


Reading for meaning: The need for urgent intervention for sustainability

**Author:**Chinaza Uleanya¹ **Affiliation:**

¹Department of Education Leadership and Management, Faculty of Education, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa

Corresponding author:Chinaza Uleanya,
chinazauleanya@yahoo.com**How to cite this article:**

Uleanya, C., 2024, 'Reading for meaning: The need for urgent intervention for sustainability', *Reading & Writing* 15(1), a522. <https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v15i1.522>

Copyright:

© 2024. The Author. Licensee: AOSIS. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution License.

There has been a decline in literacy in recent times. This has led to various questions being asked by scholars and other education stakeholders as to what the actual reason for that could be. Various factors have been identified and attributed to be the reason for such decline. Attempts are being made by diverse relevant personnel and organisations from different quotas to ensure that the decline comes to an end and that an increase is experienced regarding the display and use of literacy skills by students of various categories and levels.

In the South African context, there has been a prediction that 69% of 10-year-old children would be unable to read for meaning by 2026. This is alarming and frightening. Hence it has called for prompt intervention by all relevant stakeholders. This contributed to the reason for the 2023 conference organised by the Literacy Association of South Africa (LITASA) in an attempt for relevant stakeholders to brainstorm and identify implementable ways forward to avert the impending danger looming around children's literacy in South Africa, and by extension, also in Africa and the rest of the world where and when possible. The conference led to diverse conversations and thought-provoking presentations which have brought about this special issue of the *Reading & Writing* journal.

This is in a bid to not only improve the publication output of the journal in the field of literacy, but also to disseminate information on how stakeholders can improve the literacy rate in South Africa. Meanwhile, the issue of literacy as it concerns South Africa cuts across nine local languages as well as English and Afrikaans. Thus, the articles accepted in this issue revolve around both literacy issues in the English language, in Afrikaans and in the nine local South African languages. It is against this backdrop that five articles have been considered relevant for publication in this issue. The titles of the articles are as follow:

- Investigating measurement invariance in PIRLS 2021 across English and isiZulu language groups.
- Pre-service teacher investment through dialogic action learning.
- Exploring views on praxis possibilities of multilingualism in university literacy pedagogies.
- Expanding the neighbourhood watch: Orthographic neighbours in isiXhosa reading and spelling.
- The strategies in teaching isiXhosa semantics in Foundation Phase: A systematic review.

The collection for this special issue is aimed at aiding educators in assisting their students to overcome challenges capable of hindering them from making meaning as they read. Also, from the collection recommendations are made to various other education stakeholders on how to improve literacy skills, to empower and increase the number of literates in the country.

Read online:

Scan this QR code with your smart phone or mobile device to read online.

Note: Special Collection: Literacy in practice.