

INNOVATIVE WAYS
WITH YOUR
LEARNING RESOURCES

THE LIWO WORKING GROUP

This booklet was made possible by the South African and Swedish educators, school librarians, media advisors and public librarians who participated in the project Library Practice for Young Learners and contributed their ideas and tried them out in public schools.

In South Africa the national Department of Education's Centre for Education Technology and Distance Education (CETDE) endorsed the project as a vehicle to operationalise aspects of the National Policy Framework for School Library Standards. All provincial departments of education committed their senior managers of school libraries to the project and used the intervention to develop a focus on school libraries and pilot ways of integrating use of the library collection with classroom learning programmes. The valued commitment and participation of personnel from these Departments underpin this booklet.

Members of *Bibliotek i Samehälle (BIS)* and their earnest dedication to the development of libraries in South Africa are an inspiration to their South African partners from the Library & Information Workers' Organisation (LIWO). BIS has been a pivotal role player in facilitating this project.

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Pretoria 0001.

WO YEARS AGO, together with our Swedish partner *Bibliotek i Samhälle* (*BIS*), we started a school library development project between Sweden and South Africa called *Library Practice for Young Learners*. The aim was to enhance the practice of school librarians in South Africa's nine provinces – especially those working in disadvantaged schools where there are few resources and an inadequate infrastructure.

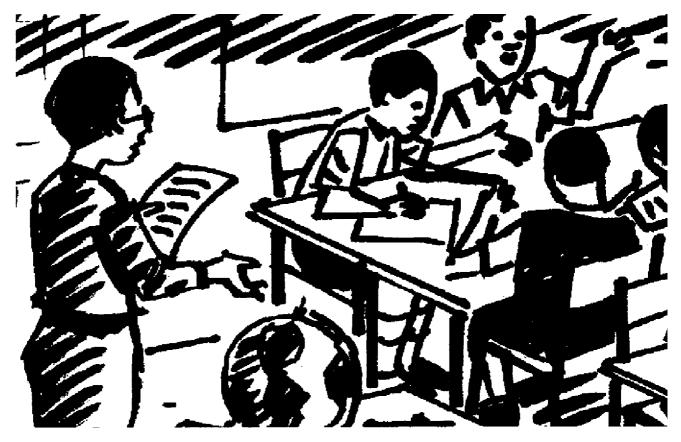
Our strategy was to work closely with provincial education departments. In the first stage of the project the most senior managers that develop and implement school library policy went on a study tour to learn about Sweden's school library policy and system. In the second stage, Swedish school librarians, public librarians and academics visited South Africa to learn about our school library context and prepare selected provincial school library advisors and school librarians for a study tour in the schools of Sweden. During the third stage those selected South Africans lived with families in various parts of Sweden and spent two weeks in local Swedish schools observing and taking tips from school librarians and public librarians about how they work together with educators to integrate the use of learning resources in the curriculum. On their return to South Africa, the school library advisors and school librarians tried to put into practice some of the good ideas they had seen in Sweden. We have received their reports and heard about the many exciting ways they are exploring to develop school library collections and network with school managers, educators, public librarians and others in the



community. We are certain that soon teaching and learning will improve in these schools.

In this booklet we share what we think are the 15 best ideas that emerged in this project. Most of the ideas don't require a lot of money and can be carried out even in a school that has no electricity and telephone. There are 9 ideas about using the collection, and 6 ideas about managing and developing the collection. We suggest you experiment and try them out in your school!

LIWO WORKING GROUP SOUTH AFRICA JULY 1999



LEARNIERS ARE THE FIRST RESCURCE!

earners are themselves an important resource for learning. This fact is often overlooked – perhaps because in our previous education system the teacher was assumed to be the only person with information and expert knowledge. But we now know that learners can play an active and important part in their own learning. Here are a few suggestions for increasing learners' participation while they use a range of learning materials and develop their competence in information and problem solving skills.

- Invite learners to dramatise a point made in a lesson, or act out a scene from a set work of literature, or a theme. Let them talk about and learn from that experience.
- Learners can research and record indigenous and local knowledge as well as social and economic history and contemporary issues by collecting information from their parents, elders and key members of the local community.



- Children and young people learn while they play. Even in Maths classes, games can be used for learning. For example, learners can play the counting game Jacks / Diketlo / Izingedo. Games are learning resources that can be kept alongside other resources such as books, in the library collection.
- Writing a biography is another activity that helps develop learners' information searching skills as they make more use of other learning resources and reference books.
- Getting out of the classroom and even away from school for a while can be a very effective way of focusing learners' attention. Take a walk with your class for learners to make a list of plants, insects and birds they can see in the neighbourhood. There are so many lessons that can be planned to draw on their lists of information. Or plan a visit into town, maybe to the post office, or an excursion to a museum or monument. On their return, learners should have some discussions or debates about what was observed or seen.

For other ideas, ask your learners how they think they can be resources.



LET'S GET LEARNERS READING!

hoose several books around a theme and on your own read them so that you know their story line and content. Some ideas for these themes are:

Going to town

Great discoveries

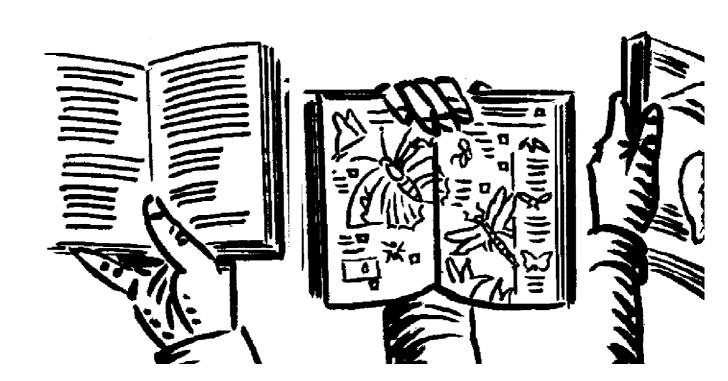
Unusual creatures

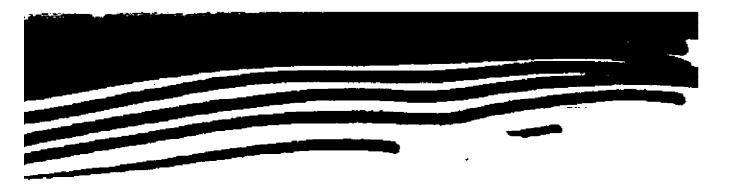
Mysteries

First time adventures

Build atmosphere

Create the setting for a cosy reading circle with a blanket on the floor, cushions and a low stool for you. Have all the books standing in a little display where you can easily reach them. Even older learners will enjoy this relaxed approach.





Slowly show the learners the covers of the books you selected and read the titles.

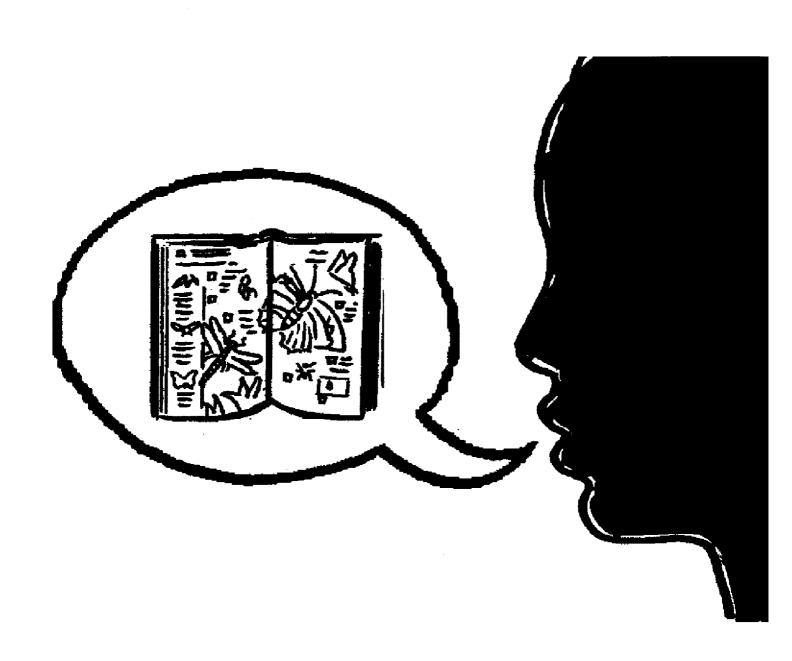
Show them a lovely picture or illustration and then read a little of the text, and then leave the story with them itching to borrow the book to take it home for more reading.

Build suspense

- If it's a storybook, start to read the first few pages only.
- If it's a nonfiction book, read some really intriguing paragraphs.
- Or if it's an adventure story, read the climax of the story but leave them. gripping their seats to know what happened next!

To avoid disappointment, be sure to have enough books for almost the whole group to borrow at least one title each that is more or less on your theme.





2 TALKING BOOKS?

I their eyes follow the print they listen to the words and hear the language being well read on the taped recording. Listening to audio books can also increase learners' reading interests as they encounter words and concepts that they do not know. This is one of the best and easiest ways for learners to improve their vocabulary, language use, comprehension and reading skill.

Audio books are useful for large classes with learners of a wide range of abilities and interest. Learners can be clustered into reading and conversation groups for sharing ideas, questions and answers about their different audio books. Group work relieves the teacher from reading aloud to everyone, and frees up time for seeing to individual learners. Groups also provide more advanced readers and those with reading difficulties with the opportunity to practice reading at their own pace.

Talking books are useful for learners with special needs, especially those who are visually disabled. Learners who are ill and will be away from school for an extended period can benefit from talking books especially those related to the curriculum; an arrangement can be made for such learners to borrow tapes for use at home or in hospital.

TIIP

- Start a collection of talking books by arranging to record educators as they present a special lesson or tell a good story.
- You can also record parents who are good storytellers in their first language, and local authors, poets and actors as they read or recite their work.
- Also consider recording radio and television programmes as they are broadcast, especially those related to learning areas and that cannot be listened to during school hours



AND USE REFERENCE BOOKS

riting letters to someone in a school of another country can be an exciting opportunity for learners to become familiar with encyclopaedias, atlases and directories. Each one of these reference books has a particular type of information arranged in a special way and the school librarian and educator can work together to show learners how to find what they are looking for, and how to interpret and use the form of information.

Usually in a first letter, it is important to write about who you are, your school and society. To do this, learners will have to think carefully and get accurate information about South Africa and their own local area and community.

They also need to think about the person they are writing to. This provides the opportunity to use reference books to find out about that other country, its climate, position on the globe, the society and culture, languages spoken and way of life of the people there.

When the first letter of reply is received, there is so much more to investigate through the envelope, stamp and the contents of the letter!

- TIP
- Give time for the learners to get together a classroom display showing the reply letter and envelope, a country map with label and arrow or string to the place where the writer lives. Find other pictures about this country and community of the correspondent in an encyclopaedia or in magazines. Learners from other classes will enjoy it when they are invited to visit the display. Soon they will also want to start writing letters!
- Don't leave the display up for too long or learners will become bored with their own work.



DISCOVER YOUR LOCAL HISTORY AND HEROES!

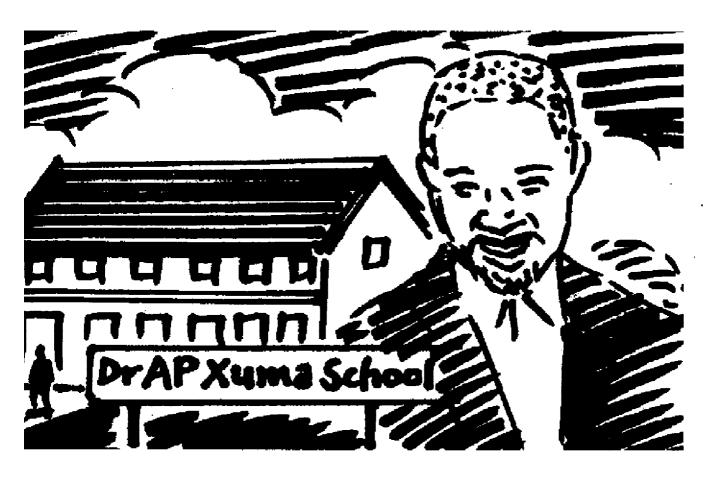
earners are always full of questions about the names of things.

- What does your name mean?
- Why is your school named after a person?
- How did this town or village get its name?
- Who gave this street its name?

Use such questions as the springboard for a class assignment so that learners develop their research and information search skills while they use a wide range of sources.

A school in Gauteng has tried out this idea:

'In our library we have begun a project compiling the history of the school, and the history of presidents of the ANC, beginning with Dr A P Xuma after whom the school is named. The school and the community are very excited



about this project. We were not aware of who Dr A P Xuma was. ... Now a picture collection on the history of our school has been established and is housed in the library.'

- For this type of project, you will need to get together. some useful secondary texts such as dictionaries, encyclopaedias, directories, atlases and history books. They may be in the school library collection already. If you don't have many of these sources, learners can find them in the public library.
 - If the history is more recent or if the person named was a member of the local community, look for primary texts or original documents such as a family album, diaries and letters.
 - Consider the clubs, churches and organisations connected to the history or person because there may be interesting mentions in the local newspaper, club record book, lyrics of a song or even on a gravestone.



A GREAT IDEA TO BRING A BOOK OR POEM OR PRAISE SONG ALIVE!

earners love meeting creative artists and discovering that the writer of
a popular book or poem is still alive and maybe even living nearby.

Invite a local author, poet or praise-singer to make a special visit to school so the learners can meet him or her and hear the story, poem or praise song from the creator's own lips.

It's also a wonderful opportunity to get the signature of this special person. If their work is published, they should sign the title page where their name is printed. All over the world readers are especially proud of the signed copies in their collections.

After the visit, encourage learners to write about their response to the artist. Invite the learners to reflect creatively in a poem or short story about meeting this special person.

Perhaps some learners may want to write a brief biography of the artist from what he or she told them.

Others may recall the visit with an illustration while others can write a letter of appreciation and thanks to the artist.

Those who are really inspired may even want to try and write their own original pieces.

When the learners' neat copies are ready, let them proudly display their work on the wall of the classroom or principal's office or on a notice board where visitors pass by.

TIP

The nearest public library will help you find a local author, poet, praise-singer or actor.



FIND INFORMATION ON THE INTERNIET - BY USING AN E-MAIL **ADDRESS**

Ithough many people claim that the information is so easily accessi-A ble on the Internet, it is important to assist learners with this technology and resource. In fact, learners need research skills and 'know how' to sift through the information on the Internet so it's important to give them guidance and support until they are very familiar with how the Internet works

Educators and learners can use the Internet for e-mailing teachers and learners at schools in other parts of South Africa or other countries around the world.

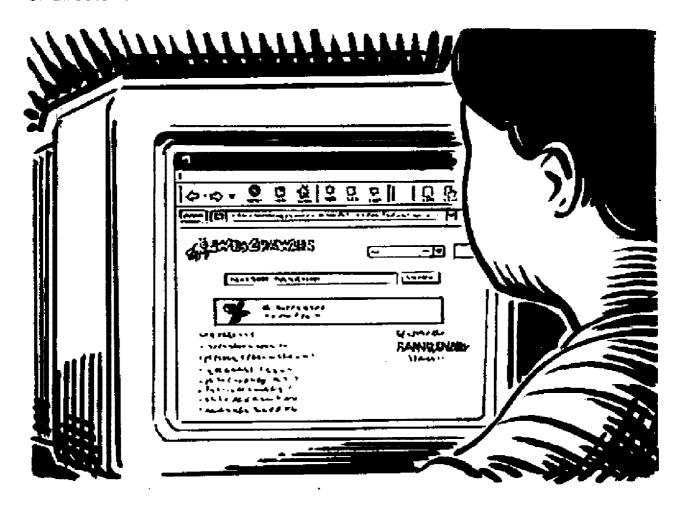
Subscribing to a listserv is an alternative way of communicating with colleagues and people who share similar interests. A listserv is an electronic discussion group and there are listservs on every imaginable topic. To subscribe to a listsery, e-mail the address of the relevant listsery and follow their instructions.

- There are conventions of polite Internet manners that you might want to find out about. For example, if you use capitals continuously in your message LIKE THIS, you are said to be shouting and those reading your message may take offence!
 - Unlike when one is reading a book or newspaper, time spent on the Internet is the cost of a telephone call, so it is important to ensure efficient use of this information source.

FIND INFORMATION ON THE INTERNIET - BY USING A SEARCH ENGINE

here are countless pages of information on the Internet or World Wide Web, so it's important to organise searches and downloaded information. Get to know the subject directories in your learning areas. They are useful and your search will be more efficient when you know exactly what you want.

Search engines are a fast, accurate and comprehensive way to search the Internet. They require you to type in a search term. The search engine will retrieve a list of web sites that have your requested search term somewhere in their text. Search engines allow you to search for information in many different ways; some search titles or headers of documents, others search the documents themselves, and still others search other indexes or directories.



An example of a search engine is Webcrawler located at http://www.webcrawler.com. This engine allows searches by document title and content. Webcrawler lets you search by keyword. When you are at the Webcrawler home page, select a search word and a 'hotlist' page will present items related to your topic.

· Always evaluate the results of your search and be somewhat cautious about the information you find, especially if the content does not match your experience or seems inaccurate in any way.

Keep in mind the following criteria:

Authority Availability Ease of use **Format** Treatment Uniqueness

Questions to ask yourself:

Is the person, association or organisation responsible for the information named on the page? Has someone taken responsibility for the information in front of you? Does the author have some credentials that make him/her a subject expert? If you have found an electronic journal, are the editors named? What are the credentials of the editors? Is the journal peer reviewed?

• Evaluation is a subjective process. What I believe is 'good' information may not be 'good' to you. Keep in mind that if educators and learners use information from the Internet they need to think about the source and decide whether or not the information is credible. There is more information on key issues to keep in mind when evaluating Internet resources. You will find this at:

http://www.capecod.net/Wixon/critical.html

(Library hands on training by ABE Social Science Working Committee. Published by Open Learning Agency, Burnaby, BC.)



USE LEARNING RESCURCES AS YOU TEACH

ny resource can be used for teaching and learning the curriculum. A learning resource might be a book, a person, objects, other organisations and buildings, waste materials ready for recycling, newspapers, radio and television.

The most important thing is how you integrate the learning resource into your lesson plan and how you use it as an educator.

Let's take the example of the programme organiser 'communication'.

As a homework task, learners can collect items such as old phones, newspapers, magazines, whistles, horns and drums that are used in com-

munication. Or they can bring pictures of these objects to school. Bring one or two items yourself in case there are only a few items brought by learners. Try to select a few books on the theme and have them available for the class.

In the context of the desired learning outcome, structure your lesson so that each learner has a chance to handle some of the items and directly experience them. Let the learners talk about them together, sharing their existing knowledge with each other, and feeling confident, to learn more and go beyond what they know already.

After the lesson, neatly label and display the items and books on a table in the corner of the classroom. Encourage the learners to read the selected books when they have a spare moment.

After a few weeks of using a particular programme organiser, learners can put together a display of their own work in the library or their classroom. This can comprise some neat scripts they have written based on their research using the library collection, collected articles from magazines, newspapers and the Internet, 3-D objects or constructed models and relevant books.

- To set up a display, know your theme.
- Find a suitable corner and furniture such as a box, table or shelf. Even shoe boxes and bricks will do.
 - Use a clean cloth or paper to cover the display area and hold it 'together'.
 - Arrange and label things neatly and attractively.
 - · Involve learners.
 - Be innovative with what you already have. A display should not cost you anything.



(A) A COLLECTION WITHIN ARM'S REACH AND JUST WHEN YOU NEED IT!

o introduce a new programme organiser at the start of a term, prepare an attractive and enticing collection of resources on the theme. Most educators don't have large personal collections, relying instead on a library. Organise a block loan i.e. a large number of books borrowed for an extended period of time, from your own library or another local school library, the public library or the community resource centre. Place these books on a shelf, box or table in the classroom, ready for learners to use.

Many learners don't have many opportunities at home to browse through interesting books and discover things through reading. With such books always nearby, educators establish a culture of learning in the classroom. And having a collection of reference books in the classroom that learners and educators can immediately turn to during a lesson is perhaps the most effective way of learning information skills.

A corner for educational games such as jigsaw puzzles, dominoes and chess complements the classroom collection of learning resources very well.

Learning resources are easily lost and damaged, so plan carefully how to use them in your classroom while they are borrowed as a block loan.



ILOOK BEYOND THE BOOKS

ooks are not the only resources that can be used in teaching and learning.

If your school has never had a library collection and the budget is very limited, consider the resources that can be found free of charge within the community. For example, at home and in the community there are many things that are usually discarded. These may be empty tins and cans, boxes, magazines, newspapers, plastic cups, packets, styrofoam containers, and unusual outfits (for role play and drama) and objects.

Learners can collect and bring these items to school for use in any of the classes.

Find a corner in the storeroom or in one of the classrooms where these items can be sorted and stored until educators need them.

TIP

For a small annual fee schools may become affiliated members of the Centre for Educational Technology & Distance Education (CETDE) to borrow videos, computer programmes and CDs by free post. To contact CETDE for more information about this learning resource service, check the Helpful Contacts at the back of this booklet.



12 SCHOOL MANAGERS KICK-START THIE COLLECTION

If there are few or no resources in your school, here's a process you might follow to start a small library collection.

Arrange a meeting with your school manager and head of department. In the meeting, discuss the importance of learning resources in effective teaching and learning and how learning resources are central to the new curriculum.

Follow this up by arranging to make a presentation at a meeting of the school governing body. Introduce members to the concept of a school library and carefully explain the role of a library collection in teaching and learning. Encourage them to decide to have a resource collection at your school even if at first it is only small classroom collections.

A key structure for taking these ideas forward is a library committee. The governing body is able to form sub-committees such as a library committee if the chairperson is a member of the governing body.

Parents will need to be informed about this decision in one of their meetings. Discuss ways of involving parents in the library committee and in building a collection of resources.

If possible, involve the school's circuit / district / regional manager and school library advisor. They will provide valuable advice and support to the person responsible for the library collection.

Request some time during assembly to announce the decision of the governing body and to explain to learners why it is important to have a library collection in their school.

- A file of newspaper cuttings on a theme, magazines and the dictionary are useful items for starting your collection.
 - Approach your local clinic, post office, electricity and water supplier for helpful brochures, pamphlets and posters.
 - For advice on building your collection, see also the helpful contacts listed at the back of this booklet.



(B) A LIBRARY COMMITTEE WITH DRIVE!

In terms of the South African Schools Act, someone who is a member of the governing body should chair the library committee. The teacherlibrarian, school manager, heads of departments and a learner representative should comprise the library committee. Parents and other community members can join the committee as well.

The committee's role will be to decide on the most suitable type of library for this school and then to develop library policy and the plan of action. They should also fund-raise in conjunction with the school governing body and ensure that the collection is well managed, secure and – most important of all – used by educators and learners. They can suggest innovative ways to get involved in national campaigns and competitions.

One of the schools from the *Library Practice for Young Learners* project has a library committee with very active members:

'Members of our library committee help by telling stories and training other teachers in the use of the library.'

TIP

Here are some issues that should be covered in your library policy. Adjust them to suit your type of library and school.

- · Opening and closing hours
- Lending to teachers and learners
- Community access
- Library etiquette
- Reporting to the governing body
- Budget
- Collection development
- Library helpers/monitors

For recommended types of library models see the National Policy Framework for School Libraries or visit the CETDE web site.

| Date | Activity | Leader | | | Resources Needs | | |
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AN ACTION PLAN MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

n action plan is a written strategy to guide the school librarian and library committee. It has two parts. The development plan should start with a clear statement of how your library is now and what you intend your library to be in the future. Identify steps of how you intend to achieve that goal and who will be responsible for each action.

Ideally, the *activity plan* should cover one year and state which activities are scheduled at specific times and who is responsible to organise these events. Activities may be for fund-raising, to train library helpers, participation in campaigns and competitions, involvement in community activities and thematic displays, etc.

A school librarian who participated in the Library Practice for Young Learners project says,

'A plan for improving our library was produced. The plan was discussed with the governing body, and the parents. ... Our school has progressed from classroom collections to a proper library, an area of growth that needs to be looked at for other schools.'



THE PUBLIC LIBRARY YOUR SCHOOL'S PARTNER!

It is well known that most schools in South Africa do not have learning resources that meet the needs of educators and learners. Even so, school managers and educators must find ways to change this so that teaching and learning is more effective in the future.

Until schools have collections that are sufficient to meet the curricular needs of educators and learners, alternatives should be considered.

Already we have suggested a couple of suitable ideas in this booklet. Entering into an agreement with your local public library or community resource centre is another important way of addressing this situation.

Your school manager and school librarian might start this process by having an exploratory meeting with the librarian of the library nearby. There will be local government membership rules and visiting and lending conditions that the school will have to negotiate and comply with if classes are to be given access to the collection.

It is important to build good relations with librarians in charge of such institutions so that the partnership agreement is sustained and benefits the school for a long time without being too great a burden on the public library. Also ensure that the agreement and all conditions are in writing so that both parties know the extent of their responsibilities and rights.

If a more privileged school with a well-established library collection is nearer to your school than the public library, consider an agreement with the school as your first option.

HELPFUL CONTACTS

1. Centre for Educational Technology & Distance Education (CETDE)

211 Skinner Street Private Bag X239 0001 PRETORIA

Tel: (012) 322-6625 Fax: (012) 322-1862 http://www.ncetde.co.za http://www.teli.co.za

2. Eastern Cape Department of Education & Culture

Provincial Libraries Private Bag X7486 5600 KING WILLIAMSTOWN

Tel: (043) 643-3002/43 Fax: (043) 643-3375

3. Free State Department of Education & Culture

Directorate: Education Institute

Private Bag X20565 9300 BLOEMFONTEIN

Tel: (051) 407-4187 Fax: (051) 407-4032

4. Gauteng Department of Education

Gauteng Library & Information Services 111 Commissioner Street PO Box 5052 1730 HORIZON

Tel: (011) 355-0763 Fax: (011) 355-0670

KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education & Culture

Education Library Services
Private Bag X04
3838 ULUNDI

Tel: (0358) 874-3592 /

(031) 327-0331

Fax: (0358) 874-3591 /

(031) 368-6408

6. Mpumalanga Department of Education & Culture

Education & Library Services
Private Bag X251863
1050 MIDDELBURG

Tel: (013) 243-4980 Fax: (013) 282-7375

7. Northern Cape Department of Education & Culture

Provincial Libraries PO Box 532 8300 KIMBERLEY

Tel: (053) 831-1761 Fax: (053) 831-3453

8. Northern Province Department of Education & Culture

Directorate: Library & Heritage Private Bag X9489 0700 PIETERSBURG

Tel: (015) 291-3631

Fax: (015) 297-2043 / 7080

9. North West Department of Education & Culture

Provincial Library Services
Private Bag X6
2735 MMABATHO

Tel: (018) 387-3749/22/23 Fax: (018) 387-3436

10. Western Cape Department of Education & Culture

EDULIS (Education Library & Info Services)

Private Bag X9099 8000 CAPE TOWN

Tel: (021) 483-5265 Fax: (021) 483-5747

11. Read Educational Trust

PO Box 30994 2017 BRAAMFONTEIN

Tel: (011) 339-5941 **Fax:** (011) 403-2311

12, SchoolNet SA

PO Box 477 2050 WITS

Tel: (011) 403-3952 Fax: (011) 403-1417 http://www.school.za

13. Media Africa

PO Box 2265 2132 SAXONWOLD

Tel: (011) 442-6929 Fax: (011) 788-6649

http://www.mediaafrica.co.za

14. Media in Education Trust

PO Box 35677 4065 NORTHWAY

Tel: (031) 303-4206 Fax: (031) 303-4209

15. SABC Education (TV)

Television Centre Private Bag X41 2006 AUCKLAND PARK

Tel: (011) 714-6155 Fax: (011) 714-5492

16. SABC Education (Radio)

Radio Park Private Bag X1 2006 AUCKLAND PARK

Tel: (011) 714-3728/3890 Fax: (011) 714-3889

17. Shoma Foundation

PO Box 1502 2125 RANDBURG

Tel: (011) 289-3631 Fax: (011) 789-6962

18. Eskom Development Foundation

Community Development
Megawatt Park
Maxwell Drive

SANDTON PO Box 1091

2000 Johannesburg

Tel: (011) 800-2340 • Fax: (011) 800-4271

19. State Library

PO Box 397 0001 PRETORIA

Tel: (012) 321-8931 Fax: (012) 325-5984

20. Centre for the Book

62 Queen Victoria Street PO Box 496

8000 CAPÉ TOWN

Tel: (021) 246-320 Fax: (021) 241-484

21. Biblionef SA

4 Central Square 7405 PINELANDS

Tel: (021) 531-0447 Fax: (021) 531-0455

22. Tape Aids for the Blind

South African Library for the Blind PO Box 115 6140 GRAHAMSTOWN

Tel: (046) 622-7226 Blindlib@iafrica.com

PARTNERS WITH THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Department of Arts, Culture, Science & Technology

Science & Technology Branch Subdirectorate of Meta-information Private Bag X894 0001 PRETORIA

Tel: (012) 323-8074 Fax: (012) 323-8308



- 2 Let's get learners reading!
- 3 Talking books?
- 4 Letters-to open up and use reference books
- 5 Discover local history and heroes!
- 6 A great idea to bring a book or poem or praise song alive!
- 7 Find information on the Internet by using an e-mail address
- 8 Find information on the Internet-by using a search engine
- 9 Use learning resources as you teach!
- 10 A collection within arm's reach and just when you need it!
- 11 Look beyond the books
- 12 School managers kick-start the collection
- 13 A library committee with drive!
- 14 An action plan makes the difference
- 15 Make the public library your school's partner!