



#### READING WITHIN REACH

Webinar 2: Handout 16
Design and readability in EGR materials – An annotated example

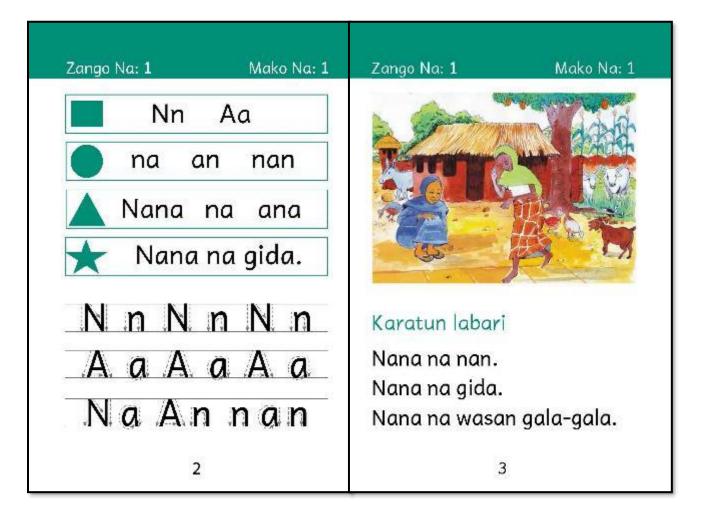
Source: The following slides were excerpted from:

Robledo, A. & Sankey, S. (2016). *Nigeria Reading and Access Research Activity (RARA): Development of Teaching and Learning Materials for Early Grade Reading Instruction.* Internal presentation for RTI International.

#### About Nigeria RARA

- Nigeria RARA, an EdData II Task Order funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID), was implemented from February 2014 to December 2015.
- The objective of the project was to identify factors that improve reading skills and increase access to schooling for out-of-school children in northern Nigeria.
- RARA assisted the Nigerian government with the development and testing of an instructional model to improve the Hausa reading skills of Primary 2 children in Bauchi and Sokoto states.
- The instructional approach tested by RARA included designing materials for teachers and learners.

### Elements of readability in the Pupil Reading Book



Decodable text on page 3 uses letters and words taught in the week's lesson.
Only 3 lines of text.

Font: Andika Basic

Size: 32 pt

Wide space between lines of text.

Andika font makes letter identification easier for learners than a font like Times New Roman, for example.

а	g
a	g

## Elements of good design in the Pupil Reading Book

Entire lesson fits in a symmetrical, facing-page spread.

Information in header is isolated in a different color block.

One colorful

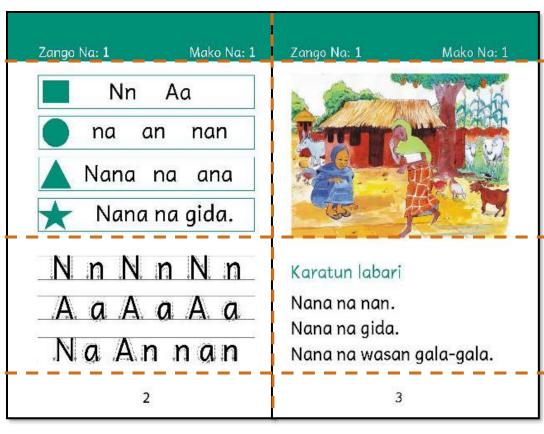
illustration in the

larger portion of

The four main sections of the lesson are easy to identify.

Wide margins and a lot of "white" space on the page.

Page number can be easily found – it is alone at footer of page.



the page.

----Story title is in a different color font.

a simple cue that

children can grasp.

Design elements are applied consistently throughout the entire book.

### Making materials for teachers "user-friendly"

- When designing materials for competent readers, such as teachers, readability also needs to be considered. Issues of formatting, such as font type and size, line spacing, text density on a page and overall organization of content also come into play when developing materials for adults.
- In general, designing materials requires careful thought about the end user and the context in which the book will be used. The aim is to make materials "user-friendly."
- RARA wanted to produce a Teacher's Guide that teachers could consult during a lesson. This implied:
  - Ensuring correspondence between the Pupil Reading Book and the Teacher's Guide.
  - Providing clear visual cues for quickly finding instructions for the activity they are facilitating.
  - Using printing specifications that would allow the teacher to have at least one hand free to use for writing on the board, etc.

# Create correspondence between student and teacher materials

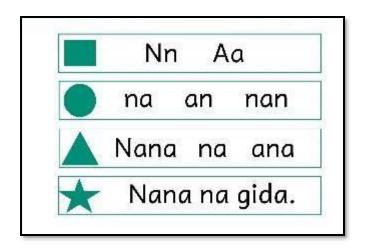
RARA developed a simple system whereby students, who are still learning how to decode, could easily find the section on the page that corresponds to the activity the teacher is facilitating through the use of shapes. Children can recognize shapes more easily than letters at this initial stage of literacy development. These icons were also used in the Teacher's Guide.

Square indicates activity is about letters.

Circle indicates activity is about syllables.

Triangle indicates activity is about words.

Star indicates activity is about sentences.



#### Use icons to guide teacher instruction

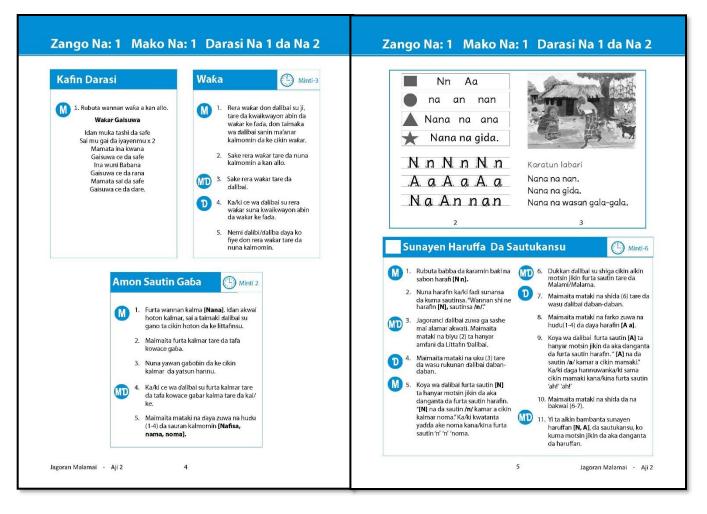
In addition to using shapes as specific activity prompts, the Teacher's Guide used a simple key to guide gradual release:

- M is the initial letter for "teacher" in Hausa, indicating the "I Do" activity phase.
- D is the initial letter for "student" in Hausa, indicating the "You Do" activity phase.
- MD indicates the "We Do" activity phase.
- The clock icon was used to remind teachers of time allocated for each activity.



# Elements of user-friendly design - Teacher's Guide (1)

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.



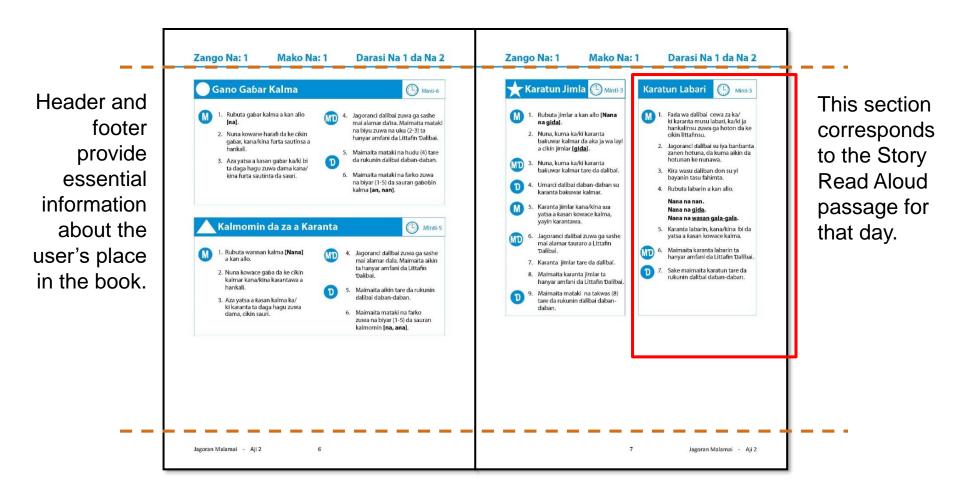
Large thumbnail of the Pupil Reading Book

Notice the use of icons.

Notice that each activity is clearly highlighted in its own text box. The name of the activity is in a blue text box.

#### Elements of user-friendly design - Teacher's Guide (2)

These are pages 3-4 of the daily lesson plan.

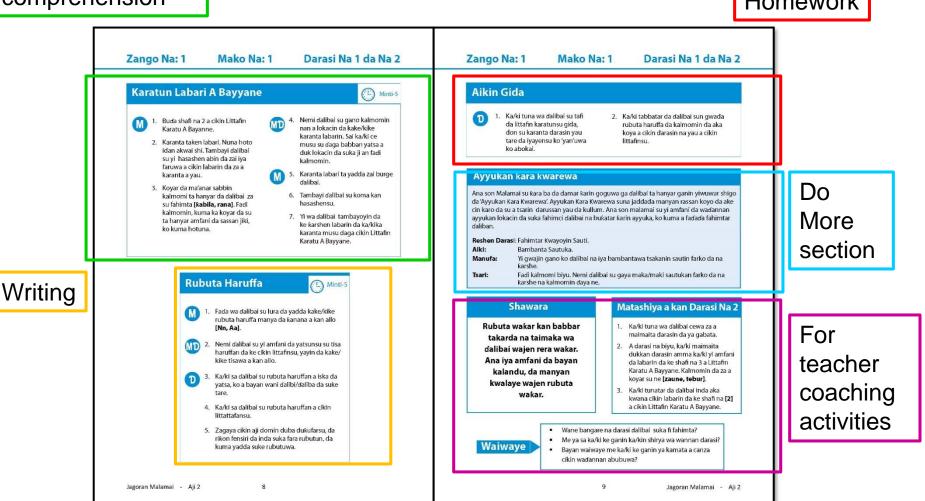


# Elements of user-friendly design - Teacher's Guide (3)

These are pages 5-6.

Story Read Aloud comprehension

Homework



# Negotiating trade-offs between design quality and costefficiency in book design

- The reality is that developing instructional materials almost always requires decisions whereby "ideal" specifications need to be sacrificed to work around time and cost constraints.
- RARA made a significant effort to develop a high-quality Pupil Reading Book that had all of the characteristics of readable, engaging material.
- RARA also endeavored to develop a user-friendly, functional Teacher's Guide that was rich with content for teachers.
- As the Story Read Aloud was not intended to be read directly by children, but by the teacher to the children, some elements of readability could be sacrificed in favor of cost savings on printing.
- As long as children could see the large, colorful illustration while the teacher was reading the story to the class, the book fulfilled its function.
- The Story Read Aloud had a total of 64 pages, the lowest of all titles despite the length of its contents.

#### Elements of functional design in the Story Read Aloud

Space for story text is small and line spacing is tight, in favor of making the illustration the largest part of page composition.

Sub-section titles are highlighted in a different font color and size for easy navigation through the page.



Margins are narrow to maximize use of space.

Illustration is colorful and conveys the action of the story.

Header and footer provide essential information about the user's place in the book.