

language support course with me as her host. Her application was successful. She visited UWC for three weeks during the winter break in 2019. We offered the language support course as a block course over two weeks, from July 1 to July 11, 2019, to 14 students (22

3. Construct an implementation plan that will assist primary and high school teachers in implementing the reading and writing strategies and monitoring the learners' progress in literacy development;
4. Develop the reading and writing guides into a handbook as part of Dr McGhie and Dr Mussman's research output, and write two or more articles for publication in accredited academic journals.

The right to a basic education is one of the fundamental human rights in the South African Constitution (South African Constitution, 1996, Section 29(1)(a)). Spaul (2019) explains that the right to a basic education presupposes a child's ability to read and write with understanding at a basic

In addition, as part of Dr McGhie's community engagement and empowerment commitment, she has worked with a youth development organisation in Bonteheuwel (one of the Coloured townships on the Cape Flats) for the past three years. The organisation works with the three high schools in Bonteheuwel and offers workshops on Saturdays and extra support classes for Grade 12 learners after school. The focus was on Arcadia High School in 2023.

On Monday afternoons, Dr McGhie taught the learners reading and writing skills to prepare for their final examinations in October and November

individual language teachers and reading specialists. I was also scheduled to present a lecture on education and literacy in South Africa's public schooling sector on Wednesday, November 29, 2024. The lecture was well-attended by faculty and students and well received.

Meeting with individual teachers and reading specialists resulted in a snowball effect as we were directed to other schools and teachers, which we followed up on as I also wanted to visit a middle school and a high school. We attempted to schedule the visits in the mornings so that Dr Mussman could be back for her classes at noon on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. I used the Metro train to meet Dr Mussman at Richmond Heights Station in the mornings to meet her halfway and an Uber to get to the school in O'Fallon for the full-day class observations.

In addition to the school visits and meetings with language teachers, I attended Dr Mussman's classes, observed what and how she taught and participated in the class activities and discussions. The classes ended on Wednesday, 6 December. I also assisted her with assessing the final presentations of international graduate teaching assistants on Monday, 11 December 2024.

Table 1 below lists the dates and names of the two-year college and the schools. Table 2 presents the dates and meetings with individual language teachers, reading specialists, and others.

Monday, Nov 20, 2023	Jefferson College	I observed a developmental reading class and met with the teacher, Ms. Lisa Ebert, afterwards.
Tuesday, Nov 21, 2023	Dr Henry Given Jr Elementary School	Observed the reading support classes and met with the reading specialist Ms. Michele Ferber.
Monday, Nov 27, 2023	Woerner Elementary School	Observed and interacted with teacher candidates in a Grade 2 class. Attended their de-briefing session after the class
Tuesday, Dec 5, 2023	Fort Zumwalt North Middle School (O'Fallon)	Met with the principal, Dr Damon Burkhart Observed two Grade 8 language classes Met with the language teacher and reading specialist afterwards
Wednesday, Dec 6, 2023	Fort Zumwalt West High School (O'Fallon District)	Met with the principal, Dr Edward Dreyer, to discuss and arrange specific class observations
Tuesday, 12 Dec 2023	Fort Zumwalt West High School (O'Fallon District)	Full-day observations of five classes (English 1 (RTI), Math 9, English 1 (Resource), AP Lang and Communication, English 1)

--	--	--

independent reading assignments and

tests that we can use in South Africa and to the Florida Centre for Reading Research resources that are also freely available.

I have learned so much from the classroom observations and discussions with the people I met. I observed the teachers' engagement with the learners in the classes and their commitment to developing the learners' knowledge, skills and competencies. Small class sizes make it possible for the teachers to know their students and to give extra attention to the ones who need it. Moreover, having adequate and functional infrastructure and resources (both human resources, equipment, internet connectivity, laptops for every single learner with the required learning material, food and transportation) and the support of the principal and school districts enable the teachers to focus on learning and teaching. Qualified and competent teachers, reading specialists, and engaged and committed principals ensure that the learners receive a quality education. A safe school environment free of criminal

Department of Basic Education. (2013). *Achievement of learning outcomes in S.A.*