

# HOW TO SET UP AND **MANAGE** A CLASSROOM LIBRARY



## What is a Classroom Library?



The classroom library/collection comprises a box or reading bag of theme-related resources, a reading mat, a shelf or a cupboard (may be fitted with wheels to be used as a portable library unit) of reading and information resources appropriate to the level of the learners in the class, as well as to the curriculum.

This collection of reading resources includes fiction, non-fiction and reference materials such as encyclopaedias, atlases and dictionaries. The fiction material can be in the form of different genres such as animal stories, historical fiction, as sets of readers etc.

It serves two purposes, viz:

- it provides resources to assist in the teaching and learning
- it encourages reading for pleasure

The collection should appeal to children of the target age group. It should be levelled/graded according to the reading ages, interests, likes, experiences and abilities of the learners in the class. It should also cover the different languages and language levels within the school.

### Why Set Up a Classroom Library?

Making books available in the classroom is an effective way of promoting literacy because it:

- Encourages learners to learn to read so that they can read to learn;
- Inculcates the reading habit;
- Makes books easily accessible to learners; it also allows children to spend more time browsing and looking at books;
- Creates a conducive environment for literacy development that will promote engagement, excitement as well as encourage readers of all age groups and ability levels to explore books;
- Encourages an enquiring mind through the provision of relevant information sources;
- Supports the curriculum; and
- Promotes the acquisition of information literacy skills and digital literacy skills where digital literacy resources are available.

TODAY A READER,  
TOMORROW A  
LEADER



READING IS TO  
THE MIND  
WHAT EXERCISE IS  
TO THE BODY



BOOKS ARE FUEL  
FOR ACHIEVEMENT



## When can a Classroom Library be used?



Once you have your classroom library started, you have to create time for children to interact and read the books. Encourage them to use the classroom library resources to support their learning processes; i.e. making use of reference material like encyclopaedias, dictionaries and atlases is a skill that has to be taught. The classroom library is a good source for learners to read for pleasure. Children should also be encouraged to borrow books to read at home. Use their free time meaningfully. This can always be a free time activity to do after other assignments are finished to inculcate the culture of leisure reading.

### Who sets up and manages ?

The Principal with the assistance of the School Management Team (SMT) and School Library Committee will oversee, monitor and support the establishment and management of classroom libraries, however the class teachers need to take full responsibility in establishing and managing the classroom library.

### Where can a Classroom Library be set up?

The box/reading bag/shelf or cupboard is placed in a position where it is easily accessible to the learners, so that they can access the library resources during classroom activities or when they have completed work ahead of their peers.

### How to establish a Classroom Library Book stock

Various options of accumulating book stock can be explored. These can include donations. The following are suggestions:

- If the school library has adequate stock, a school with a centralised library could also ensure that smaller resource collections are placed in classrooms by means of block loans, and these must be exchanged regularly, so that learners are exposed to a range of resources.
- Ask your public library or mobile library about a block loan programme. These libraries allow teachers to check out books for an extended period of time to use in their classrooms
- The school can form partnerships with key stakeholders in the community to donate books or to raise funds to purchase books for the classroom libraries.

### Circulation and stock control

Every item in the classroom library needs to be recorded in an accession register (this can be an exercise book). At the end of every term the teacher should do stock taking to make sure that all the items are accounted for.

If books are borrowed, there needs to be a system of recording what has been issued. This can be done by using a loan register or a system of accession cards. Alternatively each learner can have an index card filed in a box and the same details are recorded on the card. They can be filed either by due date or by the learner's last name.



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