



Teaching Reading at Oak Cottage Primary School

Main principles

Texts

Any texts used should be of a high quality. This might mean a number of things:

- Level of challenge. Ideally the text will challenge even the highest ability readers in the group, whether in terms of decoding, vocabulary, comprehending the contents or otherwise. Which one of these is the most appropriate will depend on which reading skill you are focusing your teaching on. One rule of thumb is to pitch 12-18 months beyond your higher ability group although this may not always be the case.
- Extend vocabulary. This may be linked to the level of difficulty, or might link in with cross curricular work that you are doing which fits with your text but you should try to ensure that children are exposed to a wide range of vocabulary in both fiction and non-fiction. Where these new or unfamiliar words appear they should be addressed in an appropriate way (see Teaching).
- Where possible, examine texts for how often the words form the spelling list for your year group appear. If they are not present at all it does not mean that you shouldn't use the text but be aware of how else you are covering your key vocabulary from the curriculum
- Novels might be approximately 120-150 pages long. Articles and shorter pieces/ extracts may be shorter, or may be supported with diagrams in non-fiction, but should still present an appropriate challenge to the reader.

Frequency

Reading needs to be taught frequently in order to rehearse and maintain the widest variety of skills. However, there is no set number of sessions that need to be covered in the short term. This will be best planned when balancing the competing demands of writing and other areas of English that you wish / need to cover. There may also be overlap between them. In the medium and long term reading and writing (including grammar and spelling) should take up about 50% of your English curriculum time each or 40/60??? WE need to spend more time on writing/grammar/spelling. Two possible models are:

- Split a weeks' worth of lessons approximately 50% reading and 50% writing/ other areas across a week (i.e.: Monday, Tuesday and part of Wednesday are reading skills heavy and the remainder is writing)
- Split individual lessons 50/50 or as necessary??

Teaching

Reading as an adult is only 'easy' because we have built a number of strategies, gathered often extensive prior knowledge, have a wide vocabulary and know how to deal with unfamiliar words or topics when reading. These are the skills that we need to teach children through modelling and exposure followed by rehearsal and independent use. As a rule, if you 'do' something in your head while reading to a class, share and explain what you did and why along with the outcome of it.

Structuring a reading lesson

The following is a structure to use for planning a guided reading session. It may be adjusted from time to time but as a principle most sessions will contain the following order and take account of the suggestions and explanation in the right hand column.

<u>Stage of session</u>	<u>Elaboration</u>
Teacher reads the text	• The teacher reads the whole text, or for longer texts a short section • Unusual vocabulary may be noted at this point and defined (or this could form a later activity) • Teacher takes account of volume, intonation, facial expression movement and comprehension in order to support understanding. Model good reading habits – that is, as an adult what decisions and thinking are taking place in your head to decode vocabulary, comprehend, prioritise and predict? • Think about making one ‘interruption’ per paragraph. This might involve questioning to see who has made any inferences, questioning about any predictions or summaries that can be made, stimulating children’s use of prior knowledge. This could also be pre-planned to see if children agree with the teacher’s responses at each point. Try not to read out aloud to the children for too long all at once as their concentration will waiver! • Teacher could model the use of sentence stems that stimulate an answer. Children could go on the use these same stems later in the session independently. • While the teacher is reading the children should have a copy of the text at least 1 between 2, and for some it will appropriate for them to follow the text with a ruler to allow the teacher to ensure all children remain engaged – remember: you will be reading the text out. • SEN children should remain with their class.
<u>Activity</u> • First stages of children working independently • First opportunity to gather assessment observations.	Children now begin to work with their own ideas and thoughts about the text. This could be done in a variety of ways: • There could be a 60-second retrieval quiz (60 seconds on a timer and a number of pre-prepared multiple choice questions to work through as answer as rapidly as possible as a class/ individuals (if all displayed at once). • There could be a set of 5 ‘Find and copy’ style questions that children record in their books. Again, ideally quite quick-fire unless this forms the focus of your session. (e.g.: Find a copy one word from paragraph 2 that suggests danger.) • Further use of sentence stems for children to engage with a particular feature of the text or reading skill • Children might re-create a section of dialogue in pairs taking account of intonation, adverbs. ‘Present this conversation in a way that convinces me you are the king.’ • Unfamiliar vocabulary that has been encountered and elaborated on and defined could be reinforced by being used in different sentences independently. ‘We have just encountered the word <i>recognition</i> in the text. Now can you use it correctly in two different sentences.’ • Children could re-read part of the text again.

<u>Further activity</u> • Next stage of children working independently or supported on the text/skill	• Children might read-on and continue to apply the main focus skill that has been taught and modelled by the teacher. See the end for a list of the different reading skills. Be clear about how far on they are to read and have an 'If you finish early..' activity ready. (It may be appropriate to adopt independent reading of alternate chapters if the text is long.) • SEND and LA readers need consideration. They could be placed with a HA reader to ensure that they still have access to decoding the text, they could read with a TA or as a guided group with the teacher. Activities at this point should be differentiated, as LA readers may not be able to engage with the text at the same level as AA readers. • Challenge needs to be present for all ability groups at this stage. • The teacher might now position themselves with a focus group previously identified or that has become apparent during the session.
<u>Finalise</u>	• This should be differentiated question(s) that continue to address the teacher modelled focus skill that require children to return to the text, consider and answer fully, usually with supporting evidence, in their guided reading books. • Sentence stems might be used to support answering • Differentiation here needs to take account of the challenge provided at all ability levels. • This may also be a good time to model the next skill that the children will be working on, or to pre-teach some of the unusual vocabulary that will be encountered in the next lesson. • The teacher might have some pre-prepared answer that the children can compare theirs to as a good model, or add to/improve. • At this point or after the teacher needs to gather assessment information to inform planning/ teaching for the next lesson.

Reading skill areas

The reading skills to focus on are listed below although this is not exhaustive. Across the medium and long term reading lessons should cover all of these skills in some way.

- Decoding/ reading and re-reading
- Decoding unfamiliar vocabulary – might involve using inference from known spelling patterns
- Comprehending and defining vocabulary (familiar and unfamiliar)
- Prediction
- Questioning
- Summarising
- Inference
- Retrieval (might include skimming and scanning)
- Activating prior knowledge
- Make comparisons within and across the text