

# Home Literacy Environment – read more 5

- *Story telling* is one unused resource in Africa that is vital in promoting literacy skills. Most African countries are orally oriented and the focus of knowledge transfer is centrally through folk tales. It was a traditional practice in most rural communities in Africa for children to sit around fire in the evening and listen to stories from their grandparents. Although folklore was largely seen as the major rapporteur of intergenerational knowledge, the potential it has in promoting foundational literacy skills has not been given prominence in the early literacy discourse in the region.
- During story-telling, children are likely to engage in meaningful conversations with adults, ask questions, get feedback and make connections with the story. In this regard, not only does story-telling increase the children's oral language skills, but it acts a buffer to emergent literacy by promoting listening skills and enhances the child's ability to organise thoughts.
- Moreover, the coming of modern technologies has contributed to the natural extinction of such a rich cultural heritage which has since been replaced by computer games, cartoons and social media among the upper and middle class families. Even in rural communities where such a reservoir of oral tradition may be available, many children tend to reject it as they do not seem to identify themselves with the imaginary characters in the stories. However, the fact that there is a generational pattern of home literacy embedded in

story- telling, our suggestion is that teachers should explicitly recognise this and help parents and families embrace the same using technology.