

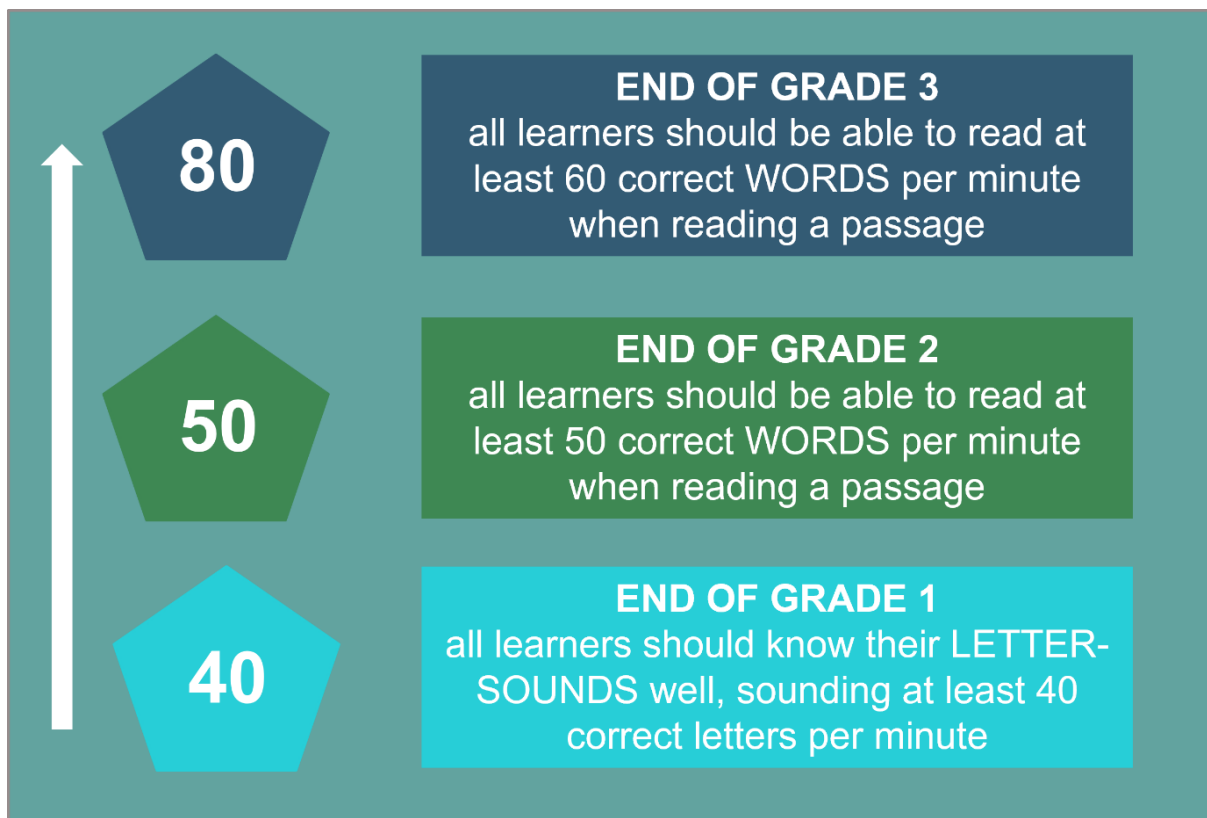
# AFRIKAANS READING BENCHMARKS

## LEARNING BRIEF

November 2022

South Africa has 11 official languages that differ in terms of structure and complexity. While there are benchmarking elements in all languages embedded in the curriculum, there has historically not been a comprehensive or systematic benchmarking process. Although the Afrikaans language has enjoyed a significant investment historically, engagement with the Afrikaans language board shows that there is a lack of large-scale Afrikaans assessments and data collection efforts that aim to foster learning and developing tools that incorporate emergent literacy, decoding and writing in line with current standards and curriculum expectations.





### What are reading benchmarks?



### How were the benchmarks determined?

Learners assessments were developed in a collaboration between education technocrats, reading experts, Afrikaans linguists and quantitative experts. This collaboration was designed to ensure both technical and practical usefulness. Learners were assessed with adapted early-grade reading assessments specifically designed to enable the setting of reading benchmarks. These were administered on a one-to-one basis with written assessments administered by groups in an exam-type setting. The learner assessments were administered electronically to ensure maximum validity, with clear protocols. Data were collected from 100 schools in 2022 in the Western Cape.

## How can benchmarks be used?

System levels	Clarifying goals and expectations for reading	Clarity & alignment for the effective assessment of reading	Clarifying intervention priorities
<p><b>NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION</b></p> 	<p>Benchmarks articulate and communicate an education system's definition of reading proficiency. This promotes alignment of goals across the system with Goal 1 of the DBE Action Plan to 2030.</p>	<p>With a shared understanding of expectations for reading proficiency, the reading assessment process is unified across the system.</p>	<p>With a shared understanding of the size and extent of reading gaps across the system, this paves the way for a constructive intervention response.</p>
<p><b>SCHOOL</b></p> 	<p>Benchmarks establish standards and targets that school leaders can aim towards and are aligned with national goals for reading proficiency.</p>	<p>Standardises assessment practices across and within schools and ensures that school level assessment is aligned with informing tracking against national goals for reading proficiency.</p>	<p>Clarifies the extent of remedial support required in specific schools and required budget allocations. Focuses intervention responses on the improved teaching of reading and the provision of reading support materials.</p>
<p><b>CLASSROOM</b></p> 	<p>Benchmarks establish standards and targets that teachers and students can aim towards.</p>	<p>Teachers can determine how many children in their class are on track with their reading.</p>	<p>Target remedial programmes at learners at risk of not being able to read.</p>
<p><b>HOUSEHOLDS</b></p> 	<p>Benchmarks establish standards for parents against which to assess their children's reading proficiency.</p>	<p>When assessment is linked to standards, and communicated clearly in school reports, this provides meaningful information to parents on how well children read. They can engage in their child's journey to reading proficiency.</p>	<p>Parents and communities are empowered to identify if schools are providing necessary opportunities for their children to learn to read and to partner in remedial programmes.</p>

