper and helped the learner write the introduction, asking the learner what the learner was thinking and then writing it down on paper. The teacher helped the learner scribe each sentence. Teacher B stated the following strategy that she usually used:

When I go through each question step by step, the learner then writes as I go through it, then the learner gets started...or I would ask one of the stronger learners in writing to sit with LP 7, or normally LP 7 would sit in front of me

Teacher C

Teacher C gave little detail of how she conducted her class. She stated that she did not always have time to provide individual tuition to learners because she had so many learners in her class. Teacher C mentioned that the buddy system was often used in class. The teacher explained that the buddy system was a system whereby a stronger learner in writing and reading was placed with a weaker learner. This was a similar system that Teacher B described in Teacher B's interview.

Question 3

3.1 Could the learner identify elements for writing a good story such as writing an introduction, body and conclusion? Explain.

Teacher A

Teacher A explained that most of the learners could start off the story by writing an introduction and identify words to start a story by using phrases such as "Once upon a time, there once was ... etc." They could write the setting to a story if it was not detailed. Teacher A explained that most of the learners could write the middle and sequence the events. The teacher continued that all of her learners were unable, however, to conclude a story well.

Teacher A described the following:

...my learners do not know how to end off their stories...many will just write down events, repeating the same idea over and over and leave the story, without the reader knowing how the story ended.

Teacher B

Teacher B described that writing a conclusion was what most of Teacher B's learners failed to do. Teacher B commented that:

Many of the learners do not know how to end off the story, many stories just stopped, the character would do something then the next sentence the learner would write the end.

Teacher B explained that two of her LPs often ended off their story or essay when the action part in the story took place.

Teacher C

Teacher C described that her LPs could write a good introduction, middle and conclusion. Teacher C, however, had a contrasting response about how learners concluded their stories.

They would write an end to the story and also write how they felt at the end of the story...almost like a reflection they would write, but I would stand behind them to do it well.

3.2 Was the learner able to write a complete story/essay on his/her own?

Teacher A

During the interview process, Teacher A explained that six of her LPs could write a story on their own but only when the story had fewer than one hundred words. The teacher explained that the remaining LPs needed constant encouragement and motivation to finish. In her words, she described one of the LP's as being "babied". She had to beg the learner to finish and fed the learner sentences although the learner had the ability to complete the story independently.

Teachers B and C

Teachers B and C agreed that none of the LPs in their classes could work independently. Teacher B commented that "...being playful and lacking concentration" was what they contended with, leading to the LPs not completing their work.

Question 4

4.1 Could the learner plan his own writing process? For example, could they create mind maps or follow instructions to a writing frame?

All the teachers explained that LPs could plan their own writing to a certain extent. The teachers explained that LPs needed help in completing a mind map or writing frame. Some learners knew how to plan their characters, such as attribute names to their characters, identify the setting to the story and to some degree knew how the story would end. They all explained, however, that planning the middle of the story, such as writing down the sequence of events was what most learners found difficult. Teacher C mentioned that what some learners wrote in their planning did not always materialise in their stories.

Question 5

5.1 How does the learner behave during writing lessons? Explain the behaviour.

Teachers A, B and C

From their interviews, it was clear that all the teachers had similar responses about the behaviour of LPs. They all agreed that LPs easily became distracted and could not concentrate for long periods when writing. Teacher C gave a detailed breakdown of the behaviour of her LP 15 during a writing lesson:

LP 15

The learner can't sit still... will sit for a good couple of minutes just staring and looking around at what to write. The learner will fiddle around with paper or take apart the pen, eventually the learner ends up talking to the next learner. I will

then remind the learner to continue, but the learner will only focus again for a short time, and you can see the learner loses interest along the way when the learner becomes stuck on what to write next... .

5.2 Can the learner focus, and complete the writing task independently?

Teachers A, B and C

All the teachers agreed that learners could seldom complete a writing task independently. The teachers all had similar responses regarding their LPs, stating that some learners could complete the planning and introduction on their own, whereas other learners failed to start off their story. The responses were similar with writing the middle and conclusion of the story. The teachers explained that some learners needed help with how to write events in a chronological order when writing the middle, while others needed help to write a good conclusion.

5.3 How does the learner behave when encountering a problem?

Teachers A, B and C

This question elicited various responses from teachers. Teachers A and B responded that some of the learners completely stopped writing, looked around, put their head on the desk and dozed off without requesting help from the teacher. Teacher B mentioned that when she asked a learner how far s/he was, the learner stated that s/he was done. Both teachers mentioned that some of the learners drew at the back of their book or paper. Teacher B described one learner becoming aggressive, pushing the book or task to the side and refusing to write further. The very same learner tried to disrupt other learners while they were writing by hiding their stationery or by hitting the nearest learner. Teacher C mentioned that Teacher C's LP sometimes asked for help.

Teacher C responded to one LP by stating that:

When the learner sees somebody else in the class ask for help, then the learner will come and ask, even though the learner sat with the problem for a long time, the learner would not come immediately.

Question 6

6.1 Can the learner follow instructions after the teacher has explained a writing process?

Teachers A, B and C

Responses from teachers were similar over the course of their interviews. They explained that all of the learners showed some understanding of the writing task when the teacher explained it because the learner verbalised that they understood what to do. What the learners really understood and what was being executed in their writing task was, however, completely different. The teachers explained that as soon as learners were left to work independently, part of the writing task was completed as the instructions stipulated, while the greater part of the writing task was incorrect.

Teacher B had this to say about *LP 4*:

The learner struggles to put what the learner thinks onto paper. When you ask the learner what ideas the learner has to write the learner would tell you the entire story, but the learner is unable to write the idea down on paper.

Question 7

7.1 Does the learner write in detail, make use of adjectives, create a good character, describe the setting etc.?

Teacher A

Teacher A responded by describing that her LPs were able to write in detail but only when they were reminded to do so. Teacher A commented on the writing of one of her LP's by stating that:

The learner would mention the name of the character or characters but wouldn't elaborate about the character. No physical description is given. I would then tell the learner to describe the face of the character and the learner will only write about that, nothing further will be written about.

Teacher A continued in her interview by stating that this held for most of her LPs. They did not take the initiative to continue writing a detailed story.

Teacher B and Teacher C

Both teachers responded in their interviews that the LPs added adjectives but only in the introduction, and forgot to add detail as the story progressed.

Question 8

8.1 Does the learner revise her/his work? Can the learner check for spelling mistakes, check if any words have been omitted, edit sentence construction etc.?

All the teacher comments were similar regarding their LPs. They stated that they reminded learners to revise but many of the learners were unable to pick up their own mistakes, unless it was pointed out, or a peer read and identified the error. Teacher A explained that the peer method was used when peer reviewing took place. This method involved a weaker learner teaming up with a stronger learner who read the work written by the weaker learner and pointed out any mistakes made. The weaker learner then attempted to correct the error.

Teacher A asserted that:

Even though I point out the spelling mistake, the learner could not always identify the mistake independently, and even when I show the spelling mistake, the learner will not be eager to use a dictionary to look up the correct spelling.

Question 9

9.1 What do you perceive to be the problem with the learner's execution of a writing task regarding planning, composing and revising of the writing task?

Teachers A, B and C

The three teachers registered comparable responses. They cited a lack of motivation and focus as the core problems. Teacher C explained that some of the learners started off the writing process with a negative attitude which disrupted the rest of the writing session. The teacher stated that many of these negative attitudes stemmed from past writing experiences, such as not completing a writing task in time or receiving hurtful comments from a teacher regarding their ability to write.

9.2 How would you define the quality of the learners' writing?

Teacher A and B

The responses received from Teachers A and B showed that learners wrote poorly structured stories. Both teachers alluded to the way in which learner motivation affected the outcome of the writing task. Teacher B commented that:

The less interested the learner was to work, the less interesting was the work.

Teacher C

Teacher C responded that LPs had the ability to write good stories if they understood the topic well. The teacher mentioned that the quality of the writing task depended largely on the mood of the LPs.

4.2.2. Observation before intervention programme

The second method used to garner data was in the form of classroom observations of writing lessons. Such observations allowed the researcher to examine how learners behaved and reacted in class during a writing task. The researcher could then gather data about the behaviour of LPs before and during the intervention programme.

The seventeen participating learners were observed during two normal classroom sessions to allow the researcher to witness how learners performed under normal classroom conditions. Learners were observed by the researcher in their classroom setting before the intervention programme. A total of two 45 minute lessons were observed. In an attempt to be an unobtrusive observer, the researcher ensured that she was in class before the learners arrived for the given period. This strategy was used to divert attention from the researcher.

The aim of observing the learners was to determine how selected learners coped with, and unpacked, a creative writing lesson. The researcher used an observation schedule (Appendix H) to make detailed notes about non-verbal cues and writing interaction between learners. LPs were selected according to the score of their pre-test results. LPs who were selected scored between 40-49 %. To avoid any confusion, the researcher asked each teacher to place participants in demarcated areas in the class known to the researcher and teacher only, before the lesson started. This lesson was conducted in the Home language period. In an attempt to keep the identity of the learners anonymous, a number was assigned to each learner. It was evident from the observation that, of the seventeen learners, many were not interested in the lesson when it started. The teacher used humour to entice the rest of the class to repeat the instructions of the lesson in chorus. Five of the participants remained silent and refused to laugh at the jokes that the teacher made.

The topic of one of the observed lessons was “The Missing Cupcake”. The lesson started with the teacher signalling learners to join in the shared reading lesson. The teacher read the introduction to the story. Midway through the story, she asked learners who the main

characters were, what the setting was, what the time was, and what had happened so far. LP4 on numerous occasions stared out of the classroom window, and twice during the session, the teacher had to divert learner 4's attention back to her. It was evident, however, that the other learners enjoyed the introduction and suspense that the story evoked. The story was not complete since the ending was missing. Learners were then given instructions to write an ending to the story. This was done as a shared writing activity. Learners wrote an ending to the story by sharing their ideas.

The teacher modelled the planning for the conclusion of the story by asking the entire class how the story could end. Learners were encouraged to offer their opinions and the teacher wrote down three possible ways that the story could end. Next, learners had to vote on how the story should end. The teacher asked one of the learners to be the class scribe and write down the agreed upon conclusion. The shared writing lesson proved exciting. Most of the learners wanted their sentence to be written on the board. It evoked much participation from the selected LPs. Each time a new learner read, s/he contributed a sentence to writing the conclusion. The ending changed slightly. The teacher reminded the class to keep in mind how the story should end according to what they planned and discussed.

An independent writing activity was then presented to the learners. The topic that the learners wrote about was "The messy kitchen". The teacher pasted a picture on the board that depicted the image of a messy kitchen. The teacher wrote the instructions on the board with the required number of words needed in the paragraph. She explained that learners needed to create their own characters and sequence their events according to who created the mess in the kitchen and how the story ended. Five of the LPs looked at the colourful picture on the board as they started with their planning. As the teacher walked past LP 7, the learner hunched down as if he were writing. LP 4 was still staring out of the window and had a pen dangling from the mouth. LP 12 made no attempt to open the book or start writing. Five of the other participants were busy completing their endings. After thirty minutes, it was evident that of the LPs who were observed, only two had shown any interest in trying to finish the activity. They requested the teacher grant them a few extra minutes. Learner performance was recorded and tabulated. The number of words,

number of paragraphs written, and the ability to stick to the topic and teacher intervention were recorded in Table 4.2

Table 4.2: Pre-intervention observation during the writing lesson

Learner	Number of words	Number of paragraphs	Comments	Teacher Intervention
1	66	1	Adhered to topic. Only the introduction was written.	0
2	32	1	Attempt made to stick to the topic by starting off the first sentence “the kitchen was messy because...” Only three sentences written.	1
3	14	1	Attempt to stick to topic but a very weak introduction. The learner started the story by introducing the character. Only two simple sentences written.	1
4	0	0	No attempt made to write.	3
5	37	1	Attempt made. Introduction written, characters identified.	1
6	33	1	Attempt made. Introduction written characters identified.	1
7	45	1	Attempt made. Introduction written, characters identified, and three adjectives used to describe the character.	1
8	52	2	The learner made a good attempt at writing an introduction. Paragraph two lacked detail about the events.	0
9	22	1	Incomplete paragraph. Only 2 sentences written. Learner walked around and drew pictures.	2
10	14	1	Random sentences written. Learner did not adhere to the topic.	2
11	39	1	Attempt made but learner did not stick to the topic.	0
12	45	1	Adhered to the topic. Simple sentences written. Characters introduced.	1
13	57	1	Adhered to the topic. Introduction, middle and conclusion written. Conclusion only 2 sentences.	1
14	45	1	Adhered to topic. Introduction and middle written. No conclusion.	1
15	23	1	Copied two sentences from friend, very restless.	1
16	29	1	Learner copied introduction from friend and rewrote only changed the name of characters. Only two sentences written.	1
17	18	1	One complete sentence written and one incomplete sentence. Only the character was introduced in the story.	1

Table 4.2 displays none of the LPs completed the prescribed number of three paragraphs. The majority of LPs managed to write one paragraph only. One of the LPs did not attempt the activity. The LP who did not write, had his head on the table. When the teacher asked the LP what the learner struggled with, the reply from the LP was that “the work is too hard”. The table below presents the body language observed by 17 LPs. The body movements of LPs were noted.

Table 4.3: Learner behaviour before the intervention programme

Observed behaviour	Pre- test observation Number of Learners	Pre- test observation Percentage of observed behaviour
Restless at the start of the activity	2	12%
Paying attention some times during the lesson	6	35%
Fidgeting	7	41%
Not paying attention at all	1	6%
Paid full attention	1	6%

The data above demonstrate that only one (6%) LP paid full attention from the start to the end of the lesson. Two (12%) of the LPs were restless at the start of the lesson, and played with their stationery. One LP scribbled at the back of the book.

In comparison to the six (35%) LPs who paid attention during the lesson, these six LPs were unaware of the researcher observing them. One of the LPs took out a magazine and started paging through it and cutting out pictures. The LP glanced up now and then at the teacher, pretending to pay attention. The other three LPs agreed that they understood the instructions but when it came to their chance to write their story independently, they whispered between themselves that they did not know what to do. Of the LPs, seven (41%) displayed unsettled behaviour by fidgeting during the lesson. Of the group of LPs, only one (1%) of the learners did not pay any attention at all. This LP placed his head on the desk and slept throughout the lesson. The LP who completed the writing task showed interest at the start of the lesson. As soon as the teacher finished explaining, this LP immediately started planning the writing task.

4.2.2.1. Observations during the intervention programme

Observations were conducted during the SRSD intervention programme.

As LPs interacted during the lesson, any behaviour that suggested that learners were distressed or confused was noted on the observation schedule. The behaviour of the seventeen participating LPs was noted and routinely checked during the course of the intervention programme. The following behavioural patterns were observed from the seventeen LPs. A variety of body cues were noted on the observation schedule such as:

- irritability
- talking to or distracting other learners
- fidgeting with stationery, or body
- learner participation

Irritability

At the start of the programme, some of the LPs did not seem at ease after they were allocated to their seats at the start of the session. Of the seventeen learners, there were six LPs who made a fuss about not feeling well, such as complaining of being too hot, having stomach cramps or a headache. This happened at every session from week one until week five. The researcher allowed these learners to have a sip of water or go to the toilet. Going to the toilet was the most common request when the learner claimed to have stomach cramps. As the intervention programme progressed, the request to leave for the toilet or complaints of an ailment subsided, with no complaints occurring after week eight of the intervention programme.

Talking to, or distracting, other learners

Talking to each other did not subside as the intervention programme progressed. The noise, however, became a constructive buzz. Learners often discussed with each other how far they were or what was happening in their story. The most popular competition among the learners was who had the most adjectives in their paragraphs. Without the researcher planning it, this game proved to be a strong motivation for the learners to write in detail, and describe characters and events within their story.

Fidgeting with stationery and seating

During the first sessions in week one to week three, LPs found it difficult to settle down and focus on the task at hand. Fidgeting among learners at the start of the intervention programme was at its peak since LPs sat in different seats at every session. To settle the learners, the researcher assigned name tags to seats and stationery. Learners were not allowed to change seats, unless given permission to do so from the researcher. There was no need to borrow any stationery or pages from each other because the researcher provided each group with a set of stationery that included pens, coloured pencils, rulers and book. Stationery was collected by a different learner after every session to ensure that responsibility was shared among all learners. All of the seventeen learners took turns to collect the stationery diligently. Fidgeting with stationery, such as asking each other for pens, decreased as the intervention sessions progressed.

Learner participation

LPs sometimes arrived a few minutes late to the intervention sessions due to unforeseen circumstances such as a preceding class running late or a learner having a long rugby practice, yet they all made an effort to be on time. The researcher observed that half of the LPs were interested, from the start of the lesson, to participate in lesson discussions such as brainstorming and story planning during shared writing. Three of the learners were prepared to volunteer to do the planning on the board for whichever topic was discussed in the class. Their eagerness to do the planning often resulted in the three sharing ideas. This behaviour led to a change in attitude from the other LPs, and also resulted in the more shy LPs participating in activities - although it did not happen from the outset.

Throughout the intervention program, learners were encouraged to undertake a short reflection at the end of the intervention session. At first, some of the LPs were not willing to share their thoughts about the day. The researcher then encouraged other learners to share their thoughts. As time elapsed, however, more of the LPs who were unwilling to share their thoughts initially, began to open up to how they felt.

4.2.2.2. Observation during the post-test

Observations were conducted during the post-test. A variety of body cues were observed during the intervention programme were noted on the observation schedule, namely:

- irritability
- talking to or distracting other learners
- fidgeting with stationery, or body
- learner participation

Irritability

During the post-test, LPs were quiet and seemed content to do another activity. Only one of the LPs was distracted by the noise outside the classroom which was due to gang activity outside the school grounds (?). The rest of the LPs seemed relaxed.

Talking to, or distracting, other learners

Only a few muffled sounds came from the classroom. The researcher did not need to tell the learners to keep quiet or become settled. LP 6 whispered to his friend to move his feet under the table but was hushed by another learner to keep quiet.

Fidgeting with stationery and seating

There was no need to borrow any stationery or pages from each other because the researcher provided each group with a set of stationery that included pens, coloured pencils, rulers and book. At the start of the test, LPs 2, 6 and 13 took time to settle. LP 3 had to be reminded that an activity was about to begin because she was still rummaging through the pencil holder in search of a pencil. After about three minutes, the group settled and was ready to listen.

Learner participation

During the post-test, learners knew immediately that they needed to write their names on the activity sheet. Some of the LPs took the initiative to open the test even before the researcher stated that they could start. As the researcher read the instructions to the LPs, they listened carefully and immediately started to write their story. No reprimanding was

necessary to ask LPs to co-operate. As the test drew near to the end, the researcher reminded five learners that they needed to check through their work and rest their heads on the table.

Observation of learners during the pre-test and post-test of the SRSD intervention programme

Table 4.4: Learner behaviour before and after the intervention programme

Observation	Pre-test Number of learners' behaviour observed	Post-test Number of learners' behaviour observed	Pre-test Percentage of learners displaying behaviour	Post-test Observation Percentage
Restless at the start of the activity	2	1	12%	5%
Paying attention some times during the lesson	6	5	35%	29%
Fidgeting	7	4	41%	26%
Not paying attention at all	1	1	6%	6%
Paid full attention	1	6	6%	34%

These results suggest that only one (6%) of LPs paid full attention at the start of the session. Only 2 (12 %) of the LPs were restless at the start of the lesson but this number slowly decreased. Six (35 %) LPs paid attention at times during the lesson in comparison to the 6% of LPs who paid attention from the start. Fidgeting declined among the LPs from 41% to 26%. Of the group of LPs observed, only one (1%) of the learners did not pay attention at all in the pre-test. The number increased towards the end of the programme.

4.2.3. Pre-test results

A pre-test (refer Appendix I) was conducted before learners started the intervention programme. The goal of the pre-test was to ascertain areas in the creative writing process that learners found difficult. The pre-test was designed to assess various aspects of the writing process such as planning, sequencing events, describing characters, setting and

concluding the story. At the start of the pre-test, a few of the learners seemed uneasy about writing the pre-test. Four of the LPs wanted to know what the total score of the test was and whether the marks contributed to their final examination scores. The researcher explained that the test was not for a mark but to help the researcher identify areas that LPs found challenging in writing. The researcher explained that the pre-test would assist in determining what, if anything, the LP learnt during the intervention programme.

The pre-test comprised two sections. Activity 1 consisted of listening and planning of the story. Activity 2 dealt with the writing of the story. A rubric was used to evaluate how learners performed in the pre-test according to the following criteria:

- ability to follow instructions and plan;
- structure and content;
- use of adverbs and adjectives;
- use of conjunctions and formulations of complex sentences.

At the start of the pre-test, LPs needed to follow verbal instructions read to them. LPs at the start of the process were unsettled, especially the six LPs who found it difficult to settle, as noted in section 4.2.2.2. The first part of the pre-test was Activity 1 which comprised a listening activity and ability to follow instructions to complete the planning stage. It required learners to listen to the researcher's instructions and complete what was read. This was the planning stage of the pre-test. Many of the LPs did not pay attention because some of them were staring out of the window or scribbling at the back of their books. Two of the LPs were trying to fix a pen. The writing task did not capture the attention of LPs and the researcher read the pre-test instructions for a second time. LPs had to plan their writing, based upon instructions read to them. The aim was to evaluate whether learners were able to use the information written down in Activity 1 to plan their stories and think creatively when developing a story.

Activity 2 required that LPs use the information that they planned in Activity 1 to help them build their story. The story had to contain an introduction, middle and conclusion. To help the LPs start their introduction, a lead-in sentence was provided. LPs needed to complete the lead-in sentence. Seven of the LPs drew a face to depict the character but there were

no adjectives or ideas jotted next to the face. The technical drawing ability of the learner was not assessed. The emphasis was for LPs to draw detailed pictures to help them visualise the character in their mind, build their characters' personality and develop an interesting, detailed storyline.

As the researcher moved through the row of learners, many of the LPs were not familiar with the word 'setting'. The researcher had to explain what the setting was in a story. The researcher explained what the setting was and glanced over the pages where some LPs had blank spaces. The LPs had to jot down ideas of the events that occurred in the story.

Table 4.5: Pre-test word count, number of adjectives and adverbs used

LEARNER	Activity Pre-test Word count	Pre-test: Number of adjectives used	Pre-test: Number of adverbs used
1	67	4	1
2	74	6	1
3	44	3	0
4	86	7	2
5	66	5	1
6	35	0	0
7	93	8	1
8	88	6	1
9	73	5	1
10	89	9	2
11	111	12	2
12	90	11	2
13	56	7	1
14	76	8	1
15	54	4	0
16	73	4	1
17	99	13	2

Of the seventeen learners, six jotted down possible events. To present the data collected from the pre-test, learners were grouped according to the number of words they wrote in

their stories below. The results of the word count, adjectives and adverbs used can be viewed in Table 4.5.

LPs: 1, 3, 5, 6, 13, 15

- Ability to follow instructions and plan

The above learners were mostly unable to complete the first activity of the pre-test (Appendix I) which was creating a character for their story. As the researcher read the instructions to the group, to draw the face of their character, LP 3 and LP 5 found it difficult to draw the face. After asking the two LPs, LP 6 noted that he did not know how to draw a face properly because he could not draw well. LP 5 decided to draw a picture of the full character instead of writing down the description of the character next to it. The researcher then explained to LP6 that it is not about how well he can draw, but to try and picture the character in his mind and then try to draw it. After ten minutes, LP 6 still made no attempt to draw. LP 1 displayed the same degree of distress about drawing but it was due to the LP not having a proper pencil. The researcher gave LP 1 a pencil and LP1 immediately started to draw his character. LPs 5, 13 and 15 drew a character's face but minimum facial features were added to their character, and all three omitted the character's name. LPs 1, 3 and 15 did not add any information to describe the setting. All six LPs failed to add any adjectives to describe their character's personality.

- Structure

The structure of LPs 1, 3, 5, 6, 13 and 15 all lacked detail in the structure of their introduction. This group wrote the fewest words in their stories, namely fewer than 70 words in total. Their introduction had no setting or character described. No action or drama was created by the LPs in their stories. Events followed incoherently. A number of ideas that LPs wrote in the middle were repeated in the conclusion. LPs 3 and 6 made little attempt to write a conclusion and their stories ended abruptly.

LPs 13 and 15 wrote their introduction by completing the lead-in sentence. No setting and character was described in the introduction. The body of their stories contained more completed sentences yet lacked a flow of ideas from one sentence to the next. The conclusion of LP15 consisted of two sentences and LP 13 wrote one sentence only to conclude his story. LPs 1 and 5 completed the introduction lead-in sentence. LP5 named his character in the introduction but no descriptive words were used to describe the character or the setting. LP 5 wrote a conclusion that contained repeated sentences written in the introduction. LPs 1, 5, 13 and 15 succeeded in completing the character drawing. These four LPs added more detail to the facial features of the characters. All four LPs got the orientation of the character right, drawing it in the left block.

Only LP 15 added three things to describe the personality of the characters. LPs 2, 6 and 16 wrote down one description only about the personalities of characters. All four LPs completed the planning by adding three things that the character liked to do. LPs 3 and 6 were unable to write a completed introduction. The opening sentence to the introduction was given to the learners in a cloze format. The learners then had to complete the opening sentence of the introduction. No character name was mentioned and no setting was described. The body lacked detail and both stories used simple sentences. No conclusion was written. The planning done in Activity 1 was not utilised to build their stories. Both learners wrote the fewest numbers of words in their stories.

- Use of adjectives and adverbs

LP 3 added one adjective to describe the personality of the character, whereas LP 15 focused more on completing the drawing in great detail and added four adjectives to describe the character. LPs used the fewest adjectives for the setting, character or other nouns. LP 6 made no attempt to add any adjectives to his story. Many of the adjectives written down were basic adjectives of colour and adjectives of size. LP 1 wrote down one adjective only to describe the character and one adjective was used to describe an object in the story.

None of the six LPs in this group used more than two adverbs to describe the actions of the character or events in their story. LPs 3, 6 and 15 employed no adverbs.

LP 13's story contained mostly simple sentences and an attempt was made to add 7 adjectives to extend her story. LP 15 used fewer adjectives in his story and the body of his story consisted of simple sentences.

- Use of conjunctions and formulation of complex sentences.
The stories of LPs 3 and 6 contained simple sentences only. There were no conjunctions used in any of the paragraphs. No compound sentences or complex sentences were written. Words and ideas were often repeated in their stories. LPs 1, 5, 13 and 15 extended their sentences with adjectives but no conjunctions were used to create compound sentences. Most of the sentences were simple sentences.

LP 3, 6 and 13 ignored capital letters and punctuation marks in their sentences.

LPs 2, 9, 14 and 16

- Ability to follow instructions and plan
The four LPs covered more completed areas in Activity 1 than the previous participants discussed. All the LPs drew the face of a character with three adjectives to describe their character. They all added three descriptions to describe the character's personality. The exception was that LP 14 added more detail to describe what the character liked to do. LP 14 wrote down four sentences and used 5 adjectives to describe the character's personality.
- Structure
All four LPs made an attempt to add the information written in the planning stage into their stories. LPs 9 and 16 used simple sentences to complete their introduction, body and conclusion. Their sentences had a logical flow of ideas.

LPs 2 and 14 used more or less the same number of adjectives to complete their stories. The conclusion was written poorly by this group, compared to the number of sentences written in their introduction and middle.

- Use of adjectives and adverbs

Use of adjectives in the story of this group was fairly uneven. LPs 2, 9 and 14 mainly made use of adjectives of colour and size to describe either their setting, character or an object. LP 14 was able to employ two adjectives in a sentence to describe the size of the character. LP 16 alone was unable to add more than 4 adjectives within her story.

Only 1 adverb was utilised by this group to elaborate their sentences. Only LP 9 was able to use the adverb of manner correctly within his sentence.

- Use of conjunctions and the formulation of complex sentences.

All four LPs were able to extend their sentences by using adjectives but few conjunctions were used to create compound sentences. LP 16 was able to incorporate two compound sentences within her writing. None of the LPs was able to create complex sentences.

LPs 4, 7, 8, 10 and 12

- Ability to follow instructions and plan

LP 4, 12 drew a detailed character. LPs 4, 7 and 10 added one adjective to describe the personality of their character whereas LP 8 focused more on completing the drawing in great detail and added one adjective to describe the physical appearance of the character. None of the six LPs attempted to write down three things in the circle that the character liked to do. All six LPs failed to describe the characters' personalities.

- Structure

This group of learners tried hard to write a more detailed introduction and to describe the setting and the characters. The introductions of LPs 7 and 12 linked up and flowed with the middle of the story. The rest of the LPs from this group managed to write an introduction but there was an inconsistency in the flow of ideas from the introduction to the middle.

A disconnection followed in the conclusion of LPs 7, 8 and 10. There was not a logical link with the behaviour of the action of the characters' action in the middle and the conclusion so their conclusions ended abruptly. This group managed to complete the lead-on sentence in a more meaningful way.

LP 7 wrote a more creative and original middle, with a good explanation of how the events led on to each other. LP 7 could not complete the conclusion and no closing sentence was evident in his story. More attention was given to explain how the events led on to each other.

LPs 4, 8 and 10 wrote good introductions but little detail was given in the story to describe the characters or events. Simple sentences were used in the middle and to write the conclusion. The introduction written by LPs 4, 8 and 10 contained more complex sentences. More adjectives were used to describe the character. These three LPs, however, failed to conclude their stories in a logical manner. LP 8's paragraph structure was incoherent. Information that had to be written in the introduction was added to the middle and ideas were repeated in the middle and conclusion.

LP 12 wrote the longest middle section of all the LPs in this study. It contained more detail about the character and what the character saw. Her sentence construction and spelling, however, were poor. She concluded her story in two sentences which repeated the same idea. This group wrote more than 80 words in their stories which lacked coherence and flow of ideas.

- Use of adjectives and adverbs

LPs 4, 7, 8, 10 and 12 attempted to write more complex sentences. The use of adjectives was highest in this group. LP12 enjoyed the activity so much that the LPs focused more on the planning stages of the story. LPs 4, 7 and 8 had more adjectives in their stories. All three LPs discussed the personality and look of their character in detail.

Correct use of adverbs was fairly low in this group with no more than 2 adverbs used within the story.

- Use of conjunctions and formulation of complex sentences.

This group managed to write one complex sentence within their stories mainly, in the introduction. The use of conjunctions to form compound sentences was mainly used in the middle of their stories to link events, add or explain an idea or a reason. Towards the conclusion of the story, learners used mostly simple sentences to conclude their story.

LPs 11 and 17

- Ability to follow instructions and plan

The ability to follow instructions was more accurate among the two LPs. The drawing of the character in the correct block, adding adjectives to describe the character were all completed correctly. Both LPs were able to employ two descriptive words to describe the personalities of their characters.

- Structure

Two LPs used the highest number of words in their stories: LP 11 had a total of 111 words and LP 17 wrote 99 words.

LP 11 wrote an introduction that focused more on describing the setting and the appearance of the character. The middle focused on how the events unfolded but LP 11 constantly repeated the same idea throughout her story. She would slightly change the phrasing of her sentences but the idea remained the same.

This created a high number of words in her story. The chronological flow of ideas in the story was inconsistent in her conclusion. LP 17 wrote a logical introduction. His middle had a logical follow of events but ideas were repeated in the middle and the conclusion.

- Use of adjectives and adverbs
LPs 11 and 17 used the most adjectives to describe the events that unfolded in their story. The use of adverbs was low with no more than two adverbs in their story.
- Use of conjunctions and formulation of complex sentences.
LP11 and 17 utilised more conjunctions in their sentences to create compound sentences. LP 11 alone was able to write one complex sentence in her story. As the stories concluded, the sentences were mostly simple sentences.

The pre-test had a set time of one hour and learners had to do their planning and final draft within that time period. The LPs took almost half an hour to do their planning. In the second part of the pre-test, Activity 2, many of the LPs failed to write a conclusion.

The following section will elaborate on the work plan.

Table 4.6: Work plan

Day	Date	Topic
<i>Thursday</i>	<i>18 February</i>	PRE-TEST
<i>Monday</i>	<i>22 February</i>	Positive thinking, create self-statement card and behaviour modification chart (BMC)
<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>24 February</i>	What makes a story exciting? Look at a variety of stories and identify elements which make it exciting.
<i>Monday</i>	<i>29 February</i>	Organising and planning Where it happened? Setting, different settings What happened? Explain in detail
<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>2 March</i>	When did it happen? Time (Introducing adverbs of time) How it happened? Explain in detail

Chapter 4 – Presentation of data

Day	Date	Topic
Friday	4 March	Using adverbs Time- Ask the question <i>When?</i> earlier, today, yesterday, tomorrow, soon, Place- Ask the question <i>Where?</i> above, here, behind the gate, outside, inside Manner-Ask the question <i>How?</i> Easily, happily, sadly, silently, loudly, quickly, Frequency- Ask the question <i>How often?</i> Always, every day, never, once, seldom, sometimes
Monday	7 March	Paragraph writing using adverbs
Wednesday	9 March	SRSD activities- Character formation: Personality of a character. Character formation. How to create a characters
Friday	11 March	SRSD activities -Paragraph writing using adjectives SRSD activities -Paragraph writing using adjectives
Monday	14 March	Paragraph writing Topic: A cold Tuesday morning What happened? Explain in detail Where it happened? Setting
Wednesday	16 March	How to write a beginning/Introduction
Friday	18 March	Learners write own introduction
HOLIDAYS 18 MARCH - 5 APRIL		
Wednesday	6 April	Review and practice of POW+ TREE
Monday	11 April	Transfer words
Wednesday	13 April	Introduction writing activity. Use conjunctions, transfer words
Friday	15 April	Plot-Middle part of a story. Read a variety of short stories with an interesting middle. Discuss what makes the story interesting. Discuss climax of a story.
Monday	18 April	Plot-Middle part of a story. Discuss what it means to describe in detail. Look at story examples. Highlight interesting parts.
Wednesday	20 April	Learners write middle Topic: A cold Tuesday morning
Monday	25 April	Using adjectives= Adjectives of Colour Taste Smell, Texture, Sound Add adjectives to story: A cold Tuesday morning
Wednesday	27 April	SRSD activities- Similes and Million Dollar Words (MDW)
Monday	2 May	Similes and Million Dollar Words (MDW). Activity
Wednesday	4 May	SRSD activities – How to write an ending to a story. Different ways to end a story.
Monday	9 May	Activity: Writing an end to the story
Wednesday	11 May	How to write an end to a story : A cold Tuesday morning
Monday	16 May	Learners plan own story. Topic: The Beach

Day	Date	Topic
		Follow writing frame: title, introduction, characters, middle, end
<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>18 May</i>	Story writing: continue with story from the previous week.
<i>Friday</i>	<i>20 May</i>	Final draft of story. How to edit.
<i>Monday</i>	<i>23 May</i>	Editing a story. Add Remove Replace Review (ARRR)
<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>25 May</i>	Writing to persuade. How to convince your reader.
<i>Friday</i>	<i>27 May</i>	Writing to persuade activities
<i>Monday</i>	<i>30 May</i>	Writing to persuade activities
<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>1 June</i>	Writing an ending. Adding own opinion to a story.
JUNE HOLIDAYS 24 JUNE - 18 JULY		
<i>Monday</i>	<i>18 July</i>	SRSD activities- Story writing revision
<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>20 July</i>	Story writing revision planning to final draft.
<i>Monday</i>	<i>25 July</i>	Story writing revision
<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>27 July</i>	POST TEST

4.2.4. SRSD learner lessons and activities

18 February Pre-test

The SRSD programme started off with the pre-test to assess the creative writing abilities of the selected learner participants. At the start of the pre-test, learners were informed that it was not a test to pass or fail but a chance for the researcher to determine what aspects of creative writing they found particularly challenging. Learners were handed a copy of the activity. The pre-test comprised three sections: listening, planning and writing. A rubric was used to evaluate the performance of learners in the pre-test and their ability to:

- follow instructions;
- write an introduction;
- write a well-developed body;
- write detailed sentences using adjectives; and
- write an effective conclusion.

22 February

Developing and activating background knowledge is the first step in the SRSD programme where learners develop all the necessary skills: (i) to understand why they are doing the

SRSD programme, (ii) identify negative attitudes or perceptions to writing and (iii) learn and apply the SRSD strategies (Harris et al., 2008:401). At the start of the first session, learners were randomly asked to describe how they felt about writing creative stories or essays. Learners were given their own books and Behaviour Modification Chart BMC as a reflection tool, to self-evaluate and monitor their own progress and feelings as the intervention programme continued. As described in Chapter 2, the main goal of the SRSD strategies is to help learners learn the four basic self-regulation strategies: goal-setting, self-monitoring, self-talk, self-reinforcement (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001:112).

The researcher asked learners about any negative that arose. This was done to identify why the learner mentioned it and asked the learner how to change the situation described. Most of the learners felt that it was boring. One learner stated that “it’s a waste of time” and that completing a creative writing activity was “too difficult to complete”. As the responses from the learners continued, the researcher pointed out to the learners that they already knew how to remedy their problems. The responses initiated the introduction of positive self-statements through positive thinking. It was then explained to learners that positive thinking and creating positive statements can help when motivation is needed to complete a task.

Learners were asked to think of a positive thought or song that motivated them. They were asked to take one line from the song or thought which stood out, and write it down on the leaf-shaped card given to them. Learners then needed to repeat their personal motivational message, until they knew it by heart. The learners then had the opportunity to share their personal messages with each other. This became part of the intervention ritual which was repeated at the start of every lesson to remind learners that they needed to stay motivated, focused and that they could do better. We came up with a theme for the intervention sessions and all the learners decided on a nature theme. The reason for the nature theme arose from one of the learners linking positivity and calm to nature. The self-statement cards were made into shapes that represented nature.

Learners were given a copy of the work plan (Table 4.5) to prepare themselves mentally. This gave learners a sense of preparedness and control of what to expect in the weeks to

follow. After completing the self-statement cards, the researcher wanted to know from the learners what makes a story interesting to read (*Stage 1- Developing background knowledge*). Many of the learners responded that detail and explanations made it appealing to read (*Stage 2- Discuss the strategy*).

At the end of the session, learners were asked to complete their behaviour modification chart (BMC), by pasting a smiley, sad or confused face at the corresponding date. Learners had the option to write a sentence below the face to express how they felt.

24 February

The following week began with learners repeating their positive comments on their self-statement cards. After the positive injection of self-statements at the start of the session, learners were asked to identify what makes a story interesting. As in the previous week, most learners commented on great detail as a component that made a story interesting. Learners were then handed a text, *The Parade*, and were asked to comment on words and phrases that caught their attention or parts in the story and that made it interesting to read (*Stage 2- Discuss the strategy*).

29 February - 7 March

The planning stage of writing a story was the core focus of the intervention programme. At the beginning of the lesson, the researcher explained to learners that they would learn a trick that writers used when they wrote a story. This introduction led to the planning stage of story writing (*Stage 1- Developing background knowledge*).

Explicit teaching took place on how to set out ideas and organise writing. First, the researcher described the concept of taking notes to remember things. An example was made of taking notes when drawing up a grocery list, or when jotting important dates down on a calendar in order to remember special or important dates. Learners then had to come up with examples of their own when notes are used.

The mnemonic chart POW was introduced and made visible to learners on cards. The learners then were asked to remember the mnemonic:

P - **p**ick an idea to start with

O -**o**rganise my notes (5w- who?, when?, where?, what?, why?)

W -**w**rite more

The researcher explained in detail how POW is used to help in planning a story. The researcher focused more on the “organising my notes” section since this was the central part of mapping out the characters, scene, setting and order of events. This section was a revision exercise since most of the learners were familiar with who, when, where, what and why questions (*Stage 1- Developing background knowledge*). The following week, the learners repeated the POW mnemonic and explained to the researcher what it meant (*Stage 4 - Memorise it*).

A cartoon image of a boy and girl who spilled ink was presented to the learners. The learners were asked to come up with ideas on how to write a story based on the picture. First, the researcher asked learners to repeat the POW and explain what it represented (*Stage 2- Discuss the strategy*). Next, learners had to write down the letter P. which represented that they needed to pick an idea. They then had to formulate ideas about what they thought this story was about. They needed to select the best idea and write it down. Learners had to repeat the POW mnemonic and define what the O stood for. Next they had to organise their notes.

The learners then made use of the writing frame to help with the organising of their notes.

WHO - who are the character(s)?

WHEN - when is the story taking place?

WHERE - where is the story taking place?

WHAT - what is happening in the story?

WHY - why did it happen?

After the planning stage, the researcher asked learners to use the information they wrote down and write a story (*Stage 3- Model it*). Each learner’s input was important for this activity. Next, the meaning of the W in POW, which represents writing, was explained.

The researcher wrote down the story on a large sheet of newsprint. The class started with the introduction and learners had to give their input to write an introduction. The introduction had to include the setting and characters. After the completion of the introduction, the researcher asked the learners to read it, and see and hear if it made sense.

Learners were asked to use their planning and devise a combined middle to write this story. Each learner had to contribute ideas to complete the middle of the story. The story took a few twists and turns. Each learner could add their reason for why the spillage in the cartoon happened. After the middle, the researcher asked the learners to help write an ending to the story.

Setting

Different settings of where and when a story can take place were considered. Learners were asked to list possible places where a story can occur. Examples that were given by the learners were: at home, at school, during interval, late at night, on my way to the library. The researcher explained to learners that this answers the question, *where and when*, in the planning stages. A list of possible settings was mapped on the board (*Stage 5- Support it*). Showing the learners the possible settings on the board enabled them to see that a story can take place anywhere.

Explaining in detail - Adjectives

Learners were asked to explain an object, a person or event in detail. The researcher explained to them that writing in detail was important, to give the reader a full picture of what happened. A variety of objects was shown to learners who were asked to explain it in words and in detail (*Stage 2- Discuss the strategy*). Next they were presented with a list of objects and people. They then had to write a description of each object and person (*Stage 6- Independent performance*).

Before participants engaged in any independent writing, shared writing was implemented for every new topic introduced. The topics which were covered during the next few weeks were:

9 – 11 March: Character formation

The lesson started off where learners were given three different pictures of people pasted on the board. Learners had to describe people based on their physical appearance (hair colour, eye colour, body size, facial and body features), age (young, baby, teenager) and personality (friendly, loyal etc.). Descriptions of the people were written on flash cards and pasted next to the picture. The introduction of the lesson led to how to form a character when writing a story. It made learners aware that by visualising their character in their mind, it made it easy to write about the character. The learners were then given two more pictures. Based on the pictures, they had to describe the physical appearance, age and personality. After the descriptive writing, they had to explain orally to the group how the two characters can fit into the scenario of the previous week's picture of the boy and girl who spilled the ink. The following week, the group was asked to add their two characters to the story of the spilt ink. They needed to describe in detail how the two new characters looked in the story and what their actions were.

14-18 March - Writing an introduction

Writing an appropriate introduction became the focus of the following weeks. The previous weeks focused mainly upon how to explain in detail when writing a narrative story. The researcher reminded learners that our aim for writing a good story was to keep the reader interested. We then read an excerpt from Kensuke's Kingdom. This story was selected because it explained in detail the setting and actions of each character. The researcher then asked the learners to point out the setting of the story. Learners had to write a short introduction of five to eight sentences on the topic picture, Kelly's bike. Teacher support, (*Stage 5- Support it*) during the independent writing, (*Stage 6- Independent performance*) was important and learners were reminded to refer to the writing frame and signal for help when they struggled.

6-25 April: Writing the middle (conjunctions and descriptive writing)

To introduce the topic on how to write an interesting plot, learners were read the title, *The wind blew my kite away*. A short introduction to the story was read to introduce the characters and the setting. Learners were asked to come up with ideas on what events led to the kite being blown away (*Stage 2- Discuss the strategy*). They had to write events

and jot down one event that could possibly have led to the kite being blown away which formed part of the planning process. Next, key words (snapped, gush of wind, drifted, release, pulled) were pasted on the board and the learners had to complete the story based on the title and the introduction (*Stage 3- Model it*). The key words had to be incorporated into the middle part of the story.

The following week was spent on editing the first draft of the middle.

Peer assessment followed and the group had to swop their stories with a peer. Learners had to check whether sentences followed in a logical order and if the events described made sense and employed key words.

The following lesson focused on conjunctions. Learners were required to join two simple sentences to form a compound sentence. Next, the learners had to read through their stories and check that they had sentences that could be joined. Learners were reminded to extend their sentences by adding more descriptions to the events and characters.

After re-reading their stories, learners were asked to read the middle part of the story to their group. After the reading process, neat drafts were handed in and learners were asked to comment on the work of their peers (*Stage 6- Independent performance*).

27 April- 2 May: Million Dollar Word (MDW)

Million dollar word (MDW) is a fancy name given to similes (*Stage 1- Developing background knowledge*). Learners were given a list of words and were asked to come up with a MDW to those words. When the learners struggled to find the meaning, the researcher revealed the word to the group and asked any learner to use the word in a sentence orally (*Stage 5 - Support it*). The researcher explained to learners that using MDW's in a story made the story more exciting to read. A list of MDW's was presented to learners with a cloze activity. Learners were handed dictionaries to help find MDW's and complete the cloze.

To demonstrate to the learners how to use MDW's in their story, they had to read their story, *the wind blew my kite away*, and replace five words in their story with MDW's.

4-23 May: Write an ending to a story

Writing an ending to a story is often the part that learners neglect to elaborate upon and make exciting. The researcher placed a story on the board with a missing conclusion and asked the learners to read the story. After reading the introduction and middle, I asked learners to give me their opinion on how the story ends (*Stage 2- Discuss the strategy*). Each opinion of the learners was written down under the heading 'possible endings'. Next, the researcher asked learners to decide on which ending they liked best. The researcher then asked learners to help write the end to the story (*Stage 3- Model It,*). Each learner had to contribute a sentence to the complete the ending. This activity was exciting and unpredictable. Each new opinion changed the intended ending of the previous learner. To consolidate the above activity, the researcher handed the group two incomplete short stories to which they needed to write a conclusion.

Follow-up activities included writing an end to a specific title, changing the ending to the story and adding your opinion at the end of a story. Learners were reminded (*Memorise It- Stage 4*) to check for MDW substitution, adding detail to events, objects and characters.

25 May- 1 June: Writing to persuade

The last few weeks of the programme were spent on writing to persuade. The researcher explained to learners that writing to persuade meant that the content of a story had to capture the attention of the reader. The reader had to believe what was being said in the writing. Writing to persuade involves stating certain opinions and explaining an opinion, so that the reader understands why you stated your opinion. Writing to persuade involves POW + TREE.

A few topics were presented to the learners, Should learners wear a school uniform? School should only be four days a week.

To start off the process of writing, the researcher reminded learners that they needed to remember POW, the P - pick my idea. Learners needed to refer to the graphic organiser cards, remind the learners that picking an idea helps to think freely, creatively and believe that they can write a good story. Next, learners were required to repeat the second letter, O – organise my notes. To help with organising their notes, the researcher explained to learners the TREE mnemonic of writing to persuade. They then had to organise their notes. The TREE process is explained below to help with organising their notes.

T - Topic sentence

The topic sentence tells us what the writer of the text believes. TREE explicitly teaches learners to first write a topic sentence. Learners either agree or disagree and state what they believe.

R - Reasons

Learners needed to state why they believed what they did. Learners were taught to make use of transitional words such as first, second, third, next, finally and always write more than three reasons. The teaching of writing more than three reasons teaches the learners to be persuasive and be credible in their opinions to persuade the reader.

E - End

Learners are made conscious that the ending should be interesting and agree with their topic sentence.

E - Evaluate

The evaluation stage is a reminder to check that they have all their parts to the story. Learners need to check that they added more than one reason and described in detail why they said so. The last part of POW is W – write more. Learners were encouraged to keep the statement or question in mind so that they need to answer and explain in much detail why they say so. During each lesson, learners were reminded to ask for help and encouraged to read through their written texts to see if it made sense and answer the questions.

18 – 25 July: revision

After the June holidays, sessions primarily focused on revision activities of the writing process. During the last two sessions, learners were given a story to edit and add more detail. The structure of the story was jumbled and learners had to reorganise the story into the correct order. Learners were reminded to use the POW graphic reminder to help them plan and write their story. Next, learners had to read the story and add adjectives of colour, taste, sound, smell and texture to create an interesting sensory journey.

27 July

At the end of the intervention programme, learners wrote a post-test. The purpose of conducting the post-test was to evaluate what learners learnt during the SRSD intervention programme and that they were able to apply it. The post-test was the same test written during the pre-test (Appendix I). The same procedure for the pre-test was followed. Learners needed to listen to the instructions read by the researcher, plan and then write their story.

4.2.5. Post-test results

The post-test assessed various aspects of the writing phase such as planning, structure, content, use of descriptive vocabulary and types of sentence structures. The results from the post-test are presented in table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Post-test word count and number of adjectives and adverbs used

LEARNER	Activity Post-test Word count	Post-test: Number of adjectives used	Post-test: Number of adverbs used
1	77	7	4
2	89	9	5
3	57	8	4
4	122	13	3
5	154	14	6
6	62	7	4
7	110	10	5

LEARNER	Activity Post-test Word count	Post-test: Number of adjectives used	Post-test: Number of adverbs used
8	109	11	4
9	99	13	5
10	115	12	4
11	154	17	2
12	132	12	6
13	87	8	4
14	88	9	4
15	65	7	4
16	89	7	4
17	163	18	5

On the day of the post-test, LPs were relaxed and all seemed happy. As the researcher completed the listening part of the activity, LPs all sat quietly and listened. When the researcher moved on to the next part of the activity, which was the planning part, all of the seventeen LPs started working immediately. There was hardly any hesitation among the LPs except for LP 3 who still stared out by the window. Activity 3, the writing of the story, was completed within thirty minutes by all of the LPs. All seventeen participants were able to complete the planning stage of the post-test activity.

As with the pre-test, the data collected from the post-test of the LPs were grouped below according to the number of words written in their stories. Results of the word count, adjectives and adverbs used can be viewed in Table 4.7

LPs 3, 6, 15

- Ability to follow instructions and plan

From the results of the post-test, the above LPs completed their post-test within the specific time-frame of the test. All three LPs drew their characters.

LP 6 drew a face with very little detail, whereas LP 15 drew a very detailed face but no adjectives were added to describe the character from both LPs 3, 6 and

15. No eyes were present on the character of LP 6. LP 3 drew a full character body.

LPs were able to write down adjectives to describe the physical appearance of their character. LPs 3, 6 and 15 were unable to complete all the requirements in the planning. All three LPs gave a name to their character with only one adjective written down to describe the character's personality. LPs 3 and 6 vaguely described their setting using only one adjective to describe the setting. LP 15 made an attempt to describe the setting using three adjectives.

- Structure

The introduction from LP 3 followed on with a lead-in sentence. A complete sentence was written. The introduction contained the name of the character, but no character description was given. In addition, LP 6 and LP 15 included the name of their character with both LPs adding a second character to their introduction. None of the three LPs described their settings.

The middle from LP 3 contained more sentences than the introduction and the conclusion. Both LP 6 and 15 were able to write an introduction that followed in a chronological manner. Their conclusion was completed but it contained the least number of sentences.

- Use of adjectives and adverbs

LPs 6 and 15 both used adjectives to describe the character but no setting was described. This group of LPs added more adjectives to the introduction to describe the events that unfolded in the body of their story. Adverbs were used in the introduction only.

- Use of conjunctions and formulation of complex sentences.

The stories of LPs 3, 6, 15 comprised simple sentences except for the introduction which contained compound sentences.

LPs 6 and 15 wrote more complex sentences in their introduction whereas the end of their stories contained simple sentences. LP 6 wrote no concluding

sentences to the story but made an attempt to write a complex sentence in the body of the story.

LPs 3 and 15 made no attempt to write complex sentences.

LPs 1, 2, 9, 13, 14 and 16

- Ability to follow instructions and plan

LPs completed their post-tests in a similar fashion as the above three LPs with the prescribed time-frame. The lead-in sentence was completed by all the LPs. All the LPs drew their character.

- Structure

The introduction of this group of stories followed a similar fashion. The introduction contained a great deal of content, and the character was introduced, with the setting described and a logical flow of events and ideas leading from the body of the story to the conclusion. The conclusion linked the events that unfolded in the middle of the story. There was a coherent flow from the middle to the end. LPs 2, 9, 13, 14 and 16 all had original endings and none was similar, with one exception that they all described the way the character felt at the end and how they felt. Their sentences concluded with how they felt at the end of their story.

All the LPs were able to conclude their stories.

LP 1 completed her introduction with simple sentences, using two adjectives to describe the character. The setting was described using one adjective. The middle contained repeated ideas and one sentence was repeated. The conclusion had an abrupt ending, containing no detail on how the character felt at the end.

LPs 2, 9, 13, 14 and 16 wrote their introductions in similar ways. The character was described by using two adjectives. The setting contained one adjective, with

the sentences linking to the next idea. The sentences and ideas flowed. The middle of their stories contained linking sentences but few details were employed to describe the events that unfolded.

- Use of adjectives and adverbs

All six LPs used three adjectives to describe the character's personality. This group of LPs wrote down three things that the character liked to do. LPs made an effort to incorporate adjectives written down in their planning, into their stories. Adverbs were seldom used and most of the LPs made use of the adverbs in their introductory paragraph only. As their stories came to a conclusion, no adverbs were identified, except for LP 9, who had one adverb written in his conclusion.

LPs 2, 9, 13, 14 and 16 all managed to add the information that they used in their planning to build on their sentences. The number of adjectives used and word count can be seen in Table 4.7

- Use of conjunctions and formulation of complex sentences.

A good attempt was made by this group of LPs to extend their sentences by using conjunctions to form compound sentences or to create complex sentences. More compound sentences were used in the body of their stories to link events. Simple sentences were written to enhance the paragraph and only when it was needed.

LPs 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12 and 17

- Ability to follow instructions and plan

LPs scored the highest word count of all the participants in the group. The ability to draw the character in the correct square, add adjectives to describe the character's appearance and personality, and elaborate what the character liked to do, were all completed by LPs from this group.

- Structure
All of the LPs from this group used the information written down in their planning to build meaningful, coherent sentences that linked the introduction, middle and the concluding sentences. LPs mentioned in this category had the highest word count, ranging from 109 to 163 words in their stories.
- Use of adjectives and adverbs
LPs from this group wrote detailed introductions, describing the character, setting and adding extra information to describe the character's physical appearance and personality. Use of adverbs was highest amongst this group of LPs, making use of adverbs of manner, degree, time and place. Adverbs of frequency were not often used by LPs.
- Use of conjunctions and formulation of complex sentences.
The use of conjunctions to create compound and complex sentences was higher in this group of LPs. Conjunctions extended the sentences and linked events in a meaningful and coherent manner. Complex sentences were mainly used in the introduction and the body of LPs stories.

4.3. Conclusion

This chapter presented raw data collected from the research site in the form of observations, interviews and work completed by LPs. Interview data were presented *verbatim* in order to give a true reflection of what the researcher observed and what the researcher recorded from the respondents during interviews. Section 4.1 introduced the topic and offered a synopsis of the content discussed in the chapter. Section 4.2 presented the results from the data collected from interviews, observations and a pre-test, SRSD programme and post-test. This section was subdivided and it gave a detailed layout of the research process employed to collect data. In section 4.2.1 the interview process was presented. The data were captured from the teacher participants in the study. The observation results are presented in section 4.2.2. Section 4.2.2.1 explained the process undertaken to observe the behaviour of the LPs prior to the intervention programme.

Sections 4.2.2.2 and 4.2.2.3 discussed the observation period of the LPs during the intervention programme and the post-test observations. Observations conducted enabled the researcher to make important notes on the attitude and behaviour of LPs during the intervention programme and how they coped with the writing tasks. In section 4.2.3, the process of conducting the pre-test and collecting the data from the pre-test activity was explained and presented. It presents the data collected from the two activities and shows the results under the sub-headings such as planning, content and structure, use of connecting words, adverbs and adjectives and use of conjunctions and formulation of complex sentences. The SRSD intervention programme was discussed in section 4.2.4. Here the researcher mapped out the timeline undertaken to complete the programme and the lessons planned to teach the SRSD programme. The post-test data results were set out in section 4.2.5 following a similar fashion as section 4.2.3 under the sub-headings.

Activities in class, the intervention programme itself and results from data underline the significance of a pedagogy of social consciousness whereby the individual learner is empowered, knowledge is created jointly in the classroom and the resources of each learner are mobilised. In this model, the individual is empowered and the school community is strengthened in a form of social cohesion that realises the abilities of the individual and stretches outwards to raise the energy and dignity of the community as a whole, thus reversing patterns of degradation and oppression endemic in this school community and so many other areas of post-apartheid South Africa still. Results of the observations, interviews, pre-test and post-test are compared and discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5

Discussion of Results

5.1. Overview

Chapter 5 discusses and interprets the data presented in the previous chapter. This chapter indicates key themes that emerged from the qualitative data. Section 5.2 discusses responses from the three interviewees. Observations based on behaviour during the pre-test and during the post-test of the intervention programme, are discussed in section 5.3. Data collected from the pre-test and post-test are dealt with next. This chapter concludes in section 5.4.4 which presents the themes that have emerged from the results gathered and discussed. This last section demonstrates to what extent, and in what manner, the research question have been addressed.

5.2. Interviews

All interviews with teacher participants were semi-structured.

5.2.1. Summary of Interviews with Teachers

Question 1

- 1.1 When was the learner in your class?
- 1.2 Was the learner part of the intervention programme at your school?
- 2.3 Why was the learner placed in the intervention programme?

Interview question one elicits information from: (i) the past literacy performance of learners and determines whether writing barriers facing learners have been identified.

All three teachers responded that LPs were identified with writing and reading barriers in the foundation phase. Teachers had some idea of what aspects LPs found difficult in their lower grades.

In Chapter 2, Neeta and Klu (2013: 257) suggest that, in order for language communication to be successful, a strong reading and writing climate should be created from an early age and that barriers should be eliminated before new ones can be created.

Question 2

2.1 When did you notice that there was something wrong with the writing skills of learners?

Teachers A, B and C

All three teachers responded that they observed that learners experienced barriers at the start of the year, when they had to complete their baseline assessment. It was clear that the teachers identified and developed strategies to help learners to cope. Teacher A mentioned that creative writing was a core focus because so many learners found creative writing challenging. Teacher A sensed that there was a need for an Individual Support Plan (ISP) at the start of the year. This observation implied that teacher awareness and identifying barriers early at the start of the year were a priority for the school. Children who lag behind in reading and writing encounter more difficulties in later grades when texts become longer and more complex (Myrberg (2007: 146). Early detection of learner barriers in foundation phase is important if it is identified early rather than late (Lane et al., 2006: 60).

2.2 How did you intervene to improve his writing skills?

From the responses of the three teachers, the following strategies were utilised:

- formulate an ISP for each learner
- shared writing method
- buddy system

According to the teacher responses from the interview questions, identifying learner barriers and strategising an intervention plan or ISP at the start of the year should be part

of school policy to support and improve the needs of learners in language and numeracy. All three teachers indicated that the ISP plan lays out the strategies that the teacher needs to unpack throughout the year. The teachers indicated, however, that they had an ISP plan but that it was often difficult to unpack because the teacher could not always stay long enough on a topic to consolidate an area of difficulty. This problem was exacerbated as the curriculum for the year progressed and new barriers for the learner arose. Apart from the ISP plan, the teachers had developed their own unique strategies to help the learner. According to their interview responses, Teachers A and B employed a shared writing method to guide learners through the process of writing. The shared writing method is one of the prescribed methods set out by the CAPS document as part of the BLA approach, as discussed in 2.5.1. The shared writing method involves teacher demonstration and learner input to compile a written text. This compilation text of teacher and learner input grants learners the opportunity to compile a text with support.

Teacher C utilised the buddy system to engage learners.

As discussed in Chapter 2, group work and pairing of learners can be successful if a learner is paired with stronger learners in class since learning is spread across a range of individuals. Johnson and Johnson (2017:29) posit [see section 2.9.2], that group work, known as co-operative learning, challenges learners to take an active role in their learning, as opposed to a passive approach. This comprises learner-centred education which is a key concern of the socially responsive attitude adopted in this thesis. The role of the group was to participate actively, sharing ideas and correcting each other by listening to each other's ideas, so as to achieve a shared set of goals.

This method was utilised by Teacher B. She explained, however, that her time was limited and restricted her from giving her learners individual tuition. Her effort to pair learners, a weaker learner with a stronger one, resulted in opportunities for learners to teach each other in a way that a teacher might not be able to do alone. Learners were often more willing to work with a "clever" learner in class. Such learners were often more willing to show the gaps in their writing skills to a peer learner than to a teacher. The buddy system, however, has its flaws. Learners may be taught incorrect information if a topic is new and

the stronger learner is not familiar with it. Another flaw in the buddy system is that a teacher does not know who actually completed a particular piece of work. Was it done by a weak student or actually completed by the stronger peer? As discussed in section 2.8.2, and as Fernet et al. (2012:516) state, learners who do not feel that the input of their ideas and thoughts are appreciated fully, do not become motivated. Learners who are not motivated become dependent on others and find it difficult to develop into autonomous thinkers and writers.

What was prevalent in the responses of all three teachers, was that they made an effort to help their struggling learners to write better in different ways. The teachers worked hard to assist learners improve their writing skills.

Question 3

3.1 Could the learner identify elements to writing a good story such as writing an introduction, body and conclusion? Explain.

In this regard, the feedback of all three teachers was similar. All three explained that their learners, who found it challenging to write creatively, could write an introduction. They all stated that the particular area of concern in creative writing was concluding their stories. There was a disconnection between what was written at the beginning and what was written at the end of their stories. Two of the teachers explained that they needed to provide motivation for the learner to complete the work. The motivation from the teacher encouraged the learner to complete the task although a large percentage of the planning was produced by the teacher through her input.

Teachers A and B highlighted similar problematic areas in story writing/creative writing. They reported that many of the learners tended to repeat ideas and events. When probed about the reason for this, all of the teachers mentioned the same reason. Below are a few reasons proffered by teachers as to why learners did not complete all the elements to writing: *“Some learners do not know how to start their story; they do not have an idea on how to start their story?”*

The learners lacked motivation towards the end of their stories; therefore, they never conclude their story.

...it is difficult for them to think of all the events that need to unfold in a story, especially if they need to imagine it.

The learners become tired towards the end and therefore some learners would not end off their story.

From these responses of teachers, it became apparent that learners had difficulty in writing at various levels. Some were challenged at an emotional level which was marked by behaviours such as lack of motivation. Some learners struggled on a concrete level: they were unable to process the ideas mentally, plan and write.

3.2 Was the learner able to write a complete story/essay on his/her own?

The overall response from teachers was that their learners lacked the necessary writing skills to complete their stories successfully. Some of the learners had the ability to complete their stories while others had difficulty ordering their stories in a logical order: and yet others lacked the vocabulary to express themselves in a meaningful way. As discussed in section 2.6.3 [see Chapter 2], Kirk et al. (2006) state that creative writing requires learners to become skilful thinkers before they can become skilful writers. The process of writing starts with the imagination of the learner. If s/he is able to order and then process what is happening in the brain, then s/he will be able to express it on paper (Kirk et al., 2006:142). All three interviewees cited spelling as a barrier. Learners often focused so hard upon avoiding incorrect spelling that the thinking and thought processes failed. The researcher noted that misbehaviour of learners and lack of motivation were common shortcomings.

Question 4

4.1 Could the learner plan her/his own writing process?

(Example: create mind maps, follow instructions, and use a writing frame)

During interviews, teachers intimated that learners partaking in the study had difficulty in following instructions, were limited in their planning skills and ability to order thoughts and ideas in a logical order. To varying degrees, these shortcomings were evident in the work of all the learners partaking in this study. A disconnection often appeared between what was written in the planning and what was contained in the actual written piece, according to Teacher C.

Question 5

5.1 How does the learner behave during writing lessons? Explain this behaviour.

Discussions with the three teachers revealed that all of the LPs displayed either:

- disruptive behaviour such as talking, hitting or kicking or
- avoidance: such as sleeping or no eye contact
- defiance

Teacher B shared her view about the learner behaviour during a writing lesson: "...many of the children either resort to hitting or bothering learners or trying others to join them to also not do the work ... or to not do the work the learner will put his head on the desk." Teacher A had a similar response and commented on "...learners will take out their frustrations when they don't know something, they will either hit or physically distract the next learner, some will even be rude to you and tell you they don't understand and therefore will not work..." Teacher C commented: "I will leave the learner alone, hoping that the learner will come around and start to work, because I have too many children to work with still. " This comment confirms what Browne (2013:126) posits, that when the academic responsibilities of teachers increase, they become less tolerant of learners who display reluctance and behavioural problems during a writing lesson.

Teachers in this research study indicated that when a learner struggled to cope with the work at hand, their behaviour often changed negatively. This was noted in question three that the behaviour of the learners influenced their motivation which in turn had a direct

effect on their learning. This point leads to the concept that learners do have better control over their behaviour when they are under favourable conditions and when they feel that the work is important. In Chapter 2, section 2.8.2, Fernet et al. (2012: 516) explain this behaviour as autonomous motivation, which refers to a choice of skills taken to initiate positive behaviour, a crucial aspect for learners to function at independent levels. Learners who are not in conditions conducive to learning, do not understand the work, block out and do not initiate positive behaviour. Learners who do not understand the value of their work, do not grow into autonomously motivated writers. Teachers need to make a conscious decision to change learner perceptions and instil a sense of personal accomplishment.

Question 6

6.1 Can the learner focus and complete the writing session independently?

Based on the responses from teachers, it became evident that when the learner experienced difficulty in understanding the topic or did not like the activity, it would result in a lack of focus and the learner could not complete the activity independently. All three teachers shared the same view as Teacher A who commented: “...*when you have a child that does not understand or does not like the work...automatically that child loses focus...but when you have a child who struggles with all aspects of writing, immediately you get nothing from that learner...*”

6.2 Can the learner compose a story? (write an introduction, middle and end)

6.3 Does the learner write interesting stories in class, add detail, make use of adjectives, adverbs etc.?

As discussed in Chapter 2 (see section 2.5.2), teachers need to explain that writing is “a process where the writing process is scaffolded using writing frames to support the writing process”. Teachers in this study stated that when you have a child who lacks the confidence and finds it difficult to master the basic elements of planning and composing

of a story, the child will be unable to complete the writing task independently, and fail to add detail to make the story interesting. This was consistent with what was discussed in section 2.6.3 where metacognition and cognitive challenges that the learner experienced adversely affected the process of writing and the production of a complete a written task.

The teachers all responded that the learners partaking in this study were largely unable to compose a story successfully from first to last. Some of the learners struggled to start the story, while others wrote incoherent events, and some ended the story suddenly with a single sentence. These challenges all resulted in the incomplete composition of the story. The learners were unable to apply the scaffold technique.

Question 7

7.1 Does the learner revise his work? (Check for spelling mistakes, check if s/he left out any words, edited sentence construction, etc.)

As the three teachers indicated during their interview sessions, learners who lacked the motivation to write, were less willing to check their work for spelling mistakes when they were done. Kirk et al., (2006: 142) explain [cited in Chapter 2] that metacognition is a reflective process of language usage and thinking. It involves all forms of language usage in which speaking, reading and writing are the highest forms of language usage. Polloway et al. (2008: 154) posit that a learner who struggles to compose a certain writing task will be less conscious to check for spelling mistakes. In section 2.6.3 McVey (2008: 291) explains that learners who skip the process of editing and revising their work are often uncertain of how to refine their writing. They lack the skills to identify their own mistakes. If the child has basic knowledge about the topic or schema, s/he will assimilate or draw on past knowledge and try to fit in with existing, familiar rules and structures. This is known as assimilation. When the child tries to learn new information, rules or apply new skills, this is known as accommodation (Ginsburg & Opper, 2005: 54). Learners who find it difficult to write often make mistakes based on rules that they have not mastered in the previous grades, resulting in the same mistakes being repeated in the new grade.

Question 8

8.1 Can the learner follow instructions after the teacher has explained the writing process?

This question elicited similar responses from the three teachers. Teacher A's response summed up responses from the three teachers: "*... it depends on the mood of the learner ...sometimes when the learner feels up to work the work will be better executed than days when that particular learner does not feel up to working...*".

8.2 Does the learner stick to the topic?

Teacher B responded: "...when you struggle to grasp the topic, you don't know what to write about the topic and you therefore don't stick to the topic, and often that happens with children when they write, they don't always stick to the topic...".

Teacher C highlighted: "...even learners who are stronger in writing don't always stick to the topic...".

Question 9

9.1 Can the learner plan, compose and revise a writing piece in the stipulated time period allocated by the teacher?

Similar responses as to Question six were obtained and all of the teachers remarked that learners were unable to complete all the processes of writing within the stipulated time frame. All three teachers stated that learners often ignored the time frames given and did not complete the work at all.

9.2 Explain the final product of the learner's writing task.

From the comments derived from the interview responses, it became evident that various factors hampered the end product of the writing task. Many learners handed in incomplete

tasks. The quality of the writing was below standard, and often resulted in a failure for the learner.

5.3. Discussion of Observations

Pre-test and post-test observations

During the pre-test the researcher observed firsthand how learners approach and interact with a given writing task independently. The pre-test was similar to an examination classroom set-up. Learners had to work on their own, without asking for help from their peers. A time limit of an hour was allocated to complete the activity. LPs were nervous when the pre-test was handed to them. When the researcher read through the instructions, a few of the LPs displayed behaviours such as fidgeting and looking around.

McVey (2008: 291) claims that learners often experience creative writing as a burden. They do not necessarily engage with the task, making it more difficult to grasp the topic and complete the activity. According to CAPS (2011:11) writing is a powerful form of communication which is used to express thoughts and ideas.

After the SRSD intervention, the participating learners were given a post-test, similar to the pre-test, in the form of an independent creative writing activity. This was done to determine the effect, if any, of the SRSD intervention on their creative writing development. Table 5 shows to what extent changes were noted in the five non-verbal behaviours that were measured for the purposes of this study.)

Table 5.1: Summary of results of behaviour of learners observed before and after the intervention programme (pre-test and post-test), with discussion of observations

Observation of learners during the pre-test and post- test of the SRSD intervention programme				
Observation	Pre- test Number of learners who displayed behaviour changes	Post- test Number of learners who displayed behaviour changes	Pre- test Observation Percentage	Post- test Observation Percentage
Restless at the start of the activity	2	1	12%	5%
Paying attention some times during the lesson	6	5	35%	29%
Fidgeting	7	4	41%	26%
Not paying attention at all	1	1	6%	5%
Paid full attention	1	6	6%	35%

The results in Table 5.1 indicate that only one (6%) of the LPs paid full attention at the start of the pre-test. Only two (12 %) of the LPs were restless at the start of the lesson but this number slowly decreased. Six (35 %) LPs paid attention at some times during the lesson, in comparison to the 6% of LPs who paid attention from the start. Fidgeting declined among the LPs, from 41% to 26%. Of the group of LPs observed, only one per cent (1%) of learners did not pay attention during the pre-test.

The percentages above indicate that learners were more settled, comfortable and focused during the post-test, resulting in a change in their behaviour and positive shift in their focus. This could be a direct contribution of MKO as described by Vygotsky (1987). MKO provides gradual assistance. As this bond strengthens, the child develops the potential to achieve a task on his own. Another factor that could have influenced the change in the

behaviour of the LPs was the confidence that the learner gained during the intervention programme. Learners became more mindful of the task at hand (Saddler & Asaro (2007:223). A second factor was stated by Helsel & Greenberg (2007: 755): when learner has a goal and actively works toward that goal, s/he will be more likely to harness self-motivation to fulfil that goal (Helsel & Greenberg (2007: 755):.A pivotal part of the intervention programme, the SRSD programme, is exactly that: to teach learners steps to self-motivate them in order to work towards independence (Lineman et al., 2006:68). This forms the pivotal part of the SRSD intervention programme.

As the learners became confident, they engaged more with the teacher, each other and the content. They felt free to ask questions and gained a sense of achievement. This empowerment of the individual testifies to the value of creative writing and sustains the concern with uplifting the individual learner as a way of building up the school community and ultimately redressing the corrosive effects of the past at the micro-level first. These factors positively affected learners' non-verbal behaviour.

5.4. Pre-test and post-test discussion

According to Lamer and Marx (2008), pre-tests are 'a monitor or baseline tool with which the teacher tests a learner at the start of a programme or grade to determine the level at which the learner is.' In this research study, the use of a pre-test was appropriate to determine the writing level of the learners. At Grade 6 level, writing competencies of learners should allow them to plan, draft and write stories independently (CAPS, 2011:11).

The pre-test consisted of listening, planning and writing. LPs were evaluated as to whether: (i) they had listening and planning skills, (ii) they followed the instructions and (iii) constructed a mind map or concept map of what they intended to write about. The rubric evaluated the following criteria for writing:

- ability to follow instructions and plan;
- structure and content;
- use of adverbs and adjectives;
- use of conjunctions and formulations of complex sentences.

The pre-test activity gave an overview of what learners found challenging in writing. The results of the pre-test were presented in Chapter 4, section 4.2.3, and Table 4.5. The post-test was an exact copy of the pre-test. Results of the post-test can be viewed in Chapter 4, section 4.2.3, and Table 4.7. For the purpose of this section, the two results are compared, and similarities and differences are discussed according to categories.

Table 5.2: Pre-test and post-test: word count, number of adjectives and adverbs used

LEARNER	Pre-test Word count	Post-test Word count	Pre-test: Number of adjectives used	Post-test: Number of adjectives used	Pre-test: Number of adverbs used	Post-test: Number of adverbs used
1	67	77	4	7	1	4
2	74	89	6	9	1	5
3	44	57	3	8	0	4
4	86	122	7	13	2	3
5	66	154	5	14	1	6
6	35	62	0	7	0	4
7	93	110	8	10	1	5
8	88	109	6	11	1	4
9	73	99	5	13	1	5
10	89	115	9	12	2	4
11	111	154	12	17	2	2
12	90	132	11	12	2	6
13	56	87	7	8	1	4
14	76	88	8	9	1	4
15	54	65	4	7	0	4
16	73	89	4	7	1	4
17	99	163	13	18	2	5

The results from the two tests indicated to the researcher areas where improvement had occurred and areas where no or little improvement was made by the learners. The pre- and post-test results are discussed under the following headings: word count, number of adjectives used and number of adverbs used.

- **Word count**

Word count refers to the number of words that a learner produces in a text (Maree, 2013:45). In the CAPS document (CAPS, 2011:32) a general guideline is presented to teachers to show them the number of words needed to be produced by learners for various given texts. The number of words to be produced by the learner increases as the learner progresses in the grade. In section 2.6.2 in Chapter 2, Leuttler (2016: 44) is cited. He posits that the number of words produced by a learner in a text indicates the vocabulary range of a learner but not necessarily how well he understands the word or if it is used in the correct context.

All of the LPs had an increase in their post-test word count, compared to the number of words used in their pre-test. The results indicate that: (i) either the LPs had increased their number of words by having more ideas to be written down in their planning and transferring those ideas to their stories (ii) or that learners were more descriptive and detailed in their writing, extending their sentences with adjectives and adverbs. This, however, does not correlate with new vocabulary learnt. It could be that the learner is enabled to utilise new skills and draw upon existing vocabulary that the learner already knew by being taught the SRSD model.

- **Number of adjectives used**

Part of the SRSD programme was teaching learners to become creative in their writing by adding detail and being descriptive. It was evident at the start of the pre-test that most of the LPs found it challenging to be descriptive in their writing. Use of adjectives allows learners to add detail and create a colourful view of characters, setting and plot. Results from the pre-test recorded in section 4.2.3 in Chapter 4, display an inability to employ adjectives effectively. In the CAPS document (2011:12) it is stipulated that the approach to teaching language should be text based. This entails that language should be learnt not as an isolated activity but be integrated in the text produced by the learners. LPs used few descriptive words prior to the intervention programme. This could be ascribed to the fact that the LPs did not know how to add more detail to their stories by using adjectives. There was a greater use of adjectives used in the post-test, suggesting that LPs made an effort to use adjectives. A variety of activities were used during the intervention

programme to teach LPs different ways of increasing detail in a sentence by adding colour, explaining how something feels, what it tastes like, sounds like, smells like. The idea of adding adjectives to a story seemed daunting to learners during the pre-test. Lack of adjectives used during the pre-test suggested to the researcher that learners were not aware that adding adjectives to a story enabled them to give detail and create a more interesting picture to the story. As a result, many of the sentences were short, simple sentences.

The results indicate that the number of adjectives used during the post-test was 11 and had increased on an average of 4 words, compared to the average number of adjectives used in the pre-test that was 7. Many of the LPs were able to incorporate description into their writing piece but added description in the introduction only. Many of the post-test writing pieces had a significant number of adjectives used in the introduction, where the setting and character were described. As the writing text progressed to the middle and the conclusion, however, the number of adjectives decreased. This trend is similar to that of the pre-test, where the number of adjectives used decreased as the writing of the LPs progressed. A reason for the decline in usage of adjectives in the conclusion could be that LPs were more focused on writing the events that unfolded, placing more emphasis on developing the story. A second reason could be that the LP did not feel the need to add adjectives to the nouns that were written later in the story.

- **Number of adverbs used**

Data contribute to a clearer understanding of a link between practice and motivation from the MKO and the learner, which play an important role in the development and motivation of creative writing. In the pre-test, the number of adverbs used was an average of 1.1. The number of adverbs used in the post-test was an average of 4.3. This is not a significant increase in the use of adverbs in the post-test since the most adverbs used in the post-test were six by a LP.

The practical implication of the use of adverbs and teaching the LPs how to use adverbs is that LPs had to be constantly reminded that they need to describe their verbs. Use of adverbs is difficult for learners. The difficulty of understanding and using adverbs correctly

is highlighted by Hernández (2006; 272) [see Chapter 2], since many learners find it difficult to distinguish adverbs from nouns, verbs and adjectives. Hernández (2006:272) explains the reason so many learners struggle with adverbs is the fact that adverbs have different kinds of meanings. Parrot (2000:176) adds that what learners find difficult to do is choose where to place an adverb in a sentence. During the intervention programme when the use of different types of adverbs was introduced, learners were able to learn how to describe a verb and add the suffix ‘-ly’ to create an adverb. The completion of the adverb activities soon became fun to the learners. When LPs had to add adverbs to their stories, however, many of the learners forgot to add adverbs, focusing more on using adjectives in their story to extend their sentences. Learners seldom succeeded in transferring their knowledge, using adverbs from the activities and using them in context with their story writing.

5.5. Overview of the findings

From the research study, the following findings emerged during interviews with teachers.

5.5.1. Teacher knowledge

Of the three teachers interviewed, only one had a clear definition of what creative writing entailed in terms of creative writing being a writing process. Two teachers, in particular, regarded creative writing as a discipline where learners need to think creatively but they did not consider planning as a process. These two teachers regarded the planning phase as straightforward, requiring learners to write down keywords and then compose a story. They did not consider it important that the teacher should first engage with the learners and determine whether learners possessed background knowledge on the topic. Both teachers were of the opinion that the planning phase was “easy”. They did not think that they needed to teach planning skills to learners. These teachers assumed that learners had learnt planning skills in the previous grades. This perception of the two teachers can be detrimental to the teaching and learning of creative writing, specifically at the planning stage of the story. If learners are engaged with a task, they first need to understand what is expected of them, before they become engaged in the task.

During the observation stage of the research study, the teachers showed that they moved through the six stages of the SRSD study by: (i) drawing upon background knowledge of learners regarding certain topics and (ii) discussing it at some point during writing periods. There was a lack of modelling on how to write a certain genre and how to support the writing process. All three teachers admitted that they were not always consistent in their teaching of creative writing.

5.5.2. Required teacher knowledge on giving feedback

It became evident from the teacher interviews that teachers needed to invest more time in learner feedback sessions. Qian (2010:14) emphasises the role that discussions play during the planning phase and the affect that such discussions have on learner preparedness. Paterson (2007:429) asserts, however, that feedback at the end of a lesson plays an even more important role because it gives the learner an immediate report on progress, and an opportunity to learn from errors. Learner feedback engages the learner and affords the teacher the opportunity to provide valuable feedback to the learner in real time, should there be aspects that the learner finds challenging.

5.5.3. Required teacher support in the classroom

The researcher noted during the intervention sessions that praise, positive reassurance, immediate feedback and approval by nodding of the head, had a remarkable impact on how LPs conducted themselves. In Chapter 2, Paterson is cited as claiming (2007:427) that this form of thinking is “in-flight thinking”, which refers to what teachers think of their learners when they engage with them in the classroom. Powell and Kalina (2012: 242) affirm the significance of the social and physical environment upon the learner during the learning process: “It enables learners... into task-related behaviour.” The learning environment allows learners to engage in class. Having a positive disposition in the class translates to the learners. In the case of this research study, it was important that the researcher be positive from the moment LPs stepped into the classroom. It was important to the researcher that when a compliment or nod was given to a particular LP, she had to

be fair to all and make sure that every LP was paid a compliment at some point in the lesson. These subtle gestures gave LPs a sense of belonging in the classroom.

Utilising the above gestures and comments allowed the researcher to deploy the SRSD programme as effectively as possible for learners. This resulted in learners feeling motivated. They occasionally became too noisy but the level of noise never interrupted the learning process taking place. The researcher later realised that she no longer had to raise her voice for them to settle down. Raising a hand signalled that they had to pay attention again. This brought about a change in their attitude and behaviour compared to how she experienced them during pre-test observation when they were disorderly and uninterested.

Key findings

- The role of the teacher in the classroom is important. The teacher is there to transfer knowledge and present learners with a curriculum so powerful that it extends beyond what the child thought could be possible (Browne, 2013: 125). Teachers are powerful motivators of change and so are learners. By creating a more learner-centred environment, LPs discovered (i) what they already knew, and learnt (ii) the ability to self-regulate their learning (Shor & Freire, 1987:72). Freire (1978) states that the oppressed already possess the potential and skill needed for their own learning by analysis of their feelings and experiences. He posits that effective education in society is the concept of free education. He refers to “free education” which encompasses learner-centred education through scaffolding, from the known to the unknown.
- Learners can be agents of change in their learning. They can govern their behaviour if they are taught that there are alternative ways to express the frustrations and concerns they experience in communities and families of deprivation. Creative writing grants them a channel through which they can articulate their pain [e.g. 6.3.3 Learner perception].

At the start of the first session of the SRSD programme, LPs viewed the programme as a burden. This perception had to be changed immediately because it set the tone for how

many of the LPs might engage in the programme. As the programme progressed, a change of attitude slowly occurred. It was noticeable as learners stepped into the classroom. LPs were calm and settled into the lessons more easily. As the weeks progressed, all LPs arrived on time for the afternoon sessions. LPs were more prepared and brought along their own stationery, making no excuses that they could not work, to feeling tired, hungry or not having stationery. These small changes in their behaviour brought about a change in their presence in class. LPs were no longer fidgeting or fooling around, as compared to the start of the intervention programme (See Table 4.4, Chapter 4). LPs were more responsive and engaged willingly in the lessons.

Despite the fact that LPs did not seem to show any interest in the programme at the beginning, however, their exposure and knowledge regarding the SRSD programme increased as did their enthusiasm in acquiring the new skills and strategies learnt. This change in their perception about the SRSD programme concurs with Krashen's (2003:113) description that "we get smart by trying to solve problems of interest." As in the case of this study, the more learners were exposed to the SRSD programme, the more their interest peaked and the more involved they became in their own learning. The findings from this study suggest that the perception of LPs can be influenced positively (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001; Krashen, 2003; Johnson & Johnson, 2017).

5.5.4. Learner perceptions of remediation

In order for learners to gain a sense that they are the agents of change in their own learning, the researcher praised and encouraged any valid positive behaviour that LPs displayed. A way of showing them that they were gaining more from the programme, was to ask them to reflect at the end of the day upon whether they had learnt anything in the class for that day and how they could use it the next day in the normal classroom environment. This reflection at the end of the day enabled the researcher to gauge how LPs experienced the programme. A good way was to explain to LPs that the programme was like walking through a field looking for something to pick. The researcher explained that no-one wants to leave at the end of the day with an empty basket. They all need to try and "pick" one or more thing from the class that they learnt, take it home and use it. This idea allowed LPs to realise that what they learn is not confined to the classroom. This

later became evident during one of our reflection sessions, when one of the LPs stated that he applied the planning stages of how to plan a story, to plan a prepared speech for class. The LP stated that because he knew how to plan his speech, he was able to score a good mark. He was able to mention all the relevant factors in his prepared speech, utilising the 5 Ws strategy that the teacher wanted them to include.

- **Metacognition**

By examining the data collected in order to address the research question, the SRSD programme revealed that many of the LPs did not understand the concept that creative writing was a process. LPs struggled to think about the topic, internalise, and suggest ideas to plan what they wanted to write. At first, LPs felt that creative writing was about writing a story and no more. How to write the story and how to make it interesting and creative seemed to LPs a difficult task. The SRSD programme and the steps that followed showed LPs that creative writing is a rewarding intellectual and imaginative journey.

LPs realised that when writing a creative story, the first step is to think about what the topic entails. The researcher made internalisation of the topics a focal point in this regard. Learners were invited to draw on background knowledge of the topic which they already possessed. If they did not possess any background knowledge (Stage 1 of the SRSD plan), it was important that LPs were taken through the steps of the SRSD process again, where the teacher explained what the topic was about, so that LPs could familiarise themselves and internalise the topic [as explained in Chapter 2 (2.6.3)]. How learners process a topic and respond in writing require an intense thinking process. Internalisation and processing of new knowledge or existing knowledge are then internalised to meet the demands of the new topic. The LP then decides on how to transfer this internalised new knowledge to complete the expected task (Polloway et al., 2008: 154). Cognitive ability improved in terms of how they learnt and were able to remember the steps in the SRSD programme.

- Self-regulation

Self-regulation of LP behaviour during writing was a conscious decision that learners needed to be reminded of. The researcher had to make sure that positive statements the learners wrote at the start of the programme were more than a promise to the researcher and a conscious choice that they were making, such as: asking for help, not asking for help, deciding not to work, etc. They needed a clear understanding of the consequences that followed, based upon the decision they took. In this research study, the researcher did not use the word “consequences” when she spoke to the learners, when a task was not completed or when they decided not to try something. Many learners regarded the word “consequences” as a disciplinary term of imminent punishment for doing wrong. Instead, she asked LPs if they are able to imagine how the story could be completed. Based on LP response, the researcher motivated learners to complete the work and reminded them that the positive decision they made had a positive outcome on their learning. She reassured them that they were agents of change in their own learning, their lives, their families and the communities they lived in, based on the decisions they made. It took some time for some of the learners to become aware of the fact that they could gain control of their behaviour, their lives and futures. It was a slow progression to encourage learners to realise that they were accountable for the self-regulation of their actions. As the programme drew to an end, there were only two LPs who struggled to self-regulate their learning. These two LPs found it difficult to stay motivated, set a realistic goal and keep to that goal to complete the given task.

- Learner disposition

The SRSD strategy helped LPs to “learn” to manage their thoughts by means of positive reinforcements that the LPs created at the start of the SRSD programme. The realisation that they were in charge of their own thoughts affected their behaviour. This sense of self-government became more evident as the SRSD programme continued. This had a direct effect on their behaviour as they became less anxious. They had a sense of being in control of their learning, time and future. It was not an easy task at the start of the SRSD programme to “change” the thinking patterns of many LPs who lived in families and communities in which drugs, violence

and crime undermined self-esteem and hope. It was a way for the researcher to help learners exploit their own positive resources, their unique ways of thinking and ability to make a conscious effort to help themselves. This was an integral part of the self-regulation process. It made LPs conscious, often for the first time in their lives, of their thinking and how positive thinking could alter their behaviour.

As the programme progressed, there was a gradual change in the thinking and behaviour of LPs after they saw that the intervention was more learner-centred. LPs were more relaxed and more willing to partake in discussions.

Freire's approach to learner-centred education and the advantages that learner-centred education has on the progress of learners underpin his belief that more interest in school systems makes learning more meaningful to learners. Freire makes a clear statement through the following passage:

...Freire discouraged the "banking education" system that he referred to which was forced upon learners, whereby teachers thought that true education meant that teachers ought to just deposit information into learners minds and learners being passive objects in their learning (1978).

Learner-centred education has a great significance in the South African context, since it was through the mobilisation, uprising and empowerment of ordinary youth during the apartheid era that proved the catalyst for change in the old South Africa. This process of making youth aware of their powers, Freire referred to as *conscientization* (1978). This preceded curriculum change which was instituted at the dawn of the new democratic South Africa as OBE.

- Engagement and Disaffection

The SRSD programme progressively raised the confidence and self-reliance of LPs. At the start, many LPs suspected that the programme was yet another class to attend after school. Their opinion regarding creative writing was negative at that stage. Many considered it to be difficult and irrelevant. There were a few of the LPs who initially thought

that the entire SRSD programme was about no more than writing, that they would spend every period writing. As new topics and concepts were introduced, however, over the course of the weeks, different learning styles such as dramatisation, singing or playing a game to learn new concepts were introduced. LPs began to enjoy the lessons. The nature of the SRSD programme that was deployed over the course of the few weeks and the manner in which LPs responded to the programme, meant that their attitudes became increasingly positive as the programme progressed. The researcher realised that later in the programme, LPs did not display characteristics of disaffection such as tiredness, boredom, frustration, lack of initiative and anxiety. According to Simonsen et al. (2008: 356) [cited in Chapter 2 (2.9.1)], learners who are engaged in relevant academic engagement are less likely to exhibit disruptive behaviour in the class. Observation results were presented in Chapter 4 which highlighted a few behaviour variances in the pre-test, during the intervention programme and post-test. Irritability, talking to, or distracting, other learners, fidgeting with stationery or themselves, were dramatically reduced as learners came to the end of the intervention programme. Observations revealed that the self-regulatory steps that LPs followed had an effect on their behaviour, showing that LPs devised a way to self-regulate their learning. As discussed in Chapter 2 (2.9), the quality of LPs' learning and overall responses from LPs as the programme progressed, revealed that learner engagement was positively achieved.

5.5.5. Findings of the SRSD programme

From the findings of the SRSD programme, it was apparent that the intervention programme had an effect on the creative writing outcome of LPs when the pre-test and the post-test results were compared. By means of the SRSD programme, the following findings indicate that the more learners were exposed to the SRSD programme, the more motivated they became as agents of change in their own learning. Table 6.1 provides a summary of the findings of the LPs pre-test and post-test according to categories. It shows an increase in word count, number of adjectives and adverbs used.

Table 5.1: Summary of findings on the LPs creative writing averages, pre and post-test

Category	Average
Pre-test Word count used. Average percentage scored by the 17 LPs	74.9%
Post-test Word count used. Average percentage scored by the 17 LPs	104.2 %
Pre-test: Number of adjectives used. Average percentage scored by the 17 LPs	6.6 %
Post-test: Number of adjectives used. Average percentage scored by the 17 LPs	10.7 %.
Pre-test: Number of adverbs used. Average percentage scored by the 17 LPs	1.1 %
Post-test: Number of adverbs used. Average percentage scored by the 17 LPs	4.3 %

A direct comparison of the pre-test findings and the post-test findings is presented in Chapter 5 (see Table 5.2). Average word count increased in the post-test word count, compared to the number of word count averages used in the pre-test. A reason for the result of the increased averages in the post-test was that LPs had more ideas to be written down in their planning and were able to transfer those ideas to their stories readily.

In Chapter 1 the purpose of this research investigation was set out and the research question was generated.

Research question: *How can self-regulated strategy development improve Intermediate Phase learners' creative writing skills?*

The results from this study suggest that LPs increased their vocabulary after they were obliged to write down their ideas in their planning. Their writing grew more detailed since they were able to extend their sentences by using adjectives and adverbs. Many of the post-test writing pieces had a significant number of adjectives used in the introduction, where the setting and character were described. This indicated that LPs were aiming to make the introduction appealing to the reader. This was a direct implementation of the

SRSD strategy to motivate LPs to become writers who, at the start of their stories, could capture the imagination of the reader. The SRSD programme had an impact upon learners in terms of:

- Pre-writing/planning

Drawing upon previous background knowledge. The researcher went through the planning process with the learners as a support mechanism. The SRSD programme enabled LPs to draw from a support system, MKO, to guide them through the six stages of the SRSD programme. LPs became more engaged at the start of their writing tasks as they understood their instructions better and could plan appropriately to meet the writing criteria of the task. The fact that learners understood the importance of the planning process and knew how to plan effectively, gave learners a better opportunity of meeting the writing requirements pertaining to the tasks. Planning was more structured and had a clear outcome. Learners made extensive use of the 5 Ws (who, what, when, where, why) as their writing frame.

- Drafting

As topics were discussed and ideas were shared, a platform was laid for LPs to build upon the ideas generated in class. At the start of the programme, many learners were reluctant to interact and share ideas, due to various barriers they perceived themselves to possess. The shared writing approach from the SRSD programme enabled LPs and the researcher, to unify ideas discussed. This unison in class established a type of camaraderie among LPs. They all had the same areas that needed support. Fear of being unable to provide input diminished as the programme continued. The drafting process provided LPs with a scaffold to work from. LPs shared ideas and found out that, although they did not write the same story or exact ideas, they all encountered similar problems and solutions. The drafting programme was successful. LPs planned more carefully which led them to draft their ideas more logically. They could plan and draft all their ideas in a comprehensive manner.

- **Editing**

The SRSD programme brought an immediate response from LPs to correct their stories. LPs were more comfortable about editing their own mistakes or extending their stories. LPs were no longer viewing the editing process as a punishment. Immediate feedback to LPs created a pathway to correct mistakes straightaway. Instead of LPs forgetting what to write, or losing focus, it allowed LPs to identify and rewrite corrections immediately. Revision of work and editing occurred during the shared writing phase where learners and teachers collaborated and revised, edited and proofread work. LPs struggled to edit their own work at times by identifying all spelling or grammar errors in their creative writing pieces. LPs were able to identify when they needed to add adjectives and adverbs or check spelling mistakes.
- **Publishing/presenting**

All finished texts were displayed or shared between LPs. This stage proved to the learners that what they worked on was completed. The cathartic process of writing and reflecting on what they had done, encouraged LPs to want to work harder the next time. The SRSD programme encouraged LPs to feel proud of their achievements which were constantly reinforced by the researcher during the programme. Some of the LPs did not deem their work to be important or as exciting as that of their peers. Yet the fact that they completed the task was an achievement in itself.

This research study highlighted a lack of self-confidence among LPs which inhibited their work when they were set difficult tasks to complete. A lack of self-confidence and low self-esteem had a detrimental effect on their behaviour and ultimately their schoolwork. The SRSD raised the creative writing ability of LPs. It improved the thought processes of LPs. They learnt to assess their own abilities and capabilities. By helping LPs gain a measure of self-affirmation and use it throughout the programme to sustain themselves, LPs came to realise that all learners had difficulty at some point in their work. They generally discovered that by motivating and governing the self, it is possible to overcome obstacles in writing, in school, life and the community.

LPs grew to understand that good writing needs to be planned and has to follow a logical order. The programme encouraged LPs to create a visual board in their mind, and fill in the pictures to make the story real and convincing to the reader. By encouraging LPs to be the masters of their own learning, a different approach to help them order what they think took root. The SRSD programme helped LPs in their planning and writing, and in the manner that learners conducted themselves. LPs were more willing to try and participate in the activities that were presented to them. A thorough and conscious planning process was implemented when LPs embarked on a writing activity which, in turn, had a positive impact on their ability to write a convincing and well-structured story.

This study has shown that the more LPs became involved in the construction of their own learning, the more control they had over the knowledge they acquired. They discovered that, if they set their mind to it, their input had a direct effect upon their output. The behaviour of LPs fortified their ability to self-regulate. LPs found that they were able to change their behaviour when they understood why and what the purpose of their activity was. This self-realisation had a positive effect upon their thinking and work outcome. The SRSD programme was designed to help learners who found it challenging to write but the benefits stretched further than creative writing. Learners who felt the effects of the social dereliction around them in the community, gained confidence, self-esteem and the ability to face and solve problems on their own. In this important sense the intervention sustained the priorities of Freire's vision of a school as integral and remedial part of a community damaged by capitalist and colonial policies. The SRSD programme, in terms of this research study, was used to address the research question. The SRSD programme was incorporated into the existing work that the CAPS (DoE, 2011) document prescribes for Grade 6. By forging a link between the process of writing as prescribed by CAPS (Department of Basic Education 2011a: 11-12) and the SRSD programme, the researcher was able to implement the SRSD planning phase effectively. Learners came to realise that they possessed more background knowledge about various fields than they were aware. Here again Freire was acknowledged, in his concern to liberate the minds of learners and recognise that there are many more kinds of knowledge upon which to build than the deterministic prescriptions of western settler pedagogy.

Focusing on creative writing, the SRSD programme was aligned with the process of writing that is described in Chapter 2 (2.5.2). This study sought to enrich and improve creative writing. Findings below indicate how the writing ability of learners was galvanised by the SRSD programme.

5.6. Themes

After analysing the data the following key themes were identified:

- dedication and motivation of the learner to complete a task
- focussing skills
Sub-theme: *support*
- ability to follow instructions

These themes emerged based on the research question: How can self-regulated strategy development impact creative writing of Grade 6 learners?

5.6.1. Dedication and motivation of the learner to complete a task

The researcher observed that during the class observation session LPs would start off with the planning process but not complete the planning process. Planning of the story would take place, including actions such as the following: jotting down a few ideas, completing the character sketch, and adding in the where and when the story is taking place, but completion of the planning would not occur. It was observed that many of the LPs found it hard to settle and dedicate their full attention to complete one thought process. One of the interviewees, Teacher B, noted that:

‘...many of the learners lacked the excitement or enthusiasm to write, many can do it but just need to put in the extra effort ‘.

During the observation period and at the start of the intervention programme many of the LPs struggled to complete a writing activity when left unsupervised and some would often sit for the whole duration of the period doing nothing. Many were unsure of where to start

and how to complete the activity. During the observation the teacher prompted the learners to complete the activity, only then a few would continue. It became evident during the observation session that many of the LPs lacked the ability to set realistic goals.

5.6.2. Focusing skills

The LPs' inability to focus on the task at hand had to be refined by working on their organisational skills to ensure that tasks are completed functions efficiently (Ginsburg & Opper, 2005: 18). It was observed by the researcher that when the LPs start with a writing activity they could not focus on the task at hand because they could not manage their own actions in order to complete the tasks more effectively. All of the LPs lacked the ability to organise their thought processes, often jumping around with ideas, resulting in incoherency in their creative writing pieces.

At the start of the intervention programme it was observed that many of the LPs could not focus on completing the writing activity because they either struggled to relax and become fully absorbed in their writing, would fidget, or simply start talking to other learners.

As a result of their lack of focussing skills, many of the LPs were disorganised at their table. The disorganised state of the environment, the notes not being in order, distracted the attention of the LPs as stationary or a book would fall on the ground, resulting in the LPs losing focus on the task.

The LPs' inability to focus on the task at hand was heightened when they did not understand what they had to do and were afraid to ask for help. This resulted in a lack of focus and desire to complete the task. For many learners writing creatively, the process is already uncomfortable and being in a position of not knowing what to write adds more pressure on the learner creating a lack of focus (Powell, 2006: 27).

During Teacher B's interview, the following was said:

'Even after the lesson when I have explained the work to the class, some of the LPs still somehow forget what to write or how to structure their writing pieces. Some will hand in such incomplete work, when I ask them why the section is not

complete many will say that they forgot, but when I ask them to explain what they think needs to be done many will tell me exactly the right thing, they just don't do it'.

Focusing skills emerged as one of the main themes from the data analysis, with a sub-theme support.

5.6.3. Support

It was observed that the LPs showed more focus and concentration when their teacher assisted them with their work such as rereading the instructions and prompting them.

Teacher B explained in her interview regarding LP7, *'he doesn't show any interest...unless you constantly stand on top of him and watch and direct him on what to do'.*

LP7's actions coincided with the theory of Piaget, where the learner constructs his knowledge and derives his focus through the interaction of the teacher as a mediator (Powell and Kalina, 2012: 241).

When working through the intervention programme it became evident that many of the LPs were able to focus, but distractions had to be minimised such as sitting alone at a desk, organising the tasks from the order of most important to least important. To motivate the LPs the researcher had to help the learners first identify what was the important step to complete first when they are given a creative writing task. Secondly, learners had to set goals for themselves as to what they wanted to achieve for that period (Dreascher, 2007: 133). After practicing goal-setting techniques the LPs were able to set realistic goals to complete a task and this stemmed from the support and modelling provided by the researcher in helping the learner use the self-regulating strategies taught during the SRSD intervention programme. The researcher also noted that during the SRSD intervention programme a few of the LPs relied solely on the mediation of the researcher to help them complete the activity, but the researcher had to redirect the LPs to remember the steps which they learned from the SRSD process and try to work independently.

5.6.4. Ability to follow instructions

During the observation session LPs would start with the planning of their text, but instructions were only partially followed. This was interesting to note from the findings because both Teacher B and Teacher A noted that LPs' ability to follow instructions was not consistent.

Teacher C agreed with Teacher B, that instructions are partially followed. Teacher B recalled the following of one LP:

'Even if I remind the class to look at the rubric and say it to him, he still does not do it, he will follow the instructions only halfway...e would start or write his mind map...but what he writes on the mind map his a completely different idea in the story'.

Piaget's theory on cognitive constructivism explains that when an individual constructs their own knowledge, they do not immediately understand it and will feel unbalanced, which is demonstrated by the learners' inability to complete the full instructions of the task (Powell 2006: 27). The learner feels overwhelmed by all the processes which already took place to complete the writing task, therefore doing the final edits to his writing text pushed him over into an uncomfortable state whereby editing his work seemed too much.

5.7. Conclusion

These results discussed above build on existing evidence from the theoretical position of Vygotsky's MKO (1976) that during the learning process the support structure (teachers, mentors, peers) helps and guides the learner every step of the way, even when the learner has seemingly mastered a certain concept. The data contribute to a clearer understanding of how well learners responded to the teaching. They used adverbs in their stories through constant reminders to learners by the researcher during the SRSD programme.

Analysis confirms that LPs had successfully understood the usage of adjectives and adverbs to add detail to write a more descriptive story, to enhance the setting, describe

the character and create a visual board for the reader's imagination. Based on the analysis of the results, with the abundant use of adjectives in the introduction and decrease of adjectives towards the end of the story, it seems that the LPs became tired and lacked the motivation and thoroughness to write descriptively. The results support the theory of Vygotsky (1987) that the role of the MKO is a constant support to guide and motivate the child through the learning process. Results from the lack of adjective and adverb usage near the end of each writing piece build on existing evidence from Lane et al. (2006), [cited in section 2.6.2], that creative writing is a complex task that involves several cognitive processes and skills. Data show the importance of providing support throughout the phase of the writing process. Support can be in the form of encouragement and motivation, peer support or self-support in the form of the self-affirmation chant that the LPs learnt at the start of the SRSD programme. By self-regulating their thoughts and behaviour, the learner becomes calm and focused which leads to meaningful learning.

Piaget's theory of cognitive constructivism explains that when an individual constructs knowledge, the individual does not immediately understand the knowledge constructed, resulting in an unbalanced state (Powell, 2006: 27). This feeling of imbalance is demonstrated by the fact that learners in this research study were unable to follow instructions and complete tasks at the start of the intervention programme. As learners were immersed in a new environment, they started making sense of what was happening around them. A positive and encouraging environment with the correct stimuli is directly associated with the construction of new knowledge (Vygotsky, 1978). When learners feel supported, it piques their interest. Providing learners with support has reference to emotional and cognitive engagement in the classroom.

This was seen when LPs needed to add adjectives and adverbs to their writing texts. The interviews discussed above in section 5.2 highlight a variety of responses from interviewees regarding the academic strengths and weaknesses of LPs before the intervention programme. The main point that the interview responses highlight was that many of the LPs found difficulty, not with the actual writing of a story, but lacked the emotional and behavioural ability needed to complete tasks.

Interview questions identified that many LPs struggled to motivate themselves and self-regulate their learning to complete writing tasks. Problems of this nature manifest themselves in an inability to plan, or build a storyline, poor sentence construction and the submission of incomplete written tasks.

The behavioural and emotional factors discussed in section 5.3 were significant. They revealed that the number of negative learner behaviours such as restlessness, fidgeting, not paying attention, dropped after the pre-test. Learner participants became more settled as the programme progressed, indicating that the strategies implemented had an effect on the LPs and how they behaved.

Using the figures represented in section 5.4, in the pre-test and post-test results table, it was clear that all the participants improved their writing. This research study assessed learner performance in the pre-test and post-test by using a rubric; word count, the number of adjectives and adverbs used. In all three criteria, it showed that all of the LPs showed an increase in either their word count, use of adjectives or the use of adverbs.

The pre-test and the post-test results gave a clear comparison as to how learners responded to the SRSD intervention programme. Comparing the results allowed the researcher to see which methods worked and which methods could be improved upon. This reveals limitations to this study which are discussed in Chapter 6.

Chapter 6

Conclusions

6.1. Introduction

In the CAPS (DoE, 2011) document, creative writing is acknowledged to be a focused skill which requires learners to follow a certain process in their development as writers. Learners are required to be efficient and creative writers at the end of their primary school phase. The previous chapter reported upon the main findings of how self-regulated strategy development was explored with Grade 6 learners. This study set out to investigate how SRDS can improve creative writing performance. The research question necessitated gathering of qualitative data. In section 6.2, an overview of the research study is set out, revisiting the aim of the research study and how the research requirements were addressed. Section 6.3 discusses the overall findings. The SRSD findings and a perceptible advance in the creative writing of learner participants are discussed in 6.4. Various limitations constrained the study: the number of participants and methodological limitations. The limitations to the study are discussed in section 6.5. Concluding recommendations appear in section 6.5, pointing the way to future research prospects.

6.2. Overview of Research`

This research study set out to investigate how the main research question can be addressed:

How can self-regulated strategy development improve Intermediate Phase learners' creative writing skills?

The aim of the study was to explore whether the strategies of the SRSD programme, in particular the six stages of the SRSD, affected how Grade 6 learners plan and develop a creative story. In order to implement the strategies, the researcher engaged with selected teachers and learner participants, who were from the same school and in Grade 6 (which

is one of the years earmarked for systemic testing from the DoE), to determine the English language competencies of learners. Based on the 2011 PIRLS assessment, it is clear that South African learners scored very low in the world rankings (Howie et al., 2012:19), a trend that holds true for the participating learners in this study. The systemic test conducted by WCED and the ANA nationally by the DoE includes writing as one of the components for assessment. This research project was based upon how well a selected group of Grade 6 learners performed in creative writing. Many learners in Grade 6 found it difficult to plan and write creative stories. A case study design within a qualitative approach was formulated to gather information by means of teacher interviews and observation. Collection of data took place by means of certain instruments: semi-structured interviews and classroom observations, the SRSD intervention programme conducted with LPs were implemented over a total of four months [see Table 4.6: *Work plan*]. To determine how the intervention programme influenced LPs' creative writing performance, a pre-test and a post-test were conducted to draw a comparative analysis.

It was evident from the teacher interviews that the teachers regarded some aspect of the creative writing process as not important to teach,

Only one of the three teachers interviewed, had a clear definition of what creative writing required.

Teacher feedback and support plays an important role in the classroom. Patterson (2007:429) posits that providing learners with regular feedback on their progress encourages learner engagement. The role of the teacher as a motivator should encourage learners to feel free and learn from their experience (Freire, 1978). These self-reflective processes provide learners' time to internalise what they have learnt.

6.3. Limitations of the study

The following could be seen as limitations to the study:

6.3.1. Number of participants and site

The methodological choices were constrained in that the number of learner participants came from a small group within the Grade 6 class at the school at which the study was conducted. The study examined the effect of SRSD on Grade 6 learners, yet only a certain group of participants (learners who scored between 45% -50 % in their baseline tests at the beginning of the year) was selected for the study. Due to the limited number of learners who were selected to participate in the study, the overall outcome of this research study reflects the findings in terms of LPs who faced challenges in creative writing. The number of learners who participated in the study does not reflect the overall performance of Grade 6 learners' creative writing ability and therefore cannot be generalised.

A second possible limitation to the study could be that the group of Grade 6 learners was drawn from the same site and that one school context was used. Saddler and Asaro (2007:213) posit, as cited in Chapter 2, that the context of each school is different, even if two schools are neighbouring schools. Each school has its own ethos and context. Broadening the study to include another site, could have given the researcher a broader perspective of the impact of the SRSD programme with learners in a different site and setting. The small number of learners selected from one school prevents the findings of this study from being generalised. The findings pertain to one school only in a selected area. By broadening the research study across a different school or school district, the impact of the SRSD programme could be measured against how effective the SRSD study is in a different context.

6.3.2. Language of learning and teaching (LOLT)

The outcome of how learners responded to the SRSD programme was greatly influenced by how well learners understood English, which was used as the medium of instruction. The opportunity for learners to express their thoughts and scribe what they thought could have happened earlier in the programme but the fact that English was not the mother tongue of all LPs, delayed the ready progress of some participants. Since the programme was presented through the medium of English, many of the learners had to push

themselves to think more creatively in their second language. Many spoke English only when they were at school but expressed themselves better in their mother tongue, which was not always English. The results of SRSD programme were conditioned by the fact that English was not the home language of all the LPs.

6.4. Recommendations for teachers

The following recommendations are made to help improve the creative writing process in a class and are based on the findings of the study.

- Tests should be conducted at the beginning of the year to ascertain the level of academic competence of learners. Teachers should conduct the necessary baseline tests to assess where a learner's capabilities and academic progress lie, instead of assuming that all the learners in the grade are at the same academic level. Through regular progress reporting and identifying learner barriers, teachers can devise appropriate intervention activities to support each learner.
- To accommodate the ever-changing needs of learners, it is important that teachers incorporate different methods of teaching the difficult topics or subjects in school. Gardner's Multiple Intelligences (1991) theorised different learning styles: linguistic, logical/mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist to determine rates at which learners acquire knowledge. Learners learn at different rates and are influenced by their own learning style to the way in which they learn best. At the start of the programme, the researcher focused mainly on the visual (using pictures), verbal (using words in speech and writing) and social (work in groups or with other people). As a means to accommodate all the different learning styles of learners in a class, it is recommended that teachers embrace and adopt diverse learning styles to cater for the different learning styles of learners in the classroom.
- To help learners increase their creative writing potential, it is important that teachers recognise the value of a positive learning environment. Making sure that the learning environment is positive and conducive to learning, helps learners think and react more positively. The six stages involve the presence of a caring and

devoted MKO. Four of the six stages require direct interaction and input from the MKO. This punctuates the importance of making sure that the teacher is always visible to learners. After conducting the research study, it was evident that learners could learn new strategies if the right learning environment was implemented. In this case, LPs showed an awareness and improvement in taking charge of their own learning. The most important aspect that the research study highlighted was that learners were able to learn from the six stages: *Developing background knowledge, Discussing it, Model it, Memorize it, Support it and Independent performance*. The six stages taught the LPs that they were able to learn how to self-regulate the writing process through self-instruction, goal-setting, self-monitoring and self-reinforcement.

6.5. Recommendations for future research

Based on the findings and recommendations of this study, the researcher proposes the following suggestions for future research.

- Conducting a longitudinal study on how SRDS can be used by teachers in earlier grades. Conducting research in the Foundation Phase and analysing the barriers experienced would help to formulate corrective measures to enhance creative writing literacy in the formative years of the literacy development of learners. Early intervention in the Foundation phase has an impact on explicit instructional teaching and helps teachers develop a greater understanding of how learners can use the strategies to plan and write creative texts independently and other forms of writing genres.
- Further research should investigate the efficacy of the SRSD programme with a larger group of Grade 6 learners in different schooling contexts. This would expand the study field and give greater insight into the impact of SRSD and its effectiveness in fostering learners' creative writing. It would yield more comprehensive results if the strategies are observed on a daily basis enabling trends to be observed, exposing learners to different writing genres whilst implementing the SRSD plan. By having more schools partake in the study, the researcher would be able to draw a comparative analysis across the different schools. This would be beneficial in

determining how challenges described in section 2. 6 influenced schools in different contexts.

This research study focused on one area of the language, namely creative writing. It would be beneficial to conduct further research into how learners utilise SRSD strategies in other composition types and genres. This would allow teachers to gain a broader sense of how the SRSD stages can be implemented and the knowledge gained from it can be transferred and applied in other forms of writing.

6.6. Conclusion

This study was conducted within a broader context of social awareness, responsibility and justice. As much as the legislated mandates of racism from the colonial era of occupation to apartheid were enforced from the top downwards, so the only real way of redressing three centuries of oppression is by beginning at the ground level and working upwards. Learners at this school are victims of an on-going broad range of social ills brought about under the Apartheid government through racist and discriminatory legislation, government –mandated forced removals and humiliations of many kinds. Investigating the effect of a programme for improving creative writing was of particular significance in this social context in that creative writing is a subject that imparts the habits of critical thinking which run counter to the rote learning pedagogy which dominated education in South Africa and which still lingers in many staff rooms and classrooms. The overall success of this intervention showed a way forward for the recuperation of a school community and in a small yet substantial suggested a way of building social cohesion through independent thought.

The SRSD programme is demonstrably a successful intervention strategy to help learners equip themselves with the necessary skills to self-regulate their own learning. There is a dire need in the South African education system where teachers to realise that they are the catalysts of change. A systemic change that needs to be highlighted among teachers is that they are and part of a constant process of reform in education. They can be agents of change and do not need to treat teaching as an act of “transferring” education to

learners who are capable of being self-thinking individuals in this world, possessing their own opinions and outlooks (Shor & Freire, 1987).

As the study reached the end, it was observed that LPs did not want to stop the “extra classes” they had after school. This change in attitude showed the researcher that any learner is willing to learn, if the learning conditions are favourable in class. The perfect classroom condition would be to have learners who are self-motivated when faced with a writing task and teachers who are committed to making sure that creative writing is not an overlooked aspect of language learning. It is important that early detection of language barriers and appropriate remediation be implemented in order to mediate or prevent creative writing problems. In keeping with the aim of this research study, the framework proposed led the researcher to understand through observations, interviews and the SRSD programme, that learning does not happen in isolation and not without the help of others. The reality for complete reformation of education in South Africa post-apartheid has proven to be a greater challenge than anticipated. All must realise that education, more specifically learning, is not a one-way stream and it does not happen in isolation.

This study embarked on a way to help learners self-regulate their own creative writing through the implementation of the SRSD programme. Every stage in the SRSD strategy involved input from a MKO, even during the independent stage of the SRSD programme. The SRSD study ultimately aimed for learners to become self-sufficient in their own learning (Freire, 1978). This can be achieved if teachers change their disposition in the class and instil in learners an attitude that they can achieve anything they put their mind to despite their personal circumstances, level of wealth and regardless of how they perceive or others. The SRSD strategy, however, though on a microscopic scale, instilled a sense learner empowerment, reversing some of the damage brought about by the apartheid government of South Africa.

Chapter one juxtaposed the socio-economic context in which the study was conducted, with the results of the national literacy tests in order to show that such testing cannot be interpreted absolutely but has to be understood in terms of the troubled and unjust history of many poor communities across the country. An intervention such as that examined in

this study for improving creative writing, has to take into account both the literacy levels as they appear in tests as well as the conditions in the school community. To achieve this balance, this study adopts a Freirean perspective which stresses the importance of a learner-centred approach, recognises the inherent knowledge of each learner and regards the school community in a holistic manner, as part of the larger community, and a means of uplifting that greater social reality. Chapter two explains the SRSD or self-regulated strategy development in itself and within the ambit of CAPS. The ANA test results are reflected and discussed in order to set out the poor standards existing across the country. If the history of the country is considered together with the nature of apartheid education enforced for fifty years, the state of literacy is not as unaccountably low as may appear when the results are read literally, as absolute statistics. The argument of this thesis is that the sort of obedience pedagogy which was paramount from 1948-94 has to be countered by an entirely opposite attitude of liberation in which the learner is stimulated in a conducive environment to become a critical thinker. Creative writing is the single discipline in which rote learning, the cornerstone of apartheid education, cannot take place. Here the learner is most encouraged to think independently and gain the confidence which conditions in a crime-ridden community cannot foster. SRSD reverses the authoritarian modes of racist pedagogy, replacing them with a carefully staged intervention which sensitively builds up the self-confidence and self-esteem of learners who are disadvantaged in so many ways.

Chapter three explains in detail the methodology which most closely enables this sort of patient schema to occur successfully. The selection of learners, the construction of a pre-test and post-test and methods of collecting suitable data are all in alignment with the imperatives of a socially conscious undertaking such as this which seeks as much to improve literacy skills at the 'absolute' level as it desires to enhance the self-expression and autonomy of learners. Chapter 4 presents data collected by means of the main instruments identified as particularly apt for such an investigation: teacher interviews, observations, pre-tests, learner worksheets and post-tests. Data show how learners at first exhibited behaviour of aggression and alienation which could be predicted when gang war events are familiar and even recorded in the process of this investigation. Gradually, however, the gentle approach of a Freirean classroom and constructivist initiatives calmed

learners who increasingly found meaning and identity in the carefully staged intervention. The six stages were in accord with priorities of social awareness: Developing background knowledge, Discussing it, Model it, Memorise it, Support it and Independent performance. The slow yet detectable advancement in classroom attention and enjoyment of lessons was mirrored in the linguistic advances made by learners over the period of the intervention and measured by the researcher. In this way literacy levels and behavioural irregularities stemming from socio-economic deprivation were interlinked and could be gauged in a statistical manner. This to a large extent resolved the juxtaposition of historical context and 'absolute' testing which was set out in chapter one. Chapter five examines interviews with teachers in terms of nine key questions posed. Typical behavioural difficulties such as defiance, lack of interest or disruptive habits were revealed yet teachers acknowledged that such negative aspects were often overcome by means of the structured intervention offered by SRSD. Observations centred mainly upon the distinction between pre- and post-test results. Here the most satisfactory elements of the SRSD programme could be appreciated. There was a measurable and demonstrable improvement in performance. This general improvement addressed the core research question in the affirmative: the SRSD did bring about an improvement in the ability of learners to write creatively.

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APPENDIX A: Email requesting permission from WCED

7 December 2015

The Director: Research Services

Western Cape Education Department

Audrey.Wyngaard@westerncape.gov.za

tel: +27 021 467 9272 Fax: 0865902282

Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000

wced.wcape.gov.za

Dear Dr Wyngaard

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL IN THE WESTERN CAPE

I am an MEd student at Cape Peninsula University of Technology. I wish to apply for permission to conduct research in the Department of Education: Western Cape. The research I wish to conduct for my Master's dissertation involves Self-regulated strategies in writing engagement in Intermediate Phase learners. This project will be conducted under the supervision of Dr A. Steenkamp and Dr C. Thornhill (Cape Peninsula University of Technology).

I request permission to conduct interviews with a number of Intermediate Phase teachers and parents of Grade 6 learners, and to observe Grade 6 learners at .

I have attached a copy of my research proposal which includes copies of the data collection instruments, as well as a copy of the ethics clearance letter which I received from the CPUT Research Ethics Committee.

I can assure you that the name of the school and the names of the learners involved in the study will not be disclosed in my dissertation or any other publication of the research findings.

I hope to hear from you soon.

Yours sincerely

Kay Lynette Roberts

APPENDIX B: Letter requesting permission to conduct research study (SGB)

14 January 2016

The principal

Boundary Primary School

Bonteheuwel

Dear Principal and SGB

Re: Request for permission to gather data at your school

Research: Self-regulated strategies for writing engagement with Intermediate Phase learners.

I am currently a student at Cape Peninsula University of Technology and I am reading for my Masters of Education Degree. My research focus is on self-regulated strategies for writing engagement with Intermediate Phase learners.

I wish to explore how Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) can impact a learner's creative writing skills as an intervention strategy.

I humbly request if you would grant me the necessary permission to conduct my research study at your school. I have received approval from the Western Cape Education Department under reference number 20151214-6188.

I will need to work with a maximum of twenty Grade 6 learners and 4 intermediate phase teachers. Learners will need to be in an English medium classroom and the research study will span over six months. The intervention classes will take place after school and will start in February and end in August 2016.

If you agree for me to use your school as the research site it, the following list of criteria will apply:

Teachers and parents of learner participants will sign a consent form to participate in the research;

Two observation sessions, approximately one hour;

Attend intervention classes after school starting at 15:00 – 16:00.

All information provided will be used for research purposes only and anonymity of all participants is guaranteed. Participants can withdraw from the study at any time.

My vision is that the research will contribute significantly to the learners and to your school. I trust that you will consider my request favourably.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours in education

Kay Roberts

APPENDIX C: Letter requesting permission to partake in research study: learner

7 February 2016

Dear Parent/Guardian

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO OBSERVE AND INTERVIEW YOUR CHILD_____

I am currently registered as an M Ed student at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Faculty of Education. My research topic is: "Self-regulated strategies in writing engagement in Intermediate Phase learners". I would like to obtain your permission, in principle, to observe your child and provide academic support to your child in English Home Language, while at school. This will help your child improve on their creative writing.

In addition I would like your permission to interview your child's teacher. This will happen after school hours so I will not disturb the learning process.

Please complete the attached consent form. I would like to inform you that all the information obtained from my observation, interview and academic programme will be kept strictly confidential and that the above arrangement can be terminated at any time.

Please note that your child's identity and the school's name will not be revealed in the research project. The research project, when completed, will be available for you to view.

Please feel free to contact me if you need any additional information regarding this research project.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Kay Roberts

Grade 6 educator

Please complete the attached.

REPLY SLIP

I, Mr/Mrs hereby give permission for my child
..... in Grade 6 to be observed and
participate in the research study.

Signature..... Date:.....

Witness name: Date:

Signature:

APPENDIX D: Letter requesting permission to partake in research study: teacher

7 February 2016

Dear Educator

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO INTERVIEW EDUCATOR

I am currently registered as an M Ed student at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Faculty of Education. My research topic is: "Self-regulated strategies in writing engagement in Intermediate Phase learners". I would like to obtain your permission, in principle, to interview you regarding learners who struggle with creative writing in the English Home Language class, while at school. This research will hopefully help learners who struggle with creative writing, to improve their creative writing.

This will happen after school hours so I will not disturb the learning process.

Please complete the attached consent form. I would like to inform you that all the information obtained from my observation, interview and academic programme will be kept strictly confidential and that the above arrangement can be terminated at any time.

Please note that your name and the school's name will not be revealed in the research project. The research project, when completed, will be available for you to view.

Please feel free to contact me if you need any additional information regarding this research project.

Yours sincerely

Mrs.Kay Roberts

Grade 6 educator

Please complete the attached.

REPLY SLIP

I, Mr. /Mrs. voluntarily give Mrs K. Roberts permission to interview me. I understand that my participation in her study is strictly confidential and will contribute to her study.

Name of educator:

Signature.....

Date:.....

APPENDIX E: Letter of approval from WCED

Directorate research

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Fax: 0865902282

Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000

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REFERENCE: 20151214-6188

ENQUIRIES: Dr A T Wyngaard

Mrs Kay Roberts
25 Rosinni Street
Belhar
7493

Dear Mrs Kay Roberts

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: SELF-REGULATED STRATEGIES IN WRITING ENGAGEMENT IN INTERMEDIATE PHASE LEARNERS

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from 11 January 2016 till 30 June 2016
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number?
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

The Director: Research Services

Western Cape Education Department
Private Bag X9114
CAPE TOWN
8000

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.

Signed: Dr Audrey T Wyngaard
Directorate: Research
DATE: 14 December 2015

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APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITHIN THE WESTERN CAPE

Note

- This application has been designed with students in mind.
- If a question does not apply to you indicate with a N/A.
- The information is stored in our database to keep track of all studies that have been conducted on the WCED, it is therefore important to provide as much information as is possible.

1 APPLICANT INFORMATION

1.1 Personal Details		
1.1.1	Title (Prof / Dr / Mr/ Mrs/Ms)	Mrs
1.1.2	Surname	Roberts
1.1.3	Name (s)	Kay Lynette
1.1.4	Student Number (if applicable)	207007314

1.2 Contact Details		
1.2.1	Postal Address	25 Roslini Street Belhar 7493
1.2.2	Telephone number	
1.2.3	Cell number	0716771310
1.2.4	Fax number	na
1.2.5	E-mail Address	kjates33@gmail.com
1.2.6	Year of registration	2015

APPENDIX F: Letter of approval SGB

PRIMPRE SCHOOL

Principal

Admin Clo

20 January 2016

To Mrs K. Roberts

The principal and SGB of **Boundary Primary School**, hereby grant Mrs. Kay Roberts, student at Cape Peninsula University of Technology, permission to use the school as her site to gather her data and complete her research.

We trust that the necessary data is collected to complete her studies.

We have made available one of the classes after school so that she can utilise it for the intervention programme.

We trust that all goes well with her studies and hope that this will help build a strong love for education with our learners.

Yours in education

Principal

APPENDIX G: Interview questions
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Interviewer: _____ Interviewee: _____ Date: _____ Learner Participant Discussed: _____	
	<u>Probing Questions</u>
<u>Main subject</u>	
Question 1 <u>1. Reception</u>	<u>1.1 When was the learner in your class?</u> <u>1.2 Was the learner on the intervention programme at your school?</u>
Question 2 <u>2. Identify Intervention provided</u>	<u>2.1 When did you notice that there was something wrong with the learners' writing skills?</u> <u>2.2 How did you intervene to improve writing skills?</u>
Question 3 <u>3. Determining background knowledge</u>	<u>3.1 Could the learner identify elements for writing a good story such as writing an introduction, body and conclusion? Explain.</u> <u>3.2 Was the learner able to write a complete story/essay on his/her own?</u>
Question 4 <u>4. Planning of writing piece.</u>	<u>4.1 Could the learner plan his own writing process?</u> <u>For example, could they create mind maps or follow instructions to a writing frame?</u>
Question 5 <u>5. Assessment of learner's Behaviour</u>	<u>5.1 How does the learner behave during writing lessons? Explain the behaviour.</u> <u>5.2 Can the learner focus, and complete the writing task independently?</u>

	<u>5.3 How does the learner behave when encountering a problem?</u>
Question 6 <u>6. Ability to follow what the teacher Models</u>	<u>6.1 Can the learner follow instructions after the teacher has explained a writing process?</u>
Question 7 <u>7. Quality of text</u>	<u>7.1 Does the learner write in detail, make use of adjectives, create a good character, describe the setting etc.?</u>
Question 8 <u>8. Revising(editing)</u>	<u>8.1 Does the learner revise her/his work? Can the learner check for spelling mistakes, check if any words have been omitted, edit sentence construction etc.?</u>
Question 9 <u>9. Execution of writing task</u>	<u>9.1 What do you perceive to be the problem with the learner's execution of a writing task regarding planning, composing and revising of the writing task?</u> <u>9.2 How would you define the quality of the learners' writing?</u>

APPENDIX H: Observation schedule and Notes

<u>Dates</u>		<u>Duration of observation</u>	<u>Class /teacher</u>	<u>Sign</u>	<u>Any comments</u>
<u>Feb 2016</u>		<u>9:30-10:30</u>			
<u>Observation session 1</u>		1 hour			
<u>Feb 2016</u>		<u>11:45-12:45</u>			
<u>Observation session 1</u>		1 hour			
<u>TOTAL OF OBSERVATION in minutes:</u>					
<u>120 minutes</u>					

Observation schedule and notes

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Organisational skills of the learner while completing the activity.</u>	<u>Writing progress of the learner after 10-15 minutes</u>	<u>Comprehension and completion of the activity</u>	<u>Body behaviour (how did the learner behave with the given activity)</u>
23 Feb 2016 Time: 9:30-10:30 After 1 st break FIRST 30 minutes	Write a letter to a friend to explain what you did during the holidays. (Activity given by the class teacher)	First day of observation with class teacher present. Learners struggles to settle in. Three looks around and fidgets	Learners started with the address (able to write the correct letter format.), but he does not follow	It does not seem if the learners understand the instructions. 10 of the learners are just	There are about 15 learners still fidgeting, turning, and talking to another learner. Often looking

		<p>with his pen and an elastic band. The class teacher notices the elastic band and</p> <p> LP 3 please put the elastic band away."</p> <p>LP 3 replies, "Yes miss." He frowns slightly and puts it away. He is now chewing on his pen and writing. After 2 minutes he is still fidgeting with the elastic band.</p>	<p>through with the body.</p>		<p>out of the window. Some learners stare at their page and reads through it, it however looks as if they are thinking about what to write but not really writing it down.</p>
.	<p>Only a few of the learners completed the</p>	<p>The learner read through the</p>	<p>Learner is attempting answering</p>	<p>Lp 13 is answering the question. It seems as</p>	<p>LP 7 seems focused. The</p>

<p>Remaining 30 minutes of period</p>	<p>comprehension. (I looked at the two questions on the page and it was two higher order questions)</p> <p>The learner would need to explain the answer and imagine that he is the character</p>	<p>story, it is evident that he can read, he is silent reading, slightly moving his lips and moving his finger along every sentence, however he is not getting ready to answer the two questions. His page is open and his pen is positioned on the page but still not doing anything.</p>	<p>the question. Some are reading through their story again and looking at their answer. One learner erases the answer again.</p>	<p>if he knows the story and understands what needs to be done. There is evidence on his page of answering the question</p>	<p>teacher is standing near him and directing the learners in his group on how to answer the question. No moving. Learner is completely involved in the lesson.</p>
<p>25 Feb 2016</p> <p>After second break</p> <p>11:45-12:45</p>	<p>Learners need to write their own fable. The teacher read a fable to the class, the teacher provide the learners with the background of what a fable</p>	<p>The sets out to fill in the writing frame, his pen is out and pencil, he is constantly erasing his work. 2 learners are</p>	<p>No set planning yet, just looking at the others around him. I'm uncertain if some of them</p>	<p>The learner is still not following through the instructions, Even though he nods and tells the teacher what he will do. He</p>	<p>The learners do not seem at ease, Some are looking at their friend's page, LP11</p>

<p>First 30 minutes</p>	<p>is and a writing frame.</p> <p>The writing frame is the W5 + 1H.</p> <p>Who What Where When What How</p>	<p>jumping around on his page he plans the where, then goes through to the what.</p>	<p>know what to do. The teacher is near a group of learners pointing and showing them where to start first. She is explaining that they need to come up with character names for their story first, then they need to think of where the story is taking place. The teacher is drawing the mind map again on the board.</p>	<p>does not put what he is planning to paper. He is still busy with filling in the writing frame.</p>	<p>scratches his head, then writes a piece and starts again. He doesn't seem sure about himself. He is comparing what he is writing to that of his friend, then erases.</p>
	<p>The learners now need to complete the</p>	<p>Some learners start off</p>	<p>The learners are still</p>	<p>The learner are working through the</p>	<p>Some are sitting still.</p>

	<p>planning process of writing a fable. 5W+1H Learners need to hand in their first drafts today.</p>	<p>with reading through their story where they left off two days ago. Some start then starts with adding more detail to the story. The teacher has placed a few learners next to a more stronger learner in the class and also a learner who does not chat too much in the class.</p>	<p>busy with writing his story. Some still spending too much time erasing work instead of writing.</p>	<p>activity. Some however do not seem to follow the instructions of the writing frame. I am not sure if they forgot to look at the instructions and are just continuing on his own. Doing just his own thing but I don't see them writing about the topic (I was able to check this because I walked through the class and stopped at a few of the groups to read through their work and by doing that I checked a few of their</p>	<p>Some not fully absorbed in the lesson. Some would look around now and then, spending too much time doing other things. LP 8 glares outside the window now and then , but is still not done with the story. Learners took out a page and is now busy scribbling a cartoon character. LP 9 looks at his writing</p>
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				<p>work without them becoming suspicious that they are my core focus). A few learners handed in his first draft. The teacher gave the learner + 3 extra learners extra time during interval (10 minutes) to complete the first draft as some of the learners were still not done.</p>	<p>frame, facial expression is of a thinking face. The teacher stops the learner and directs him back to his writing frame and to start writing again. The learners behaviour are now a bit tense and some are constantly paging back and forth to the mind map to complete their story.</p>
	<p><u>Learners to edit their first draft</u></p>	<p>Learners are reading through their first</p>	<p>The learners are still busy</p>	<p>A few checking their mind map. Some</p>	<p>Many movement in class. LP 4 is</p>

	<p>Instructions given by the teacher: read through your first draft and check if you wrote about the 5w+1h. Check spelling (learners are handed their dictionary) Learners then need write their final draft.</p>	<p>draft. Some are busy erasing words and writing the correct spelling. Only a few are circling the incorrect words, and writes the correct spelling of the word on top of the word. Many not using a dictionary.</p>	<p>reading through their first draft. A few is not busy with erasing words. The teacher prompts the learners to use their writing frame and mind map to check if they answered their questions.</p>	<p>learners start completing their final draft. Very minimum changes to some of their first draft. Many cannot pick up their mistakes. The teacher reminds the learner to write a title for their story and to indicate the amount of words that is used. The learner write in a title, but most do not indicate the number of words used.</p>	<p>talking to one of his friends. He is playing with a soccer ball, rolling the ball under his feet, and frequently bites on his pen.</p>
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APPENDIX I: Pre-test

TEACHER NOTES

Lesson 1- LISTENING AND PLANNING

To test the learner's ability to listen, follow instructions and use of adjectives.

The teacher will read the following sentence to the learners.

On a sunny afternoon ... (name of character) was walking through the park. Suddenly ...

INSTRUCTIONS READ TO LEARNERS:

- Draw a picture of the face of a person in a block of your page. Any face.
- WHO-Now give the person a name.
- HOW- Write down three adjectives to describe the person's appearance (how does this person look?) Write this around the block.
- WHERE- Write down where this story is taking place (setting). Write the three adjectives to describe the setting.
- WHAT- Next write down what happens next in the story. Write this in the circle.

Lesson 2

Use the character profile to write a story.

Learners need to write a descriptive story using the character they created.

The story will start as follows:

Learners will complete what happened next. They will need to use their imagination and write a short story on what happened. The short story should have a body and conclusion.

Learners can write as many sentences as they want to. Learners will not be told how many sentences to write, but only told to write a body and conclusion.

Learner Pre-test

Section A

Name : _____

Grade: _____

LP: _____

Time: 1 hour Mrs K. Roberts

INSTRUCTIONS

Listen carefully to your teacher.

Character creation

Activity 1:

PLANNING

a) WHO/ HOW? =CHARACTER



b) WHERE? = SETTING

c) WHAT happens
in the story?

1. _____

2. _____

CHECKLIST

	Yes	No	Comments
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Character drawing: face drawn.			
Name given to character.			
Adjectives written to describe the person's appearance.			
Write down where this story is taking place (setting). Write down three adjectives to describe the setting.			
Sequencing of events in a chronological manner.			

Activity 2

Complete the following story. Use your character that you have created and write a short story. What do you think happened o the character as he walked through the park. Write an introduction, body and conclusion. Use your imagination.



Write story

On a sunny afternoon _____ was walking through the park. Suddenly

--

RUBRIC				
Level	1	2	3	4
Structure	Poor introduction, middle or conclusion. Events not in logical order. Paragraphs do not link with one another.	Attempt to write interesting introduction, middle or conclusion. Some evidence of logical ordering of events. Some linking of paragraphs evident.	Good introduction, middle and conclusion. Events arranged in a logical order. Linking of paragraphs.	Introduction captivates attention of the reader, interesting middle and conclusion. Events follow in logical order. Paragraphs coherency evident resulting in a well rounded story.
Content	Content and description of events have no connection with the topic.	Content and descriptions are evident in story but sometimes disconnects with the topic. Some irrelevant information.	Content and description relevant to the topic.	People or animals described suits the content and fits in. Appropriate descriptions create interesting content.
Correct punctuation usage. Use of connecting words.	Poor punctuation use. No or little use of connecting words to extend sentences.	Punctuation use evident. Little use of connecting words.	Good punctuation usage. Compound sentences.	Punctuation use to highlight emotion and suspense in story. Punctuation used in direct speech, quotes in story. Connecting words and compound sentences.
Descriptive vocabulary Use of adjectives, adverbs, figurative language	No descriptive vocabulary used.	Descriptive vocabulary used are few.	Effective use of descriptive vocabulary.	Very rich description used in describing characters and events. Descriptions add interesting detail to the story.

Length of Story	Less than 80 words	Adequate vocabulary (80- 100 words)	Range of vocabulary (101-130 words).	Wide range of vocabulary (131-150 words).
Total	20 Marks			

APPENDIX J: EFEC application

EDUCATION FACULTY ETHICS COMMITTEE

FLOW CHART OF ETHICAL CLEARANCE PROCEDURES

- (i) The Institutional Ethics Review Board (IERB) requires that all research that involves CPUT community (students and staff) as participants should comply with ethical clearance procedures of the faculty to which the study is attached. Therefore, all staff, students and outside researchers who propose conducting research that involves any members of CPUT community should apply for ethical clearance.
- (ii) All supervisors in the Faculty of Education should emphasise the importance of ethical compliance in students' proposals. Proposals which do not satisfactorily explain how the principles of ethics will be adhered to in their studies will not receive any ethical clearance. For students, the consideration of ethics should be clearly explained in proposals even if their studies do not involve the CPUT community.
- (iii) All researchers who (staff and students) who seek University Research Funding (URF) should apply for ethical clearance. **Note: ethics committee needs at least 10 working days to process applications as the process requires assembling a minimum of four committee members to process the applications.**
- (iv) The Faculty has entered into an agreement with WCED that proposals that involve conducting research in public schools will **first acquire ethical clearance in the faculty before they seek permission to conduct research in schools.** Proof of ethical clearance will be attached to the application to conduct research in WCED schools.
- (v) **Ethical clearance is a process that involves more than the signing of a completed form. Please note the stipulations in the flow-chart below for the purposes of a speedy processing of your application**

STUDENTS	STAFF
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop the proposal as required by the FRC 2. Clarify in the proposal how the principles of ethics will be observed 3. Submit the proposal to the FRC 4. Complete the ethical clearance form 5. Summarise your proposed study in about one page and within the one page summary clearly explain how your study will pay attention to ethics. Use the questions for consideration (i – x) provided in the ethics form as guidelines for describing ethical compliance. 6. Email the complete ethics form and the summary to the chairperson of the faculty ethics committee. Please note, the application and summary should be emailed as it 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete the ethical clearance 2. Write a descriptive summary of study to submit with application. The summary should as well respond to questions for consideration (i – x) in ethics form 3. Submit to the chairperson of faculty ethics committee 4. Email the complete ethics form and the summary to the chairperson of the faculty ethics committee. Please note, the application and summary should be emailed as it speeds processing between committee members and the applicant. 5. As soon as the chairperson receives your application, it will be forwarded to three members of the committee to examine.

Updated February 2013

<p>speeds processing between committee members and the applicant.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">7. The chairperson distributes ethical clearance application to committee members8. Allow at least 2 weeks for the committee to process your application. It is therefore imperative to send your application long before the due dates (e.g. application for funding) for which ethical clearance is required.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">6. Allow at least 2 weeks for the committee to process your application. It is therefore imperative to send your application long before the due dates (e.g. URF and WCED applications) for which ethical clearance is required7. Note that staff is also mandated to seek ethical clearance before seeking permission to conduct research in WCED schools. Proof of ethical clearance will then be appended to the WCED application
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Cina Mosito



Chairperson, Education Faculty Ethics Committee

Updated February 2013

*** For office use only	
Date submitted	11 Nov 2015
Meeting date	n/a
Approval	P/Yy/N
Ethical Clearance number	EPEC 6-11/2015



FACULTY OF EDUCATION

RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION FORM

This form is to be completed by students, staff members and other researchers intending to undertake research in the Faculty. It is to be completed for any piece of research the aim of which is to make original contribution to the public body of knowledge.

Please note:

- Complete the form in MS Word – no handwritten forms will be accepted.
- All attachments are to be included in this document – your email submission should include one MS Word attachment.
- Your surname must appear at the beginning of the file name, e.g. SMITH Ethics application

1 Applicant and project details

Name(s) of applicant(s):	Kay Lynette Roberts
Project/study Title:	Self-regulated strategies in writing engagement in Intermediate Phase learners
Is this a staff research project, i.e. not for degree purposes?	Yes / No
If for degree purposes:	Degree: MEd Supervisor(s): Dr Steenkamp & Dr Thornhill
Funding sources:	

2 Abstract of study

<p>Self-regulated strategies in writing engagement in Intermediate Phase learners</p> <p>ABSTRACT</p> <p>In South Africa learners are required to demonstrate their writing abilities in the national systemic evaluation test which is undertaken by the Department of Education. Being able to write creatively in the systemic test is of the essence and starting off the planning process and delivering a final written piece, should all be done in a specific period of time. Yet many learners fail the creative writing activity in the systemic test. There is concern about creative writing, as many learners struggle to write rich, expressive, and thought provoking, creative writing texts independently. Research suggests that many learners struggle with creative writing due to creative writing being a very expressive form of communication in</p>

1.2.7	Year of completion	2016
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2 DETAILS OF THE STUDY

2.1 Details of the degree or project		
2.1.1	Name of the institution	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
2.1.2	Degree / Qualification registered for	M Ed
2.1.3	Faculty and Discipline / Area of study	Education
2.1.4	Name of Supervisor / Promoter / Project leader	Dr A. Steenkamp & Dr C. Thornhill
2.1.5	Telephone number of Supervisor / Promoter	021-6801512
2.1.6	E-mail address of Supervisor / Promoter	SteenkampA@cput.ac.za ThornhillC@cput.ac.za

2.1.7	Title of the study
Self-regulated strategies in writing engagement in Intermediate Phase learners	

2.1.8	What is the research question, aim and objectives of the study
<p>How can self-regulated strategy development improve Intermediate Phase learners' creative writing skills?</p> <p>Aim This research study seeks to investigate self-regulated strategy development (SRSD), which can be used within the existing approaches and methodology of current teaching practices in the classroom, to help learners who struggle to write creative texts.</p> <p>The SRSD model helps learners to learn four basic self-regulation strategies: Goal-setting, Self-monitoring, Self-talk, and Self-reinforcement. With SRSD six stages are explicitly modelled for</p>	

learners on how to start their introduction, which questions to pose when writing an introduction, how to create an interesting middle and climax, and how to add emotion, creativity and interest. As the teacher moves through the six stages, *Developing background knowledge, Discussing it, Model it, Memorize it, Support it and Independent performance*, the learner learns how to self-regulate the writing process through self-instruction, goal-setting, self-monitoring and self-reinforcement.

2.1.9	Name (s) of education institutions (schools)
	Boundary Primary School

2.1.10	Research period in education institutions (Schools)	
	5 months	
2.1.11	Start date	11 January 2016
2.1.12	End date	30 June 2016

language writing.

Research suggests that this form of writing can be improved if learners are guided in the process on how to self-regulate their learning by being explicitly taught how to plan effectively, edit and review their work. This study will review current literature on self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) and aims to seek how this form of strategy development can help learners improve their writing skills and become more equipped in planning, editing, and presenting their creative writing texts.

The research study will be conducted at one public school in the Western Cape, South Africa. Selected participants will be learners who struggle to write good creative writing texts within the Grade 6 English Home Language class. A qualitative approach will be used to collect data from interviews, observations and results from an intervention strategy which will require learners to engage in a variety of writing strategies from the SRSD model. The two theories which underpin this study are Feuerstein's Mediated Learning Experience (MLE) and Piaget's cognitive constructivism.

This study will be conducted in a case study format. An intervention strategy will be implemented. Findings will be deduced from how the participants performed in the pre-test of the intervention, implementation of the SRSD model and post-test. These tests will be measured against a rubric and will give the researcher the opportunity to reflect on the SRSD model and whether it helped the participants become better independent creative writers and which areas learners need to improve on.

3 Ethical considerations specific to the intended study/project

Provide explicit and concise answers to the following questions:

Sampling: How will you recruit participants? Is there any possibility that participants might feel coerced to take part and if so how can you manage this issue?

Participants for this study will involve approximately 5 Intermediate Phase teachers and 15 Grade 6 learners who will be recruited at a public school. The teachers will identify learners who struggle in creative writing in the classroom and these learners will be selected as participants for the study. The parents of the selected learners who will participate in the study will need to give permission for their children to participate in the research study. A letter of consent will be given to the parents and they need to sign the letter granting permission that their child can participate.

The Intermediate Phase teachers will be interviewed. Teachers will need to sign consent letters to grant permission that they will participate in the study.

Should participants feel coerced in any way they will be able to withdraw from the research study at any given time.

How will participants be made aware of what is involved in the research [prior to, during and after data collection]?

At the start of the study the Intermediate Phase teachers and Grade 6 learners will be made aware that the study is there to seek answers to help identify when learners struggle in creative writing, with what they struggle in writing and how they can help themselves become more equipped in creative writing by using the self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) model. During the

research study participants will be able to ask questions and after the research study the participants can view the research results .

How will you ensure that participants really do understand their rights?

Participants will need to sign a letter giving permission to be part of the study. In the permission letter the rights of the participants will be stated. The researcher will also verbally read and explain to each participant their rights. This will give participants the opportunity to question any information which is not clear.

How will you collect data?

Data will be collected from interviews, observation and from the pre-test, intervention and post-test

Attach your data collection instrument(s) to the end of this document.

Is there a risk of harm to participants, to the participants' community, to the researcher/s, to the research community or to the University? If so how will these risks be managed?

There are no risks involved to the participants, community, researcher and university.

What plans do you have for managing the confidentiality and anonymity of participants in this study?

All notes and documents will be in the possession of the researcher alone in a safe and secure file. Participants' identity will be confidential at all times in the research paper. No names will be revealed in the publishing of the research findings.

Are there any potential conflicts of interest for you in undertaking this study?

No

How will the findings be used on completion of the study?

The findings will be published in a thesis and a journal article, and will be shared with the teachers at the school.

Does this work raise any other ethical issues and if so, how will you manage these?

No other ethical issues are foreseen. Should any arise, they will be handled with sensitivity to ensure that the rights of the participants are not infringed on.

What training or experience do you bring to the project that will enable you to recognize and manage the potential ethical issues mentioned above?

I have attended the workshops presented by CPUT on ethical issues.

Teacher training. My training as a teacher will enable me to always put the needs of the participants first and to identify when a child is in discomfort or struggling.

4 Research Ethics Checklist

Ethical considerations:		Yes	No
4.1	Does the study involve participants who are unable to give informed consent? Examples include children, people with learning disabilities, or your own students. Animals?		x
4.2	Will the study require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the groups or individuals to be recruited? Examples include students at school, members of self-help groups, residents of nursing homes — anyone who is under the legal care of another.	x	

4.3	Will it be necessary for participants to participate in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time — for example, covert observation of people in non-public places?		X
4.4	Will the study with the research subject involve discussion of sensitive topics? Examples would include questions on sexual activity or drug use.		X
4.5	Will the study involve invasive, intrusive, or potentially harmful procedures of any kind (e.g. drugs, placebos or other substances to be administered to the study participants)?		X
4.6	Will the study involve prolonged or repetitive testing on sentient subjects?		X
4.7	Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?		X
4.8	Does your research involve environmental studies which could be contentious or use materials or processes that could damage the environment? Particularly the outcome of your research?		X

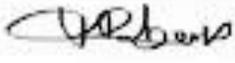
5 Attachment checklist

Please Tick:

The following documents have to be included at the end of this document:

Attachment		✓
5.1 Consent form	✓	
5.2 Data collection instrument(s)	✓	
5.3 Other relevant documentation (Please specify)	Attachment of abstract	

Signatures:

Researcher/Applicant:		Supervisor or Senior Investigator (if applicable):	
Date:	09 November 2015	Date:	09 November 2015

Please note that in signing this form, supervisors are indicating that they are satisfied that the ethical issues raised by this work have been adequately identified and that the proposal includes appropriate plans for their effective management.

Please insert attachments here:

Data collection attachments

APPENDIX K: EFEC clearance

Comments by Education Faculty Ethics Committee:

The Education Faculty Ethics Committee grants this application unconditional clearance valid for Two Years from the date of issue.		
Approved: X	Referred back:	Approved subject to adaptations:
Chairperson: 		Date: 23 November 2015
Approval Certificate/Reference: EFEC 6-11/2015		

APPENDIX L: FIELD NOTES

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

Interviewee: TEACHER A

Interviewer: Mrs Roberts

Relation to subject: Current Grade 6 2016 (English Teacher)

LOTL: English

Date of Interview: 24 FEB 2016

Scheduled Time: 15:00 (After school)

Actual time interview started: _____

<u>Main subject</u>		
<u>1. Reception</u>	<p><u>1.1 When was the learner in your class?</u> <i>"LP 1, 2 , 3, learner is currently in my class."</i></p> <p><u>1.2 Was the learner on the intervention program?</u> <i>Yes, all three were on the programme.</i></p>	<p><u>To ascertain if the learner was identified with academic barriers.</u></p>
<u>2. Identified barrier/ Intervention</u>	<p><u>2.1 When did you notice that there was something wrong with the learners writing skills</u> <i>I noticed in the first term that, that the LP 1, 2, 3 struggled to complete a writing task, they would start off with an essay and only explain parts in detail, for example the middle. It was bits and pieces. Really not organised, but you see he doesn't really focus on what he does.</i></p> <p><u>2.2 How did you intervene to improve his writing skills?</u> <i>"Improve comprehension and spelling skills"</i></p>	<p><u>To gain insight to what the learner struggled with and see if there is a common pattern.</u></p>
<u>3. Determining background knowledge</u>	<p><u>3.1 Could the learner identify elements to writing a good story create characters, write a setting etc?</u> <i>Yes they can, but it's not very interesting, it lacks effort, it's done in a rush way just to get done. There is not anything interesting to it really, I would have to say uhm, that if all of the three really put effort into their writing, from the start he can do it. If I should ask him about it then he is able to do explain.</i></p> <p><i>The three will mention the characters and maybe describe what the appearance of the character is, but it's</i></p>	

	<p><i>not very in depth. LP 2, 3 needs to practice more.</i></p> <p><u>3.2 Is the learner able to write a good story?</u> <i>Yes they can but like I said above it needs some practice.</i></p> <p><u>3.3 Did you start from the known to the unknown when you introduced a writing genre?</u></p> <p><i>Yes of course, but in grade 6 there are certain things which learners need to know already, you know what I mean, I mean he is suppose to be able to describe the characters, say where the story is taking place, you know what I mean. In grade 6 we will extend on this maybe we don't only speak of the physical features of the character , but also the personal traits of the character. That is what we need to move on.</i></p>		
<p><u>4. Planning of writing piece.</u></p> <p><u>5. Assess the learner's Behaviour</u></p>	<p><u>4.1 Could the learner plan his own writing process? (Example create mind maps, follow instructions to a writing frame)</u></p> <p><i>At three LPs planning is very minimum, they do not put all their effort in. I'll give an example yesterday they had to plan a letter for me, but the letter format is something which they have done in grade 4. But even though I revised the letter format, they then had to write the body, and explain in detail about what they plan to do for the 50th anniversary of the school. LP 3 and 5, 6, 7 were able to complete the format and</i></p>		

8.1 Could the learner follow instructions after the teacher has explained a writing process?

Many times they are not able to follow instruction, they still somehow forget what to write or how to structure their writing pieces, LP 7 and 8 will start of somehow start off good but forgets or does the complete opposite.

Are the learners able to follow when the teacher models /explain work on the board?

The three learners will show some potential when you explain the work, but when they do it on their own they are not able to.

9.1 Could the learner plan, compose and revise a writing piece in the stipulated time period allocated by the teacher.

No not all the time, mostly hands in incomplete work.

9.2 What do you perceive to be the problem with the learner's execution of a writing task?

They lack focus and concentration but I would say mostly they lack the excitement oruhm the enthusiasm to do it., but they can do it they just do not put in the effort, because the moment you stand behind them they will do it, and get the work done, but when they work on their own they do not get it done.

9.3 How would you explain was the quality of the learners writing?

It is poor at times no real substance to it really, very basic, simple, not really that of a grade 6 learner yet.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

Interviewee: TEACHER B

Interviewer: Mrs Roberts

Relation to subject: Grade 5 2016 (English Teacher)

Language of class instruction: English LOTL

Date of Interview: 26 February 2016

Scheduled Time: 13:00 (After school- Friday)

Actual time interview started: _____

<p><u>1. Reception</u></p>	<p><u>1.1 When was the learner in your class?</u> The learners were in my class last year.</p> <p><u>1.2 Was the learner on the intervention program?</u> Yes, all three LPs were on the intervention programme at school in grade 5.</p>	<p><u>To ascertain if the learner was identified with academic barriers.</u></p>	
<p><u>2. Identified barrier/ Intervention</u></p>	<p><u>2.1 When did you notice that there was something wrong with the learners writing skills</u> I noticed in the second term that, that the learners struggles to complete a writing task and they did not complete their baseline tests.</p> <p><u>2.1 A- Was this not picked up in Term 1 and was it all three LPs?</u> I was not here for three weeks beginning of the year and all three LPs struggled.</p> <p><u>2.2 How did you intervene to improve the learners writing skills?</u> “I mostly focus on spelling and grammar conventions, as this encourage them to read properly. I will then focus on reading and comprehension strategies.”</p>	<p><u>To gain insight to what the learner struggled with and see if there is a common pattern.</u></p>	
<p><u>3. Determining background knowledge</u></p>	<p><u>3.1 Could the learner identify elements to writing a good story create characters, write a setting etc?</u> “None of them are able to do it. Most of the learners struggle to create a character, by describing the appearance, such as size, age, the most they do is give the character a name. They can’t describe the setting.”</p> <p><u>3.2 Is the learner able to write a good story?</u> “ All three LPs can, but then will need to practice very hard.”</p>		

<p><u>7. Revising(editing)</u></p> <p><u>8. Ability to follow what the teacher Models</u></p> <p><u>9. Execution of task</u></p>	<p>“No, LP 9, 10, 11 never checked for any errors. I don’t think that they even read through their work as they just want to finish their work”</p> <p><u>8.1 Could the learner follow instructions after the teacher has explained a writing process?</u></p> <p>“Sometimes they could but most of the times no. LP 9, 10 somehow start off ok, but does not follow through.” “LP 11 would do the bare minimum and struggled to keep up and follow instructions.”</p> <p><u>9.1 Could the learner plan, compose and revise a writing piece in the stipulated time period allocated by the teacher.</u></p> <p>“None of the LPs could revise their own work as they did not know what to look for. They do not have the ability to correct their own mistakes. Many are too lazy to use a dictionary to look up the correct spelling of a word.”</p> <p><u>9.2 What do you perceive to be the problem with the learner’s execution of a writing task?</u></p> <p>“LP 14 would try to complete the writing task , but it would be very minimum effort. The other three LPs , LP 12, 13, 14 would write neat at the start of their writing piece, but umm, as the tim,e goes on the handwriting would become sloppy as they start to lose interest.”</p> <p><u>9.3 How would you explain was the quality of the learners writing?</u></p> <p>“ They would write very basic sentences. “LP 9, 10, 11 would</p>	
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	sometimes not bother to complete the work.”		
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INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

Interviewee: Teacher C

Interviewer: Mrs Roberts

Relation to subject: PREVIOUS Grade 4 class teacher (all learning areas)

LOTL: English

Date of Interview: 26 February 2016

Scheduled Time: 14: 30 (After school- Friday)

Actual time interview started: _____

<u>Main subject</u>	<u>Probing Questions</u>	<u>Reasons for the question</u>
<p><u>Interviewer:</u></p> <p><u>Teacher:</u></p> <p><u>Interviewer</u></p> <p><u>Teacher</u></p> <p><u>1. Reception</u></p>	<p>“Good afternoon [REDACTED], thank you for taking the time now to sit with me , I know it’s raining and cold, but I’m sure I wont take too much of your time. No miss its umh fine, no its really fine at least we don’t have any tasks to prep yet.”</p> <p>Knock on the door, caretaker wanting to know how long we will stay after school</p> <p>“Ok no we won’t be long, So miss I will ask you a few questions and I want you to feel settled and be assured that any of the questions is no reflection on you but just to find out how LP has worked in your class. Everything you say is therefore confidential. Ok so let’s get started. I will just remind you that I will record every word so that at the end when I scribe this interview I write everything down word for word, ok , so that I don’t add my own words in this mix. ok. I’ll tirn the recorder around so that the flashing light is not a distraction.</p> <p>No it’s fine as long as my picture is not taken, my hair is not right.”(interviewee laughing)</p> <p><u>1.1 When was the learner in your class?</u> “LP 15, 16, 17 was in my class in grade 4 in 2014.”</p> <p><u>1.2 Was the learner on the intervention program?</u></p>	<p><u>To ascertain if the learner was identified with academic barriers.</u></p>

	<p>"Ja, when I uhm got them in Grade 4 they were all on the intervention programme from his previous teacher. Ja, all three were very weak. I also noticed that in the first term that they did not do so well. All three LPs struggled and I could see , I could see that they were struggling to get their work done. It's bits and pieces here and there."</p>		
<p><u>2. Identified barrier/ Intervention</u></p> <p><u>Interviewer</u></p> <p><u>Teacher</u></p>	<p><u>2.1 When did you notice that there was something wrong with the learners writing skills</u></p> <p>"Like I said I noticed from the first term, yes yes just after the sports in February that I discovered that they are struggling to complete their work in the class.</p> <p>And how was their writing?</p> <p>Very poor writing skills, sloppy handwriting, I mean it's bits and pieces. (interviewee signs and starts) mmm ja , for example start a sentence , you can see that it is one idea, but then the next sentence is different. They wrote very basic, what do we call it , umh simple sentences. No real oomph to it. I could see it was just to get done. No thinking really more or less just to get done."</p> <p><u>2.2 How did you intervene to improve his writing skills?</u></p> <p>"Well basically I did spelling with them , because all three struggle with spelling. I did story writing where I would</p>		

	<p>give them a story writing practice and then they would need to complete the story. We never really sat in the class and went through story writing step by step when we did intervention, there was not really any time. That would be done in our class lessons as a whole class. I would do comprehensions to help them get an understanding of how to write a story or text."</p>		
<p><u>3.Determining background knowledge</u></p>	<p><u>3.1 Could the learner identify elements to writing a good story (create characters, write a setting etc ?</u></p> <p>"They could write, or let me say he would write about a character or something umhJa, but they would mention the name of the character or characters but they wouldn't elaborate about the character. It was very very basic. Like a grade 3 learner would write. No real interest really, and then you would catch LP 14 busy playing again or looking around."</p> <p><u>3.2 Was the learner able to write a good story with an interesting plot and use of humour or interesting plot?Does he show effort in making it interesting?</u></p> <p>"No not really, it was just sentences thrown together, as if they lost interest, just to get done more or less. Lack of motivation really. and you can see it in the first draft. Ja, LP 15 and LP 16 can write but somehow loses interest. They</p>		

	<p>will then start fidgeting again and then realise they need to get done and rush through it. No, no real effort really. Even if you call them up and ask them to correct some of their mistakes or add more detail to their story, they will look at you with a blank stare. They will nod but when the learner sits down you realise they still didn't do as you told them. Umh, wait let me think of a word, they would just chuck the idea away. It's all just to get done, and they would repeat the same sentences over and over again. Ja ,very flimsy."</p> <p><u>3.3Did you start from the known to the unknown when you introduced a writing genre?</u></p> <p>"Ja I would revisit/ revise writing genres from the previous grade because it then tells me what the child learner knows."</p> <p><u>3.4 Could the learner extract information from his prior knowledge and apply it.</u></p> <p>"Ja, they could but showed no real effort to apply what or even try to remember to write it that way, I mean they know how to write an essay and paragraphs they will tell you it , but does not apply it. They just don't show any interest at times, unless you stand constantly behind them or he sits at your table."</p>		

	<p><u>8.1 Could the learner follow instructions after the teacher has explained a writing process?</u></p> <p>“Yes they have the ability to follow the instructions, yet they do not apply it. Like I said they will tell you what needs to be done when you ask them, LP 16 is very well at expressing ideas verbally. They understand the task, but they struggle to follow through. They do not stick to their plan.”</p> <p><u>9.1 Could the learner plan, compose and revise a writing piece in the stipulated time period allocated by the teacher.</u></p> <p>“No never get done. Incomplete planning, introduction, or something would not be completed.”</p> <p><u>9.2 What do you perceive to be the problem with the learner’s execution of a writing task?</u></p> <p>“Not focused and not committed to completing a writing task, LP 17 will complete a comprehension task or maths but I think the long written pieces tires all three LPs at times, it’s too daunting. No creative thinking is applied. Ja I would say that they give up easily.”</p> <p><u>9.3 How would you explain was the quality of the learners writing?</u></p> <p>“No real creative thinking put to it, just to(teacher thinking) to get done No extra effort given. I would say lack of effort at times,</p>		
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	Certain times they would write , but certain times he would do nothing." <u>End of interview, Interviewer thanks the teacher.</u>		
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