

Fundamental Principles of Effective Teaching of Reading

This document provides clarity regarding key concepts / pedagogies pertinent to reading lessons. It also provides an overview of the different types of reading lessons. Each lesson type serves a different purpose; therefore, different pedagogies are deployed. An overview of what each reading lesson type includes is also provided. This document is heavily influenced by the [Reading Framework, 2023](#) (RF). This document aims to be a key summary of our approaches, rather than an exhaustive exploration. For further information regarding our approach to reading, please speak to a member of our English Team.

Concept / Pedagogy	Explanation
Retrieval	Reading lessons begin with a short retrieval activity. This could be revisiting previously explored vocabulary or key themes/events of the text so far. The purpose of this part of the session is to encourage the embedding of key knowledge into long-term memory . This part of the lesson should be short, focused and have good pace .
Text Introduction	Teachers introduce a text by explaining its author, purpose, text-type and genre. Why the text is being read is also explained e.g. to learn about volcanoes, to explore a fairy tale etc. Teachers prime children “be on the lookout” for key themes, concepts or character developments. This hooks the children into the text and primes background knowledge.
Explicit Vocabulary Instruction	Words pertinent to the children’s understanding should be explored prior to the reading. Teachers should model how to decode the words , explore their morphology and etymology and provide dual coded images to support comprehension. The teacher should lead this instruction and not encourage guessing as this can lead to misconceptions and a disruption to pace. These words should be displayed in the environment and returned to in future retrieval sessions with the view to commit them to long-term memory. (RF, p.108).
Implicit Vocabulary Instruction	Other unfamiliar words can be defined quickly by the teacher as the text is read. The teacher can model how to define words from the context of the passage if appropriate. This should be quick and teacher-led to avoid disruption to the session (RF, p.116).
Teacher Read Aloud	Reading lessons will often be built around the Teacher Read Aloud . The teacher reading the text aloud models effective prosody for the children and allows children to focus on comprehending the text and building mental models . The teacher’s performance can also unlock nuances through intonation, emphasis and volume. Children are encouraged to focus on listening to the text rather than following along with the reading. An effective Teacher Read Aloud can be transformational in terms of developing reading attainment and engagement (RF, p.115).
Pupil Reading	In order for children to develop as readers, they must have sufficient practice in decoding to ensure the number of words they can read at a glance increase. Therefore, teachers also plan for pupils to read independently or in pairs . When reading in pairs, pupils are aware of their role e.g. listening and following along or listening and giving feedback. The children may be re-reading a text already read by the teacher or a new text where the teacher has ensured the children have sufficient word and background knowledge to access it. On occasion, pupils benefit from reading aloud to the class; however, this is most effective after significant practice in fluency sessions. Guided read-along (e.g. children taking it in turns to read small parts from the class text aloud to their peers) is not recommended at Edale (RF, p.116).
Modelling & Explanations	Teachers will disperse their reading with modelling and explanations to show children how skilled readers makes sense of a text, for example to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think out loud which character the pronoun ‘she’ refers to in a sentence • Model the making of a mental model of a character or key concept • Comment on an unexpected character development • Share a key piece of knowledge, such as explaining the historical context to an event • Model how ideas in the texts and pupil’s background knowledge combine to make meaning • Comment on and consider the impact of a specific word or phrase • Model how a skilled reader fills the gaps as they read The purpose of a lesson and the particular needs of the class will guide the level of and type of modelling & explanation. Teachers carefully balance promoting the comprehension of vital words and concepts with ensuring good pace and engagement (RF, p.116)

Questioning & Discussion	<p>Effective questioning deepens children’s understanding, prompting children to think about the ideas and language used in a text, driving quality discussion and thus improving attainment. Teachers focus on a few key questions which focus on the fundamental concepts of the text being read. These questions toggle between establishing meaning and analysing meaning and zoom from the word to sentence to whole text level. The questions are entirely text-dependent, i.e. they focus on exploring meaning of the specific text most pertinent to developing understanding rather than using generic banks of questions. Questioning also provides opportunity for children to reflect on how they feel about a text e.g. Have you met someone like this character? Do you think what this character did was fair? The discussions that these sorts of questions prompt elicit emotive engagement promoting an enjoyment of literature.</p> <p>Discussing is not just talking; it is a way of thinking deeply about new knowledge and ideas as well as a way of learning something new (RF, p.106) Paired, group and class discussion is vital in developing children’s reading. Teachers make comprehensive use of think-pair-share, cold-calling and choral responses to ensure that all children engage with the questions: these approaches are almost always preferable to hands-up, volunteered responses. Discussions are carefully facilitated by teachers to ensure key content remains the focus, all children are able to engage and pace is not negatively impacted.</p>
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Different reading lessons serve **different learning purposes**. The different lesson types, therefore use a different structure and combination of pedagogies.

Lesson Type	Purpose	Key Pedagogical Features
Fluency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve children’s accuracy, automaticity and prosody of increasingly challenging texts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Text Introduction Teacher Modelling Choral / Echo Reading Pupil Reading Repeated Reading
Shared Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To immerse children within a text in order to develop listening comprehension and word, background and literary knowledge There is some modelling and explanations and some questioning and discussion if appropriate for the class, but the focus is on text immersion and enjoyment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Text Introduction Teacher Read Aloud Implicit Vocabulary Instruction Modelling and Explanations (some) Questioning and discussion (some)
Extended Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To deepen understanding of the key themes or concepts within the text and to develop children’s listening comprehension and word, background and literary knowledge Teacher modelling and explanations guide meaning making throughout reading; questioning and discussion prompts thinking and deepens understanding of the text being read. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retrieval Text Introduction Explicit Vocabulary Instruction Implicit Vocabulary Instruction Teacher Read Aloud Pupil Reading (if appropriate) Modelling & Explanations Questioning & Discussion
Close Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To focus on the analysis of a short passage or extract, exploring language, literary devices or concepts in depth. These sessions can be within writing units or when a teacher wishes for children to explore a particularly well-crafted extract in more depth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retrieval Text Introduction Explicit Vocabulary Instruction Implicit Vocabulary Instruction Teacher Read Aloud Pupil Reading (if appropriate) Modelling & Explanations Questioning & Discussion