



# **Sustainable Impact in a Changing Landscape**

Lessons from Shine's sunset



Kristen Thompson, Carol-Ann Foulis and Katie Huston  
NASCEE webinar - 20 Nov 2024

# Shine Literacy Hour (flagship programme)

A “**paint-by-numbers**” approach where **anyone** can help children **learn to read**



**Goal:** move Grade 1-3 children from struggling to confident readers

**Approach:**

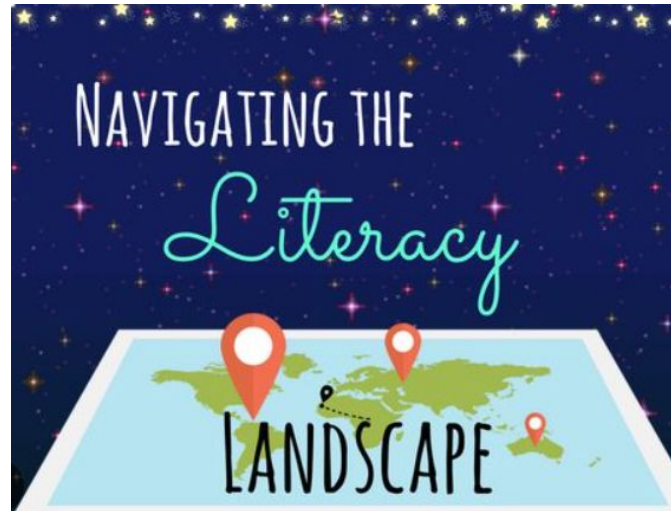
- 2 hours of reading partner support per week
- Simple methodology – for volunteers or unemployed youth

**Impact:** Most children improve by 1 or more levels within 6 months

Over 23 years, Shine reached **34 891** children at **63** schools and trained **2,265** volunteers and **582** youth

# An organisation in transition

---



# The choice facing Shine and the question that changed everything

---

What if...



**12 month “sunsetting” process**  
March 2023 —————> March 2024

## Decision to close, **unlocked thinking**

What can and should  
“shine on”?

What kind of impact can we  
have, even after we close?

### **RETHINK SUSTAINABILITY**

Rethinking sustainability is critical to impact. Giving up on sustaining the *organisation* in favour of sustaining the *work* unlocked many opportunities. For Shine, its work and impact have the potential to become infinitely sustainable through its partners, training legacy, open-sourced resources, and the financial distributions it made on termination. In this way, choosing to sunset arguably made the mission more sustainable.





**What ways of thinking are  
holding you back?**

---

# Sunsetting strategy + ethos

1

## **Strengthen Shine Chapters and partners**

to continue, strengthen, and grow their work

2

## **Open-source materials**

so they can continue helping children indefinitely

3

**Build awareness, skills and knowledge** about key reading support skills in volunteers, paraprofessionals, and the people who support them

4

## **Fulfil existing commitments**

(programmatic and to funders)

5

## **Sunset with integrity and accountability**

to ethos, team, partners, funders and governance requirements

6

## **Share learnings with the sector**

to share best practice and inspire others

## SHINE'S ETHOS

EACH INDIVIDUAL MATTERS.

LISTEN WITH RESPECT AND  
WITHOUT INTERRUPTION.

TREAT EACH OTHER  
AS THINKING PEERS.

EASE CREATES,  
URGENCY DESTROYS.

PRACTICE THE ART  
OF APPRECIATION.



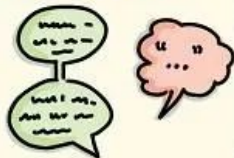
# HOW TO THINK BETTER

& help others think better, too



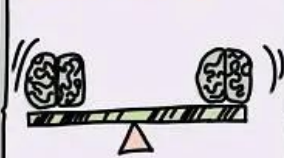
From the work of Nancy Kline - "More time to Think." 3STICKMEN

## ATTENTION



Listening without interruption is an act of creation

## EQUALITY



Our thinking is different and equal

## EASE



You cannot think in a hurry. Create freedom from rushing

## APPRECIATION



Appreciate 5 x more than you criticize

## ENCOURAGEMENT



Eliminating competition improves thinking

## INFORMATION



What are you denying that could liberate your thinking?

## FEELINGS



Fear prevents thinking, laughter helps

## DIVERSITY



People will think for themselves

## INCISIVE QUESTION



Remove false, limiting assumptions

## PLACE



The place - and your body - matters

NOTE: Please use this poster when facilitating, training or leading thinking.

Drawn by Lita Currie  
© www.3stickmen.com





# Thinking Environment Guided by Strong Leadership

- The power of process, iteration, and curiosity
- Board participation
- Role of leadership
- Clarity of offering
- Keep coming back to “why”
- Letting go and trusting others



“

*If you have the big why of why you're doing this, [you should] keep going back to that. This has been an incredible learning for me. It doesn't just apply to Shine, it applies to all areas of life.”*

KEHILOE NTSEKHE, CHAIRPERSON

# Questions

- How do you know your organisation/programme is still relevant?
- What systems and processes might your organisation need to bring information about your relevance to you sooner?
- If your organisation were to close down, what do you hope its **legacy** would be?



*“The sign of a good non-profit is where you can work yourself out of existence.”*

KATHRYN TORRES

SHINE CO-FOUNDER AND HONORARY BOARD MEMBER



# Collaboration and partnerships

What makes them work



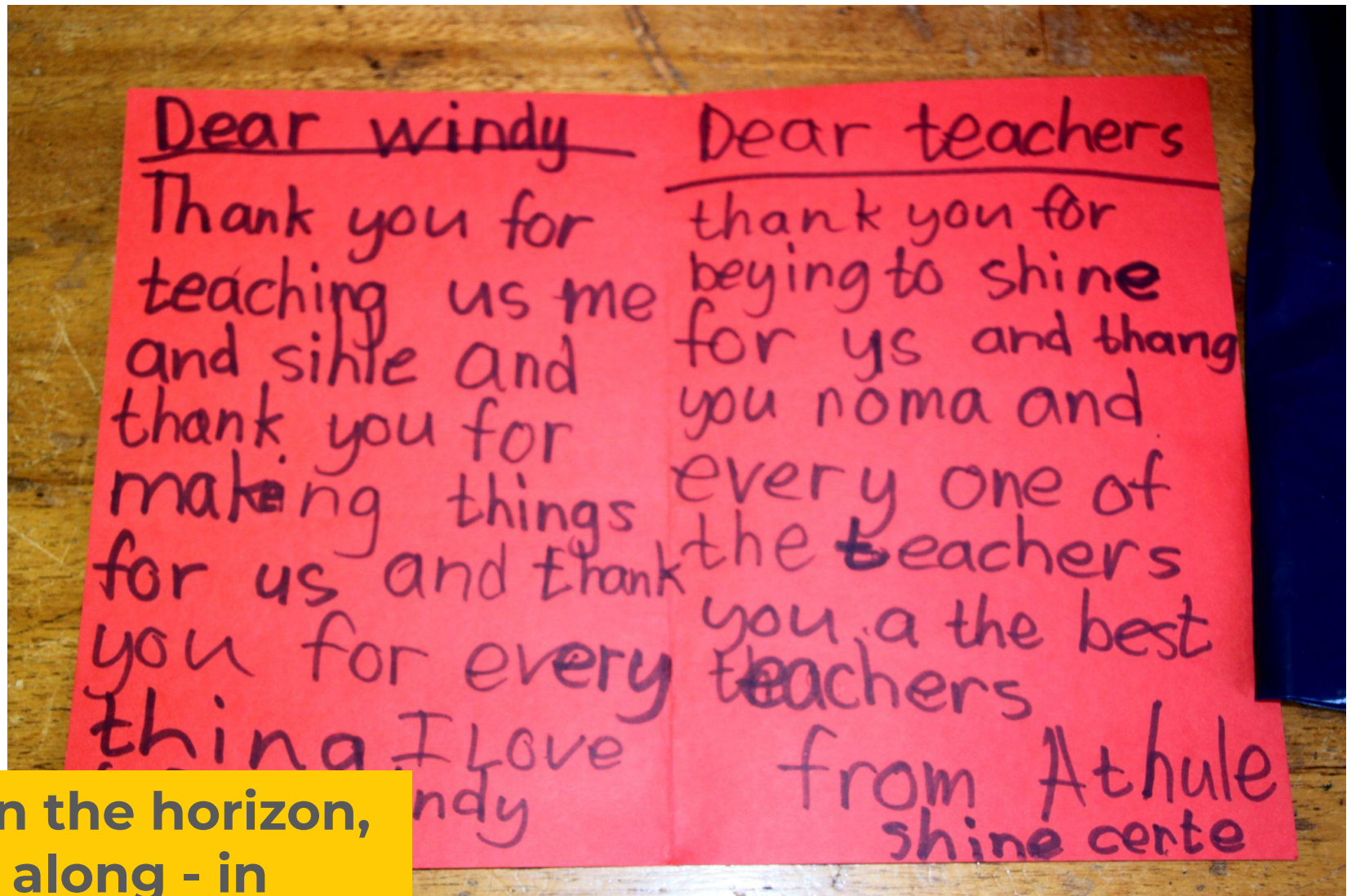


**If collaboration is important to your organisation, think about organisational models and forms that support collaboration**





**The power and simplicity of  
relationships**



**When change is on the horizon,  
bring partners along - in  
particular, communicate well -  
and honestly**



**You can trust people to handle change**





**Are you moving people from  
dependence => independence =>  
interdependence?**





# Documenting and sharing resources





**GOOD  
PRACTICE IN  
THE EDUCATION  
SECTOR**

Documented and shared  
Clear licensing

Undocumented/  
“tacit knowledge”

Informally documented/  
internal only

Unclear licensing

# “Shine in a box” - social franchises received:

## Training materials



## Literacy learning materials



## Implementation guidelines



**What do you need  
to think about,  
if you want your  
resources to have  
greater reach and  
impact?**

1

Clarify your **intention**

2

Choose a **license**

3

Ensure **copyright** is clear

4

Tailor to your **audience**

5

Design for **unmediated use**

6

Find resources **a good home**

# 1. Clarify intention

---

What do you  
want your  
resources to  
“**make possible**”?

Shine’s materials are  
**open-licensed** and  
freely available, on  
**easily accessible  
platforms**, in  
**formats that are  
user-friendly** to the  
target audiences

and












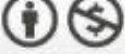


potential users are  
**aware** that these are  
freely available and  
**know how** to access  
them

so  
that








CBOs, literacy  
organisations,  
youth  
employment  
programmes,  
teacher assistants  
and parents **can  
and do use  
Shine’s resources  
to help young  
children become  
confident  
readers.**

## 2. Choose a license

CREATIVE COMMONS LICENSES		 COPY & PUBLISH	 ATTRIBUTION REQUIRED	 COMMERCIAL USE	 MODIFY & ADAPT	 CHANGE LICENSE
 PUBLIC DOMAIN		✓	✗	✓	✓	✓
 CC BY		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 CC BY-SA		✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
 CC BY-ND		✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
 CC BY-NC		✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
 CC BY-NC-SA		✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
 CC BY-NC-ND		✓	✓	✗	✗	✓

 You can redistribute (copy, publish, display, communicate, etc.)	 You have to attribute the original work	 You can use the work commercially	 You can modify and adapt the original work	 You can choose license type for your adaptations of the work.
--	---	---	---	---

Thinking differently about risk vs. benefit of openness

“In the CC licensing world,  
**you can end up with  
licensing that is as  
restrictive as good,  
old-fashioned copyright.**

BY-SA-ND-NC means you  
can't do anything except  
download and circulate.”

– *Marion Smallbones  
(OER expert)*

“Anything in addition  
to attribution  
**makes the prospective user  
think twice -**  
people don't know  
what it means.

It creates friction, and  
**ultimately fewer users.”**

– *Arthur Attwell (Electric  
Book Works / Book Dash)*

### 3. Ensure copyright is clear

---

Licensing

≠

Copyright!

What you **can and cannot do** with the materials (e.g. share, adapt, sell)

The **owner**  
("copyright holder")  
of the materials

**You can only open-license something you own.**

Who created material? (Staff vs consultants)

What is in their contracts? (need to "transfer ownership")



## 4. Tailor to your audience

---



**Imagine a person who is going to use Shine's materials...**

**Who are they?**

**And what do they need?**

## 5. Design for unmediated use

---

- **Less is more**
- **No jargon**
- **On-demand navigation**
- **Low-data + mobile friendly**
- **Self-paced learning - yay or nay?**
- **Editable?**

**“Don’t try to be clever.**

Be OK with the fact you only have to get the core things across.

**Leave out the bells and whistles.”**

*– Arabella Koopman, PRAESA / independent publishing & curriculum design expert*

## 6. Find resources a good home

---



Legacy site:  
**[www.shineliteracy.org.za](http://www.shineliteracy.org.za)**

It's (kind of) easy to  
build a website...

...but **how will people  
find out about it?**

## 6. Find resources a good home

### Wordworks resource hub:

Resources for ages 0-10  
(under development)

Currently available via  
WordNetworks:

**wnw.wordworks.org.za**

Email for a login:

**paulene@wordworks.org.za**

The screenshot displays the Wordworks website interface. At the top, the logo 'Wordworks Changing Lives through Literacy' is visible alongside navigation buttons for 'Who we are', 'What we do', 'What we have learned', and 'Contact us'. The main content area features a section titled '1.2 Resources for After school programmes.' with the subtext 'Everything you need is here!' and an illustration of a family reading together. Below this, there is a block of placeholder text: 'SupportNate sus acearum et aut rem et esequamus parum quis is della voloreperum landaescilis nobist ulpa aperum quo et es porro bearum et excea quod quodici lluptio duci delessus. Ore magnat omnis repuda cus debis doluptas magnis nonecatem. Itat.lquo imus solo dolorehene laut omnitio velia commitati in eum, quatus descindias earcide percil expliquam audis.' This is followed by four promotional cards: 'Get Activity packs for Grade RR/R/1' (with a 'TIME' logo), 'Get Activity guidance for Grades 2 and 3' (with a 'Shine LITERACY' logo), 'Join our community of practice' (with a group of children), and 'Attend free support sessions online' (with a laptop and calendar icon). A footer contains a grid of links for 'WHO WE ARE', 'WHAT WE DO', 'WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED', and 'CONTACT US', along with a newsletter sign-up form and social media icons.

# “Shining On” Learning Briefs

[www.shineliteracy.org.za](http://www.shineliteracy.org.za)



## CLOSING WITH **INTENTION** AND **INTEGRITY**

LESSONS FROM  
SHINE'S SUNSET

SHINING ON LEARNING BRIEF: Lessons from Shine's Intentional Sunset | March 2024



## FROM **OURS** TO **EVERYONE'S**

LESSONS FROM SHINE'S  
OPEN-SOURCING  
JOURNEY

SHINING ON LEARNING BRIEF: Shine's Open-Source Journey | March 2024



## LEAVING A **LASTING** **LEGACY**

REFLECTIONS  
FROM SHINE'S  
SUNSET

SHINING ON LEARNING BRIEF: Reflections from Shine's sunset | March 2024



To close...

---

*If you shared your model, resources  
and knowledge more widely –  
**what might be possible?***

Read the learning briefs:  
[www.shineliteracy.org.za](http://www.shineliteracy.org.za)

Access the resources:  
[www.wordworks.org.za](http://www.wordworks.org.za)  
[paulene@wordworks.org.za](mailto:paulene@wordworks.org.za)



**Thank you!**

To close...

---

*What is one thing you might  
**do differently** as an organisation  
after this webinar?*