

Webinar 5: Handout 4

Training tips and activities

General best practices for EGL training

- **Training should be systematic, explicit and structured.** Just like the EGR instruction, training should be organized in such a way that the information is presented in a logistical and coherent manner, with new information and practices clearly explained. Trainers should go through the materials, activities and instructional approaches in detail, using a real lesson plan to guide participants through what they will need to do in the classroom. Daily objectives and session outcomes should be explicit. See example below.

Outcomes for day 3

By the end of the day:

1. Teachers will be able to deliver the handwriting lesson segment in a timely, engaging and correct manner.
2. Teachers will be able to effectively conduct formative assessment.
3. Teachers will simulate a complete lesson in a timely, engaging and correct manner, ensuring that pupils have understood the lesson.

Source: Nigeria RARA Teacher Training Refresher Manual

- **Provide trainers with clear guidance.** This should include the outcomes for each day and session, specific guidance on how to conduct activities, and information on how to assess participants' progress and adapt training as needed. Trainers should also be provided with strategies for contextualizing the content to the classroom environments. Sufficient training for trainers should be provided in advance of the teacher or coach training, to ensure they have mastered what they will teach. It is recommended that "master trainers" support the trainers at least initially, as the trainers themselves may be new to the EGR pedagogy and practices being taught.
- **Training/trainers should model instructional approaches they want teachers to use.** For example, trainers should utilize the gradual release model when they are teaching new instructional practices, so that trainees can observe how it is done. To emphasize this point, the Nigeria RARA teacher training facilitator's guide included the headings "I do," "We do," "You do," and under each heading were steps the facilitator was supposed to take.
- **Conduct the training with all the necessary teaching and learning materials.** Teachers, coaches and others who are trained will need to have all of the TLMs that they are expected to use in the classroom. The resources should be complete and NOT excerpts. Experience has also indicated that participants should not be provided with lots of supplementary handouts, as these can become overwhelming during the training. Rather, any useful tips for teachers can be integrated

into the teacher’s guide itself, so that they will easily be able to reference them in the future (and not lose them).

- **Design teacher trainer resources appropriately.** Just as the design of the teacher’s guide can greatly assist (or hinder) a teacher’s ability to effectively deliver a lesson, so, too, can the design of the trainer’s guide impact the trainer’s ability to effectively facilitate the sessions. Therefore, it’s important to plan for sufficient time to format the trainer’s guide. Helpful features include a clear indication of the amount of time and materials needed for each session, what (if anything) needs to be prepared in advance and the objectives of the session. Similar to the level of scripting of the teacher’s guide, it is recommended that the trainer’s guide not include verbatim scripting, but indicate what the trainer should do. Correct responses to prompts and questions that the trainer will ask participants should be included. It can also be helpful to clearly differentiate what the trainer is doing and what participants are doing for a given session. References to the materials teachers are using (e.g., the teacher’s guide and student reader) should be included in the trainer’s guide. It is highly recommended that trainers use the TLMS (and that they not be excerpted and put in the trainer’s guide) so that participants see the trainer use them.

Activities

- **Assessment of teachers’ beliefs and practices.** Throughout training, activities can be used that provide information about the participants’ expectations, their beliefs and practices, and/or their concerns/questions. The information can be used to help the presenters adapt training to the needs of the teachers (i.e. contextualization, concepts to revisit, etc.). Sample ways for collecting the information include:

- **KWL chart:** have participants complete the first two sections of the chart related to the workshop. At the end of the day/overall workshop, participants complete the last section:

What I Know About Early Grades Literacy	What I Want to Learn About Early Grades Literacy	What I Learned About Early Grades Literacy

- **Pre-/post-workshop assessment:** Handout that includes a set of statements and participants check agree or disagree both before the first workshop sessions begins and at the end of the workshop:

Agree	Disagree	STATEMENT	Agree	Disagree
		1. It is important to model and practice new skills and strategies for students to be able to use independently (i.e. how to say the sounds in words to be able to read new words).		
		2. Students need to be able to independently read simple passages by the end of grade 1.		

		3. Even grade 1 students are able to answer inferential questions.		
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- **Parking Lot:** A “Parking Lot” is a place (such as a blank piece of flip chart paper) where participants and facilitators write questions/concerns they may have and would like addressed during the course of the training.
- **Activities** that integrate assessing participants’ knowledge. For example, observation form for providing feedback when participants practice. Providing short text for participants to identify the type of expository text (sequence, compare/contrast, description, cause/effect, problem/solution).
- **Ice breakers and energizers.** Ice breakers and energizers can be used to enliven a training (particularly after a break), to help participants get to know each and build camaraderie, and to reinforce aspects of the training content. For example, if the reading program includes songs, letter sounds or letter sound movements, these can be quickly conducted to start the day or after a break to help participants to commit them to memory. Other ideas for energizers include:
 - Songs with movements, rhymes, letter names and/or sounds, etc. (use what may be used in the lessons, as well as additional ones if appropriate)
 - Stretching exercises, cultural dances
 - Acting out poetry
 - Role play stories in the EGR materials
 - Sharing local riddles, folktales, etc.
 - “Get to know your partner” questions: Find someone who you do not know and ask her/him questions such as:
 - what does she/he do – principal, educator, coach, etc.
 - what has he/she read lately, what are favorite types of text (i.e., about nature, mysteries, historical novels, etc.). Then invite partners to introduce each other to the rest of the group.
- **Materials “scavenger hunt.”** A fun way to get trainees acquainted with the materials they will be using is to have them go on a “materials scavenger hunt.” This activity should take place on the first day of the training, before the materials have been explained in detail. The items participants go “hunting” for should be specific to the materials they receive. For example, participants can go on a hunt for a lesson on a particular letter or be asked to “find” the five parts of each lesson. Trainees can work in groups to go on the scavenger hunt. Small prizes can be provided to the winners. Then the trainer can walk participants through all of the materials in detail, explaining the purpose, content and design features of each.
- **Demonstrations and modelling.** Trainers should demonstrate how to conduct the different activities and approaches so teachers can literally “see how it’s done.” This means that trainers should in turn be provided with multiple opportunities to practice the new routines BEFORE they train others.

- **Lesson simulations and observations.** It's critical that participants spend an ample amount of time practicing lesson delivery. Lesson simulations should include lesson plans that have been written to support explicit teaching of literacy skills (i.e. syllable blending to read words). Use of locally available manipulatives (i.e. water bottle caps, seeds) should be integrated into practice. Just observing the instruction, or reading through the lesson plan, is insufficient. Lesson simulation can take place in pairs, in small groups, or with the whole training course. It is highly recommended that a "lesson observation checklist" be developed for participants to use when they practice lesson delivering. Participants also can use the "checklist" when they watch their colleagues demonstrate lessons. Then they can discuss each of the items after the demonstration. Participants can keep the observation checklists that their colleagues complete to review their progress over the course of the training. The trainers, too, can look through them to see how participants are progressing.
- **Pair work.** As teachers learn new information, it can be helpful for them to discuss and practice with a partner before asking them to stand up and demonstrate in front of a larger group. Some activity ideas include:
 - Think/Pair/Share: Participants first *think* about the question or concept individually. Next, they work in *pairs* and talk about their thoughts. Finally, a few participants *share* their conversation with the whole group.
 - Pair lesson delivery practice: Participants work in pairs to practice delivering a lesson plan. See example below.

Pair lesson simulations

- Pair participants and ask them to practice simulating the lesson segment of decoding sentences and passage reading.
- One person from each pair will be the teacher and the other will be the pupil. They should take turns being teachers and pupils so that each person in the pair gets to practice. They should provide feedback to each other on the following (if possible):
 - Time on task
 - Steps, scripts, directions from the teacher's guide; proper implementation following the teacher's guide
 - Pupil engagement
 - Formative assessment
 - Any questions resulting from teaching the lesson
- Debrief the activity

Source: Nigeria RARA Teacher Training Refresher Manual

- **Group work.** Once participants have gained familiarity with the new information, instructional approaches and materials, group practice can be a useful technique that simulates the classroom environment. Here’s an example from the *Nigeria RARA Teacher Training Refresher Manual*, which focuses as well on teacher-coach interaction, which trainees would be familiar with by the time of the refresher training.

Simulations: Teacher, head teacher, SSO

- Lesson Components: Sentence decoding and passage reading
- Each presenter should take a different lesson from the teacher’s guide.
- Appoint three participants to be the observers. The remaining participants are to assume the role of pupils. The observers should use the observation checklist, as well as the feedback items as follows:
 - 1 observer should take note of time on task (i.e., time spent on each segment of the lesson)
 - 1 observer should focus on proper implementation of the steps
 - 1 observer should take note of pupil engagement

- **Jigsaw.** Another group activity method is the “jigsaw.” Participants work in a group to complete the task. Each participant is given a different task to complete and share with the group. For example, each participant can be given a phonological/phonemic awareness skill (i.e., sentence segmentation, syllable blending, syllable segmenting, sound identification, sound blending, etc.). The participant then develops an activity and models it for the group.
- **Practice reading aloud.** Participants should have plentiful opportunities to practice reading aloud. This will give them an opportunity to become familiar with the stories they will read aloud to children, to practice their fluency and prosody, to practice holding the materials appropriately and turning pages, and to practice asking comprehension questions.

Monitoring participant learning

Many strategies and activities can be used to assess participants’ level of understanding. The information can be used to provide timely feedback and to determine what needs to be reviewed/clarified. At the end of the workshop, the information can also be used to determine what follow-up support and training participants will need. Activities that can be used to monitor and assess learning include:

- **Ticket out the door.** Before a break or at the end of the day, provide participants with a question, a word to define or a reflection prompt related to the day’s objectives. These could be written on flip chart paper, a blackboard, an overhead projector or a plain piece of paper. Participants can then respond orally or in writing. Examples might include: What are the

components of fluency? What is one way to teach phonological awareness? What is the most important thing you learned during this session?

- **“Turn and talk”:** At the end of each session, participants can be invited to turn and talk with a partner about a particular topic (the facilitator can pose specific questions), what they have learned, what they still have questions about, etc.
- **Quickwrite.** Participants are given three minutes to write about a concept, strategy, etc. (e.g., What is the difference between phonological awareness and phonemic awareness? Why is the ability to match letter names/sounds important when learning to read?)
- **Processing activities:**
 - Given 5 expository passages, participants work in groups to identify which text structure is used for each (i.e., sequence, compare/contrast, descriptive, cause/effect, problem/solution)
 - Word sort: Given header cards for the components of reading and writing, sort the remaining word cards so that they match the related component.
 - Graphic organizers: Upon completion of a section, participants select and complete a graphic organizer to represent what has been learned.
- **Exit slips.** Exit slips are a relatively simple and easy way to monitor trainee learning and inform ongoing instruction throughout a workshop. At the end of each day, or after selected sessions, participants fill out a short “exit slip” to be reviewed by the trainers. The questions can be written on a flip chart or on a PowerPoint, and participants can copy and answer on a piece of paper from a notebook, tear out the paper and give it to the trainer. They can write their names on them or submit them anonymously. See example below from the Nigeria RARA teacher training guide.

Exit slip

Two things I learned today:

1. _____

2. _____

One thing I still have questions about:

1. _____

Exit Slip

1. What is phonological awareness?

2. How does phonological awareness support children in learning to read?

- **Think-Pair-Share.** This activity facilitates monitoring and sharing among participants.

Ask participants to Think and Pair (with a partner) on the following three incomplete statements. After, invite participants to share (either to the whole group, or to write their responses to share with the trainer, anonymously or not).

I am feeling _____ about the training.

I have questions about _____

I am excited about the following activity I have learned: _____

Activities that Support Gender and Inclusive Practices

- **Gender**
 - Based on their gender, participants first talk about their roles in society. Next, the participants take the perspective of the opposite gender and talk about what their roles would be (i.e. a female discusses what she would be doing if she were a male).
 - Participants review the resources they will be expected to use and identify texts and pictures that are gender equitable or represent gender in non-traditional or non-stereotypical ways.
 - Participants discuss ways to communicate and support gender equity in the classroom (i.e. opportunities to have special tasks/duties in the classroom, call on both females and males to respond).
- **Inclusion**
 - Participants discuss how to create an inclusive classroom.
 - Participants review the materials and identify texts and pictures that represent diversity (families/children from different cultural groups students with disabilities, etc.).
 - Participants discuss ways to support diversity in the classroom (i.e. struggling readers, children who do not speak the language of instruction, children with disabilities, etc.) in the classroom.
 - If developed, participants review primary materials that support inclusion (i.e. large print books).

Activities that support educators working in crisis and conflict areas

- Where indicated, provide practice in working with non-formal EGL materials
- Provide a holistic approach; help teachers develop skills for providing support to children; provide practice in strategies for developing social-emotional and psychosocial skills to help teachers and students who are experience distress, and conflict resolution
- Discuss factors that contribute to mental health and well-being and how to identify signs of distress
- Help teachers identify safe places to take children when necessary.