

GLOBAL BOOK ALLIANCE



Trainer's Guide

Module 7: Active Use

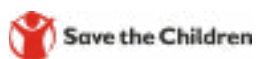


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Acknowledgements

The Global Book Alliance (GBA) would like to extend their sincere thanks to stakeholders across the education sector—including staff from the Ministries of Education; donor agencies and implementing partners; the private sector, including publishers, printers and distributors; as well as teachers, parents and community leaders—for their contribution in eliminating global illiteracy. The GBA also thanks Shirin Lutfeali for her technical expertise in writing this module and to the reviewers who provided their expertise to ensure the accuracy of its content.

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 the book supply chain in their context in order to make this vision a reality.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

BSC	Book Supply Chain
EGR	Early Grade Reading
ERM	essential reading material
GBA	Global Book Alliance
MoE	Ministry of Education
RANA	Reading and Numeracy Activity
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Glossary of Terms

Active use:	Using textbooks and supplementary reading materials in an effective and deliberate manner in schools and in the community to increase children’s reading and literacy skills.
Automaticity:	The ability to read words quickly and effortlessly without decoding.
Comprehension:	The understanding and interpretation of what is read. Having a sufficient vocabulary and the knowledge of what words mean is a big part of comprehension.
Decode:	A key skill for learning to read; the ability to apply knowledge of letter-phoneme relationships, including knowledge of letter patterns, to correctly articulate written words.
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
Discourse:	Print (written or Braille) or expressive (spoken, signed, or tactile language) communication or debate.
Emergent readers:	Emergent readers are those who are developing a grasp of comprehension strategies and skills for decoding words, such as recognizing some letters of the alphabet, understanding that writing conveys a message, and practicing scribble writing.
Essential reading materials:	Decodable, leveled, and supplementary readers are collectively described as “essential reading materials.” All are required elements for reading acquisition, but each plays a different role.
Fluency:	The ability to rapidly and accurately read connected text with expression. Fluency is strongly related to reading comprehension.
Foundational reading skills:	A set of skills students must master before they can become fluent readers. These skills include the mastery of the alphabet, understanding the concept of print; phonological awareness in spoken, signed, and tactile languages; knowledge and use of phonics; recognition of high-frequency words; and fluency of language.
Higher order cognitive skills:	A set of skills that asks the reader to go beyond basic levels of comprehension and include making inferences, perspective taking, reasoning, and comprehension monitoring.
Letter knowledge:	Knowing that the same letter can look different, that letters have names, and that letters are related to phonemes.
Listening comprehension skills:	The multiple processes involved in understanding and making sense of signed, spoken, and tactile languages. Depending on the modality of language used, these include recognizing speech sounds, manual signals, understanding the meaning of individual words, and/or understanding the syntax of sentences in which they are presented.
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.
Morphological awareness:	The ability to manipulate morphemes, the smallest unit of meaning; an example would be the word “cat.”
Paired reading:	A reading strategy that pairs two readers to read aloud to or shared reading with each other to improve fluency.
Phoneme:	The smallest unit of sound in a word. For example, the word “cat” has 3 phonemes – “c,” “a,” and “t.”
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.
Phonological awareness:	The ability to recognize and manipulate the smallest parts of language, such as speech sounds, hand configurations, facial expressions.
Print awareness:	The knowledge of printed/Braille text and how it is different from other symbols, such as pictures.
Read aloud:	An instructional practice where teachers, parents, or others read aloud to children. The reader incorporates variations in pitch, tone, pace, volume, pauses, eye contact, questions, and comments to produce an enjoyable delivery.
Reading:	The ability to make meaning from text, which requires proficiency in five key skills: phonemic awareness, phonetic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. This includes phonological awareness for reading Braille.
Reading comprehension:	The ultimate goal of learning to read. Reading comprehension requires that children know how to decode words, have strong language comprehension skills, and can read fluently.
Supplementary Readers:	Materials used for reading practice. They may not be decodable or leveled, and they do not directly tie to the school curriculum.
Textbook:	An official book, verified and approved by the Ministry of Education, that is used by teachers to teach various subjects, including language and literacy. In some cases, students will have the same copy of the textbook as the teacher; in other cases the students have their own version of the textbook and may also have a student book where they can respond to questions.
Writing book reviews:	After a child reads a book independently, they write a review about the book. They can include a short summary of the book, why they enjoyed it, and why they are (or are not) recommending it to others in the class. Book reviews can also be done orally and can be given on books that were read aloud or with another student.

List of Materials

SESSION	MATERIALS
1. Introductions and Training Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notecards 2. Flip charts and markers
2. What Is Active Use and Why Books Matter	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Handout 1: Key Reading Skills 2. Internet-enabled device to play video 3. Flip charts and markers
3. The Types of Books Children Need	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Flip charts and markers 2. Internet-enabled laptop devices
4. Barriers to Active Use in Schools, Communities, and Homes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Flip charts and markers 2. Flip chart with a list of barriers 3. Handout 2: REACH Case Study (Zambia)
5. Good Practices for Increasing Active Use in Schools, Communities and Homes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Flip charts and markers 2. Internet-enabled laptop 3. Handout 3: Engaging Families and Communities to Support Student Reading Skills Development
6. Wrap-Up and Reflection on the Workshop	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Flip charts and markers 2. Handout 4: 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

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

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

supplementary reading materials), and textbooks. The industry is also responsible for producing books that are available in multiple means of representation to be accessible to all learners, in all their diversity, with books available in printed, 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. Children are not read to at school or at home. Teachers are insufficiently trained in early grade reading (EGR) and in the use of books. The few ERMs that are in schools tend to be locked up by the head teacher for protection. There are several reasons for this: lack of appropriate training for teachers and caregivers on how to use books, a mentality that books should be kept “safe” and therefore not handled by children, a lack of book quality and relevance, and a lack of time in the busy school curriculum for reading practice.

This module is the seventh in the book supply chain series and focuses on active use—using textbook and supplementary reading materials in an effective and deliberate manner in schools and in the community to increase children’s reading and literacy skills. Although data on reading books are limited, research on textbooks reveals that book provision does not necessarily equate with usage.³ Various studies have shown that despite the presence of books in schools, the majority of students did not actually use books in the classrooms.

Policymakers, publishers, authors, and others within the BSC will find this module relevant to their work and in helping teachers, parents, caregivers, and other community members engage in children’s reading activities. This module lays out ways all stakeholders involved in a child’s education can support reading development.

This module begins by discussing what “active use” means and the importance of books and reading in supporting literacy development, and then it addresses barriers related to books not being used in classrooms, communities, and homes. The module also explores how reading and literacy are linked and what makes them distinct. This leads into a discussion around how children learn to read, why books matter in helping children learn to read, and the types of books that support new readers. Towards the end of the module, participants will read about global best practices in increasing the active use of books and how to generate solutions and recommendations on how books can be used meaningfully in classrooms and communities and at home.

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

1. Explain the importance of books and reading in supporting literacy development
2. Discuss barriers to book use in schools and communities
3. Describe ways to increase the active use of books in classrooms, schools, communities, and homes

The module contains activities to engage participants and to ensure that topics covered are well understood. References are also provided at the end of most sessions to help participants deepen their knowledge of technicalities that could not be covered during the training.

³ Results for Development (2016). Feasibility study for a global book fund, 2016

Notes on Using This Module

How to Use This Module

This module is for trainers as they prepare for and carry out the training. Trainers should review the material in this module and in the accompanying PowerPoint presentation (PPT). The presentation has been created from the content in this module, but it does not contain all the content. Therefore, it is important that trainers read through the *Trainers' Guide* in full and master the content before the training. The presentation 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 the session is important. Trainers should read and fully understand 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 materials needed to complete the session.
- **Preparation:** This highlights planning tasks that the trainer must do 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









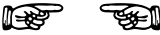

Participants for this module, as with all modules in this series, will vary. However, the training is aimed at staff throughout the Ministry of Education (MoE) and others in the BSC, such as publishers, printers, procurement, and distribution specialists. It is also relevant for those involved in training 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 Time (Total)	Session #	Session Name	Description	Time (mins.)
5 hours	1	Introduction and Training Objectives	Paired introductions, slide presentation, sharing expectations	30
	2	What Is Active Use and Why Books Matter	Interactive game in pairs, small group work, slide presentation, large group debrief	75
	3	The Types of Books Children Need	Small group work, slide presentation, video discussion	40
	4	Barriers to Active Use in Schools, Communities, and Homes	Independent reading, large group discussion and debrief, slide presentation	50
	5	Good Practices for Increasing Active Use in Schools, Communities, and Homes	Brainstorming, independent reading, slide presentation, large group discussion	70
	6	Wrap-Up and Reflection on the Workshop	Small group evaluation, slide presentation, paired brainstorming	35

Legend

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

	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 addressed 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 book supply chain.)



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 or 40 minutes



Materials—

1. Note cards
2. Flip charts and markers

Getting Started



Procedure

Present the material below and carry out **Activities 1.1—Partner Introductions** and **1.2—Sharing Expectations**.



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 travel 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.



Content

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 (PPT) (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 share. 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 arrived with 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. Explain the importance of books and reading in supporting literacy development
2. Discuss barriers to book use in schools and communities
3. Describe ways to increase the active use of books in classrooms, schools, communities, and homes



Supplementary Activity (10 minutes)

If time allows and the BSC is a new concept to participants, take an additional 15 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 following 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: What Is Active Use and Why Books Matter



Rationale

The active use of books refers to teachers, parents, and other caregivers using textbooks and supplementary reading materials in an effective and deliberate manner in schools, communities, and at home to increase children’s reading and literacy skills. Building reading skills requires time for practice and exposing children to different types of reading materials: textbooks, books, newspapers, billboards, magazines, etc. This session will focus on what “active use” means, the different types of books, and the skills children need to learn to read.



Objectives

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

- Articulate the meaning of “active use”
- Explain the stages of reading development
- Explain how books support reading development



Duration: 75 minutes

Time Breakdown

Why Books Matter	10 minutes
Activity 2.1—Think-Pair-Share	10 minutes
How Children Learn to Read	15 minutes
Activity 2.2—Key Reading Skills	15 minutes
Supplementary Reading Materials	15 minutes
Activity 2.3—GBA Webinar on International Literacy Day	10 minutes
Total:	75 minutes




Materials—

1. Handout 1: Key Reading Skills
2. Internet-enabled device to play video
3. Flip charts and markers



Preparation

1. Ensure there are enough copies of  **Handout 1: Key Reading Skills** per small group.
2. Read through the slide deck for this session and ensure you know how to explain key terms and definitions.
3. Watch the excerpt from the [Global Book Alliance webinar](#) from International Literacy Day 2020 (starts at 4:26 until 12:15) and ensure audio and video work correctly.
4. Read USAID's [Landscape Report on Early Grade Literacy](#) (Chapters 2 and 3) to familiarize yourself on the key components of this topic.

Why Books Matter



Procedure

Share objectives of the session on Slide 10. Then, using PowerPoint Slide 11 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–Think-Pair-Share** (Slide 12).



Content

The existence of books, particularly essential reading materials as opposed to textbooks, is rare in many countries, especially in lower and middle-income countries. There are many reasons for this, which will be explored in more detail in other sessions. But a major factor is that knowledge of how children learn to read is variable, and the purpose of essential reading books in classrooms is often not clear to educators, administrators, and parents, which can lead to books not being prioritized in schools and classrooms. The bottom line, however, is that learning how to read requires practice just like any other skill. And what do children need to practice reading with? Books, of course! Children do not learn to read automatically, and while looking at books and hearing books being read out loud is important, they need to practice their reading skills by reading different types of books every day. The research points to books playing a critical role in building and improving reading skills:

- Providing children access to books and time to engage in guided independent reading, including a variety of genres and levels of difficulty roughly matched to their interests and abilities, has been directly tied to their gaining better vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension skills.⁴

⁴ Harvey, S. and Ward, A. 2017. *From Striving to Thriving: How to Grow Confident, Capable Readers*. Scholastic, Incorporated, 2017. ISBN: 1338051962, 9781338051964

- A recent study covering families in 35 countries of varying income levels found that having at least one children’s book at home almost doubled the likelihood of the child being on track in literacy and numeracy.⁵
- One study undertaken across 27 countries of varying incomes (ranging from rural China, Chile, South Africa, and Philippines to Germany and the Netherlands) found that children growing up in homes with many books get three years more schooling than children from bookless homes, independent of their parents’ education, occupation, and class. It holds equally in high- and low-resourced contexts.⁶

Activity 2.1—Think-Pair-Share (10 minutes)

This module is about the active use of books. To ensure all participants are in agreement on what this means, ask participants to do a think-pair-share on the following questions:

- *Where do children find books to read?*
- *What does active use of books mean to you?*

For the think-pair-share activity, have participants note down their own thoughts on the question and then pair up and share their thoughts with the person sitting next to them. Ask the pairs to share their thoughts with the larger group and capture this on a flip chart. Ensure that it is clear to participants that in this session, “active use” is defined as (write this on a flip chart):

“Using textbooks and supplementary reading materials in an effective and deliberate manner in schools and in the community to increase children’s reading and literacy skills.” (Share Slide 14 which includes the definition).

How Children Learn to Read

Procedure

Using Slides 13–16, present the content material below. Call on participants to read the two definitions out loud. Take care to define any terms that may be new to participants. Ensure participants understand the distinction between reading and literacy. Take any questions participants may have. Then carry out the **Activity 2.2—Key Reading Skills** (Slide 17).

⁵Manu, A., Ewerling, F., Barros, A.J.D., Victora, C.G. 2019. Association between availability of children’s book and the literacy-numeracy skills of children aged 36 to 59 months: secondary analysis of the UNICEF Multiple-Indicator Cluster Surveys covering 35 countries. *Journal of Global Health*. 2019 Jun; 9(1): 010403. Published online 2018 Oct 25. doi: 10.7189/jogh.09.010403. PMCID: PMC6204005. PMID: 30410746

⁶ Evans, M. D. R., Kelley, J., Sikora, J., Treiman, D. J. 2010. Family scholarly culture and educational success: Books and schooling in 27 nations. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility* 28(2):171-197. DOI: 10.1016/j.rssm.2010.01.002

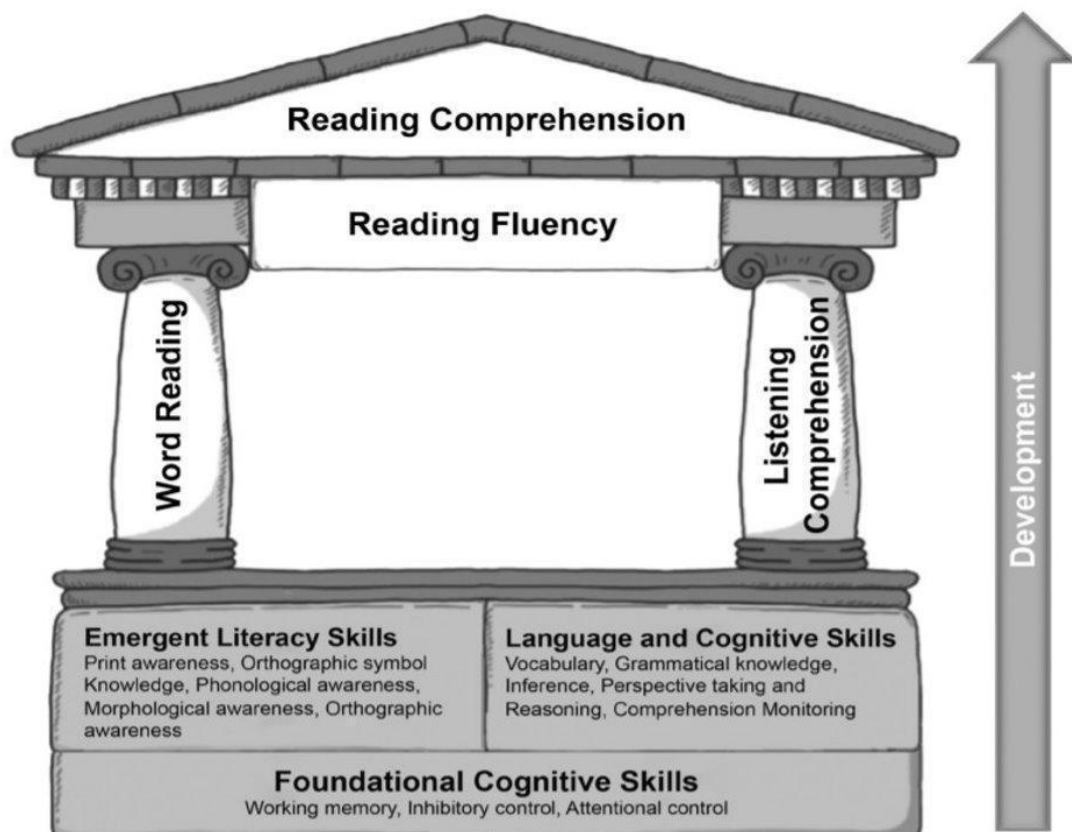


Content

It is important to ensure that all participants are on the same page regarding terms and definitions related to literacy and reading, as there may be misconceptions as well as confusion around these terms.

- Literacy is “the ability to use printed and written material in a wide variety of contexts to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, and compute” (UNESCO, 2017). This includes Braille.
- Reading is defined as “the ability to make meaning from text, which requires proficiency in five key skills: phonemic awareness, phonetic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension” (Leipzig, 2001). This includes phonological awareness for reading Braille as well as visual, tactile, and kinesthetic cues using sign language.

This distinction, between having the skills to manipulate words and then using these skills to understand and communicate with words, is small but critical. The following discussions will delve deeper into the component skills required to develop reading and literacy.



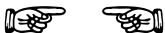
Learning to read and comprehend written texts “involves highly complex language and cognitive processes, requiring development and coordination of multiple skills through a

developmental sequence.”⁷ In order to read with comprehension, which is the goal of reading, students need to develop five key skills, which must be explicitly taught:


- **Phonemic Awareness:** The ability to hear, identify and manipulate the individual sounds in words. Phonemic awareness is necessary to grasp phonetic awareness.
- **Phonetic Awareness (also called the “alphabetic principle”):** The ability to understand and identify the predictable relationship between given phonemes and their written representation. Students who have strong phonetic awareness can begin to decode words and phrases.
- **Fluency:** The ability to read connected text with speed, accuracy, prosody (rhythm and intonation), and comprehension.
- **Vocabulary:** A knowledge of the meaning of words which supports both reading fluency and comprehension.
- **Reading Comprehension:** The ability to read and extract meaning from connected text.

Readers also need to develop the two pillars of Reading Comprehension, which are Listening Comprehension and Writing Skills. These skills enable learners to achieve Reading Fluency and Reading Comprehension:

- **Listening Comprehension:** Requires knowledge of the vocabulary, grammar, and discourse patterns (the way language is used) in spoken, signed, or tactile languages at a level that allows for comprehension of a text read aloud or in which they are presented, depending on the modality of the language used.
- **Writing:** The ability to express ideas and information in written or Braille form.

	<p>Trainer’s Notes—For Activity 2.2—Key Reading Skills divide participants into small groups; each group should have 4 participants. Use a strategy like asking each participant to count out loud to a specific number (for example 1, 2, 3, 4 and then start over 1, 2, 3, 4) to get to the number of groups required for your group size.</p>
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Activity 2.2—Key Reading Skills (15 minutes)

Separate participants into small groups. Provide each group with  **Handout 1: Key Reading Skills** and ask them to match the skill with the correct definition. Give them 7–8 minutes to work and then ask them to share their responses. Correct any misunderstandings and take questions.

⁷ Kim, Y.-S. G., Boyle, H. N., Zuilkowski, S. S., & Nakamura, P. (2016). Landscape report on early grade literacy. United States Agency for International Development.

- **Phonemic Awareness:** The ability to hear, identify, and manipulate the individual sounds in words. Phonemic awareness is necessary to grasp phonetic awareness.
- **Phonetic Awareness (also called the “alphabetic principle”):** The ability to understand and identify the predictable relationship between given phonemes and their written representation. Students who have strong phonetic awareness can begin to decode words and phrases.
- **Fluency:** The ability to read connected text with speed, accuracy, prosody (rhythm and intonation), and comprehension.
- **Vocabulary:** A knowledge of the meaning of words which supports both reading fluency and comprehension.
- **Reading Comprehension:** The ability to read and extract meaning from connected text.
- **Listening Comprehension:** Requires knowledge of the vocabulary, grammar, and discourse patterns (the way language is used) in spoken, signed, or tactile languages at a level that allows for comprehension of a text read aloud or in which they are presented, depending on the modality of the language used.
- **Writing:** The ability to express ideas and information in written or Braille form.



Trainer’s Notes—Once you have conducted **Activity 2.2—Key Reading Skills** remind participants that the effective and deliberate use of books in schools is key in children learning to read and that there are particular skills (covered in Activity 2.2) that children need to learn in order to read.

Supplementary Reading Materials

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 2.3—GBA Webinar on International Literacy Day** (Slide 20).



Content

As mentioned earlier, children need books to practice reading skills. **Supplementary reading materials (SRMs)** are materials used for reading practice; these are materials aside from the textbook and do not have to directly tie to the school curriculum. They can include magazines, non-fiction texts, comics or graphic novels, etc. In the early years, specific types of books called “**decodable readers**” are helpful for children just starting to learn how to read. Decodable books are 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.

Decoding is an important skill for children to learn as it helps them build automaticity, which is fast, effortless word recognition that comes when children have had a lot of reading experience and fluency and helps with sounding out words they do not know. These are important skills for independent reading and build the comprehension, stamina, and confidence that readers need to progress to reading independently.

Children may read decodables independently or as part of a small reading circle with their teacher. As their reading skills develop, **leveled readers** provide students with books at their specific reading level, including learned letter-sounds, word complexity, and sight words. Leveled readers range from beginning readers with simple plots and characters that are familiar to children on up to advanced readers, where plots, characters, and themes become more complex and challenging.

Digital reading materials are becoming more widespread, and in addition to the [Global Digital Library](#), organizations like [Room to Read](#), [Storyweaver](#), and the [African Storybook Project](#) are developing books for children in languages they read. Many of these digital repositories include a variety of genres and books across reading levels.

Activity 2.3—GBA Webinar on International Literacy Day (10 minutes)

Participants will listen to the remarks made by Julie Cram and share reflections. After the video, ask participants for their reactions, which may include considerations related to:

- Creating a culture of literacy
- Getting books into the hands of children
- Understanding the BSC issues
- Acknowledging that books are *the* essential commodity in education

Watch the excerpt (beginning at 4:26 until 12:15) from the [Global Book Alliance webinar](#) from International Literacy Day 2020.

Session 3: The Types of Books Children Need



Rationale

Building reading skills requires reading a lot of different types of reading materials: textbooks, books, newspapers, billboards, magazines, etc. These SRMs should be part of all classrooms. Certain types of materials—decodable books and leveled readers—are important for strengthening key literacy skills. This session will explain the distinction between these types of books and how they can be used in the classroom to support reading development.



Objectives

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

1. Describe the two categories of books children can use to strengthen reading skills
2. Explain when to use the different categories of books



Duration: 40 minutes

Time Breakdown

Book Types	10 minutes
When to Use Each Book Type	5 minutes
Activity 3.1—Digital Libraries	15 minutes
Activity 3.2—Video-Teaching Moment	10 minutes
Total:	40 minutes



Materials —

1. Flip charts and markers
2. Internet-enabled laptop devices



Preparation

1. Review the document [Books that Children Can Read: Decodable Books and Book Leveling](#) to get a better understanding of decodable and leveled texts.
2. Review the Global Book Alliance's [Global Digital Library](#) and Room to Read's [Literacy Cloud](#). Become familiar with the reading levels and how they are determined for each. Choose some books across reading levels to share with participants if the Internet and laptops are not available.
3. Watch [video](#) and ensure video works on a laptop or a computer.

Book Types

Procedure

Share the objective of the session on Slide 21. Then, using Slides 22–24, 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—Digital Libraries** (Slide 25).



Content

Non-reading children as well as developing or maturing readers need to read many books in a language they understand to build and strengthen their reading skills. Children with low vision and those who are deaf need books tailored to their abilities like books in Braille or books adapted for sign language for a read aloud. It is also important that children read books that match their reading level. If a student reads a book that is too challenging, they may become frustrated and give up. If a book is too easy, the child is not developing critical foundational skills.

Not all children in a classroom will be reading at the same level. A classroom library should have a range of books at different reading levels and different modalities of reading. A classroom library should have two types of books: **decodable books** and **leveled readers**.

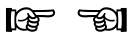
Decodable books support reading development through the use of **carefully sequenced letter-phoneme patterns which follow the scope of the curriculum**. Decodable texts:

- Use explicit patterns, for example, each sentence starts with the same three words: 'This is a cat.'
- Use repetition.
- Use a specific phonetic progression.

All of this builds on an emergent reader's skills and supports them to build fluency and automaticity. Decodable texts are usually used in grade 1 but in some countries can be used in grades 2, 3, and 4 per student reading needs and language complexity

Leveled readers are books that are organized in levels of difficulty from the easy books that an emergent reader might read to the longer, complex books that advanced readers will select. Leveled readers are generally geared to the grade-level curriculum and the skills that students are mastering and are usually written by experienced authors. There are many factors that are considered when assigning a book: a particular reading level, including the number of pages in the book; the total number of words and the number of words per page; how the book is organized; the types of words that are used; the length of sentences and paragraphs; and whether or not it has illustrations, to name a few. It is not an easy task for teachers to level books on their own. Organizations, such as Room to Read, have worked in countries like Nepal, Zambia, and Sri Lanka to develop leveled readers in local languages for teachers to use. In other countries ministries of education, local publishers, and authors

have developed leveled reading materials and books. Guidance⁸ has been developed to support teachers and schools to create their own decodable books and leveled readers.

	<p>Trainer's Notes— The full report <i><u>Books that Children Can Read: Decodable Books and Book Leveling</u></i> has much more detail on creating books for children in languages they read. In Activity 3.1, participants look at two different online libraries to see how they have leveled books: Room to Read (https://literacycloud.org/) and the Global Book Alliance's Global Digital Library (https://digitallibrary.io/library-books/). If the training facility does not have Internet access or if there are not enough laptops, then the trainer should make some hard copies of books from each digital library for participants.</p>
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Activity 3.1—Exploring Decodables and Leveled Readers through Digital Libraries (15 minutes)

Assign pairs of participants to explore two digital libraries:

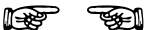
- Room to Read's library (<https://literacycloud.org/>)
- GBA's Global Digital Library (- [Global Digital Library](#))

Ask pairs to explore the decodable books and leveled readers within these libraries. As they explore leveled readers, ask participants to reflect on the following questions:

- *How many levels are there in each library?*
- *Are the levels in each library similar to each other? How are they different?*
- *What differences do you notice in books at Level 1 versus those at Level 4?*
- *How would these digital libraries work in your local context? What changes would need to be made?*

Call on a few pairs to share their findings on each library. Wrap up the activity by explaining that libraries, both digital and physical, are not arranged in the same way. Some libraries may have many more leveled reader categories available than others, depending on the reading level and needs of the children. Encourage participants to notice how different libraries are arranged in classrooms and online.

⁸ USAID. 2013. Books that Children Can Read: Decodable Books and Book Leveling. [Final Report](#).

	<p>Trainer’s Notes—Note for participants that information on additional types of books can be found in the Title Development Module and the Publishing Module. Encourage participants to look at those modules to learn more.</p>
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When to Use Each Book Type

Procedure

Using Slide 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—Video: Teaching Moment** (Slide 27).



Content

Teachers can use both decodable texts and leveled books in the same classroom. Teachers can use decodable texts with groups of children to support explicit instruction in letter-phoneme relationships.

Effective literacy instruction is not limited to only encoding and decoding words—which is what decodable readers are designed to support. Early exposure to a variety of books and other texts will build students’ knowledge of content or concepts, develop their language abilities, and communicate life skills, such as empathy and critical thinking.

When children have learned the common letter-phoneme combinations, and can automatically read key sight words, they should progress to leveled readers. With the whole class, the teacher can use a leveled reader for a read aloud or to instruct on a particular foundational skill. It is important, however, for teachers to have a clear purpose and objectives when using decodable and leveled books for instruction. Keeping a record of children’s progress in reading will help teachers determine when students can move between the different types of books in the classroom library.



Activity 3.2—Video: Teaching Moment (10 minutes)

Participants will watch this [video](#) of a first-grade small group lesson where the teacher is teaching letter phonemes and uses a decodable book to support instruction. The video is 7 minutes, 43 seconds long. As participants watch, they should take notes thinking about the following questions:

- *What reading skill is the teacher working on with her students?*
- *How might you see this approach working in classrooms in your context?*
- *How did the teacher use the decodable text in her lesson?*

- *How could the lesson be revised to accommodate children with disabilities?*

Have participants share their responses “popcorn” style once they have completed their reflections. In popcorn style, people “pop” or speak, when they have a thought to share rather than waiting to be called on and to speak only once.

Session 4: Barriers to Active Use in Schools, Communities, and Homes



Rationale

As we explore more about using books with children, it is important to unpack why books are not being used in classrooms and communities and at home, even in the rare instances where they are available. This session will center on the barriers to lack of use of available books in schools, communities, and homes.



Objectives

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

1. Understand barriers to book use in schools, communities, and homes
2. Discuss context-specific solutions to barriers



Duration: 50 minutes

Time Breakdown

Activity 4.1—Brainstorm	15 minutes
Barriers to Active Use in the Classroom and Communities	20 minutes
Activity 4.2—Case study	15 minutes
Total:	50 minutes



Materials —

1. Flip charts and markers
2. Flip charts with list of barriers
3. Handout 2: REACH Case Study (Zambia)



Preparation


1. One large flip chart per small group and 2 to 3 markers.
2. This section includes slides that describe general barriers to enhanced book use in classrooms, communities, and homes. Supplement the information in this section with your own research for your context (situational analyses, white papers, donor reports, etc.) to provide a more nuanced discussion for your participants. [USAID's Global Book Fund Feasibility Study](#) includes supplementary information for various contexts and would be a good place to start.

3. Read the [case study](#) on Zambia and note barriers and solutions.

Barriers to Active Use in the School, Community, and Homes

Procedure

Share objectives of the session on Slide 28. Then introduce the session with **Activity 4.1—Brainstorm** (Slide 29). After participants complete the brainstorm, share Slides 30–33 to supplement what groups presented, present the content below, and summarize the barriers, making sure to point out any barriers on the slides that were not mentioned by participants.

	<p>Trainer's Notes—Remind participants of the rules of brainstorming:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. There are no wrong ideas2. As many ideas as possible—be creative!3. Don't criticize others' ideas—"judgment-free zone"4. Build on others' ideas
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Activity 4.1—Brainstorm (15 minutes)

Provide small groups of participants with flip chart paper and pens. Tell participants to think about all of the barriers that keep books and SRMs from being used in classrooms, homes, and the community. Barriers can be those that are **systemic**, which include larger structural issues such as policies, infrastructure, supply chain, etc. Other barriers can be at the **school level**, like a lack of teacher training, or at the **community level**, such as a lack of community libraries, or at **home**, where parents are not literate and cannot support their children.

Assign each group one of the four barriers: systemic, school, community, and home (if there are more than four small groups of participants, groups can be assigned the same barrier). Give participants 10 minutes to brainstorm the barriers and then have them put their flip charts up on the wall. Let them know that you will return to their responses after you present the content.

Present the content below and return to the ideas from participants. Ask them to share if they identified any barriers you didn't cover.



Content

Barriers to availability of books

There are many barriers as to why supplementary materials, like books, are not available in schools and communities.

Some of barriers are systemic and include:

- Lack of a national policy framework on book provision.
- Inconsistent education policies on language, curriculum, and supplemental materials.
- Lack of a budget at the national level to provide books to schools in sufficient quantities.
- The BSC is weak and books often do not make it to schools, or they arrive late or damaged.
- Hefty taxes on books (VAT, GST) hamper book supply.
- Unstable printing environment, e.g., publishers are unable to print large quantities of books due to out-of-date printing equipment and low-quality or high-cost of materials for printing, such as ink, binding equipment, and paper.

At the school-level, even when books are available, they are often not used. Some reasons include:

- Teacher training focuses on strictly following the curriculum, and teachers have not been trained on integrating the use of other types of books in the classroom instruction or into a mandated class timetable.
- Administrators haven't been provided with proper training on the use and care of books.
- Sometimes supplementary materials like leveled readers and magazines are kept locked in a head teacher's office to avoid them being damaged by children.

Reading outside of school is not widespread in many contexts. Community-level barriers to reading include:

- A lack of knowledge on the importance of reading books outside of school or for pleasure.
- Financial constraints to purchase books.
- Few books at the appropriate reading levels and in local languages are available in the market.
- Few community libraries and limited books for younger readers.

In order for children to read effectively, they must also practice reading skills in the home.

Barriers to using books at home include:

- Low-literate/nonliterate parents or caregivers.
- Lack of parental knowledge on how to support children's reading in the home.
- Lack of knowledge on importance of reading books outside of school.
- Lack of time for after-school reading activities.
- Distances to travel to access books is far and or security is poor.

There are ways to address these barriers and we will read a case study from Zambia where the issue of textbook delivery was addressed in a creative way. In the next session, we will brainstorm context-based solutions to these barriers.

A Case Study on Removing Barriers to Use

Procedure

Carry out **Activity 4.2—Case Study** (Slides 34–35). After participants complete the brainstorm activity, wrap up the discussion on barriers by telling participants that in the next session, they will brainstorm some additional recommendations and solutions, such as the one described in the case study, to increase the active use of books in schools, communities and at home.

Activity 4.2—Case study (15 minutes)

Systemic barriers to book provision in schools can be addressed by those within the Ministry of Education and other government entities. The following case study from Zambia illustrates how incentivizing schools and administrators improves the last mile delivery of textbooks and other reading materials to hard-to-reach schools. The full text can be found [here](#); an edited version is included in the appendix.

Allow participants 5–7 minutes to read the case study independently. After they are finished, have a full group discussion on the following:

- *Are there similar last mile delivery issues in your context? How are they being addressed?*
- *Does your context utilize incentive-based methods to solve problems related to schools and education? How?*
- *Are there other solutions to shortages in supplementary materials in schools that have been used successfully in your context that you are aware of? Please explain.*



Trainer's Notes—Note for participants that more information on delivery and distribution of books to schools can be found in the **Distribution to the Education Sector Module**. Encourage participants to look at this module to learn more.

Session 5: Good Practices for Increasing Active Use in Schools, Communities, and Homes



Rationale

In this session, participants will brainstorm context-specific solutions for ensuring books in classrooms and communities make it into children's hands; learn effective strategies for how to increase reading outside of school; and read case studies of successful global approaches to increasing book use by children. Systemic barriers that hinder the use of books in schools and communities will be addressed in a separate module.



Objectives

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

1. Brainstorm context-specific solutions to ensure books are used in classrooms and communities and at home
2. Share a country-specific example about improved book use
3. Describe three strategies for active use of books in home and classrooms



Duration: 70 minutes

Time Breakdown

Activity 5.1—Brainstorming Solutions	20 minutes
Strategies to Support Active Use of Books in Schools and Communities and at Home	10 minutes
Global Best Practices and Recommendations for Active Book Use	15 minutes
Activity 5.2—Case studies	25 minutes
Total:	70 minutes



Materials—

1. Flip charts and markers
2. Internet-enabled laptop
3. Handout 3: Engaging Families to Support Student Reading Skill Development



Preparation

1. Read the [case study](#) from Bangladesh: *Can Incentives for Community Authors Reduce Shortages in Minority Language Reading Materials*.
2. Read the [case studies](#) from Mali and Mexico included in *Engaging Families and Communities to Support Student Reading Skills Development*.

Strategies to Support Active Use of Books in Schools and Communities and at Home



Procedure

Share session objectives on Slide 36. Carry out **Activity 5.1—Brainstorming Solutions** (Slide 37). Then share the content using Slides 38–40 “Solutions to Barriers to Book Use” to supplement those that participants shared. Then share Slide 41.



Activity 5.1—Brainstorming Solutions (20 minutes)

Ask groups to retrieve their flip charts with barriers from the previous session. Provide new flip chart paper to each group and ask them to title the paper “Solutions.” Ask groups to review their list of barriers and on the new flip chart paper write down solutions for each barrier.

For example, if a barrier was a lack of teacher training on book use, a solution can be to conduct training programs for teachers on how to effectively use books in the classroom. Provide time for groups to come up with solutions, then call on each group to share their solutions. Once they are done, ask them to post these on the wall.



Trainer’s Notes—Try to draw out from participants a more nuanced understanding around the barriers to reading at home and in communities. Some questions to ask to probe deeper would include:

-How do we change entrenched perceptions that reading is only done at school or only with teachers?

-How do we help parents make time to read for pleasure and support children’s reading at home?

-Do you know of any examples in your context where communities have come together around reading?



Content

Ensuring that books are used by children in classrooms and homes requires supporting teachers and family members with strategies that they can implement easily. With the proper training and guidance, teachers and family members can support children's reading skills. The following are some simple ways teachers can support reading in school:

- Designate a specific time for independent reading in the classroom
- Set up a classroom library with books at different levels that are easy for children to access
- Read books out loud to children
- Pair students to read together
- Encourage children to write and present reviews of books they have read

All parents want their children to be successful at school. In many contexts, parents do not think that children must read outside of school. Supporting parents to create a culture of reading in the home can go a long way in supporting children's literacy and reading development. The following are some strategies that all parents and community members, even those that are not literate or do not have access to books or other reading materials, can try with children in the community to support reading outside of school:


- Create a book corner in the home or a reading corner in the community where children can read
- Encourage children to read every day
- Talk to children and ask them questions
- Find literacy everywhere- point out words while shopping, working, playing

Global Best Practices and Recommendations for Active Book Use



Procedure

Read through the cases presented below thoroughly. Present the content below using Slides 42 and 43, which list "Recommendations" from global examples of how communities have ensured books are available to children and are used in classrooms and communities. Add additional details from the content below that you feel is most relevant for your training

context. Then pass out  **Handout 3: Engaging Families and Communities to Support Student Reading Skills Development** and conduct **Activity 5.2–Reflecting on Case Studies** (Slide 44).



Content

In this module, we have discussed the importance of books in helping children read and some of the barriers to why books aren't being used in the classrooms; we have also brainstormed some context-specific solutions to solving this problem. In recent years, several approaches have been implemented to improve student's access and use of books in languages they read. The following examples from Bangladesh, Mali, and Mexico


illustrate how local governments, NGOs, and community members can come together to improve children's access and active use of books:

Bangladesh: The Chittagong district in Bangladesh is home to many minority language speakers. In an effort to increase the number of books in these local languages, a competition was held for local authors to create books for children in local languages. Winning entries received cash prizes and were honored at an awards ceremony. Authors also received training on using Bloom software to develop digital books. The result was 101 participants submitted 252 books for review of which 62 were selected, printed, and distributed to schools. Digital copies were posted on a government portal that everyone could access and was a motivating factor for participants. The cost for developing these books using the competition method was less than what it would have cost using the traditional method of hiring authors and illustrators and working with the publishing industry to print and distribute books. Full case study available [here](#).

Mexico: A project aimed at improving reading skills of grades 1–3 students worked with community libraries to increase student reading outside of school. High-quality children's books across a variety of genres and reading levels in digital formats were provided to libraries, and students could access these materials on tablets or computers. The project also provided training workshops for parents and caregivers to increase engagement in their children's reading on topics including good reading habits, the importance of summer reading, and where to find reading resources. Full case study available [here](#).

Mali: Another project focused on grades 1–3. The Your Child, Reading, and You project in Mali focused on improving reading skills of emergent and foundational readers. Libraries were equipped with hard copies of leveled readers in local languages as well as digital audio, texts, and interactive activities on tablets. Awareness raising and home visits for parents helped parents see the value in creating a culture of reading and reading for pleasure. Children participating in the program had strong results on endline assessments measuring improvement in literacy skills. Full case study available [here](#).

Activity 5.2—Reflecting on Case Studies (25 minutes)

Put participants in small groups and distribute one case study found in  **Handout 3-Engaging Families and Communities to Support Student Reading Skills Development** to each group (each participant should be given their own copy of the case study). Ask participants to read their case study independently for about 5 minutes (or ask the group leader to read the case to the group) and then to discuss their case, focusing on the following questions:

- *What feature of these programs did you like the most? Why?*
- *Which of these programs can you see being successful in your context?*
- *Each of these projects faced barriers like a lack of time for families to participate in workshops, poor promotion of program activities, and a feeling of intimidation by*

parents to attend programs, what barriers to family and caregiver engagement do you anticipate in your context?

- *How can these barriers be addressed and resolved?*

Circulate among the groups, listening to the contributions.

After 10 minutes, ask a group member for each case to give a brief synopsis of the case. After they are finished, engage all participants in a full group discussion on the questions above.

Session 6: Wrap-Up and Reflection on the Workshop



Rationale

Through the preceding sessions, participants have discussed why books are not being used in classrooms and communities and have generated solutions for how books can be used meaningfully in classrooms and communities. 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:

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



Duration: 35 minutes

Time Breakdown

Activity 6.1—Taking Action and Expectations Review	20 minutes
Evaluation	15 minutes
Total:	35 minutes



Materials—

1. Flip charts and markers
2. Handout 4: Evaluation Questionnaire



Preparation

1. Display expectations on the walls of the training room or via PPT
2. Review the Evaluation Questionnaire and make enough copies for all participants



Procedure

Share Slide 45. Complete the module by conducting **Activity 6.1—Taking Action and Expectations Review** (Slide 46). Once completed, hand out the Evaluation Questionnaire (Slide 47) and ask participants to complete it individually 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 6.1—Taking Action and Expectations Review (20 minutes)

Ask participants to first reflect individually on *what actions they would like to take to improve the book supply chain in their individual contexts* and then *to describe possible actions to promote active use at the school and community levels*. 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: Key Reading Skills

Match the terms below with their correct definition. Use each choice only once.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Phonemic Awareness ____ | a. The ability to read connected text with speed, accuracy, prosody (rhythm and intonation), and comprehension. |
| 2. Writing ____ | b. The ability to hear, identify, and manipulate the individual phonemes in words. |
| 3. Vocabulary ____ | c. The ability to read and extract meaning from connected text. |
| 4. Listening Comprehension ____ | d. The ability to express ideas and information in written form. |
| 5. Phonetic Awareness ____ | e. A knowledge of the meaning of words which supports both reading fluency and comprehension. |
| 6. Reading Comprehension ____ | f. The ability to understand and identify the predictable relationship between given phonemes and their written representation. Students who have strong phonetic awareness can begin to decode words and phrases. Students who are deaf use visual, tactile, and kinesthetic cues. |
| 7. Fluency ____ | g. Requires knowledge of the vocabulary, grammar, and discourse patterns (the way language is used) in spoken, tactile, or signed languages at a level that allows for comprehension of a text read aloud. |

Session 4

Handout 2: REACH Case Study (Zambia)

Can Financial Incentives Improve the Last-Mile Delivery of Textbooks?

Context: This study examined how financial incentives to district offices and schools impacted the distribution and availability of textbooks at schools in Zambia. A public expenditure review of the Zambian education system has shown that 91 percent of schools lack textbooks, and on average, five to six pupils share less than one textbook, including textbooks in local languages. To address this shortage, the REACH Trust Fund provided a grant to investigate the factors related to the availability of textbooks in schools and to evaluate a set of financial incentive mechanisms for improving the last-mile delivery of textbooks.

In general, publishers deliver the books to the central warehouse of the Ministry of General Education (MoGE) in Lusaka, then the Ministry organizes for the books to be delivered first to the Provincial Education Offices (PEOs), then to the District Education Board Secretariats (DEBS) schools. PEOs that have the resources to do so collect their textbooks from the MoGE early and distribute them promptly to their DEBS, whereas resource-constrained PEOs postpone collecting their textbooks from Lusaka until they have secured their distribution budget. Although the official responsibility of textbook delivery is held by the DEBS, the actual practice in most districts has been for the DEBS to ask the schools to collect their books, either from the DEBS offices or from zone-center schools to which DEBS sometimes deliver the books. The DEBS are also responsible for informing schools about what textbooks are available, but how each DEBS does this varies in practice from making an announcement during unrelated workshops or meetings to sending out group phone messages to head teachers.

About the intervention: This study focused on the distribution aspect of textbook supply, in particular, the last-mile delivery of textbooks from regional education offices to schools in Zambia. Specifically, the questions that the research set out to answer were:

- What is the current status of textbook distribution in Zambia, and what are the factors that influence their availability?
- Do financial incentives have any impact on textbook distribution and availability? What kind of financing scheme might be effective in improving the last-mile delivery of textbooks?
- Does providing information to schools about textbook availability increase the numbers that are available in schools?

Intervention design: The study evaluated two different incentive schemes to measure their impact on last-mile delivery of textbooks to schools:

Scheme 1 provided payments to schools, while Scheme 2 provided payments to the DEBS. Each of the two schemes was implemented in nine randomly selected districts, while

another nine districts were selected to be the control group. All 27 districts received an upfront grant of 7,800 ZMW (US\$557) to fund the distribution of textbooks. In Scheme 1, each remote school was awarded an incentive payment of 700 ZMW (US\$50) whenever staff from the school collected its allocation of textbooks from the DEBS office within four weeks after receiving an official notice that they were available. Alternatively, each remote school was awarded an incentive payment of 400 ZMW (US\$28) if the school staff collected the textbooks between four and eight weeks after receiving the official notice.

In **Scheme 2**, each DEBS was awarded an incentive payment of 325 ZMW (US\$23) for every remote school and 180 ZMW (US\$13) for every non-remote school if the DEBS delivered textbooks to the assigned schools within one month after receiving the textbooks from the MoGE. During the endline survey, data was collected on textbook availability and distribution for both pre- and posttreatment periods. Pre-treatment distribution was in 2016 (grade two textbooks) and post-treatment was in 2019 (grade four textbooks). The primary survey respondents were the teachers in charge of textbooks, and their answers were crosschecked against relevant MoGE and DEBS data as well as against any textbook records or inventory kept in the schools.

Results:

1. The school incentive increased the probability of schools receiving textbooks by 12 percentage points (0.126) compared to the control group (Figure 4).
2. On the other hand, the DEBS incentive had no statistically significant impact on the probability of schools receiving their textbooks and actually reduced the probability of schools receiving their textbooks within a month by 0.324.
3. The school incentive scheme increased the probability of schools collecting the books from zone-center schools by about 36 percentage points (0.356) and increased the probability of them collecting books from DEBS offices by about 16 percentage points (0.158). The DEBS incentive scheme had no statistically significant impact on how books were either distributed or collected.

Conclusion: Providing financial incentives to schools to encourage them to collect textbooks from the DEBS level has been shown to increase the availability of textbooks in schools in Zambia. However, providing financial incentives to DEBS does not have any impact on the likelihood of a school receiving textbooks. This is partly because the current textbook delivery practice in districts and communities relies heavily on the action of schools and less on District Education Board secretaries. Thus, providing incentives directly to schools seems to intensify the current last-mile textbook distribution practice and has better results. In addition, providing information to schools on the availability of textbooks at DEBS offices improves the outcomes significantly with minimum cost.

Adapted from: Hong, Seo Yeon; Cao, Xiaonan; Mpuwaliywa, Mpuwaliywa. 2020. "Impact of Financial Incentives and the Role of Information and Communication in Last-Mile Delivery of Textbooks in Zambia." Policy Research Working Paper; No. 9305. World Bank, Washington, DC.

Session 5

Handout 3: Engaging Families and Communities to Support Student Reading Skills Development

Mali: Your Child, Reading, You⁹

Œuvre Malienne d'Aide à l'Enfance du Sahel (OMAES) implemented the Your Child, Reading, and You project in 10 communities in the Ségou region of Mali. The project began in February 2015 and concluded in June 2017. The Your Child, Reading, and You project aimed to improve Malian children's reading abilities—specifically pre-reading and foundational skills—by increasing family's and community members' commitment to their children's reading abilities and by increasing access to print and digital reading materials that supported reading acquisition. The Your Child, Reading, and You project created community libraries that offered literacy activities to children, parents, and caretakers; the libraries were stocked with hard copies of materials developed in the Bamanankan language for beginning readers, including leveled books and locally sourced stories. In five communities, Family Plus libraries provided participants with access to digital audio, texts, and interactive reading activities on low-cost tablets and mobile phones using Stepping Stone¹⁰, a digital learning application (app). This was done to measure the difference in reading skills gains among students who attended libraries supplied only with print materials and those who attended Family Plus libraries that offered the Stepping Stone technology.

All libraries also held writing workshops to promote a culture of reading in the communities. During the workshops, community members could contribute local stories that were then developed into books and subsequently distributed to all community libraries. Children and their parents were invited to visit the library three times per week at fixed times, though children could go to the library unaccompanied at any time. The Your Child, Reading, and You project staff also conducted home visits to teach family members different games and activities to help their children learn to read. Parents and caretakers who attended Family Plus libraries could also upload Stepping Stone and the accompanying electronic materials onto their mobile phones. EGRA results show that students with access to the community libraries outperformed students in the comparison group (Table 2). Students from Family Plus libraries had effect sizes of 1.0 and 0.7 on the letter sound identification and non-word reading subtasks, respectively. The Your Child, Reading, and You project reached 500 students in grades 1 through 3. The grant award was US\$388,416.

⁹ Redacted from: All Children Reading. 2017. Your Child, Reading, and You. Implemented by Œuvre Malienne d'Aide à l'Enfance du Sahel in Mali.

¹⁰ Students in intervention A attended libraries that provided access to tablets with the Stepping Stone app and digital reading content in addition to offering community library services. Students in intervention B attended libraries that did not offer access to the technological innovations of the project. Students in the comparison group did not have access to community libraries nor any of the technologies offered by the YCRY project.

Mexico: Mundo de Libros¹¹

Qué Funciona para el Desarrollo (QFD) collaborated with Fundación Proacceso to implement the Mundo de Libros project in 10 digital libraries¹² in Estado de México in Mexico. The project began in February 2015 and concluded in April 2017. The Mundo de Libros project aimed to improve reading skills—specifically reading fluency—and reading habits of students enrolled in grades 1 through 3. QFD developed the innovative MATCH algorithm, which used students’ literacy level and the difficulty level of books to make personalized reading recommendations. QFD also built a Web-based platform to share these recommendations with students through individual student profiles. In addition, the project granted students access to libraries with a high-quality selection of children’s books, developed a system for leveling books, and provided workshops for parents and caretakers to support children’s reading. Children could access their book recommendations through the Mundo de Libros platform and check out books from the libraries. The digital libraries had computers or tablets available for students to use to access the platform.

To engage families and communities, QFD hosted workshops for parents and caretakers at participating libraries every two months for a total of five workshops over the course of the Mundo de Libros project. The Mundo de Libros project team members led the workshops, which centered around a variety of topics, including good reading habits (e.g., recommended reading session length and activities to do before and after reading), the importance of summer reading, and reading resources available outside of school. QFD distributed informational handouts during each workshop that attendees could share with others in the household. The project also encouraged parents and caretakers to accompany their children to the digital libraries and to help them use the Mundo de Libros Web-based platform. QFD did not require that the parents directly interact with the technologies used through the project. Children could attend the library unaccompanied.

Students who participated in the Mundo de Libros project showed statistically significant reading gains across all EGRA subtasks from baseline to endline; however, it is not possible to assess to what extent reading gains were the result of the intervention or an additional year of schooling due to the research design of the project. The Mundo de Libros project reached 856 students in grade 1 through 3.¹³ The grant award was US\$317,387.

¹¹ Redacted from: All Children Reading. 201. Engaging Families and Communities to Support Student Reading Skills Development: Lessons from Four All Children Reading: A Grand Challenge for Development Projects

¹² Digital libraries are community spaces to consult and create digital content, access information, read, learn, and meet academic, personal, professional, and social needs. They are equipped with computers and tablets with internet access; however, before this project, they had no physical stock of books nor library furniture.

¹³ The research study evaluated 457 students who had enrolled in the project by January 2016.

Session 6

Handout 4: Evaluation Questionnaire

Thank you for participating in the Global Book Alliance's Active Use module. Your comments and feedback on the module will help improve future sessions. Please take some time and answer the questions below as fully, honestly, and with as much detail as you can. All of your responses will remain confidential. Thank you.

1. To what extent has your knowledge of the barriers to active use of books 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 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 why books are not being used in classrooms and communities? What made it useful?

4. What parts of this module was least useful in helping you understand why books are not being used in classrooms and communities? 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: