

# Children's Literacy Charter



Literacy is the foundation of education and the gateway to a successful adult life in the modern world. This charter invites adults across South Africa to make sure that the conditions which support children's successful literacy learning, are offered to all our children so that they may have personally-rewarding and educationally-successful literacy learning journeys.

**1 Reading for pleasure:** All children should experience exploring reading and writing purely for their own pleasure and satisfaction in their home and additional languages from early childhood onwards.



**2 Stories:** All children should have regular opportunities to listen to, read and talk about stories from South Africa, Africa and around the world.

**3 Exploring the world:** All children should have daily opportunities to use reading and writing to help them explore life from both imaginary and realistic perspectives. These opportunities enable them to learn about themselves and others while exploring their changing place in the world and how they can contribute to it.

**4 Inspiration:** Children of all ages need people to read to them in ways which inspire them to want to read for themselves. Family members at home, teachers in their classrooms and librarians at local or school libraries should read aloud to children regularly.

**5 Role models:** Adults need to model reading and writing for children. Children need to see the adults at home and school, and in their communities using writing and reading to get things done, to learn and for entertainment.

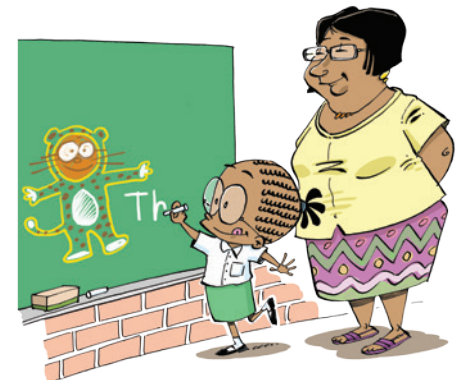
**6 Learning to read and write:** All children at school have the right to be taught how to read and write by skilled and inspiring teachers who communicate with them in language/s they understand, exposing them to wonderful stories and interesting texts as part of their teaching.

**7 Time and place:** Children need to be given sufficient and regular free time to relax and read. They also need quiet places in which to do this.

**8 Access to material:** Children need to easily be able to find a variety of reading and writing materials in their immediate environment. They need access to a large selection of story- and other books, whether these are owned, or borrowed from school and public libraries close enough to where they live. They also need to be surrounded by environmental print in languages they know and understand.

**9 Books to inspire:** Children have the right to good quality books with high quality writing and illustrations, exciting storylines and engaging information. Good quality books are the most likely to "switch" children on to reading as a lifelong habit.

**10 Selection:** Children need to be given opportunities to choose what they want to read sometimes and at other times be offered guidance by adults. Self-selection helps children to mature as readers because it allows them to develop criteria for the types of books that interest them.



**11 Encouragement:** Children deserve to have all their attempts at reading and writing celebrated by the adults in their lives and to be encouraged to continue to extend their use of written and oral language. On their journey to becoming literate, children will sometimes get things wrong and sometimes get them right. This, together with encouragement, is how we all learn.

