

# Strategies for managing reading with your class

## Shared reading

- Work with the whole class or group of children. If there are lots of children, you can work with a big group of children while other small groups and pairs do different literacy activities that you have planned.
- Use a single, enlarged text for the whole class such as a Big Book, a poster or pictures, or a text on an overhead transparency or projected from a phone or laptop.
  - *First part/day 1:* Read the story for enjoyment and talk about what the children see, hear, think and feel.
  - *Second part/day 2:* Read the story for enjoyment again, and encourage a deeper discussion about the story. (You can focus on asking questions, learning language, learning new vocabulary and so on.)
  - *Third and fourth parts/days 3 and 4:* Children read the storybook themselves, and then do different activities based on the storybook.

## Group/guided reading

- Children are in small groups of between six and ten children.
- All the children read the same story together with the help of an adult or older reader.
- Use different ways to help children with difficult words and to build phonemic awareness. This can include word games, sounding out words, clapping out rhythms in words and talking about the meaning of words.
- Talk about the written words and ask questions to check for meaning.

### *Steps in a group/guided reading lesson*

1. Select an **appropriate text**. Graded readers will mostly be used for group reading. They should be at a lower level than the texts used for shared reading. Read through the text beforehand and note any features of structure, vocabulary or syntax that may be challenging for the children. These may provide the teacher with a teaching focus.
2. **Introduce** the type of book or chapter for the session and introduce the topic. Assist the children to make connections with the topic and their own life experiences. Keep this 'talk' focused (around two to three minutes) and just enough for the children to read successfully.
3. With very young children briefly **talk through the illustrations** of the book or the chapter, pointing out significant details and raising questions about what might be happening at this point in the text. With older children, teach them to **browse through the text**, paying attention to captions, chapter headings and any other organisational features such as a

table of contents and/or sub-headings within the text. Where new or difficult words appear in the text, the teacher introduces these words in the 'text talk', prior to the children reading the text themselves. This should last for two to three minutes.

4. In the **first reading**, children read the text individually. The very early readers can read aloud or 'whisper-read' the text, while more experienced readers read silently until the teacher asks them to read out loud. The teacher observes the children's reading behaviours and may select an additional teaching focus based on these observations. The teacher moves from child to child and listens to each read a small section of the text aloud. The teacher prompts the children at this stage, for example by asking:
  - 'What do you expect to read in this book?'
  - 'Does that make sense to you?'
  - 'Well done! You corrected yourself. That makes sense.'
  - 'What would sound right in this sentence?'
  - 'Look at the illustration.'
  - 'It could be, but look at the first letter again.'
5. If any children raised questions in the picture talk stage (stage 3, above), return to these questions and **discuss** the answers. The discussion could also include a focus on phonics, comprehension or an aspect of grammar. Discuss the text, bearing in mind the range of questions that should be integrated into the discussion to develop comprehension.
6. For **second and subsequent readings**, children re-read the text either in pairs or alone. The prime focus here is to develop fluency and provide opportunities to use the text to develop vocabulary, grammar and deeper comprehension of the text. You should vary the manner in which this is done, for example by reading parts of a character or taking turns to read a page or paragraph. Older, more experienced readers may select a particular passage to work on in this time.

### *Forming ability groups*

Select storybooks according to the group's instructional reading level. The easiest way of establishing this level and dividing children into groups is by observing children when they are reading.

Here is a list of observable behaviour that will help to put children in groups for guided reading sessions. The children should:

- read the text with ease, but there should still have a few challenges for the reader at either a decoding or comprehension level
- recognise and quickly decode 90–95% of the words
- all finish reading the selection within a minute of each other
- read fluently and with appropriate expression
- be interested in the text
- not need to finger-point while reading
- read silently.

**Paired reading**

- Children sit in pairs to read together, or take turns to read.
- Encourage children to choose a simple storybook that they can read themselves.
- Children can read in pairs at any time, or when they have finished their work, and while other children complete their work.
- It helps children to practice reading and encourages reading for enjoyment.
- It can take place at anytime, anywhere.

**Independent reading**

- Children read books on their own.
- Encourage children to choose short, simple books that are easy enough for them to read without help.
- Colourful illustrations will help them to read.
- Independent reading develops fluency.
- This is good extra reading practice.