

Structured Pedagogy

How-To Guides and Literature Review

Learning outcomes in low and middle-income countries are disastrously low. The task of improving foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) outcomes hinges on raising the quality of teaching and supporting the instructional decision-making of individual teachers- tens of thousands of them in many countries. Structured pedagogy programs have shown an ability to support teachers to make those individual pedagogical decisions at large scale and that those changes can have a meaningfully large impact on learning outcomes.

The term structured pedagogy is broadly defined as **a specifically designed, coherent package of investments that work together to improve classroom teaching**. While structured pedagogy programs are defined by their variation, the typical structured pedagogy program includes key elements which work together to support quality teaching. Key elements of structured pedagogy programs include 1) student books and materials, typically at a 1:1 ratio, 2) teachers' guides that provide daily lesson plans for teachers at various levels of specificity, 3) teacher training organized to reinforce specific skills in teaching the lessons, and 4) ongoing support to teachers implementing the structured pedagogy program, typically including coaching and or communities of practice. Other elements are included in specific structured pedagogy programs, such as assessment results for monitoring program implementation, various technology supports including for teacher coaching, and continuous assessment by teachers.

Given the potential effectiveness of structured pedagogy programs, this series of guides explores specific tasks essential to effective structured pedagogy interventions. This How-To series is designed to provide practical guidance for donors, policy-makers and implementers on designing and managing effective structured pedagogy programs at-scale. This series provides a step-by-step guide for each of the key elements of a structured pedagogy program. Each guide provides the reader with 1) a list of additional resources to consider; 2) identification of areas where technical expertise is needed; 3) red alerts—something to be aware of and alert to, because it is a common problem—symbolized with this icon 🚨; 4) non-negotiables—a “must-have” for a structured pedagogy program—symbolized with this icon 📋. Each guide presents recommendations for effectively implementing particular elements of structured pedagogy programs in large scale foundational literacy and numeracy programs. The how to guides address the following topics.

STRUCTURED PEDAGOGY IS BROADLY DEFINED AS A SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED, COHERENT PACKAGE OF INVESTMENTS THAT WORK TOGETHER TO IMPROVE CLASSROOM TEACHING.

Investments for Successful Structured Pedagogy Programs



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1 Government Leadership and Teacher Adoption

Effective foundational literacy and numeracy programs need government leadership. This requires listening to government priorities, amplifying the ideas of champions, and using country-specific evidence. Succeeding in these programs requires understanding teacher decision-making and ensuring civil servants' job descriptions and incentives align with program priorities.

2 Designing an Effective Structured Pedagogy Program

Program impact depends on key program design decisions. Effective programs do more by doing less and simplifying the task of improving teacher pedagogy, and they are designed to be scaled up and use evidence of rigorous pilot studies to implement the most effective interventions.

3 Curriculum and Scope and Sequence Development for Literacy and Numeracy

Learn about the expected skills of students, what teachers do well, and expectations for a curriculum adjustment. Decide skills and pacing that aligns with the science through collaboration with the government. Develop a living scope and sequence.

4 Teaching and Learning Materials Development

Ensure that any student materials are engaging, simple, and appropriate to the target grade level. Teacher materials should be closely aligned with student materials, provide scaffolding appropriate to teacher experiences, and have everything needed for a lesson clearly laid out in one place. Do not underestimate the amount of time necessary to develop high quality materials.

5 Teacher Professional Development: Teacher training

Design training programs based on adult learning principles focusing on practical experiences with the content that is immediately relevant to build self-efficacy before teachers enter the classrooms. Plan logistics of larger trainings as far in advance as possible ensuring support to all levels of a training cascade.

6 Teacher Professional Development: Ongoing Teacher Support

Develop and implement a system to ensure that teachers receive ongoing support after they have participated in training. Include multiple touch-points for teachers and ensure that coaches and communities of practice receive enough training and support to help teachers succeed.

7 Data Systems and Accountability

Work with government to embed data systems that promote accessible, rapid feedback on each program component, taking limited resources and varying priorities into account. Communicate findings in a timely manner to ensure accountability, adaptation and a demand for further data and future use.

8 What do Education Leaders Need to Know?

Set and communicate student level outcomes in ways that all stakeholders can understand. Hold the system accountable for providing schools, teachers and students the supports they need to achieve those outcomes.

Literature Review

The literature on structured pedagogy shows that the recent iterations of these programs are in a long of structured pedagogy interventions over the history of education. We find that structured pedagogy programs have shown substantial impacts on learning at medium and large scale, though the substantive impact of these interventions differs by context. We found substantial agreement on particular elements of structured pedagogy programs but that there are several areas that remain unknown and worthy of additional research.

Structured Pedagogy Can Really Work: A Note for Education Leaders

What can education leaders do to achieve dramatic improvements in learning? Use structured pedagogy methods to improve instructional practice, make sure the education system provides the necessary materials, training and ongoing teacher support. The structures and capacity put in place to improve foundational literacy and numeracy can enable an education system to improve teaching and learning across all subjects and grades.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Science of Teaching Advisory Committee includes educational leaders and technical experts representing a range of donors and policy makers. The committee provided guidance during the process of developing the Structured Pedagogy guides, providing feedback on drafts and helping to ensure that the guide series will offer evidence-based, realistic, and actionable information to the international education community.



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