

## Webinar 2: Handout 1

# Guidance on the content and design of teacher's guides

Teacher's guides should be designed with the end user in mind. Readability and accessibility of content are key.

### Level of scaffolding or scripting

One important consideration when developing teacher's guides is the amount and type of scaffolding, or scripting, included in the guide. The level of scripting will vary depending on several factors. These include teacher needs and preferences, time available to develop scripts, and previous experience and research regarding the effectiveness of scripting for a given population of teachers, program and context.

A recent study titled *Effectiveness of Teachers' Guides in the Global South: Scripting, Learning Outcomes, and Classroom* by Piper, B., Mejia, J., Sitabkhan, Y. & Betts, K. (2018) reviewed teacher's guides from 19 EGR programs in 13 countries and found wide variation in the amount of scripting. The study including reviewing the level of scripting of the teacher's guides, observing teachers' classroom practices and analyzing student outcomes. The study found that the quality of instruction was higher when teacher's guides were simple to use, had easy-to-follow instructions and when the instructional method was consistent. Scripted lesson plans that provided verbatim text for the teacher to read were found to be less effective than more simplified lessons that provided guidance on what to do and say.

In other words, detailed word-for-word instructions do not necessarily result in more effective instruction. This is because dense text may be difficult for teachers to read if they are not fluent in the language. It may also be difficult for a teacher to read fluidly and naturally when standing in front of a classroom of students if they are reading sentences that may not be "in their own voice." In addition, the more detailed the scripting, the longer (and heavier) a teacher's guide becomes, which will increase the cost, as well as how easily teachers are able to hold it throughout lesson delivery. The authors provide a set of recommendations on teacher guide structure, content and

Source: Piper, B., Sitabkhan, Y., Mejía, J., and Betts, K. (2018). *Effectiveness of Teachers' Guides in the Global South: Scripting, Learning Outcomes, and Classroom Utilization*. RTI Press Publication No. OP-0053-1805. Research Triangle Park, NC: RTI Press. <https://doi.org/10.3768/rtipress.2018.op.0053.1805>

See a summary of the report in: Mejia, J., Sitabkhan, Y., & Piper, B. (2018). *How scripted is too scripted? A mixed-methods analysis of teachers' guides*. Presentation at the annual conference of Comparative International Education Society (CIES). Mexico City, Mexico. Available at <http://shared.rti.org/content/how-scripted-too-scripted-mixed-methods-analysis-literacy-teachers-guides-cies-2018>.

## Recommendations on Teacher Guide content and design:

### Content and instruction

1. **Use a consistent instructional method.** The teachers' guide should be consistent throughout all lessons, to create routine and structure for the teachers and students. This should be derived from a carefully designed scope and sequence.
2. **Include daily lesson plans.** Develop one lesson (with appropriate number of activities) for each day. The number and type of activities will vary by grade and context, and should cover the critical skills but be limited by the amount of instructional time available.
3. **Use heavier scripting in the beginning of the guide and reduce to lighter scripting.** Use full scripting in the beginning lessons of the teachers' guide and reduce to lighter scripting later in the guide.
4. **Limit the number of activities per lesson.** The number of activities within a lesson should consider the amount of instructional time available and make sure that all critical activities can actually be done during the classroom instructional time. No more than five to seven activities should be done within a 30–45 minute lesson period. Time should be allocated for transitions between activities as needed.
5. **Embed in each lesson checks for understanding and other types of informal assessment.** Different strategies for teachers to monitor student learning should be included within the structure of the lesson.
6. **Include guidance on differentiated instruction.** Support to teachers for noticing and responding to student needs should be included slowly and deliberately, over the course of a project. For example, in Year 1, the focus may be on noticing that students respond differently. In Year 2, the teachers' guide may then provide suggestions and/or examples on extension activities for the particular needs of higher- and lower-performing students.

### Design/formatting

7. **Limit the length of each lesson.** Ideally, each 30–45 minute lesson should be only one page long, with initial lessons in the teachers' guide potentially two pages long to accommodate more detailed guidance to the teacher. The teachers' guide should use succinct wording. Ensure font is legible.
8. **List goals and/or objectives for each lesson.** Clearly identify the theme, goals, and/or objectives of each for the teacher such that she or he is clear on the overarching aim for the various activities contained within the day's lesson. In addition, list any resources or materials that are needed to aid the teacher in teaching the lesson.
9. **Embed an image of the student book page in the lesson.** The embedded page should be an appropriate size such that it is legible to the teacher.
10. **The guide should be lightweight with appropriate binding.** The guide should not be too heavy for teachers to use and have strong binding (PUR or threadsewn) that allows it to be frequently opened.

## Content and instruction

1. **Provide hints for teacher creativity.** Use text boxes that provide tips that will aid teachers in creating new activities or add to existing activities in creative ways to allow teachers to utilize their skills and ideas to go beyond the structured guidance. This can be to provide additional support or extension activities.
2. **Strategically embed the “why” of the activity.** This may include providing a basic explanation of the reason for some activities chosen and can be included either in the lesson plan or in the front matter. If included in the lesson plan, tips should be short and embedded where space is available and/or extra explanation is needed. For example, a lesson may have a tip for choosing extra practice opportunities (e.g., tips for choosing new words for a blending activity that are consistent with the targeted blend).
3. **Provide suggested activity pacing for the activities in a lesson, using a range of minutes.** List suggested pacing for each activity within the lesson using a range of minutes (for example, 4–7 minutes rather than 5 minutes). Ensure that all activities can be completed within the pacing suggested, considering transition time between activities.
4. **Provide guidance on inclusion.** The guide should contain information to support teachers on how to be inclusive of students with special needs.

## Design/formatting

5. **Reduce front and back matter to absolute basics.** Keep the introduction/conclusion to a minimum, given that they are infrequently used and add to the bulkiness of the guide.
6. **Limit the number of icons.** The teachers’ guide should use icons to guide teachers. However, these should be limited in number, used in a consistent manner, and explained in the introductory pages.
7. **Ensure language used in the guide matches the language of instruction.** The headings, scripts, instructions to teachers, and front matter should be written in the language that matches the language of the content being taught.
8. **Use consistent formatting. Be deliberate and consistent with formatting decisions.** New lessons should start at the top of a new page so they are easily identifiable.
9. **Compile all the necessary information for a lesson in a single place/on the same page.** Teachers’ guides should be designed to not separate the script/instructions from the relevant content, to maximize ease of use. Specifically, a teacher should not have to turn to various sections of the guide to find the content or instructions needed to teach the lesson.

While existing research does not pinpoint a precise amount or level of scripting due to differences in teacher needs, contexts and languages, experience and emerging research on early grade reading programs indicates that densely scripted teacher’s guides are not preferable, for the reasons described above—they become too long and difficult for teachers to read.

Potentially effective alternatives to verbatim lesson plan scripting include:


- Icons to indicate what teachers and students should be doing (see Nigeria RARA and Nigeria RANA examples below)
- Abbreviated, bulleted instructions a teacher should take to implement the lesson or conduct an activity
- An example “script” that illustrates what a teacher could say when teaching a particular skill or implementing a specific activity, included in an annex for reference.

Development of a teacher’s guide should also take into consideration the following:

- Design should allow teacher to easily read lesson plan instructions
- Visual cues can be used to indicate different components of lesson, instructions, etc.
- Binding should allow teacher to easily flip pages and hold book
- Physical specifications of the guide should allow teacher to have one hand free to use for writing on the board
- Book size and weight should be appropriate (consider how long teacher will need to hold it with one hand during lesson delivery)

### Example 1: Highly scripted lesson plan – Kenya PRIMR

- The lesson plan includes text teachers can read verbatim (in bold)
- Italicized text indicates what teachers should do
- Lesson also indicates what students (learners) should be doing

 **Vocabulary**

T: **The word is picks.** *Read it two times slowly.*

T: **How many of you know what the word picks means?**

L: If more than half of the pupils raise their hands, have pupils share with partners and ask at least one pair to tell the class what the word means. If not, continue as below:

T: *Pick up a pencil. Say, I pick up a pencil.*

T: *Pick up an exercise book. Say, I pick up an exercise book.*

**We do:**

T: **What is the word?**

T & L: *picks.*

**You do:**

T: **Your turn. Who can pick up something in our classroom?**

T: *Let 2-3 children do the gesture. Say, I pick up a \_\_\_\_.*

*Repeats steps 1-2 with the following words:*

**Long** *(Draw two lines of different lengths on the blackboard. Point to the long one. This is long.)*

**Name:** Say: My name is \_\_\_\_.

Ask a pupil: What is your name?

Help the pupil to respond by saying: My name is \_\_\_\_.

Give the pupils time to ask their partners: What is your name?

Source: Bulat, J., Dubeck, M., Green, P., Harden, K., Henny, C., Mattos, M., Pflapsen, A., Robledo, A., and Sitabkhan, Y. (2017). *What We Have Learned in the Past Decade: RTI's Approach to Early Grade Literacy Instruction*. RTI Press Publication No. OP-0039-1702. Research Triangle Park, NC: RTI Press.

## Example 2: Guided lesson plan – Nigeria Reading and Access Research Activity (RARA)

- Guidance on how to facilitate each lesson was provided in 3 facing-page spreads, for a total of 6 pages per lesson. These are pages 1-2.
- Teachers were provided with step-by-step instructions on how to teach specific skills and activities, not a verbatim script.
- Icons were further used to guide teachers through the “I do, We do, and You do” approach.

### The guidance to the teachers is as follows for the story read aloud activity:

- Open to page [ ] of the story Read Aloud book. (I do)
- Read the title of the story. Show the picture if one is available. Ask the pupils to predict what they think might happen in today’s reading. (I do)
- Teach two vocabulary words with pupil-friendly definitions: [ ]. Say the words and teach them using actions or pictures. (I do)
- Tell the pupils to listen for those words as you read the story and to give a “thumbs up” when they hear a vocabulary word. (We do)
- Read the story in an engaging manner. (I do)
- Ask the children to think about their predictions. (We do)
- Ask the pupils the questions about the story you read from the story Read Aloud book. (We do)

**Zango Na: 1 Mako Na: 1 Darasi Na 1 da Na 2**

**Kafin Darasi**

**M** 1. Rubuta wannan wafa a kan allo.

**Wakar Gaisuwa**

Idan muka tashi da safe  
Sai mu gai da iyayenmu x 2  
Mamata ina kwana  
Gaisuwa ce da safe  
Ina wuni Babana  
Gaisuwa ce da rana  
Mamata sai da safe  
Gaisuwa ce da dare.

**Waka** Minti-3

**M** 1. Rera wakar don dalibai su ji tare da kwaikwayon abin da wakar ke fada, don talmaka wa dalibai sanin ma'anar kalmomin da ke cikin wakar.

2. Sake rera wakar tare da nuna kalmomin a kan allo.

**MD** 3. Sake rera wakar tare da dalibai.

**D** 4. Ka/ki ce wa dalibai su rera wakar suna kwaikwayon abin da wakar ke fada.

5. Nemi dalibi/daliba daya ko fiye don rera wakar tare da nuna kalmomin.

**Amon Sautin Gaba** Minti 2

**M** 1. Furta wannan kalma [Nana]. Idan akwai hoton kalmar, sai a taimaki dalibai su gano ta cikin hoton da ke littafinsa.

2. Maimaita furta kalmar tare da tafa kowace gaba.

3. Nuna yawan gabobin da ke cikin kalmar da yatsun hannu.

**MD** 4. Ka/ki ce wa dalibai su furta kalmar tare da tafa kowace gabar kalma tare da kai/ke.

5. Maimaita mataki na daya zuwa na hudu (1-4) da sauran kalmomin [Nafsa, nama, noma].

Jagoran Malamai - Aji 2 4

**Zango Na: 1 Mako Na: 1 Darasi Na 1 da Na 2**

**Nn Aa**


na an nan

Nana na ana

Nana na gida.

N n N n N n  
A a A a A a  
N a A n n a n

2



Karatun labari

Nana na nan.  
Nana na gida.  
Nana na wasan gala-gala.

3

**Sunayen Haruffa Da Sautukansu** Minti-6

**M** 1. Rubuta babba da karamin bakɪ na sabon harafi [N n].

2. Nuna harafin ka/ki fadi sunansa da kuma sautinsa. "Wannan shi ne harafin [N], sautinsa /n/."

**MD** 3. Jagoranci dalibai zuwa ga sashe mai alamar akwari. Maimaita mataki na biyu (2) ta hanyar amfani da Littafin Dalibai.

**D** 4. Maimaita mataki na uku (3) tare da wasu rukunan dalibai daban-daban.

**M** 5. Koya wa dalibai furta sautin [N] ta hanyar motsin jikin da aka danganta da furta sautin harafin. "[N] na da sautin /n/ kamar a cikin kalmar noma." Ka/ki kwatanta yadda ake noma kana/kina furta sautin 'n' 'ni' noma.

**MD** 6. Dukkan dalibai su shiga cikin aikin motsin jikin furta sautin tare da Malami/Malama.

**D** 7. Maimaita mataki na shida (6) tare da wasu dalibai daban-daban.

8. Maimaita mataki na farko zuwa na hudu (1-4) da daya harafin [A a].

9. Koya wa dalibai furta sautin [A] ta hanyar motsin jikin da aka danganta da furta sautin harafin. "[A] na da sautin /a/ kamar a cikin mamaki." Ka/ki daga hannuwanka/ki sama cikin mamaki kana/kina furta sautin 'a' 'ai'.

**MD** 10. Maimaita mataki na shida da na bakwai (6-7).









**MD** 11. Yi ta aikin bambanta sunayen haruffan [N, A], da sautukansu, ko kuma motsin jikin da aka danganta da haruffan.

Jagoran Malamai - Aji 2 5

5

### Example 3: Mixed levels of scripting – Nigeria Reading and Numeracy Activity (RANA)

- Various levels of scripting are available within the teacher’s guide to meet different teachers’ needs. The far-right column includes extensive scripting. The middle column provides a summary of the steps: For example: 1) Write the proverb; 2) Read the proverb; and 3) Discuss the proverb.
- The varying levels of scripting are helpful for teachers who may have different literacy levels. They also may be helpful for teachers who have already internalized the lesson structure and do not need to read it fully every time.
- The icons help provide teachers with quick reminders about each step. For example, an icon of a teacher at the board with students typically means chorus reading. An icon of a book and a pencil means that students are writing in their books.

Manufa: Dalibai za su iya karanta labari da gane muhimman kalmomi da kuma cike jimloli ga me da labarin.			
AIKI		MATAKAN KOYARWA	BAYANI
<b>KARIN MAGANA</b>  Minti 4		1. Rubuta Karin magana.	Rubuta: <i>Kasuwa a kai maki dole</i>
		2. Karanta Karin magana.	• Mu karanta Karin maganar tare.
		3. Tambaya a kan Karin magana.	Duk wanda ya taɓa jin wannan Karin magana ya/ta daga hannu. • Me kake/kike ganin wannan Karin maganar take nufi? • Wannan Karin maganar na nufin cewa ita dai kasuwa tana nan inda aka santa kuma duk mai son ya saye ko ya sayar dole ya sameta inda take.
<b>SHIRIN KARATU TARE</b>  Minti 8		1. Tambaya a kan hoto: Shafi na 2	• Ku bude littafinku shafi na 2. • Me kuka gani a hoton? • Me kuke tunanin wannan labarin yake magana a kai?
	 	2. Gabatar da sababbin kalmomi:  <i>Kaka</i>	• Wannan labari ne a kan Kaka. Rubuta: <i>Kaka</i> Karanta gaɓoɓin da ke cikin kalmar Kaka, ka/ki fara kai/ke kaɗai, daga baya ku yi tare da dalibai. • Shin za ku iya gano kalmar Kaka a cikin labarin? Idan kun gani ku nuna ta. • Kalmar Kaka nawa kuka gani? Ku kirga su sai ku gwada amsarku tare da abokan zamanku.
	 	3. Gabatar da nahawu:  Babban harafi	• A wannan labarin za ku ga manyan haruffa kamar wannan. Nuna babban harafi dāya ko biyu da ke cikin labarin a kan allo. • Ana amfani da babban harafi wurin rubuta muhimman wurare ko kuma sunayen mutane. Misalin sunaye kamar “Kaka” ko muhimman wurare kamar “Nijeriya.” • Za ku iya gano babban harafi a littafin ku? Ku nuna shi! • Yanzu za mu tashi tsaye mu yi taken babban harafi. Kwatanta taken babban harafi sau dāya sannan ka/ki kwatanta tare da dalibai. • Kalmar farko a cikin jimla. Harafin farko ya zamo babba. Haka ma farkon sunan yanka. Shi ma harafin ya zamo babba.