

GLOBAL BOOK ALLIANCE



Trainer's Guide

Module 2: Title Development

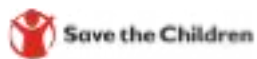


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The GBA strives to ensure that books are available, appropriate, affordable, and accessible to all, recognizing that high-quality reading materials are critical to ensuring that all children can learn to read and read to learn in languages they understand.

The GBA training modules aim to provide guidance to help various stakeholders improve book supply chains in their contexts in order to make this vision a reality.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

BSC	book supply chain
CC	Creative Commons
EGR	early grade reading
ERM	essential reading material
GBA	Global Book Alliance
GDL	Global Digital Library
LMIC	lower and middle-income countries
MoE	Ministry of Education
NGO	nongovernmental organization
PDF	portable document format
TLM	teaching and learning materials

Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Acquisitions editor:	An acquisitions editor finds and signs an author or selects a manuscript for publication.
Copyeditor:	A copyeditor reads the manuscript carefully for grammar and style.
Copyright:	A legal right granting the creator of an original work exclusive rights to determine whether, and under what conditions, an original work may be used by others.
Curriculum:	The skills and knowledge that students must learn.
Decodable readers:	Reading materials in which all words are consistent with the letters and corresponding phonemes that the reader has been taught. These readers are sequenced in accordance with the order in which letters are taught in the school curriculum and progressively increase in difficulty.
Essential reading materials:	Decodable, leveled, and supplementary readers are collectively described as essential readers. All are required elements for reading acquisition, but each plays a different role.
Graphic designer:	A graphic designer works in a program like Adobe InDesign to create the overall look and flow of a book, choosing fonts, colors, illustration styles, etc.
Illustrator:	The illustrator creates the drawings for a book.
Leveled readers:	A set of books organized by level of difficulty based on the complexity of the words, sentences, content, and other factors.
Literacy:	The ability to use printed and written material in a wide variety of contexts to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, and compute (UNESCO, 2017). Literacy includes braille.
Open license:	Grants permission, under a set of conditions, to access, re-use and redistribute a work with few or no restrictions.
Page layout:	The process of creating the pages, in a program like InDesign.
Pedagogical specifications:	A document that defines the pedagogical content of a textbook or other teaching and learning material (TLM).
Phonics:	Phonics is how the symbols of letters match to sounds. Understanding the letter-sound relationship helps children hear, identify and use different sounds that distinguish one word from another. For children who are deaf, phonics is only one of many skills used to learn to read and will need more intentional opportunities to develop language skills. Teaching phonic skills will require differentiation for each child who is deaf.
Printer:	A commercial or industrial enterprise engaged in manufacturing multiple copies of a publisher's book or other product; a device that reproduces on paper text and images from an electronic source.
Proofreader:	A proofreader reads the pages closely for mistakes.
Prototype:	A full model of one unit or lesson.
Publisher:	A person or firm that assumes the responsibilities and risks in contracting authors, designers, illustrators and others in the creation, design, editing and revision, manufacturing, marketing, and distribution of a printed or digital product.
Scope and Sequence:	The order of introduction of skills, letters, syllable, words, etc. for a particular language.

Term	Definition
Storyboard:	A sketch of all the pages in the book, with a depiction of how the text and illustrations will flow.
Substantive editor:	A substantive editor (or developmental editor) works closely with the writer to fine-tune the manuscript, editing it for overall structure and content.
Supplementary readers:	Materials used for reading practice; they may not be decodable or leveled, and they do not directly tie to the school curriculum.
Supply chain:	The entire network of entities, directly or indirectly interlinked and interdependent, serving the same consumer or customer. It is comprised of vendors that supply raw material, producers who convert the material into products, warehouses that store, distribution centers that deliver to the retailers, and retailers who bring the product to the ultimate user.
Synthetic phonics:	A method of teaching reading in which sounds associated with particular letters are pronounced in isolation and blended together (synthesized).
Title development:	The process that begins once an author is selected or a manuscript chosen for publication, and continues through writing, editorial, graphic design, illustration and page layout.
Trim size:	The trim size refers to the size of the book, so named because of the cutting process to trim pages down to size.

List of Materials

SESSION	MATERIALS
1. Introductions and Training Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notecards 2. Flip charts and markers
2. Introduction to Title Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Handout 1: Manuscript of a Children’s Book 2. Post-it Notes 3. Flip charts and markers
3. Characteristics of High-Quality Books for Children	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Printed color copy of A Beautiful Day by Raeesah Vawda, Lindy Pelzl, and Elana Bregin from the Global Digital Library (https://digitallibrary.io/) 2. Copies of a book from the Global Digital Library
4. Identifying the Right Books for the Right Level	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Copies of books from Global Digital Library or leveled and decodable books written by local authors in local languages (if available) 2. Post-it notes and pens 3. Flip charts and markers
5. Principles of Children’s Book Design/Illustration Sourcing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Examples of storyboard and graphic design (available in PowerPoint Slides) 2. Examples of high-quality essential reading materials (locally published, from Global Digital Library, or other sources) 3. Examples of illustrations (available in PowerPoint Slides) 4. Post-it notes 5. Flip charts and markers
6. Project Management of a Book Project- from Project Description to Final PDFs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Handout 2: Prototype 2. Handout 3: Writing Guidelines 3. Handout 4: Template 4. Handout 5: Schedule 5. Post-it Notes 6. Flip charts and markers
7. Wrap up and Reflection on the Workshop	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Flip charts and markers 2. Handout 6: Evaluation Questionnaire

Introduction

The purpose of the book supply chain (BSC), as it pertains to textbooks and essential reading materials (ERM), is to ensure that every child has the critical tools she/he needs to learn to read. Reading and literacy play an important role in helping a child develop the skills needed for improved economic and health outcomes and for her/his own civic advocacy. It is important to give children access to books as well as time to engage in guided independent reading. Reading should include a variety of genres and levels of difficulty roughly matching each child's interests and abilities. Providing this kind of access has been directly tied to children gaining better vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension skills.¹

The BSC consists of several key functions that play essential roles in increasing children's literacy by ensuring sufficient access to appropriate reading materials (see graphic below). The primary components of the BSC are planning and forecasting, title development, publishing, printing, procurement and purchasing, distribution management, and active use. Each phase is executed by a variety of actors (government, private sector, and private citizens) who must collaborate to create a functional, cost-effective BSC.



The book industry is essential in ensuring that the “right books are made available at the right time to all children.”² A vibrant book publishing industry is key in making available quality, relevant, and appropriate early grade ERMs (decodable and leveled readers, as well as supplementary reading

¹ <http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/pdfs/Intro-From-Striving-To-Thriving.pdf?eml=TSO/eb/20170920//TW/ST/AD//&linkId=43071495>; Harvey, S. and Ward, A. 2017. From Striving to Thriving: How to Grow Confident, Capable Readers. New York: Scholastic

² Burns, M. S., Griffin, P., and Snow, C. E. (Eds.). 1999. Starting out right: A guide to promoting children's reading success. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

materials), and textbooks. The industry also has the responsibility to produce books that are available in multiple means of representation to be accessible to all learners, in all their diversity, with books available in print, braille, audio, and sign language storybook formats. If there are not enough of these materials available to children and these materials are not accessed and used effectively, learning will suffer.

Recent supply chain analyses (SCAs) conducted by the Global Book Alliance (GBA) in Zambia, Malawi, Nigeria, Cambodia, and Tanzania have found that there are very few supplementary readers and virtually no decodable or leveled readers in homes and schools. Those responsible for developing these types of books often lack the knowledge and capacity to do so or may lack the resources needed. This module focuses on title development, which refers to the creation of texts and books intended to support acquisition of reading skills in languages children use and understand.

The process of title development begins once an author has been selected (or in some cases, a complete manuscript has been chosen for publication) and continues until the final Portable Document Format (PDFs) of the book are sent to the printer. It is a process that calls upon the skills of pedagogical experts, writers, editors, graphic designers, illustrators, proofreaders, page layout specialists, and others. The function of title development for essential reading materials can be carried out by publishers, whether State or private, and as is often the case in lower and middle-income countries (LMIC), by donors and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), who step in to provide these materials where they do not exist.

The module contains activities to engage participants, to ensure that the topics covered are well understood, and to stimulate creative thinking among participants. References are also provided as footnotes on relevant pages to help participants deepen their knowledge on technicalities that could not be covered during the training.

This module explains the following:

1. The overall process of developing a children's book
2. The characteristics of high-quality books for children
3. How to identify books for children at the right level
4. The principles of good book design and illustrations
5. How a book project is managed

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Identify high-quality books for children
2. Understand the development process of a children's book

Notes on Using This Module

How to Use This Module

This module is for trainers to use as they prepare for and carry out the training. Trainers should review all the material provided in this module and the accompanying PowerPoint presentation (PPT). The PPT has been created from the content provided in this module, but it does not contain all of the content. Therefore, it is important that trainers read through the Trainers' Guide in full and master the content ahead of the training. The PPT can also be adapted and added to by trainers as they prepare to conduct the training.

Module Organization

Each session is broken down as follows:

- **Rationale:** Explains why the material in session is important. Trainers should read and internalize the rationale in order to present the content of the session well.
- **Objectives:** These should be presented briefly at the start of each session.
- **Time Breakdown:** This guides the trainer to ensure the training stays on time.
- **Materials:** Include all the materials needed to complete the session.
- **Preparation:** This highlights planning tasks that must be done by the trainer prior to conducting the training.
- **Procedure:** This section tells the trainer how to present the content and the activities that follow.
- **Content:** The content for each session is broken down and labeled throughout the session. The activities and the content make up the heart of the session.
- **Activities:** These are designed to make the training as participatory and interactive as possible. Trainers are encouraged to adapt these to fit the training context.

Participants

Training participants for this module, as with all modules in this series, will vary. However, the training is aimed at staff throughout the Ministry of Education (MoE), and others involved in the BSC, such as publishers, printers, procurement, and distribution specialists, etc. It is also relevant for those involved in training teachers and those responsible for developing strategies for working with parents and communities. The training is also aimed at United States Agency for International Development (USAID) education team staff and implementing partners and staff from other donors.









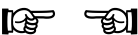

Sample Agenda

Session #	Session Name	Description	Time (mins.)
1	Introductions and Training Objectives	Paired introductions; slide presentation; sharing expectations	30
2	Introduction to Title Development	Peer sharing, slide presentation	35
3	Characteristics of High-Quality Books for Children	Read aloud activity, small group activity, slide presentation	40
4	Identifying the Right Books for the Right Level	Book review in pairs, group reflection activity, slide presentation	45
5	Principles of Children's Book Design/Illustration Sourcing	Small group work, paired activity, slide presentation	40
6	Project Management of a Book Project- from Project Description to Final PDFs	Small group work, slide presentation	60
7	Wrap Up and Reflection on the Workshop	Individual reflection and sharing, module evaluations	35

Session Time (Total): 4 Hours and 45 minutes

Legend

The following symbols are provided to assist trainers as they plan for and conduct each session in this module.

Icon	Description
	Rationale —each session has a rationale that provides the basis for the activities and links it to prior and subsequent sessions
	Objectives —action-oriented objectives are stated for the module as a whole and for <i>each</i> session
	Duration —time allocation for each session. Includes a <i>time breakdown</i> which divides the session into various components to help with timing during sessions
	Preparation —highlights planning tasks that must be done by the trainer PRIOR to the training
	Materials —lists the materials necessary for the trainer to use during each session
	Procedure —outlines for the trainer the facilitation process to be used in each session
	Content —presents key content to be address during each session
	Activity —highlights a task to be carried out by the participant(s)
	Trainer's Notes —to be used by trainer in the planning and carrying out of each session
	Handout —indicates that the trainer should distribute a photocopied document to participants

Session 1: Introductions and Training Objectives

Rationale

At the outset of the workshop, participants and the training team have the opportunity to get to know one another, establish a positive and collaborative working environment, and discuss workshop ground rules. Participants will also share their expectations for the workshop and go over the objectives of the workshop.

Objectives

Upon completion of the activities of this session, participants should be able to:


- Outline key administrative matters and the agenda for the workshop
- Articulate the shared ground rules for behavior during the workshop
- Share the objectives for the training

(See **Supplementary Activity** at the end of the Session for more information to share with participants on the BSC.)

 **Duration:** 30 minutes

Time Breakdown

Activity 1.1—Partner Introductions	10 minutes
Administrative Matters, Agenda, and Ground Rules	5 minutes
Activity 1.2—Sharing Expectations	10 minutes
Workshop Objectives	5 minutes
Supplementary Activity (Optional)	(10 minutes)
Total:	30—40 minutes

	Materials— <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Notecards2. Flip charts and markers
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Activity 1.1—Partner Introductions (10 minutes)

Conduct an activity to have participants introduce themselves. Make the activity as active as possible. For example, have participants stand in a circle; ask them to walk directly across the circle and pair-up with someone they have not interacted with before. Give them three minutes to get to know each other using prompts such as: *find out one thing you have in common; share one thing no one else knows about you*, or any other quick ice breaker. Then ask them to introduce each other to the larger group.

Procedure

Administrative Matters and Agenda Review

Explain to participants any logistics and administrative arrangements for the workshop and share the agenda for the day using the PowerPoint presentation (Slide 5) or printed copies of the agenda.

Workshop Ground Rules

Develop ground rules for the workshop; they should include the following (Slide 6) plus any other rules agreed upon by the group.

Workshop Ground Rules

1. No side conversations.
2. Telephones must be silenced.
3. Participants and trainers **all** have the responsibility of ensuring that sessions begin and end on time.
4. Respect the viewpoints of others and allow everyone the chance to speak. Remind those who like to participate to allow more reserved members to provide their feedback since everyone has something to contribute for the benefit of others in this workshop.

Ask participants if they accept the proposed rules and if they will commit themselves to them for the duration of the training.

Expectations

Invite participants to carry out **Activity 1.2—Sharing Expectations** (Slide 7).



Activity 1.2—Sharing Expectations (10 minutes)

It can be valuable for both participants and the trainer if participants share the expectations with which they arrive at a course. Spend 10 minutes having participants share their responses to the following prompt: *When you were invited to this training, how did you think you might benefit from it; what are you hoping to learn or gain through the training?*

Go around the room asking for volunteers to share their expectations. Capture participants' contributions on flip charts and tell participants you will return to the expectations at the end of the training.

Training Objectives

Present the objectives for the training (Slide 8) and take any questions from participants.

Training Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Identify high-quality books for children
2. Understand the development process of a children's book



Supplementary Activity (10 minutes)

If time allows and the BSC is a new concept to participants, take an additional 10 minutes at the beginning of the session to introduce the BSC by:

- Showing the following video that explains what the BSC is and why it is important: <https://youtu.be/9XMkNnaaBZ8> (Slide 9)
- Sharing the diagram found in the PowerPoint Slides to provide an overview of the BSC. You may also ask participants to note if the supply chain for books in their country is similar to this one or how it may differ.

Lead a brief discussion with participants on where they see the biggest challenges in the BSC in their country context.

Session 2: Introduction to Title Development

Rationale

This session discusses the process of creating a children’s book, leveled or decodable reader, from the initial idea through to the final PDF stage of a book.

Objectives


Upon completion of the activities of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify the principal actors in publishing a children’s book
- Understand the main steps in the title development process
- Understand the particular requirements for creating leveled and decodable readers

Duration: 35 minutes

Time Breakdown

Title Development	20 minutes
Activity 2.1–Peer Sharing	15 minutes
Total:	35 minutes

	Materials— <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Handout 1: Manuscript of a Children’s Book2. Post-it Notes3. Flip charts and markers
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Title Development

Procedure

Using Slides 10-15, present the content material below. Take care to define any terms that may be new to participants. After presenting the material, proceed to **Activity 2.1—Peer Sharing** (Slides 16-17).

Content

The process of title development begins once an author has been selected (or in some cases, a complete manuscript has been chosen for publication) and continues until the final PDFs of the book are sent to the printer. It is a process that calls upon the skills of pedagogical experts, writers, editors, graphic designers, illustrators, proofreaders, page layout specialists, and others. The development process for general children’s books is both different and similar to that of the development of textbooks, leveled readers and decodable readers. All require quality writing, illustrations and design as well as careful editing throughout; textbooks, leveled and decodable

readers require, in addition, a fine degree of pedagogical and linguistic knowledge about early grade reading (EGR), including phonics and decoding.

This module will focus on the development of essential reading materials, which are defined for the purpose of this training as leveled readers, decodable readers, and supplementary reading materials (defined by USAID as those books used for reading practice; they may not be decodable or leveled, and they do not necessarily tie directly to the school curriculum). These materials may be used as stand-alone reading materials for children or may be included in a set of teaching and learning materials which may also contain learner books, teacher guides, etc. for use in the classroom.

Actors in Title Development

The main actors in title development are:

ACTOR	ROLE
PRIVATE PUBLISHERS	The private publisher is the traditional purveyor of books and forms the backbone of a country’s book business. The publisher receives or commissions the manuscript from the author; enlists capital; engages and oversees the work of editors, illustrators, and graphic designers; commissions and supervises the work of printers; and then directs the distribution of books to potential markets.
DONORS, NGOS	Because of a lack of financial resources for books in some countries, implementing partners and donors often step in to help develop books, especially leveled and decodable readers.
MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION	In many countries, the MoE fulfills the traditional role of the publisher, both developing the ideas and curriculum as well as the finished books. In others, the MoE serves to set the standards and evaluate books that have been published by publishers, donors and NGOs, for use in schools.

Title development begins with an idea and a writer. For a supplementary reader/general children’s book, this idea may come as a storyline and an illustration style. For a more specialized curricular book, such as a leveled reader or a decodable reader, the initial starting point must be a Scope and Sequence of skill instruction (the order of introduction of letters, syllables, and words, according to the particular language). Generally, when a publisher decides to create a leveled reader or a decodable reader, they should engage an early grade reading specialist from the beginning of the project as the author or one of the editors. Employing such a specialist who understands the progression for the language under study can ensure a focus on explicit phonics (in which students learn letters and corresponding sounds first, and then build up to syllables and words). This is critical in order to ensure that leveled readers and decodable readers are pedagogically accurate, while slightly less important for a general children’s reader, in which the language is not as tightly controlled (they do not, for example, need to pay attention to the particular letters or words already learned).

Steps in the Title Development Process

Throughout this module, you will learn more about the types and uses of high-quality books for children. You will understand the role title development has in identifying an author and editor team, and how books are designed and illustrated. For now, here is a brief overview of the steps.

Planning, Writing and Editorial

Whether an author is identified and contracted with a book idea in mind, or whether a manuscript has been developed and submitted for consideration, the writing and editorial process begins when the acquisitions editor (or another editorial specialist or project staff member assigned to the book) then begins the process of analyzing the particular needs of the book. If it is a general children's book, who will write and illustrate the book? What should it look like? What kind of editing does this writer need? For what reading level will it be published? (See later sections of this Module for more information about this process.) If it is a leveled or decodable reader, the last question is particularly critical, and we will look closely at it in Session 3: Characteristics of High-Quality Books for Children.

Prototype and Field Testing

For textbooks, as well as leveled readers and decodable readers, it is common practice to create a prototype of one or more sample lessons. This is ideally developed to final page format, with graphic design elements and illustrations in place. The prototype is sent to teachers for field testing and review, and reviews are then incorporated into the publishing plan as needed, in order to ensure that the materials fully meet the needs of students and teachers.

Substantive (Developmental) Editing

Once the writing process has begun, a substantive, or developmental, editor (sometimes the acquisitions editor but often a different one) works closely with the writer to fine-tune the manuscript. (In project-supported writers' workshops, in addition to this kind of supervisory editor (whether an individual, or often a group), there is often a lot of peer feedback as well, so the process of refining and improving the quality of the writing can be very collaborative with input from multiple actors.) S/he reviews it at all steps of its development, to look at overall structure and content. For a general children's book, this means paying close attention to plot or content (for informational text), characters, narrative style and overall development from beginning to end. For a leveled or decodable reader, it means ensuring that the book is developed properly according to the scope and sequence for the language, and the reading level of the children for whom it is intended.

Copyediting

Once a manuscript has been written and edited to the satisfaction of both writer and editor, it is passed to a copyeditor. The copyeditor reads the manuscript carefully for grammar and style and ensures that there are no mistakes before the manuscript is considered final. In the case of a leveled or decodable reader, this is another chance to ensure that the language and level is accurate according to the scope and sequence.

Graphic Design

A graphic designer creates the overall look and flow of the book, working in a desktop publishing program such as Adobe InDesign. S/he determines what colors and fonts will be used in the book, what kinds of illustrations should be incorporated, as well as issues like size and shape of the book, and how it is to be printed and bound. The graphic designer then creates templates in the desktop publishing program, which include all these elements. (In projects, this is not usually the decision of one person because it relates to the budget. Trim size, orientation, and binding are

often part of the specs planning. Also, the design is subject to branding regulations imposed by the donor and Ministry.)

Illustrations

Often for general children’s books, an author is also the illustrator. If not, an illustrator is commissioned (or illustrations or photos sourced online). Ideally for a children’s book, the illustrator works closely with both the writer and the graphic designer to ensure that illustrations and text work harmoniously on the page. Using local illustrators (and authors) can help ensure that books are culturally relevant and representative.

Page Layout and Proofreading


During the page layout phase, the graphic designer (or in some cases, a separate page layout designer) places all the elements, text, and illustrations into the designed template to create pages. Pages are then proofread for errors, usually in two or three rounds, before the graphic designer outputs final PDFs to be sent to the printer.

Use of Software Platforms for Title Development

A recent development in developing essential reading materials, especially decodable readers, is the use of software platforms which allow writers and illustrators to create content. The platforms help authors to create linguistically correct decodable and leveled reading materials by highlighting specific letters or words that have not yet been taught to the learners, ensuring a gradual learning progression. These platforms (e.g., Bloom Software, Storyweaver, African Storybook) can be used by individuals or by organizations in a workshop setting or by publishers to create authentic titles that are suitable for specific learning levels. (Depending on the scale and use of these platforms they may be free or low-cost.) The software can also be set up to allow the creation of materials in multiple local languages. This allows development of books to be brought closer to local communities where local authors, illustrators and translators are brought together to create local reading resources.

Creation can be done online or offline, depending on the platform or software being used. Platforms are typically free to use, and outputs include print-ready PDFs and EPUBs.³

Activity 2.1—Peer Sharing (15 minutes)

Provide participants with  **Handout 1: Manuscript of a Children’s Book** found in the Appendix and ask them to evaluate it using the following discussion questions:

- *Is this book aimed at emergent readers or more fluent readers? (Sample answer: More fluent readers)*
- *What kind of editing does this manuscript need? (Sample answer: A careful copyedit by a native English speaker)*
- *What overall style should the book convey through its illustrations? (Serious? Comical? Whimsical?)? (Sample answer: Frightening)*

³ Global Book Alliance. 2020. Good Stories Don’t Grow on Trees: A Guide to Effective Costing of Storybooks in the Global South. <https://www.globalbookalliance.org/resources-1/good-stories-dont-grow-on-trees-a-guide-to-effective-costing-of-storybooks-in-the-global-south>

Session 3: Characteristics of High-Quality Books for Children

Rationale

In this session, participants will discuss elements of quality in children’s story books. Participants will look at several books in the Global Digital Library (GDL) and work in pairs to identify the quality elements in each.

Objectives

Upon completion of the activities of this session, participants will be able to:


- Identify five characteristics that define high quality children’s books: language, content, diversity, illustrations, and design



Duration: 40 minutes

Time Breakdown

What Makes a Good Children’s Book?	5 minutes
Activity 3.1—Read Aloud	10 minutes
Five Elements of Quality in Children’s Books	10 minutes
Activity 3.2—Identifying Elements of Quality in Children’s Books	15 minutes
Total:	40 minutes

	Materials— <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Printed color copy of A Beautiful Day by Raeesah Vawda, Lindy Pelzl, and Elana Bregin from the Global Digital Library2. Copies of a book from Global Digital Library (printed or digital)
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Preparation

1. Print a color copy of [A Beautiful Day](#) by Raeesah Vawda, Lindy Pelzl and Elana Bregin from the [Global Digital Library](#) for reading out loud to participants for **Activity 3.1—Read Aloud**.
2. Make a copy of a book from the Global Digital Library for each small group for **Activity 3.2—Identifying Elements of Quality in Children’s Books**. If participants have computers and internet access, the books do not need to be printed out but can be read online. (Suggested titles included in Trainer’s Notes.)

What Makes a Good Children’s Book?

Procedure

Using Slides 18-19, present the content material below. Take care to define any terms that may be new to participants. Take any questions participants may have. Then carry out **Activity 3.1—Read Aloud** (Slides 20-21).



Content

Books are essential for children in learning how to read, and children need a variety of books to develop specific skills at different stages in their reading journey. Decodable readers, leveled readers, and supplementary reading materials are essential. Decodable readers are used in the very early stages of reading development and have been created to help children practice specific letter-sound relationships that build the foundation on which children will later read independently. Leveled readers allow children to progress in their reading skills, from beginner on up to advanced, exposing children to more complex and challenging plots, ideas, and along the way. Supplementary reading materials should include both fiction and non-fiction titles, covering a variety of topics, from science and space to art and culture.

Books for children must be engaging, relevant, and written at the right level. Books need to be available to children in the languages they use and understand. Unfortunately, though, in many contexts, books for children are limited and what is available is written poorly, is not engaging or relevant, may be in a language they don't use, and may not have illustrations which are helpful for young children who are building reading skills. Providing children with high quality books will sustain their interest, teach them skills, and develop a love of reading that will support them in later years, both at school and outside.



Trainer's Notes—The last phrase on Slide 19 asks participants what their favorite book as a child was. Take a few responses from participants who volunteer.

In **Activity 3.1—Read Aloud** you will read out loud from a children's book to show participants what a high-quality children's book looks and sounds like. The read-aloud book is [A Beautiful Day](#) from the [Global Digital Library](#); however, if you are aware of children's books written by local authors in the language children speak in your context that meet the quality criteria, you can use it as a read-aloud. You can also include these locally written books in **Activity 3.2—Identifying Elements of Quality in Children's Books**.



Activity 3.1—Read Aloud (10 minutes)

Read aloud from [A Beautiful Day](#) by Raeesah Vawda, Lindy Pelzl and Elana Bregin. After reading, ask the following questions:

- *What did you like about the book?*
- *What made the book interesting to listen to?*
- *What did you think about the plot?*
- *What did you think about the illustrations?*
- *How are you similar to the characters in this book? How are you different?*
- *Do you think children could relate to the characters in this book? Why or why not?*

Five Elements of Quality in Children’s Books

Procedure

Using Slides 22-26, present the content material below. Take care to define any terms that may be new to participants. Take any questions participants may have. Then carry out **Activity 3.2—Identifying Elements of Quality in Children’s Books** (Slides 27-28).

Content

As we saw from the read aloud, children’s books must have certain elements that draw readers in. The REACH initiative has developed a set of guidelines on children’s storybook quality that include five elements:⁴

1. Language

The **language** that a book is written in is a critical element in making a story enjoyable. Global evidence consistently shows that students learn more in the language(s) they understand best.⁵ When children have access to books in their home language, their parents and communities are also more likely to be involved in their learning.⁶ Therefore, when providing books to schools and communities it is important to include books in languages children speak and understand.

2. Content

This refers to the elements of how the story is expressed, including topic and theme, plot and structure, characterization, setting, and genre. Not all elements are applicable to non-fiction stories.

- The **topic or theme** in the story is the underlying message and should be something to which the target audience can relate to. Topics like friendship, loss, animals, celebration, and having fun are widely applicable. Themes that support the development of social and emotional learning as especially relevant in today’s world. Non-fiction including topics like math to strengthen math concepts, character development and values can be linked to the curriculum. Often children need stories to deal with difficult situations and the development of [social-emotional skills](#). Topics should encourage critical thinking and include issues pertinent to children and social issues prevalent in their communities. The range of stories should include both what young children know very well and unfamiliar topics presented in an easy-to-understand way, to build knowledge of the world.
- The **plot** of the story should be interesting to young children and structured with a clear beginning, middle, and end. The plot doesn’t have to be real—many early readers enjoy fantasy and science fiction—but should be logically developed. Non-fiction books may not have a plot but should present information in an interesting and engaging way.

⁴ The REACH Initiative, South Africa. 2018. What Makes a Great Storybook? Recommendations for Storybook Quality [What makes a great storybook? Recommendations for storybook quality.](#)

⁵ Thomas, W.P., Collier, V.P. 2002. A National Study of School Effectiveness for Language Minority Students' Long-Term Academic Achievement. Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence, Santa Cruz, CA.

⁶ Collier, V.P., & Thomas, W.P. 2004. The astounding effectiveness of dual language education for all. NABE Journal of Research and Practice, 2 (1), 1-20.

- **Characterization**, or the development of characters in a story, is critical to sustaining readers' interest. Research shows that young children enjoy stories about animals or other children their age.
- Children should read across a variety of **genres**, or categories of literature. Fiction includes traditional tales, fables, science fiction, historical fiction, fantasy, and contemporary realistic fiction. Non-fiction story books include biographies of famous people and real-world topics related to math, science, geography, travel, and concept books, which focus on a concept or theme but do not have a plot. Non-fiction storybooks have a different set of quality criteria, including use of sidebars, headings and white space; the use of special features such as graphs and diagrams; supplemental materials such as a glossary or bibliography; an emphasis on factual accuracy; an engaging writing style.
- Stories need to have a **setting** (place or time) that appeals to the reader. The setting refers to the place where the story takes place, for example the forest, a village, the school. Setting can also refer to a time when the story is taking place. For example, was it during the rainy season, or during Lunar New Year, or during a school break?

3. Diversity and Equity

Children's storybooks should promote mutual understanding, empathy, and celebration of differences within a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. Stories should expose children to both validating 'mirror' stories that reflect their own identities and circumstances, as well as 'window' stories that introduce them to worlds and lives beyond their own cultures and countries.⁷ Stories that include a variety of settings, such as rural, urban, peri-urban settings and varying family types including nuclear, child/grandparent, female-headed, intergenerational, etc. will appeal to a wider range of children. Gender diversity in stories helps dispel harmful stereotypes. Books about characters from different backgrounds and of different cultures, as well as of different abilities help children learn about those that are different from them and provide unique perspectives that they may not have considered before. It is important to push publishers to develop books across a diversity of genres, themes, and topics (more of a focus on social-emotional skill development, for example), and illustration style (manga and graphic novels, for example).

4. Illustrations

The images on each page should help children understand the story, especially for early readers. It is important that the world depicted in the illustration starts with what children know and moves gradually to the less familiar. Here are some considerations:

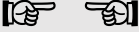
- Varied illustrations including realistic, cartoon, comic, photos, and paintings.
- Children like characters who look playful and friendly and who display obvious emotions. Research shows that children prefer storybooks that make them laugh.
- Illustrations that are relatable- that remind children of themselves.
- One illustration positioned consistently per page may improve comprehension and retention.⁸ There is also evidence that too many illustrations per page are distracting and can impair reading.
- Illustrations should also make use of perspective, including close-up drawings to show emotions and panoramas to show setting.

⁷ Tschida, C., Ryan, C.L., and Ticknor, A.S. 2014. Building on Windows and Mirrors: Encouraging the Disruption of Single Stories Through Children's Literature.

⁸ Results for Development 2016. Feasibility study for a global book fund, 2016

5. Design

This refers to how the text and the illustrations are laid out on the page. Well-designed books are more visually appealing to children and good design assists children in reading and understanding the text. Additional details on design aspects of books like font size and style, spacing between words and sentences, and layout are discussed in more detail in **Session 5**.

	<p>Trainer’s Notes—In Activity 3.2 – Identifying Elements of Quality in Children’s Books each small group will receive a copy of a book from the Global Digital Library to review against the four elements. Suggested titles are below but if you are aware of children’s books written by local authors in the language children speak in your context that meet the quality criteria, you can use these instead.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Magozwe by Lesley Koyi2. Rama Goes to Town by Shannon David3. Thato’s Birthday Surprise by Jodi Houareau4. Chaku’s Cycle by Alisha Berger
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Activity 3.2—Identifying Elements of Quality in Children’s Books (15 minutes)

Provide one book from the [Global Digital Library](#) to each small group (see suggested titles in the Trainer’s Notes on the previous page). Have groups take notes on the specific ways that the book includes the five elements of quality discussed earlier. Give groups 10 minutes to work and then ask one person from each group to present.

Session 4: Identifying the Right Books for the Right Reading Level

Rationale

In this session, participants will learn to identify and discuss differences between two main types of children’s books—decodables and leveled readers—and how children move from one type of book to the other. Participants will also discuss how authors trained in writing decodables and leveled readers deliberately structure them differently from other children’s books to ensure the development of key literacy skills.

Objectives


Upon completion of the activities of this session, participants will be able to:

- Articulate why a class library should have books across reading levels
- Identify different types of books from decodables to leveled readers and the process of moving between these books

 **Duration:** 45 minutes

Time Breakdown

Defining Different Types of Books	10 minutes
Activity 4.1—Reviewing Decodable and Leveled Readers	20 minutes
When to Use Different Book Types	10 minutes
Activity 4.2—Thoughts and Reflections	5 minutes
Total:	45 minutes

	Materials — <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Copies of books from Global Digital Library or leveled and decodable books written by local authors in local languages (if available)2. Post-it notes and pens3. Flip charts and markers
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Defining Different Types of Books

Procedure

Using Slides 29-32, present the content material below. Take care to define any terms that may be new to participants. Take any questions participants may have. Then conduct **Activity 4.1—Reviewing Decodable and Leveled Readers** (Slides 33-34).



Content

Having a range of reading materials at different levels and in a variety of genres strengthens children's literacy development. Books not only provide an opportunity to learn new things, but develop vocabulary, teach spelling and grammar, and encourage children to think critically. These skills are necessary to become a fluent reader. **Decodable** and **leveled readers** are two types of books that especially support emergent literacy skills.

Decodable Readers

Decodable texts only include words that children have learned to sound out or decode independently.⁹ Decodable texts are created by reviewing letter and word lists based on the scope and sequence of early phonics instruction and only putting together those words that children have learned and have the phonics skills to decode. Decodable texts are used with children who are beginning to read, mostly in Grade 1. However, given the context and the reading level of the child, decodable books can be beneficial for children in Grades 2-4.

When developing decodable readers for LMIC contexts, books will not look exactly like English language decodables. This is because English orthography is so opaque, (i.e., complex), and decodables include many more types of words (high frequency words, familiar words) beyond the specific letter-sounds being practiced to give students practice with the numerous different spelling patterns they will encounter. In many LMIC contexts, languages are more transparent and decodable readers are usually focused on the initial introduction of the letter sounds (and blends) in strict parallel to the scope and sequence of the target grade curriculum.

Leveled Readers

Leveled readers are a set of books organized by level of difficulty based on the complexity of the words, sentences, content, and other factors. They are designed to range from very simple books (Levels 1-3) to gradually more complex and challenging (Levels 7-10).¹⁰ There is no one universal leveling system--for example, some leveling systems will have as few as 3 or 4 levels and others can have up to 15 levels (or more). Schools will need to determine what works best for them and how many levels will be necessary in their context.

Texts are leveled using a procedure with clearly defined standard guidelines. The leveling procedures do not pay attention to whether text is decodable or not. The primary purpose of leveling texts is to provide young readers with books that they can read independently without becoming frustrated.

⁹ USAID. 2013. Books that Children can Read: Decodable Books and Book Leveling.

<https://www.globalreadingnetwork.net/resources/books-children-can-read>

¹⁰ Cunningham, J.W., Spadorcia, S.A., Erickson, K.A., Koppenhaver, D.A., Sturm, J.M., and Yoder, D.E. 2005. Investigating the Instructional Supportiveness of Leveled Texts. *Reading Research Quarterly*. Vol. 40, No. 4 (Oct. - Dec., 2005), pp. 410-427 (18 pages). Published By: International Literacy Association

Leveled readers and story books can be quite similar to each other. However, there are certain characteristics of leveled readers that set them apart from general story books. Leveled readers are created using a specific set of criteria which includes:¹¹

- Vocabulary
- Print and number of pages
- Predictability
- Illustrations
- Content and concepts

The earliest leveled readers will have very few words per page and include key sight words that children are familiar with and have regular spelling patterns. The concepts covered are generally those that children know well and often there is not an evident story line. Illustrations are simple and clear and provide strong direct support for text. As the reading level increases, there are more unique words per page, longer sentences, vocabulary children may not know, and more pages per book. Plots become more detailed and multiple characters with a sophisticated plot structure appear. Illustrations provide less direct support for text.

Because decodables and leveled readers need to be written in specific ways to achieve foundational literacy skills, they must be written by trained authors. Teachers who have taught foundational literacy and reading skills would be good candidates for writing decodable texts and leveled books, as well as curricular specialists in reading and literacy, teacher training faculty, and faculty of colleges of education.

It is important that anyone writing a decodable or leveled reader for the first time attend a training workshop. Various donor and development organizations are providing opportunities to local authors and education professionals to create decodable readers and leveled books for children in languages that they speak. USAID-supported projects in Mali, Mozambique, and Niger and many other countries have held workshops for local authors and educators to create local language decodables and leveled readers which have resulted in books in several languages being used in schools in these countries.¹² Organizations like *Room to Read* and *Pratham Books* also work with countries to develop leveled readers in languages children read. Having books at the right level across reading levels is critical to support reading development.



Activity 4.1—Reviewing Decodable and Leveled Readers (20 minutes)

Split the participants into two groups. One group will look at **decodable books** and the other will look at **leveled readers**. At the end of the activity, if time allows, bring the two groups together to share what they have learned.

Instructions for Decodable Books Group:

¹¹ USAID. 2013. Books that Children Can Read: Decodable Books and Book Leveling.
<https://www.globalreadingnetwork.net/resources/books-children-can-read>

¹²<https://www.globalreadingnetwork.net/events/developing-effective-and-appropriate-decodable-and-leveled-books>; Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) presentation, April 1, 2018

For this activity participants will review English language decodable readers developed by Flyleaf Publishing to get a sense of how decodable readers progress. If internet is available pairs of participants can log onto the free resources at <https://portal.flyleafpublishing.com/instructional-resources/>.

Have participants get into small groups or pairs and do the following (you will see correct answers in parentheses after each prompt—Use these after the groups/pairs have completed their work):

1. Read through the headings on the page-how many different ‘types’ of decodables are there? (Nine)
2. *How are the decodables organized?* (Flyleaf uses their own scope and sequence and books are organized by the vowel-consonant relationships described [here](#), starting with VC and CVC words and progressing up to compound and multisyllabic words).
3. Choose a book from Part 1-Emergent Reader Series. Read through the book. *What letter-sounds are being taught? What high frequency words do you notice?* Turn to the last page and read through the explanation of the target letter-sounds being taught. *Did you come to the same conclusion?*
4. Choose a book from Part 2-CCVCC Word (Blends). Go through the same exercise as above.
5. Choose a book from Part 4-Multisyllabic words. *What letter-sounds are being taught? What high frequency words do you notice? Turn to the last page and read through the explanation of the target letter-sounds being taught. What is different about this book compared to the books in Parts 1 and 2?* (Many more decodable words, a lot more previous knowledge of letter-word relationships required to read the story, many more high frequency words, clearer story progression and plot than in earlier books.)

If the facility does not have internet, print out one copy from each of the nine sections. Have groups/pairs read each book out loud. After reading each book, have groups/pairs discuss the following:

- *What letter-sounds are being taught?*
- *What high frequency words do you notice?*
- *How was this book different from the last one?*
- *What prior knowledge does the student need to have to read this book*
- *What do you notice about the plot in each book?*
- *What do you notice about character development in each book?*

Instructions for Leveled Readers Group:

Have participants get into small groups or pairs. If internet connection is available, ask pairs of participants to log onto the [Global Digital Library](#) to explore their collection of leveled readers. Go to the section titled “Library books-select books by level”. As they explore, groups/pairs should answer the following questions:

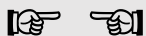
- *How many ‘levels’ are there?* (5-emergent readers, Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, Level 4)
- *What differences do you notice in books at Level 1 versus those at Level 4?* (Level 1 books have fewer pages, have familiar concepts and ideas like families, pets, and friends, include 1-2 sentences per page and use repetition. Level 4 books tend to be longer, have multiple sentences per page, and explore concepts and ideas that children may not be familiar with, like space travel, or moving to a new city.)
- *What do you notice about the plot in each book?* (Level 1 books have plots that are simple and familiar to children-playing with friends, visiting relatives, helping out at

home, etc. As the levels progress, the plots become more complex, and include problems children have to solve, or situations that can be dangerous or challenging.)

- *What do you notice about character development?* (Similar to plot development, Level 1 books have simple characters who may not have much depth or personality. In higher levels, particularly books with multiple chapters, characters have more defined personalities, and have certain motivations, strengths, and flaws, and often have to overcome a problem or difficulty.)

If the facility does not have internet, print out a copy of a Level 1 book and a Level 4 book for each small group of participants. Ask them to think through the following questions as they review the books:

- *How are the books different?* (Level 1 books have fewer pages, have familiar concepts and ideas like families, pets, and friends, include 1-2 sentences per page and use repetition. Level 4 books tend to be longer, have multiple sentences per page, and explore concepts and ideas that children may not be familiar with, like space travel, or moving to a new city.)
- *What do you notice about font size and spacing in the different leveled readers?*
- *What do you notice about the plot in each book?* (Level 1 books have plots that are simple and familiar to children—playing with friends, visiting relatives, helping out at home, etc. As the levels progress, the plots become more complex, and include problems children have to solve, or situations that can be dangerous or challenging.)
- *What do you notice about character development?* (Similar to plot development, Level 1 books have simple characters who may not have much depth or personality. In higher levels, particularly books with multiple chapters, characters have more defined personalities, and have certain motivations, strengths and flows, and often have to overcome a problem or difficulty.)



Trainer's Notes—For **Activity 4.1 – Reviewing Decodable and Leveled Readers**, if decodable books and leveled readers written by local authors in the local language(s) are available in your context, provide participants with examples of these instead to review and reflect on.

When to Use Different Book Types

Procedure

Using Slides 35-36, present the content material below. Take care to define any terms that may be new to participants. Take any questions participants may have. Then conduct **Activity 4.2—Thoughts and Reflections** (Slides 37-38).



Content

Using books to practice reading is an essential component of early grade literacy instruction. Knowing when to use different types of books is important. Decodables are used to support explicit instruction in letter-sound relationships. In an ideal setting, a classroom will have a variety of decodable texts, with each one focusing on a different set of letters and sounds. As the teacher

completes instruction in a set of letters, children can be given decodables to practice these specific letters and words. Children need to practice developing decoding skills, and the more they read, the better they get at reading. As children develop confidence in reading short decodable texts, and can automatically read key sight words, as well as decode multisyllabic words independently and in isolation, they should progress to leveled readers.

To determine whether a leveled book is right for a child, teachers can use the *five-finger rule*. In this method, a child begins reading the second page of a book and for each word he doesn't know or is not sure of, holds a finger up. If there are five or more words on the page that the child does not know, the book is too difficult. Training students to use this method as they move through reading levels is a good way to develop autonomy and accountability. However, teachers should supplement this method by regularly checking students' reading levels by keeping fluency charts on each child.

In a typical classroom, not all children will be reading at the same level. Therefore, classrooms need a variety of decodable books as well as leveled readers. Leveled readers can be used independently or in small groups, with children at the same reading level reading the same book together or in a teacher-guided instructional activity to support skills like vocabulary, spelling, and fluency.



Activity 4.2—Thoughts and Reflections (5 minutes)

Prepare a flip chart with two columns labeled: "*I have learned...*" and "*I still have a question about...*" and put it up in a prominent place in the room. Provide each participant with a Post-it Note and ask them to reflect on the last two sessions on book quality and type. Have them write one new thing they learned from these sessions and one question they still have. Have them post their notes in the columns on the flip chart. As participants finish, they can get up and read other participants' responses. Respond to as many of the questions posed by participants as you have time for.

Session 5: Principles of Children’s Book Design/Illustration Sourcing

Rationale

In this session, participants will look at the critical role that graphic design plays, both in creating an aesthetically pleasing book, as well as in enhancing its legibility. They will also look at different illustration styles and understand how illustrations are sourced and/or developed.

Objectives

Upon completion of the activities of this session, participants will be able to:


- Describe the basic elements of graphic design and how graphic design contributes to a quality book
- Articulate best practices in graphic design, as applied to essential reading materials
- Describe types of illustrations and art resources for children’s books



Duration: 40 minutes

Time Breakdown

Graphic Design	10 minutes
Activity 5.1—Evaluating Graphic Design Elements	10 minutes
PowerPoint Presentation	10 minutes
Activity 5.2—Choosing an Illustration Style	10 minutes
Total:	40 minutes

	Materials — <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Examples of storyboard and graphic design (available in PowerPoint slides)2. Examples of high-quality essential reading materials (locally published, from GDL, or other sources)3. Examples of illustrations (available in PowerPoint slides)4. Post-it notes5. Flip charts
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Graphic Design

Procedure

Using Slides 39-43, present the content material below. PowerPoint slides include an example of Pupil Books (Slide 43). Take care to define any terms that may be new to participants. Take any questions participants may have. Then conduct **Activity 5.1—Evaluating Graphic Design Elements** (Slides 44-45).



Content

At its best, a graphic design makes a book readable and appealing, pulling together separate elements of text, illustrations, and photos into a harmonious whole. A good graphic design is not always noticed, as it serves to highlight the importance of the content. A bad graphic design, on the other hand, leaves a book unattractive and unappealing at best, and at worst, impedes the reading of it.

You learned about the different types of children’s books in **Session 4: Identifying the Right Books for the Right Level**. In this session, we will focus on some of the design issues involved in developing a children’s picture book, before turning our attention to the specific design requirements of leveled and decodable readers.

General Children’s Books

As the first step in the design process, the designer evaluates the text and illustrations, if already existing, to decide what format will best suit the book. The designer considers the following elements:

Element	Description
Trim size & orientation	The trim size refers to the size of the book, so named because of the cutting process to trim pages down to size. There are some standard trim sizes for children’s books, among them 8” x 10” and 7” x 10” in the U.S. (trim sizes will differ elsewhere). It is generally advisable to use trim size that is standard in the local context, for cost effective printing. Orientation can be considered too (portrait versus landscape).
Number of pages	Because of the way books are printed, the number of pages must be in a multiple of four. Many children’s books are either 24 or 32 pages long.
Number of words per pages	If a manuscript is already written, the designer thinks about how much text will appear on each page along with the reading level of the target audience, and how the text will break from one page to the next. In other instances, s/he may work with the writer to look at each page and determine the amount of text to be placed on it.
Fonts	For early readers, it is important to choose a font with regular letter forms. Research has shown that sans serif types work best for young readers.
Color	Generally, a black and white book is less expensive, but color adds interest and has been shown to motivate young readers. However, where the cost of providing books in color will impact the number of books produced, it is preferable to use black and white illustrations to ensure as many books are available to children as possible.
Illustration style	If the writer is not also the illustrator, the designer thinks about what illustrations will be best suited to the text. The minimum image resolution for both storybooks and story cards is 300 DPI.

Once these elements have been settled, a designer will often create a **storyboard** (a sketch of all the pages in the book) with a depiction of how the text and illustrations will flow. This can be done by hand, or in a page make-up program like InDesign. In some contexts, the illustrator and the author will do this “storyboarding” activity together.

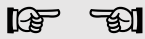
If the text and illustrations are being developed simultaneously (or the illustrations are being created for existing text), this is a good opportunity to be creative with page layout. You could, for example, incorporate custom designed spreads of an image and text that flow over two pages. In this case, careful attention needs to be made to the part of the illustration that falls into the gutter (in the middle of the two pages) so that it matches when printed. If the illustrations already exist, on the other hand, the text and pages will need to be designed to accommodate them.

You can add interest to a page of text by adding small illustrations, in the case seen on Slide 42 ones that incorporate the page numbers.

Decodable and Leveled Readers

Decodable and Leveled readers (as well as pupil books in an Early Grade Reading program) have their own design requirements. Because they target a particular reading level, it is critically important that their design conforms to the needs of the child at his/her reading level. For an emergent reader, this means paying careful attention to the number of words per line, the fonts used, the white space as it relates to the illustrations, as well as other elements. The graphic designer needs to keep in mind the following:

Element	Description
Fonts	Use a sans serif font, such as Andika. Font size differs depending on Grade level, but generally use around 28 to 30 pts for Grade 1, and 12-24 pts for Grade 3 (for English/Latin script).
Sentence length	Sentences in both leveled and decodable readers should be fairly short. For leveled readers, sentence length increases as the reader moves up in levels.
Number of pages	Decodable readers tend to be short, between 12 to 16 pages in length. Decodable stories are often packaged as a compilation for early G1. The individual texts can be just 1-2 pages early on.
Color	Be careful not to use too much color on the page, especially behind text, as it could distract a young reader. Black and white illustrations are also an option especially in resource-constrained environments.
Illustrations	Be sure that illustrations are related to the text, not simply placed for their aesthetic appeal. Decodable readers have few illustrations, as they are designed so that the student must rely only on their decoding skills to read, rather than guessing through context.
Spacing	Space around letters and words, between lines as well as the space below titles and around illustrations should be carefully considered, as research shows that this white space helps learners recognize information chunks more easily. Each paragraph should be separated by four lines; six line spaces should separate headings/titles from the body of the text. Text should not be justified.



Trainer's Notes—For **Activity 5.1—Evaluating Graphic Design Elements**, you could select some locally published books, print books from [Global Digital Library](#), or bring some of your own. Each group could receive copies of the same book, for comparison, or you could use different titles for each group.



Activity 5.1—Evaluating Graphic Design Elements (10 minutes)

Have participants work in small groups. Provide five or six high-quality book titles to each group and have them review them according to the criteria presented on Slides 27 and 28. Bring the groups back together for discussion.

Illustration Sourcing

Procedure

Using PowerPoint Slides 46-55, present the content material below. PowerPoint slides include examples of each illustration style. Take care to define any terms that may be new to participants. Take any questions participants may have. Then conduct **Activity 5.2—Choosing an Illustration Style** (Slides 56-57).



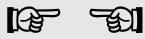
Content

As noted, a children's book writer is sometimes also its illustrator. If this is not the case, the publisher has several options. In many cases, an illustrator will be commissioned to produce the art. The writer or editor creates specifications for each piece, which include details of the content, colors, and style as well as the shape of the art to be created.

For pieces that are general (like a photo or picture of an apple, or a car), an online database of copyright-free images like Creative Commons (CC) can be used. It is never advisable to download images from the web without asking for permission from a copyright holder. Downloaded images from the web will generally not work for printing unless they can be identified as high resolution. In all cases, the photos and art need to be given proper credit in the book.

Some publishers and organizations hold community workshops to create book illustrations, taking advantage of local talent as well as building capacity for future publishing ventures. In low-income settings, it may be best to choose simple, black and white illustrations, to save costs and ensure that there are at least some books for all children.

For a children's book, it is important to think about the overall feeling of the book, and especially the depiction of the main character, as well as the background environment s/he will be seen in. What kind of reaction do you want to elicit from the reader? There are many styles of art, and one may be better suited than another, depending on the book. Here are some examples from classic children's books showing very different styles.



Trainer’s Notes—Replace these examples with similar ones from locally published books or from the [Global Digital Library](#), if possible.

Illustration Style	Example
Vintage	<i>One Morning in Maine</i> , by Robert McCloskey
Artistic and evocative	<i>Caged Birds of Phnom Penh</i> by Frederick Lipp; illustrations by Ronald Himler
Detailed, cartoon style	<i>What do People Do All Day?</i> by Richard Scarry ¹³
Comical	<i>Mirabel, Chat du monde</i> by Jean-Claude Redonnet; illustrations by Kristin Hakim
Frightening	<i>Scary scarecrow. Halloween concept:</i> https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/photo/scary-scarecrow-halloween-concept-royalty-free-image/1326135499
Comical AND frightening	<i>Two monsters creatures with balloons:</i> https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/illustration/two-monsters-royalty-free-illustration/91929596

Illustrations can be created digitally to great effect with the latest technologies as well, and can look like a hand drawn piece of art.

For textbooks and other curricular materials, the illustrations must be very closely correlated to the pedagogical points under study. In a science textbook, for example, the illustrations need to be detailed and scientifically accurate. For a second language textbook, there may be specific cultural aspects that need to be emphasized.

For all children’s books, careful attention needs to be paid to avoid stereotypes (of gender, disabilities, etc.) in characters and situations.

Process

For each illustration, the writer or editor supplies an art specification (also called “a spec”), which defines the details to be contained in the piece. The illustrator then creates a pencil (or sometimes digital) sketch of the piece, showing as much detail as possible. This is important, as the final art will be difficult and expensive to modify. For the following, you can see that the approved sketch looks very much like the final piece, with only minor changes (Slide 50).



Activity 5.2—Choosing an Illustration Style (10 minutes)

Print out the text of a story from [Global Digital Library](#), without the accompanying illustrations. Ask participants to reflect on the content and determine what kinds of illustrations they would imagine for this title. If time permits, have them map out storyboards and present them to the group.

¹³ Image is copyrighted by Penguin Random House and may not be printed or distributed without permission.

Session 6: Project Management of a Book Project—from Project Description to Final PDFs

Rationale

In this session, participants will take all that they have learned about title development and apply it to the planning of a large publishing project of an early grade reading program including pupil books, teacher’s guides, and leveled and decodable readers.

Objectives


Upon completion of the activities of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the phases of a book publishing project and the teamwork involved in creating a book
2. Describe how to schedule and resource a publishing project
3. Articulate how to maintain quality control of a publishing project

 **Duration:** 60 minutes

Time Breakdown

Project Planning and Scheduling	30 minutes
Activity 6.1—Establishing a Project Schedule	30 minutes
Total:	60 minutes

	<p>Materials—</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Handout 2: Specifications2. Handout 3: Writing Guidelines3. Handout 4: Template4. Handout 5: Schedule5. Post-it Notes6. Flip charts and markers
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Project Planning and Scheduling

Procedure

Using Slide 58-66, present the content below. Make sure to define any terms that may be new to participants and take any questions. Then conduct **Activity 6.1—Establishing a Project Schedule** (Slides 67-68).



Content

Throughout this module, we have focused primarily on children’s books, including decodable and leveled readers. For this last wrap up, we will consider the project management of an entire set of teaching and learning materials, including student or pupil books, teacher’s guides and essential reading materials. Once a curriculum framework is established, how does a publisher (or a donor, or a MoE) proceed to develop a full set of teaching materials, in time for delivery by the start of a school year? What are the phases and steps of a major publishing project? How long does each take, and how can one maintain quality control throughout?

One of the primary roles that a publisher plays is in the overall planning and project management of a book project or program. The amount of coordination and teamwork necessary to create a textbook project is critical and wide-ranging.


For this session, we will assume that a publisher is faced with the prospect of developing a full set of curriculum materials for Grades 1-3 to teach early grade reading in a local language in a given country. Materials to be published include, for each grade, a core student textbook, a teacher’s guide, and a set of decodable and leveled readers. The planning starts at least eight months before the start of the school year, with a curriculum and scope and sequence finalized and approved for the language in question. Materials must be delivered to schools in time for the start of the next school year.

The first task is to decide who will lead the project. This could be the acquisitions or commissioning editor, or it could be a separate dedicated project manager (or several, for a large project). Whatever the title, the project manager’s job is to guide the activities of the project, from planning to completion, fostering integration, ensuring that quality standards are met, and transforming the overall project goals into measurable realities. S/he plays a critical role in disseminating information and ensuring a clear decision-making process.

The primary areas that a project manager deals with are scope (of the project, of the product, and of the roles), time (schedule), money (budget), quality, communications, human resources, and risk-management. All of these areas come into play during the major stages of a book project—conceptualization, planning, and implementation.

Conceptualization

During the conceptualization stage, the specifications of the book project are determined. How many pages will each book be? How many colors? How will the chapters be structured? Writers and editors look at the scope and sequence and the curriculum and begin to determine the pedagogical specifications of the book, in as much detail as possible. They will map out the skills across the chapters of the Student and Teacher book, and decide how the Teacher’s Guide will fit with the student text (will it be scripted? Should it include miniature versions of the student pages? How long should it be?). They will also define the physical specifications of the books: On what kind of paper will it be printed? Will it be a hardcover or softcover? What kind of binding

should it have? (See  **Handout 2: Specifications** in the appendix for examples of specifications for Student and Teacher books.)

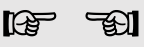
During the conceptualization phase, writer’s guidelines and a prototype are created, as well as possibly writing templates. The prototype is one full chapter or lesson, showing all the elements of writing, design, and page layout.

The prototype is fully proofread and ideally field tested with teachers and students, to create final, fully approved guidelines for the remaining publications.

Planning

Planning is the most critical phase of a publishing project. Now that the overall specifications of the project have been determined, the team begins the process of assessing its scope to plan the schedule, budget, and resources. These are separate but linked tasks. For a book project, we begin by defining the tasks that will need to be carried out and how long each will take (which thus determines the budget). For this session, we will concern ourselves only with the schedule and the team members needed. (Budgeting is covered in the Publishing training module.)

The scheduling for a book program must always keep in mind the requirements of printing and distribution. Printing can take up to 12 weeks, and distribution timelines vary as well, but could take up to six weeks, depending on where the printer is located. You will need to work backwards to see when the final PDFs of a book need to be sent to the printer in order to ensure an on-time delivery. In our current example, where we need to deliver books by the start of October, final PDFs will need to be sent to the printer by the end of July. This leaves five months to write and edit the manuscript, as well as illustrate, design and lay out the books into pages. Here is an example of what that schedule looks like for one component of our program.

	<p>Trainer’s Notes—Point out that this is a simplified overview schedule for only one component of the many in the program, and that the dates are all end dates for the phase in question. Examples of planning and implementation schedules can be found on PowerPoint Slides 66 and 67.</p>
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Implementation

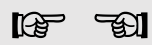
During the implementation phase, the publishing team works in concert to create the book. Throughout this module, we have talked about the major roles in a publishing project, including:

- Writers
- Developmental (substantive) editors
- Copyeditors
- Graphic designers
- Illustrators
- Photo and art researchers (if using online image databases)
- Page make-up designers
- Proofreaders

In this implementation stage, each of the actors for each step in a publishing project ideally work as a team, in overlapping fashion. The writers create a manuscript, based on the prototypes and guidelines, and pass it to a developmental or substantive editor, who ensures the quality of the content and its adherence to the specifications. This revision process is cyclical in nature and may also include peer reviews. The copyeditor reads the manuscript for grammar and spelling errors. It is then passed along to the illustrators or researchers for the creation of the art program, as well as to the page make-up designers (desktop publishers), who take the manuscript and art to


lay out the book into pages. Finally, pages are read by proofreaders, to ensure that the book is error-free, before a final PDF is sent to the printer to create the physical book. The project manager sits at the center, ensuring that the book flows smoothly from one stage to the next.

By filling out the dates and knowing approximately how many pages our writers and editors can produce, we are able to calculate the number of writers and editors we will need for this program.

	<p>Trainer's Notes—Explain the parameters of the schedule used to determine the resources, as seen in the text underneath the schedule. Point out that in this training we are only talking about the editorial portion of the process and are simplifying the time needed for this general demonstration. Show that by increasing this page count to include all books in the program, without extending the schedule, you will need multiple writers and editors to carry out the project.</p>
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Activity 6.1—Establishing a Project Schedule (30 minutes)

Provide copies of  **Handout 5: Schedule** found in the appendix. Explain that this schedule is for the editorial portion of a publishing project only.

Working in small groups, have participants analyze the needs of one 224-page book along with the parameters provided to determine how many writers and editors should be assigned to the program. After working for about 20 minutes, ask each group to share their results and lead a discussion on the following question:

- *With so many writers and editors involved, how can you ensure the quality of the final books?*

Session 7: Wrap Up and Reflection on the Workshop

Rationale

Through the preceding sessions, participants have learned the process of developing children’s books, and practiced key elements of title development by reviewing characteristics of high-quality books for children, evaluating graphic design elements, and establishing a project schedule. In this session, participants will reflect on their learning, review their expectations, and provide their evaluation of the training.

Objectives


Upon completion of the activities of this session, participants will be able to:

- Articulate how they will use what they have learned in the training in their work
- Provide feedback on the module


 **Duration:** 35 minutes

Time Breakdown

Activity 7.1—Taking Action and Expectations Review	20 minutes
Evaluation	15 minutes
Total:	35 minutes

	Materials— <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Flip charts and markers2. Handout 6: Evaluation Questionnaire
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Preparation

1. Display expectations on the walls of the training room or via PowerPoint.
2. Review  **Handout 6: Evaluation Questionnaire** and make enough copies for all participants.

Procedure

Share Slide 69. Complete the module by conducting **Activity 7.1—Taking Action and Expectations Review**. Once completed, hand out the Evaluation Questionnaire. Share Slide 71 and ask participants to complete it and hand it in before leaving the training. Explain that the evaluation is anonymous and will be very helpful in improving the course for the future, so their candid

feedback is welcome. Identify a basket or envelope at the front of the room where participants can place their evaluations when finished. Thank participants for their participation.



Activity 7.1—Taking Action and Expectations Review (20 minutes)

Keeping the same grouping of participants, ask participants to first reflect individually on *what actions they would like to take to improve the BSC in their individual contexts* and then to *describe what they have learned about the qualities of a well-written and illustrated children's book*. Then ask them to share their action steps with others at their table. Finally ask each table group to share 1 or 2 actions discussed.

Then, using the flip charts where you recorded participant expectations at the start of the training, ask participants to reflect on to what extent they feel their expectations have been met through the training. Answer any remaining questions that may arise.

Appendices

Session 2

Handout 1: Manuscript of a Children's Book

The Great Hairy Khyaa¹⁴

Durga Lal Shrestha

Suman Maharjan

Who's down there? The Great Hairy Khyaa

Why are you here? For the feast!

What feast? Lakhamari feast!

Any good? Very good!

Had enough? Never!

No! I am scared to go where it's dark. Ma, is this the khyaa that scares me so? Won't it pounce on us? Won't it pull our legs? Ma, is this the khyaa that scares me so?

When it stands in the dark, it covers ground and sky Just watching it stretch, makes my temples fry! But it disappears as soon as the lights come on...

It was just here and now it's gone! Ma, is this the khyaa that scares me so?

Where's Rag Ball Khyaa? Where's the Great Hairy one?

Nowhere to be seen when light has won!

What kind of khyaa is afraid of light? But what about me, who's such an easy bite?

Ma is this the khyaa that scares me so?

¹⁴ "The Great Hairy Khyaa" by Durga Lal Shrestha, illustrated by Suman Maharjan, and published by The Asia Foundation is licensed CC BY 4.0. <https://digitallibrary.io/book/the-great-hairy-khyaa/>

Session 6

Handout 2: Specifications

Student Books

Element	Specifications
Paper	Paper: 19,5 X 26,5, white, 80% bright, 80% opaque, 80 gm2, 4/c, double-sided
Cover	Cover: 4/c on 300gm2 white coated cardstock, glossy on one side, laminated
Illustrations	Illustrations: 4/c
Binding	Perfect bound/Thread sewn with glue resistant to temperatures of up to 45° in the shade
Length	240 pages + cover
Packaging	Plastic packaging around each group of 10 books. Each group of 10 will then be placed in a cardboard box, with no more than 20 books per box.

Teacher's Guide

Element	Specifications
Paper	Format: A4 interior paper Paper: 128 gr coated matte Color: 2/c
Cover	Cover: Paper: 300 gr coated white Color: 4/c
Illustrations	None
Binding	Perfect bound/Thread sewn with glue resistant to temperatures of up to 45° in the shade
Length	2 volumes of 200 pages
Packaging	Plastic packaging around each group of 10 books. Each group of 10 will then be placed in a cardboard box, with no more than 20 books per box.

Session 6

Handout 3: Writing Guidelines

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT BOOK SECTIONS

UNIT OPENER (2-page spread)

The unit opener appears on a visually engaging spread with a large photograph that may run across the two pages; include a description of the photo in brackets.

For example: [ART: Large main photograph to span all of verso page and some of recto page of the spread. Something that illustrates the theme of dreams, such as a Hispanic teenager daydreaming.]

Also include art specs for 4 smaller photos that will appear on the left-hand page of the opener and that express the unit theme.

The Recto page of the Unit Opener will include:

- unit number
- unit title
- Explore the Theme questions and Theme Activity

Explore the Theme

List several numbered questions below the section head. These should be simple and brief questions that prompt students to think about the theme. You might ask students about the meaning of a main word in the theme. For example, if the theme is “Dreams,” you might ask students what a dream is.

You might also ask questions that help students connect the theme to their own lives. Always include one question that has students relate the theme to the photos in the opener.

Theme Activity

Briefly describe a simple activity that students can do alone or with a partner to explore the unit theme. These activities are open-ended. They should be fun, simple to execute, and not very time-consuming.

BEFORE READING <xx>

This section includes activities that will prepare students to read the **Reading 1** in the chapter.

CHAPTER OPENER (1 page)

Include the following on the Chapter Opener:

Objectives

The Chapter Opener lists skills that indicate what students will learn in the chapter. See the prototype and the example below. Note that the first four skills appear in the imperative. For example: “Use the conjunctions *and or*”

Objectives

Reading Strategy <Indicate reading strategy.>

Listening and Speaking <Indicate chapter-level Listening and Speaking activity.>

Grammar <Indicate Grammar activity.>

Writing <Indicate Writing Assignment.>

[Set in separate box] Academic Vocabulary <List all the academic vocabulary words that students will learn in the chapter.>

[A-head] Chapter Focus Question

The Focus Question should be one that gets students to think about the readings before they read and are able to answer after they read.

[A-head] Reading 1: Literature

<Genre>

<Reading Title>

by <Author>

[A-head] Reading 2: Content: <Social Studies or Science or Math>

<Genre>

<Reading Title>

by <Author>

Reading 1: <Reading Title>

About the Reading

This section provides a brief overview of the first reading selection in a chapter. Tell students what the selection is about in two or three simple sentences. Include a spec for an image related to the reading—preferably a high-impact photo or possibly fine art. (Never an illustration if at all possible. Photo should bring a personality to the chapter.)

[A-head] Build Background (1 page)

[B-head indicates topic of background information]

Write one or two brief paragraphs of information that will help students better understand the reading. Be particularly sensitive to background information that ESL students may not necessarily know. The background information may focus on the setting, characters, or other important concepts in the reading.

You may include a spec for a piece of art if it will enhance students' background knowledge. Maps are often used here to indicate the setting of a text. You might also spec simple diagrams or photos that are easy to find. Note that depending on the nature of the background information, you might choose not to spec any art for this section.

The Build Background text must be factually accurate. Please indicate sources used to write these sections.

[A-head] Use Prior Knowledge

[B-head indicates task/goal of activity. Use imperative.]

This section includes an activity that helps students connect their knowledge with an important concept in the reading selection. Activities may allow students to recall their personal knowledge or experiences, knowledge of the world around them, and educational and classroom experiences, including material learned in prior units. Activities should be reasonable. Do not prompt students to recall information that they most likely will not have knowledge about.

Note the following instructions and ideas for developing this section.

- Make ample use of graphic organizers or simple visuals. If a graphic organizer does not work as well with an activity, it is not required. However, graphic organizers should be used most often.
- You can be creative with some of the graphic organizers, but they should not be so elaborate that students cannot duplicate them on paper.
- Partially complete (with at least one example) the graphic organizer for students or give them the information to plug in. If students have to come up with information to enter on their own, be sure the activity is doable. You may at times want to suggest that students work with partners/groups or elicit the teacher's help for support.
- Mini-quiz or assessment approach can be used for a few activities. This can take the form of listing statements/facts related to a concept in the selection, and then having students indicate whether they think each statement is true or false.

See the prototype for format. You may use numbered steps but keep the hierarchy as simple as possible.

Session 6

Handout 4: Template

[begin Unit Opener]

[begin verso page]

[C-P-<#>-1: <photo spec for main photo related to Unit theme>]

[C-P-<#>-2, C-P-<#>-3, C-P-<#>-4: <photo specs for 1, 2, or 3 (maximum) secondary photos related to Unit theme>]

[end verso page]

[begin recto page]

Unit <#>

<Unit Title>

Explore the Theme

1. <Question 1>
2. <Question 2>
3. <Optional: Question 3>

Theme Activity

<Activity related to the theme>

[end recto page]

[end Unit opener]

[begin Before Reading 1 section]

[begin verso page]

Chapter 1

Objectives

Reading Strategy <reading strategy>

Listening and Speaking <B-head of chapter Listening and Speaking activity>

Grammar <B-head of Grammar activity>

Writing <B-head of chapter Writing Assignment>

Academic Vocabulary

<Before Reading 1 academic vocab>	<After Reading 1 academic vocab>
<Before Reading 1 academic vocab>	<After Reading 1 academic vocab>
<Before Reading 1 academic vocab>	<After Reading 1 academic vocab>

[A Head] Chapter Focus Question

<theme-related question that encourages students to think about the readings>

Reading 1 Literature

<Type of literature selection>

<Title of literature selection>

by <Author name>

Reading 2 Content: <Content subject area>

<Type of content reading>

<Title of content reading>

by <Author name>

Reading 1 <Title of literature selection>

About the Reading

<2-3 sentences that briefly describe the literature selection>

[C-P-<#>-5: <photo spec for high-impact photo related to Reading 1>]

[end verso page]

[end Chapter 1 Opener]

[Before Reading 1 graphic]

[begin recto page]

[A Head] Build Background

[B Head] <topic of background information>

<background information; 1-2 paragraphs>

[C-A-<#>-1: / C-P-<#>-6: <art/photo spec that will enhance background information>]

[A Head] Use Prior Knowledge

[B head] <objective of the activity in the imperative>

<Use Prior Knowledge activity>

[Comp: <spec for graphic organizer or simple visual, including text that should appear>]

[end recto page]

Session 6

Handout 5: Schedule

Schedule for one book:

	<i>Writer's Guidelines, Template, Prototype</i>	<i>Draft 1 of manuscript written and to editor</i>	<i>Draft 1 edited and returned</i>	<i>Draft 2 written and sent to editor</i>	<i>Final manuscript to copy editor</i>	<i>Final manuscript to desktop publishing</i>	<i>Page production</i>	<i>PDF to printing</i>	<i>Printed book delivered to</i>
<i>10 Chapters, 20 pages per chapter, total 224 pages.</i>	5/1							7/31	10/1
<i>Chapter 1</i>									
<i>Chapter 2</i>									
<i>Chapter 3</i>									
<i>Chapter 4</i>									
<i>Chapter 5</i>									
<i>Chapter 6</i>									
<i>Chapter 7</i>									
<i>Chapter 8</i>									
<i>Chapter 9</i>									
<i>Chapter 10</i>									

Assumptions

Writing

- Writers can create 3-5 pages/day

Editorial (Draft 1)

- Editing pace is 3-5 pages/hour, approximately 24 pages/day

Session 7

Handout 6: Evaluation Questionnaire

Thank you for participating in the Global Book Alliance's Title Development training. Your comments and feedback on the training will help improve future sessions. Please take some time and answer the questions below as fully and honestly as you can. All of your responses will remain confidential. Thank you.

1. To what extent has your knowledge of title development increased? Please answer on a scale from 1 (my knowledge has not increased) to 4 (my knowledge has substantially increased).

1: my knowledge has not increased

2: my knowledge has increased just a little (*less than I would hope to get out of a training*)

3: my knowledge has increased moderately (*as much as I would hope to get out of a training*)

4: my knowledge has substantially increased (*more than I would expect to get out of a training*)

2. To what extent will you be able to use what you have learned? Please answer on a scale from 1 to 4.

1: Not at all

2: Rarely

3: Sometimes

4: Often

3. What parts of this module were most useful in helping you understand the process of developing a children's book? What made it useful?

4. What parts of this module were least useful in helping you understand the process of developing a children's book? What made it not useful?

5. How satisfied were you with the delivery of the training?

- 1: Not at all satisfied
- 2: Somewhat satisfied
- 3: Extremely satisfied

6. What would you suggest to improve the format or delivery of the training?

7. Please provide any other comments: