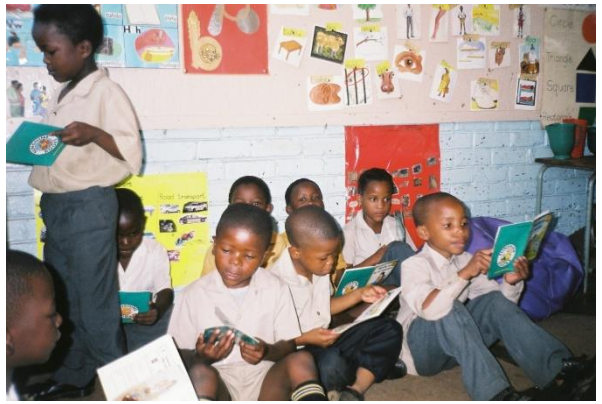

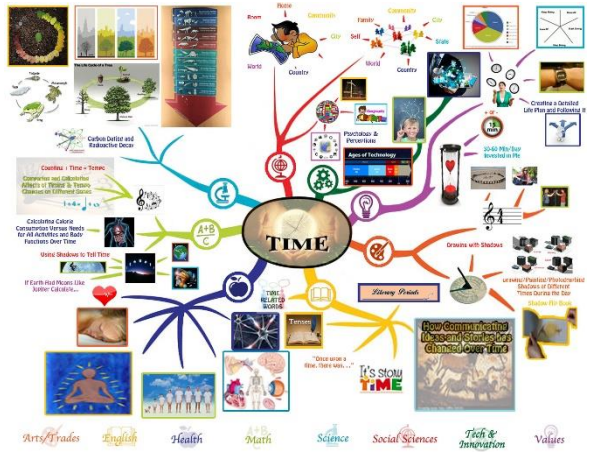

REFLECTIONS ON THE USE OF LESSON PLANS TO IMPLEMENT CAPS: SUCCESSES AND GAPS

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DBE August 2017

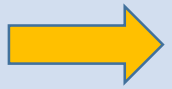
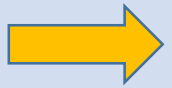
THE PURPOSE OF FOUNDATION PHASE

Launching children on **successful** reading trajectories in Grade R and Foundation Phase is a priority.

In schooling systems around the world, by the end of Grade 3 children are expected to be able to **read fluently, with meaning** and **enjoyment**.

It's important to get it right from the start. A faltering initial reading trajectory creates cracks in literacy development which "in time become gaps, and finally...chasms in learning" (Johnson, 2012).

This assumes that teachers know what reading success looks like in the Foundation Phase.

COMMON CLASSROOM PRACTICES RESEARCH IN SOUTH AFRICA 2004-2015		OUTCOMES
Whole class/collective teaching (little or no differentiated teaching) Whole class chorusing Little attention to meaning Little or no attention to higher order skills (focus on the literal) Little or no explicit instruction Little and ineffective feedback Low expectations, easy tasks Teaching reading from the blackboard Teacher reads a line and learners repeat it Very little time spent on reading No/little reading homework given Print poor classrooms Few books in classrooms Slow pace of teaching Poor time management in classrooms/teaching time wasted Minimal and ineffective assessment Very little writing done in classrooms	   	Children in primary school who can hardly read and write Children who struggle with higher order thinking Passive, dependent learners An education system producing mainly semi-literate and semi-numerate children;

TIME MATTERS

Research shows that a lot of instructional time is wasted in schools (De Stefano et al. 2010)

Studies in developing countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia show a strong correlation between amount of **engaged instructional time** and the average **reading fluency** of students.

Engaged instructional time is too low to overcome students' disadvantages, especially in the early grades.

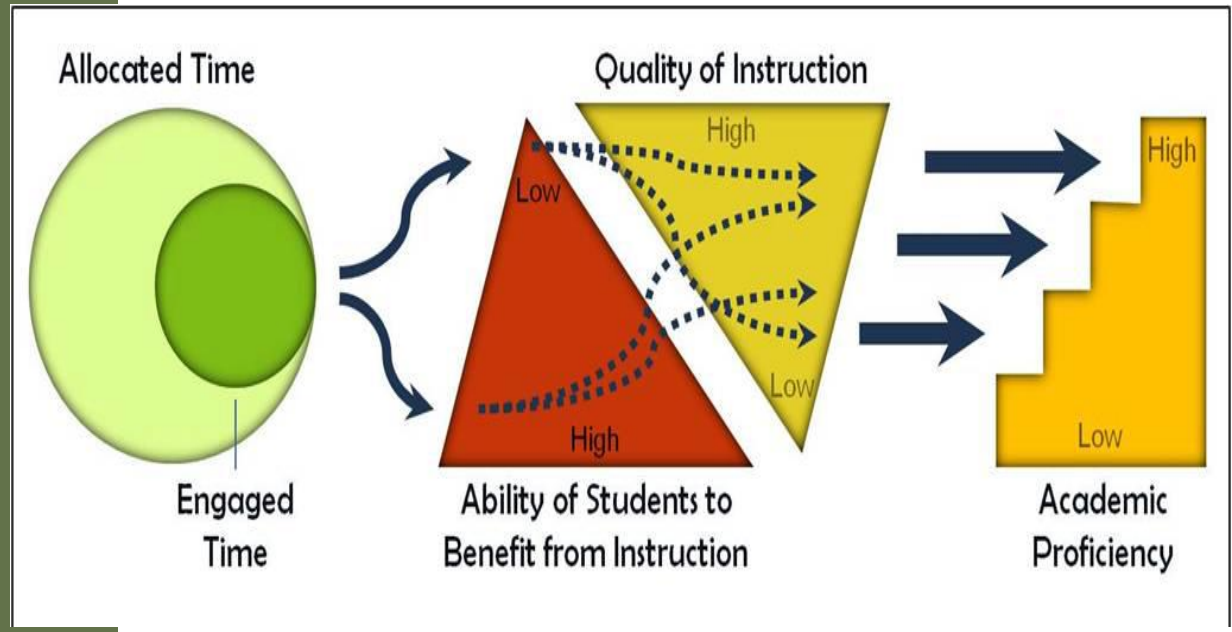
Little time spent engaging in or practising reading in class – ranging from **4-6% of class time** (Gove & Cvelich 2010)

More effective training and support needed for unskilled or poorly trained teachers.

Skills associated with good teaching are not necessarily obtained through certification in education systems in developing countries

De Stefano et al. (2012)

- Time on task matters in the classroom
- Engaged time increases academic learning time
- Amount of time that individuals need to reach a particular level is also a function of a student's starting point
- Effective teachers provide structured lessons, reinforce correct work, provide practice time, keep learners on track, maintain a brisk pace



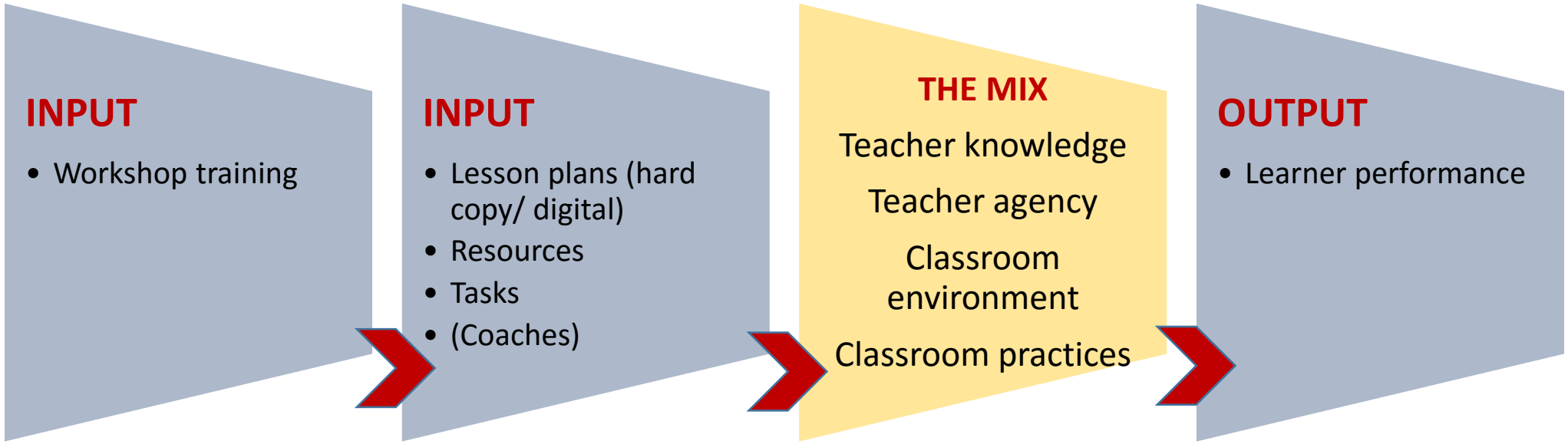
CAPS FOR FOUNDATION PHASE

The CAPS documents are very comprehensive and specify in quite a lot of detail what should be taught and how.

- **Time allocation** for Languages (HL and FAL) are set out.
- Different **Language skills** are identified for FP, viz. *Listening and speaking*, *Reading and Phonics, Writing and handwriting*. *Thinking and reasoning* and *Language structure and use* are integrated into the four language skills in FP. Time allocations clearly specified per grade per week for each of the four terms.
- CAPS refers to the **five main components of reading** identified by the NRP, viz. phonological awareness, word recognition (sight words and phonics), comprehension, vocabulary and fluency. All except vocabulary are briefly discussed.
- Different **types of comprehension questions** are identified and teachers encouraged to ask a range of question types.
- CAPS emphasises four different **reading methods** to be adopted in FP (Shared Reading, Group Guided Reading, Paired Reading and Independent Reading.
- CAPS specifies **core and support materials**, and states what materials teachers should have.
- CAPS specifies the different types and **genres of text** that should be dealt with across the grades.
- The recommended **length of texts** for English FAL across the grades is given (the recommended length of texts is questionable and seem too short).
- **Assessment codes** ranging from 1 (Not achieved) to 7 (Outstanding) and percentages are given for reading and reporting in the IP (but these are not conventional reading measures used to assess reading.
- In the English FAL CAPS, **vocabulary ranges** are suggested for Grade 1 (700-1,000 words), Grade 2 (1,000-2,000) and Grade 3 (1,500-2,500) (p22). A list of the most common 300 hundred words in English is given on pp87-89.

THE WHAT AND WHY OF LESSON PLANS

- To maximise efficient use of teaching/learning time (engaged time)
- To increase pace of teaching/learning
- To align teaching with the curriculum – to show teachers how to manage differentiated teaching (a form of role modelling)



WHAT MAKES A GOOD READING TEACHER?

Lesson plans?

What do they know (about reading)?

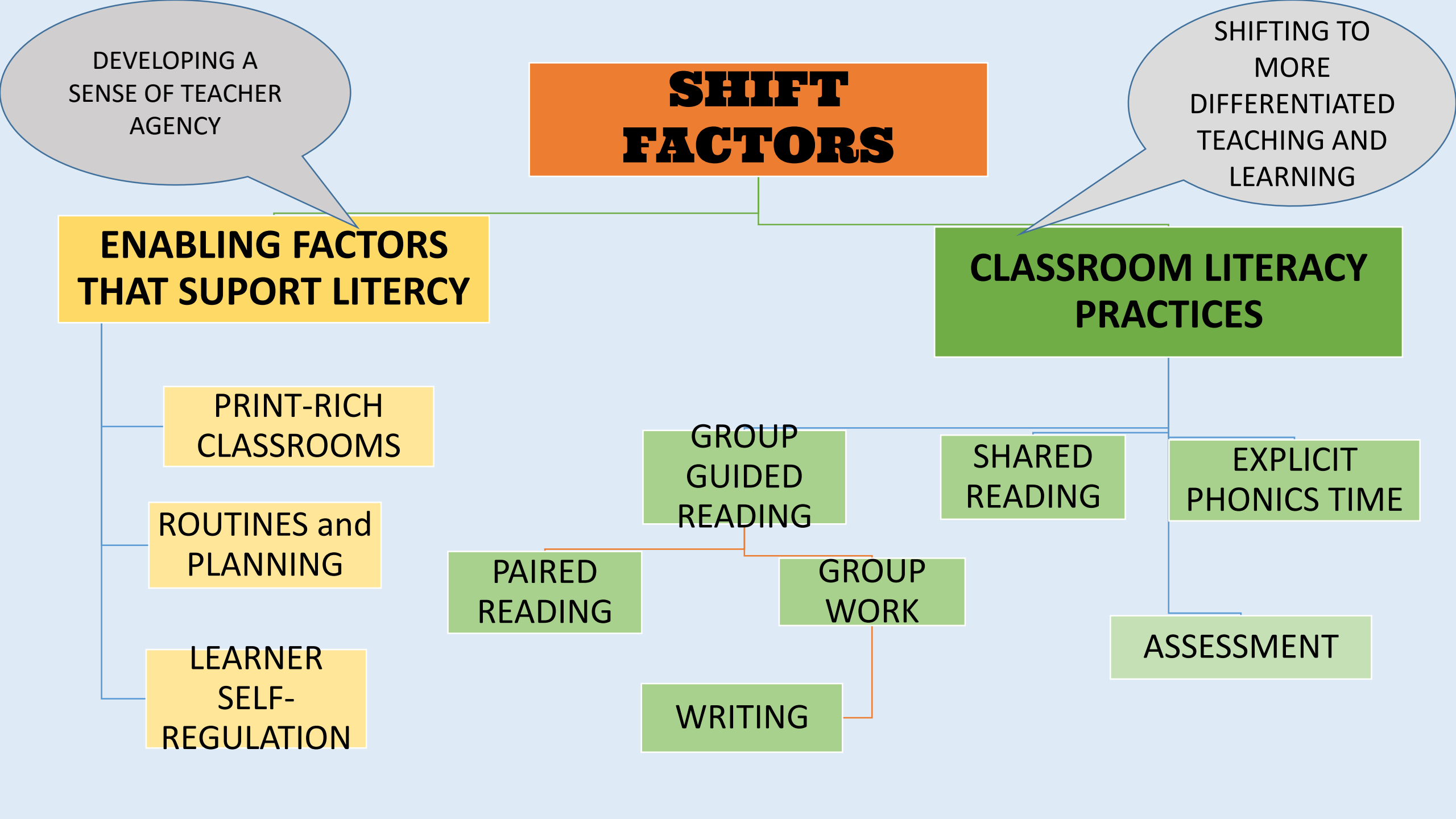
(CONTENT K)

What do they do?

(PEDAGOGIC & CURRICULUM K)

What are their values and attitudes?

(PROFESSIONAL K?)


DEVELOPING A SENSE OF TEACHER AGENCY
SHIFT FACTORS
SHIFTING TO MORE DIFFERENTIATED TEACHING AND LEARNING
ENABLING FACTORS THAT SUPORT LITERCY
CLASSROOM LITERACY PRACTICES
PRINT-RICH CLASSROOMS
ROUTINES and PLANNING
LEARNER SELF-REGULATION
GROUP GUIDED READING
PAIRED READING
GROUP WORK
WRITING
SHARED READING
EXPLICIT PHONICS TIME
ASSESSMENT

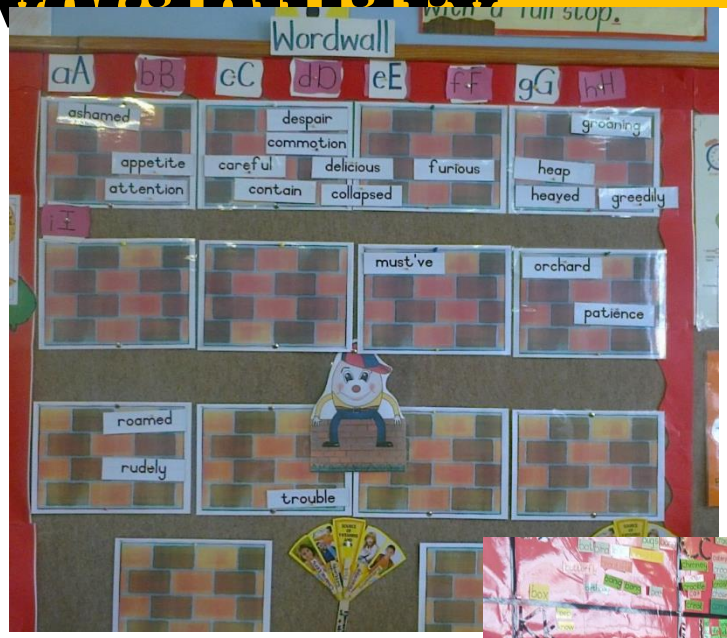
READING CORNERS –
opportunities to read, promote a value system

THEME TABLES –

build bilingual vocabulary, stimulate interest, make connections, promote thinking and reasoning

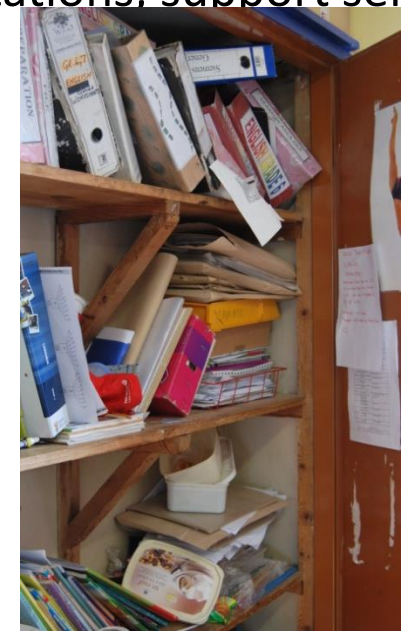
WORD WALLS –

promote vocabulary



PLANNING AND ORGANISATION –

provide structured learning environments for literacy and numeracy, enable learning, create expectations, support self-regulation



CLASSROOM ROUTINES -

provide boundaries and structure, support self-regulation, raise expectations, enable learning

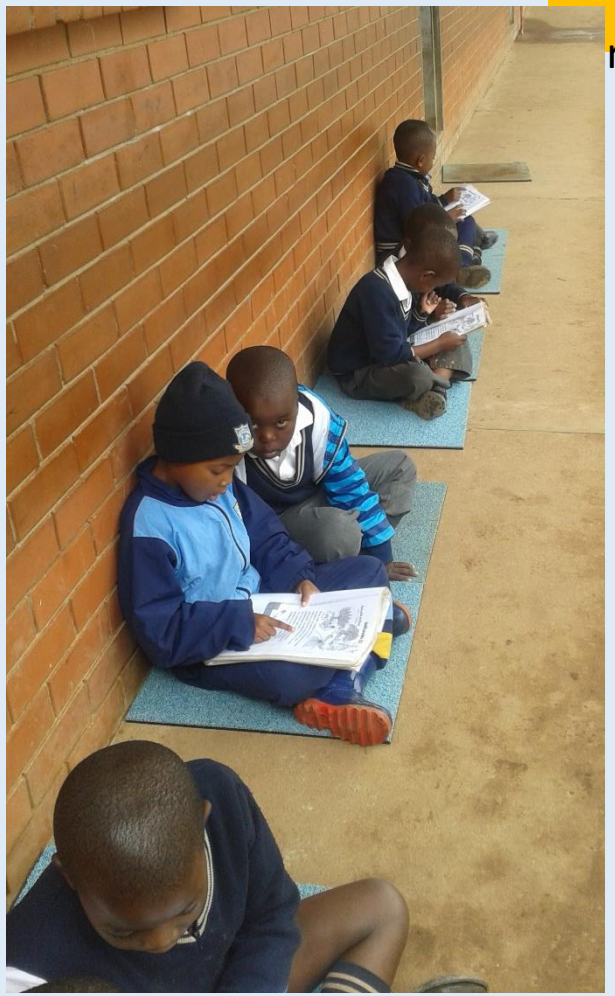
GROUP GUIDED READING –

identifying cracks, modelling good reading, providing practice

PAIRED READING

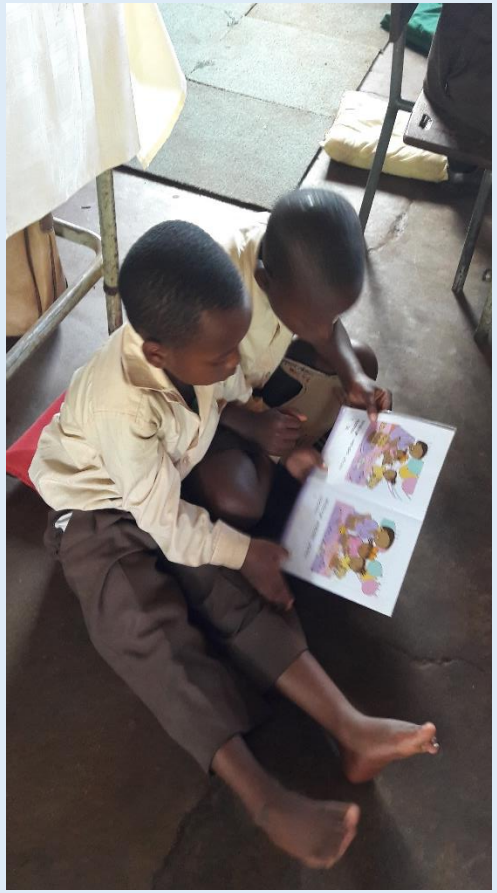
-

rovides practice opportunities, develops self regulation



WORKING GROUPS

- practice opportunities, self-regulation



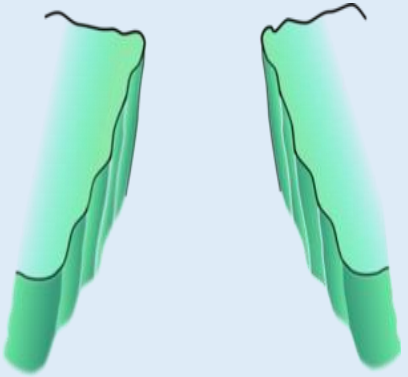
GETTING IT RIGHT FROM THE START

A faltering initial reading trajectory creates cracks in literacy development which "in time become gaps, and finally...chasms in learning" (Johnson, 2012).

We can only identify cracks and gaps if we know what reading success looks like

cracks

gaps



chasms

Can lesson plans help teachers know what reading success looks like?

MEDIOCRITY vs EXCELLENCE

If we don't know what success looks like, how can we tell if our learners are successful?

WHAT DOES DECODING SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

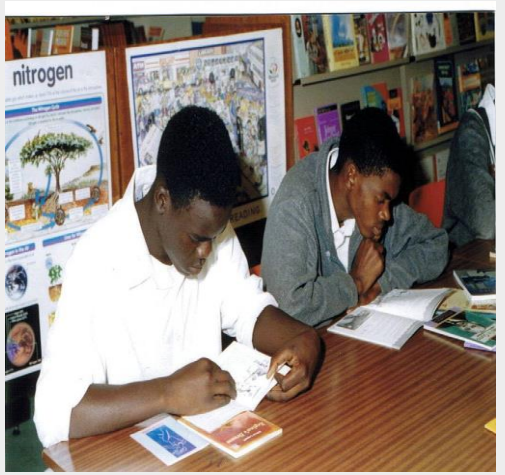
Dumile can sound out 19 letters correctly per minute.

- Is this A Good Thing? Does it matter?

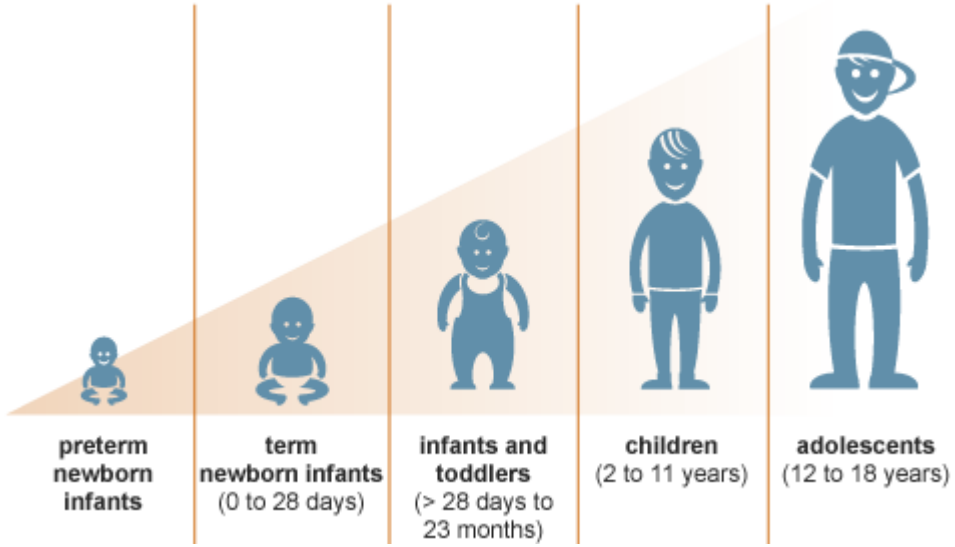
Sipho reads at 28 words correct per minute (wcpm) in Zulu.

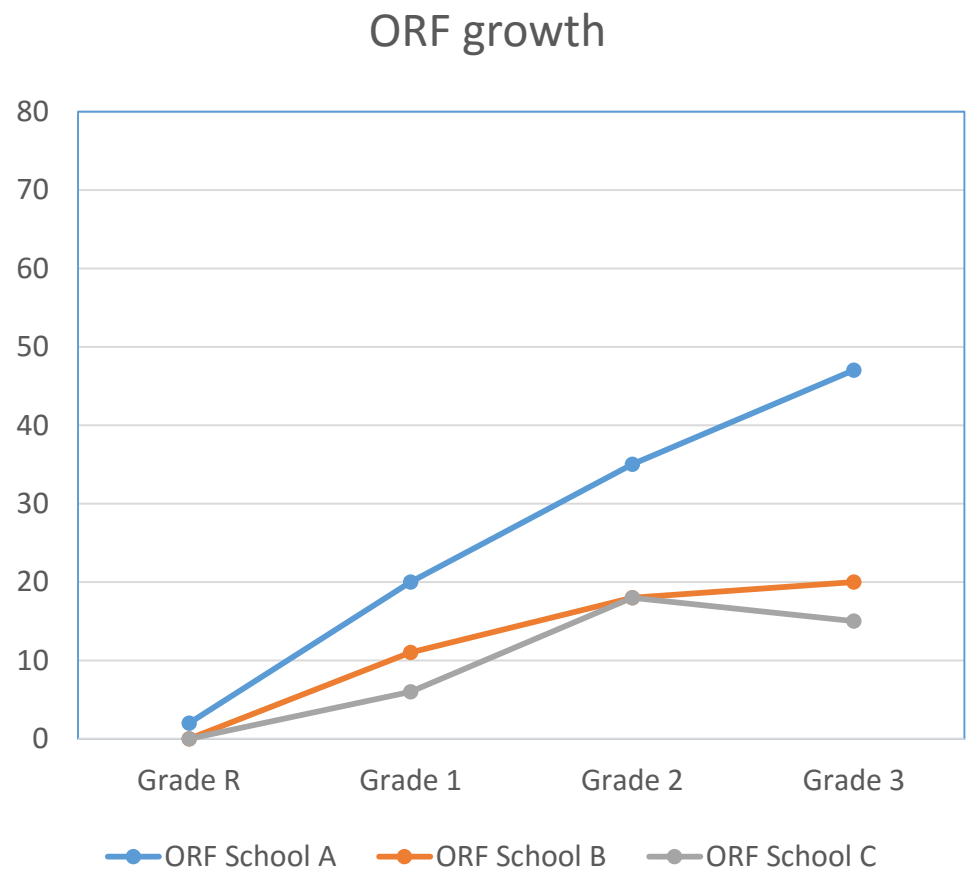
- Is this A Good Thing? Does it matter?

Speed matters in perceptual processing – milliseconds count



NORMAL GROWTH, BACKSLIDING AND PLATEAU EFFECTS – BEGING THE BATON

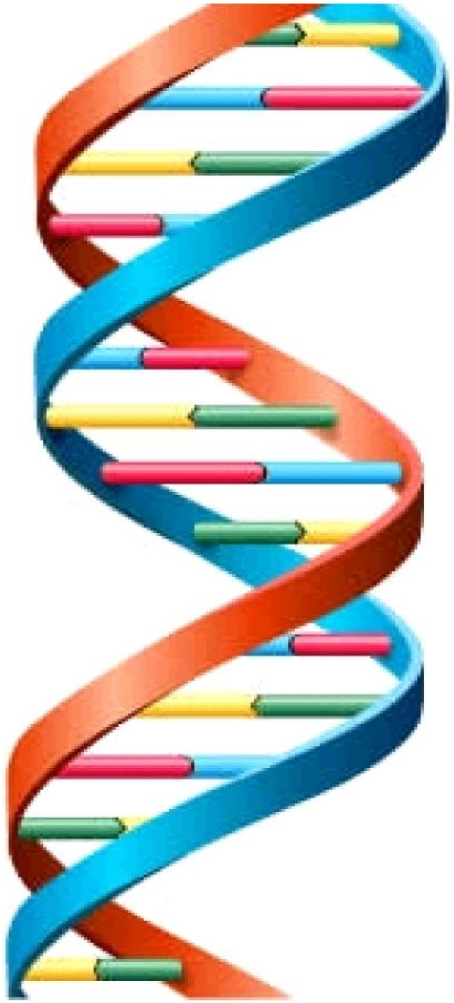




DECODING PERFORMANCE - what could success look like?

	Grade 1		Grade 2		Grade 3	
	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016
Letter sounds (sounds correct per minute) min – max	9	19 (0-70)	12	36 (0-77)	14	36 (0-95)
ORF (words correct per minute) min – max	10	11 (0-36)	24	31 (0-58)	36	36 (0-76)

Time
More time devoted to instruction in the elements of reading
Teaching
Improve teacher knowledge of and skill in teaching reading
At a minimum, intervene to assure more time for reading instruction and that teachers understand and know how to teach reading.
Materials
Assure use of rich set of materials to support learning to read
Assessment
Introduce assessments to identify reading levels and to track progress
Language
Interventions supporting L1 to L2 transition
Ongoing Professional Development and Support



TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

Change happens slowly and unevenly

Teachers/schools respond differentially

Different components of reading are taken up differentially

Two steps forward, two steps sideways and one step backwards (backsliding and plateau effects are common)

The entire FP should ideally be involved (Grade R-3)

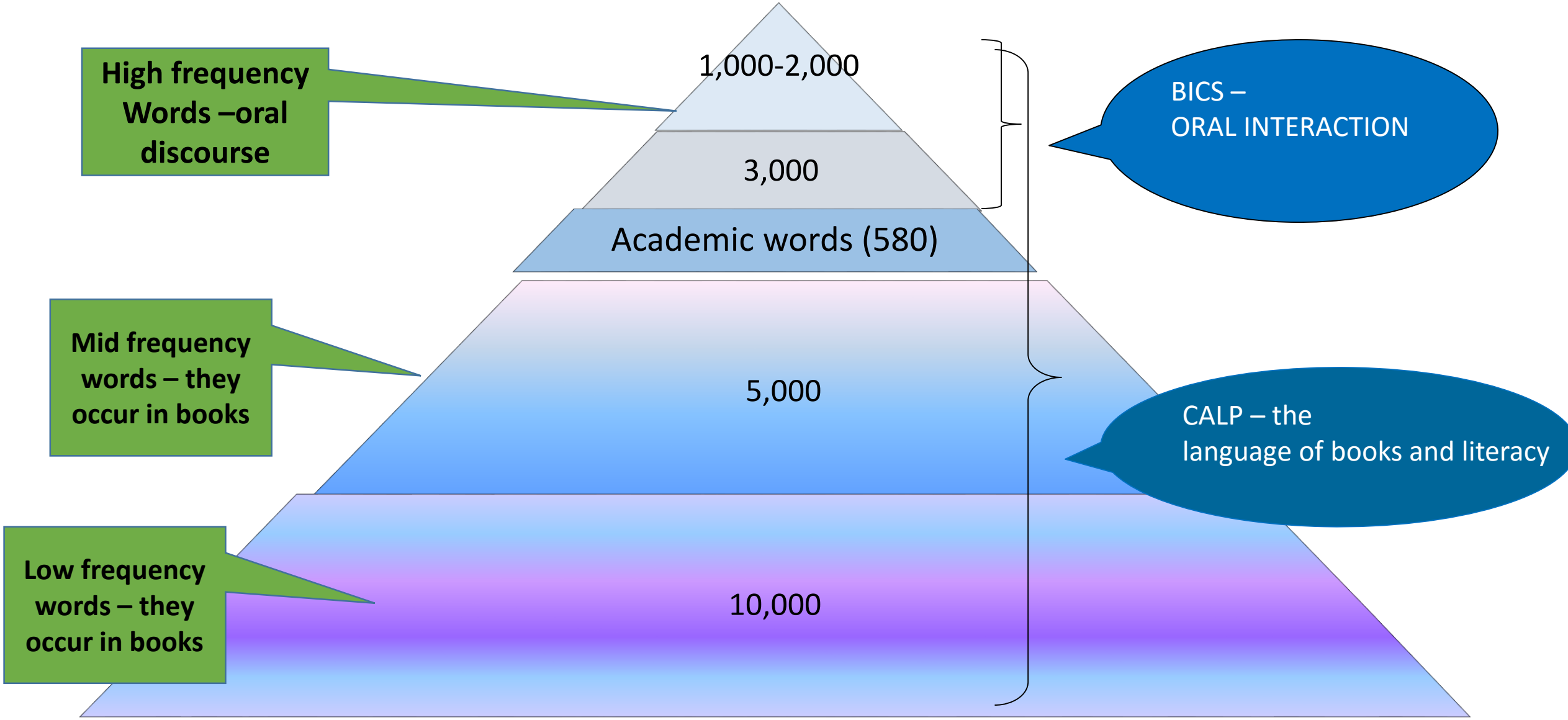
HOD training is very important – concurrently with the phase training

Start with components of reading that can give quick wins (e.g. changing the classroom)

Some topics should only be tackled later (assessment and supporting struggling readers)

Revisit/reteach topics and make time for consolidation

VOCABULARY WORD LEVELS



OVERALL PERFORMANCE 2015-2017

	2015	2017	GAINS 2015-2017
Level 1 (2,000 frequency)	81	85	+4
Level 2 (3,000 frequency)	55	64	+9
Level 3 (5,000 frequency)	34	44	+10
Level 4 (academic words)	47	52.3	+5.3
Level 5 (10,000 frequency)	4	7.4	+3.4
Total	44	50.6	+6.6

SCHOOL (FP) VOCABULARY PERFORMANCE

	2015	2017	Gains
Top school in vocabulary Performance:	48.2%	57.5%	9.2%
School showing greatest vocab improvement:	37.4%	52.03%	14.6%
Lowest performing school:	37%	43%	
Teacher SM	30%	55%	25%