

# The characteristics of an expert reading teacher

The Zenex Foundation believes that reading is the most important skill that learners need throughout their schooling career. Reading is the foundation of literacy. Learning to read starts in the Foundation Phase. Our Foundation Phase teachers need to be **expert reading teachers**.

Outlined below is the **knowledge, skills, attitudes and values** that Foundation Phase teachers need to be expert reading teachers. Please visit [www.zenexfoundation.org.za](http://www.zenexfoundation.org.za) for more information on being an **expert reading teacher**.



**WHAT AN EXPERT READING TEACHER KNOWS**

**WHAT AN EXPERT READING TEACHER DOES**

## THE FRAMEWORK

- How young children develop and learn:** understand that learning to read involves the whole child (including physical, emotional, social and cognitive development)
- How children acquire languages and develop bilingually:** understand that exposure to language assists continuous language development in children
- How children learn to read:** understand that reading is a skill that has to be learned and a social practice as part of everyday lives
- What to expect at different stages of children's reading development:** understand the reading development continuum which includes beginning, emergent, early, transitional and independent reading
- The curriculum (CAPS):** understand how learners are expected to make progress in their reading through the grades

**AN EXPERT READING TEACHER'S VALUES AND ATTITUDE**

- Passion for reading:** enthusiasm comes through in how you teach reading, in the books you choose and in how you read - with energy and conviction
- Respect for learners and their languages:** respect for the various languages children speak is a starting point to teach the standard forms of the language
- Encouraging learners to believe in themselves:** motivation builds children's self-concept as readers and encourages more and better reading
- Creating a caring and inclusive classroom environment:** make children feel included and remove fear of the teacher and each other
- Respect for parents, families and other caregivers:** establish good relationships with them and help them to support their children's literacy at home

- Organises their classroom to support the acquisition of language and literacy:** plan and use the available space, furniture and resources to support language and literacy development
- Plans for the year, the term, the week and the day:** plan how the curriculum will be covered and formal assessments completed in the time available
- Teaches different parts of the reading process:** teach decoding, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension
- Motivates children to read and provides them with opportunities to practice:** accommodate different reading activities (phonics, shared reading and group guided reading) in lessons
- Enjoys reading him/herself and provides a model for learners:** demonstrate that reading is purposeful and enjoyable
- Uses the home and additional languages competently to support children's learning:** teach reading in both home and additional languages confidently
- Uses appropriate resources to support teaching and learning:** use the most interesting resource for teaching reading - interesting books at the right level

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