



cleverblox

Grade 1 readiness skills

Cleverblox is a specially designed educational toy for children – fun to play with but also an invaluable tool to teach crucial fundamental concepts for school readiness during the early years.

Learners enter Grade 1 when they're 6 years old. Grade 1 educators need to move ahead with a class full of learners who all understand the language of instruction, and who have already developed a number sense: A class where all the learners have those Grade 1 Readiness Skills.



In the olden days kids went to school to learn the 'Three Rs' - reading, writing and arithmetic.

Kids today need a grounding in those subjects before they start school!

Some parents of very young children have read them stories and sent them to kindergarten, while most parents in South Africa have not been able to do that.

Grade R was created to help all children gain the skills needed for entering Grade 1.

Reading and writing are now referred to as literacy, and arithmetic is referred to as numeracy. There are books suitable for reading to preschool children at home. Numeracy, however, makes people think of maths, which is generally regarded as difficult.

Parents might then make the bad mistake of thinking that this should be left for when they start school; only to find that their children enter school at a serious disadvantage.

Numeracy is just as easy to learn as literacy, and Cleverblox is a very versatile toy for helping young children to make an early start with numeracy at home or in Kindergarten.

And because Cleverblox is so versatile it has more for much older children, too.

Associate professor Sigamoney Naicker called Cleverblox a 'Grade R Toolkit'. He wrote: "It is significant that Cleverblox has a range of benefits for all young children, irrespective of their social community: constructional praxis, visual motor integration, bilateral coordination, hand strength, 2D and 3D visual perceptual skills, colour and shape recognition, sequencing, problem solving, developing short and long-term memory, comprehending instructions, cooperative learning and communication, pre-reading and writing skills, and possibly more.

"I am not aware of any similar product with such versatility."

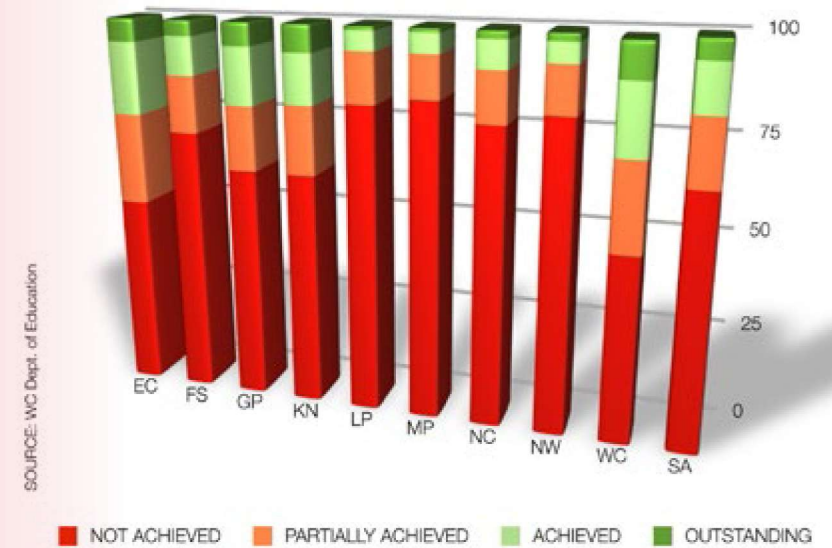
Literacy and numeracy go hand-in-hand. Literacy means the ability to communicate with others using a common language. Parents and family talk to their young children to teach them their home language, and they start doing this soon after birth. Children often have a lot to say before they're two years old.

Numeracy is the ability to reason and to apply simple numerical concepts. Those simple numerical concepts are things like More/Less, Bigger/Smaller, Same/Different.

To explain these concepts parents and educators use both language and logical reasoning.

Research done at the Erikson Institute in Chicago has shown that teaching numeracy enhances literacy skills.

Grade 3 Numeracy performance by Province 2010



However, teaching literacy without teaching numeracy does not benefit numeracy skills.

Cleverblox, like alphabet blocks, are physical objects that kids manipulate. They are experiencing reality, and early engagement with reality is essential for a future digital world of virtual reality.

Kids will keep finding things to learn from Cleverblox long after they have stopped playing with alphabet blocks.

This picture, taken in 2010, shows Tessa engaging with their son, Rowan.

She's teaching him basic numeracy – foundations for maths, logical thinking and planning skills – instructing him and allowing him to act.

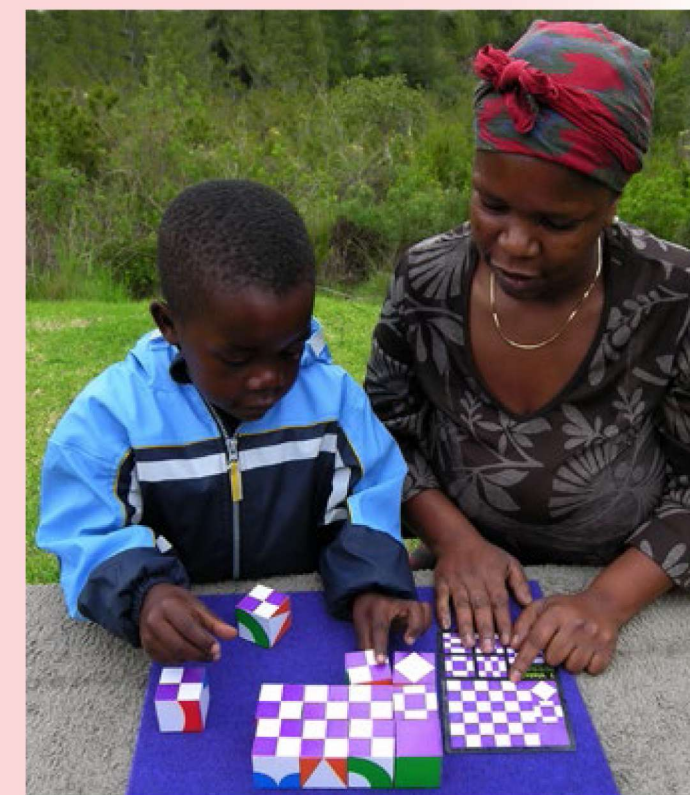
In this picture she's asking if he's sure that he's placed that last cube correctly. He must decide.

This illustrates a most effective way of teaching. Young children want their mothers and fathers, or a caring adult, to give them special attention, to see what they're doing, to talk to them and to listen to what they say.

This child is learning new words and developing his ability to both comprehend and to explain his thoughts. Here he's doing fine movements as he selects and positions the cubes to build the pattern.

He's copying a pattern on the card, having been asked to construct it in rows, starting top left; an exercise preparatory to the way we read and write.

He's learning to recognise colours and shapes, elements of maths. He's seeing how patterns can be assembled and altered. It's tactile; it's reality.



Creating thinkers

cleverblox

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