

The use of DBE workbooks in SA Grade3 mathematics classrooms

Manono Mdluli
University of the Witwatersrand

Background

- ▶ Poor learner performance in mathematics: National and international assessments
- ▶ **DBE Intervention:** Introduction of workbooks
 - 128 structured and sequenced worksheet type activities
 - 4 worksheets per week

The study research questions

- ▶ **Case study:** 5 Grade 3 mathematics teachers from Gauteng (3: GPLMS schools)
 - What do teachers perceive the purpose of the workbook to be?
 - How do teachers use the DBE workbook?
- Classroom observation and interviews

Findings: Workbook :Layout

- No index page
- 65 – 67 place value
- 68-69 map work
- 70 -71 place value
- 72 – 3D objects
- 73 – Addition and subtraction

Purpose of workbook

- Purpose of workbook has not been clearly communicated
- All used the workbook for different purposes and in different ways
- Some ways not coordinated

How is the workbook used? Workbook: Lesson Plan

- Waiting for GPLMS lesson plans – no planning

'I use the workbook to take out some activities and incorporate these activities in my lessons so children can see that I get these activities from the workbook.'

How is the workbook used?

Some worksheets overlooked

What about Worksheet 68 & 69, Map work?

'I skipped these pages because they are based on map work and I do not know how to teach map work.'

How is the workbook used

Workbook – Homework resource only

Why don't you explain the work?

'Learners are expected to read the instructions for themselves and do the work on their own, without the teacher explaining and doing everything for them. This is a way of training them for the ANA'

How is the workbook used

Workbook – Homework resource only

Who helps the children?

Some parents did the homework for their children.

'I realised that the parent was writing the homework because it wasn't in their the child's handwriting'

How is the workbook used

Workbook used to reinforce teaching

- Plan own lessons
- Workbook used for practice activities and reinforcement

'I don't just give them the book and say, 'right start', because you have to reinforce with something that the children have been exposed to on the day.'

How is the workbook used

Workbook used to reinforce teaching

'I don't just stick to the sequence of the pages'.

'I choose worksheets carefully'

Some findings:

1. Unintended uses: Home work and lesson plans
2. Highly visible resource (teachers obsessed with the resource)
3. Not used in relation to other resources
4. Teachers' :Conceptual understanding challenged

