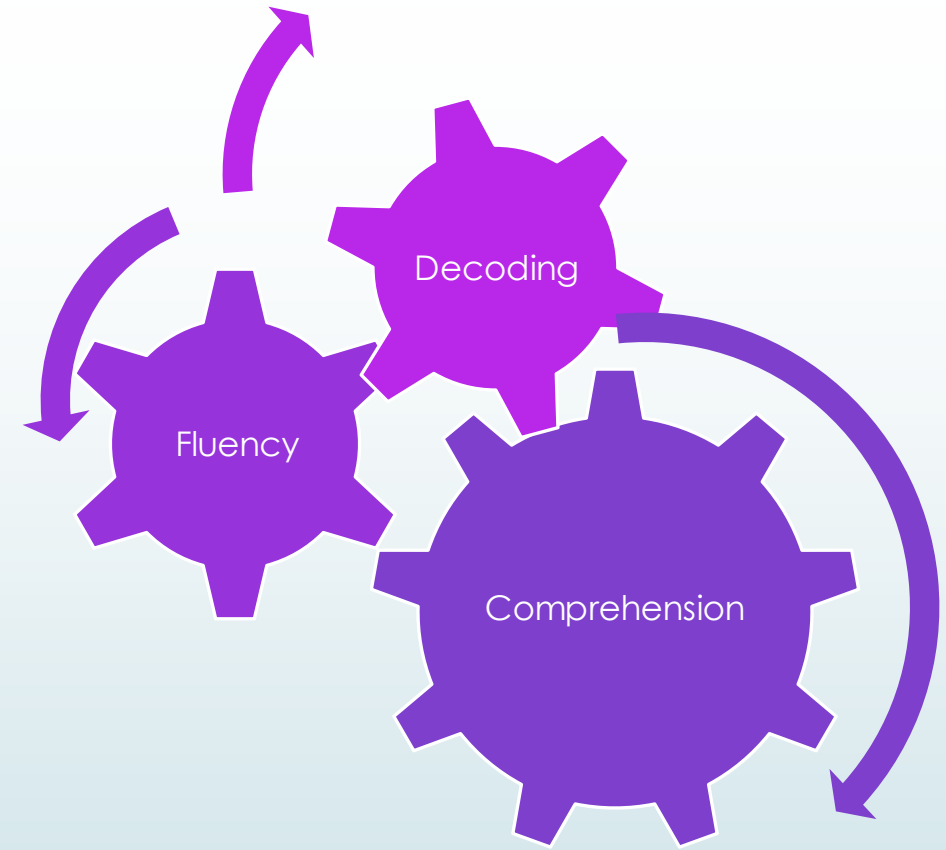




Fluency

June 2021





Why is fluency important?

- ▶ Reading aloud accurately and at a reasonable pace are important aspects of the reading process. If a child can do this then 'cognitive space' is freed up to allow them to concentrate on taking meaning from the text.

Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2 – Recommendations Summary

1



Develop pupils' language capability to support their reading and writing

Purposeful speaking and listening activities support the development of pupils' language capability and provides a foundation for thinking and communication.

Purposeful activities include:

- reading books aloud and discussing them;
- activities that extend pupils' expressive and receptive vocabulary;
- collaborative learning activities where pupils can share their thought processes;
- structured questioning to develop reading comprehension;
- teachers modelling inference-making by thinking aloud; and
- pupils articulating their ideas verbally before they start writing.

2



Support pupils to develop fluent reading capabilities

Fluent readers can read quickly, accurately, and with appropriate stress and intonation.

Fluent reading supports comprehension because pupils' cognitive resources are freed from focusing on word recognition and can be redirected towards comprehending the text.

This can be developed through:

- guided oral reading instruction—teachers model fluent reading of a text, then pupils read the same text aloud with appropriate feedback; and
- repeated reading—pupils re-read a short and meaningful passage a set number of times or until they reach a suitable level of fluency.

It is important to understand pupils' current capabilities and teach accordingly. Most pupils will need an emphasis on developing reading fluency, but some pupils may need a focus on more basic skills, such as decoding and

3



Teach reading comprehension strategies through modelling and supported practice

Reading comprehension can be improved by teaching specific strategies that pupils can apply both to monitor and overcome barriers to comprehension. These include:

- prediction;
- questioning;
- clarifying;
- summarising;
- inference; and
- activating prior knowledge.

The potential impact of these strategies is very high, but can be hard to achieve, since pupils are required to take greater responsibility for their own learning.

The strategies should be described and modelled before pupils practise the strategies with feedback. Support should then be gradually reduced as pupils take increasing responsibility.

Texts should be carefully selected to support the teaching of these strategies

4



Teach writing composition strategies through modelling and supported practice

Purpose and audience are central to effective writing. Pupils need to have a reason to write and someone to write for.

Writing can be thought of as a process made up of seven components:

- planning;
- drafting;
- sharing;
- evaluating;
- revising;
- editing; and
- publishing.

Effective writers use a number of strategies to support each component of the writing process. Pupils should learn how, when, and why to use each strategy. For example, pupils' planning could be improved by teaching the strategies of goal setting and activating prior knowledge.

The strategies should be described and modelled

5



Develop pupils' transcription and sentence construction skills through extensive practice

A fluent writing style supports composition because pupils' cognitive resources are freed from focusing on handwriting, spelling, and sentence construction and can be redirected towards writing composition.

Extensive practice, supported by effective feedback, is required to develop fluent transcription skills.

Spelling should be explicitly taught and diagnostic assessment should be used to focus effort on the spellings that pupils are finding difficult.

Pupils should practise sentence-combining and other sentence construction techniques.

6



Target teaching and support by accurately assessing pupil needs

High-quality assessment and diagnosis should be used to target and adapt teaching to pupils' needs.

Rapid provision of support is important, but it is critical to ensure it is the right support. Diagnostic assessment can be used to inform professional judgement about the best next steps. Diagnostic assessment makes teaching more efficient by ensuring that effort is not wasted on rehearsing skills or content that a pupil already knows well.

A range of diagnostic assessments are available and staff should be trained to use and interpret these effectively.

This approach can be used for high- and low-attaining pupils and for whole-class and targeted interventions.

7



Use high-quality structured interventions to help pupils who are struggling with their literacy

Schools should focus first on developing core classroom teaching strategies that improve the literacy capabilities of the whole class. With this in place, the need for additional support should decrease. Nevertheless, it is likely that a small number of pupils will require additional support.

There is a strong and consistent body of evidence demonstrating the benefit of structured interventions for pupils who are struggling with their literacy. The first step should be to use accurate diagnosis of capabilities and difficulties to match pupils to appropriate interventions.

Support pupils to develop fluent reading capabilities – key recommendation 2 in the EEF's Improving Literacy In Key Stage 2 Guidance Report

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FLUENCY CHECKLIST:

- ✓ **ACCURACY:** I read the words correctly
- ✓ **RATE:** I read not too fast and not too slow
- ✓ **EXPRESSION:** I read with feeling, and I didn't sound like a robot
- ✓ **PUNCTUATION:** I follow most or all of the punctuation marks as I read the text

Non fluent readers

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Characteristics of non fluent readers

- ✓ Children who read accurately but so slowly and haltingly that it impedes their understanding are likely to benefit considerably from this fluency into understanding approach.
- ✓ Children who read accurately but do not take enough account of meaning boundaries marked by punctuation, or who read too fast in ways which impede the full understanding of text
- ✓ Children who segment year group specific words orally even when they are familiar to them.
- ✓ Children who don't use intonation, phrasing and repeated words or refrains to help with the flow of their reading.



Awareness of punctuation

- ▶ They may appear not to notice basic punctuation (full stops in particular, but also question and exclamation marks and commas) when reading aloud.
- ▶ This means that they may read through sense boundaries
- ▶ Reading lacks expression

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Attitude to reading

- ▶ Reading often lacks enthusiasm
- ▶ Often show little interest in what they read – reading is a trial rather than a pleasure
- ▶ May be more interested in books read to them – joining in etc.

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A teaching sequence focusing on improving reading fluency

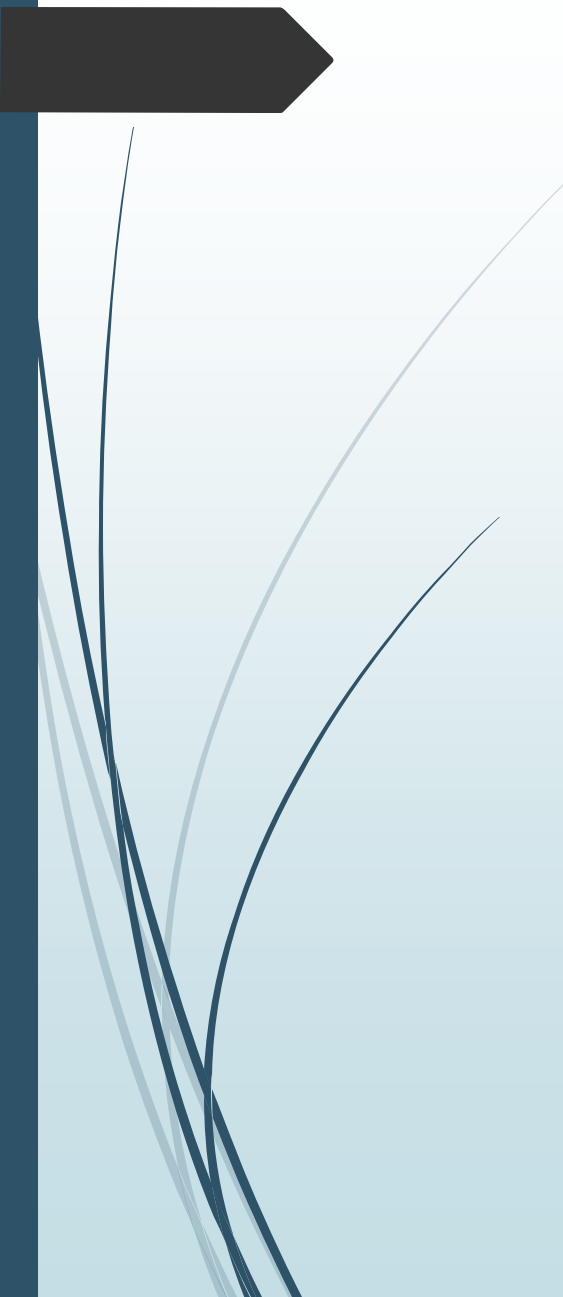


Model

Survey the text

Demonstrate
how to and
support
practice

More practice
(children
working
together)

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For children who know their phonics but don't apply their knowledge to reading

- ▶ Key skills for developing fluency include developing the ability to ‘*survey the text*’ for the *clues* which should influence their reading and being prepared to re-read sections of texts to improve the flow and cohesion of the reading. These skills need **modelling** and **demonstrating**.

Year
1 &
2

Learning where
to pause (and
breathe)

- Key punctuation – full stops, commas
- Run on lines

Year
3 &
4

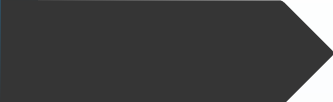
Reading in
meaningful
sections

- ‘Chunked’ text – adverbials, noun phrases, clauses
- Learning to read text in units

Year
5 &
6

Learning to be
expressive

- Other punctuation marks – question marks, exclamation marks etc.
- Text marking – italics, bold print
- Speech verbs
- Dialogue




Fluent reading involves the reader in processing other clues ...we need to teach children to 'survey the text' for these clues

- ... not just the grapheme – phoneme correspondences, e.g. alternate sounds
- **Full stops** - ensuring that the reader stops there and doesn't read through them
- **Run on lines** – sentences which run beyond the end of the line of print need to be read without a pause
- **Punctuation – particularly full stops and commas** – indicating where the reader can take a breath
- **Text that is 'chunked'**, e.g. adverbials, clauses between commas and noun phrases, e.g. *the little red hen*, should be read as a unit not as separate, disconnected words
- **Word clues**, such as speech verbs
- **Other text clues** - such as bold print or italic writing

Reading fluency lessons

- ▶ 20 mins [Discrete or as part of a Whole Class Reading Lesson]
- ▶ When teaching Fluency, the Teacher/ TA models effective and expressive reading a number of times, and points out the clues that lead them to read the text that way. The group are given multiple opportunities to practise reading aloud and improve their fluency, expression and phrasing

[This will come after 'unpicking the text' or clarifying vocabulary, so that the class begin the Fluency part with a good understanding of what the text is about. They should be able to visualise what they are reading about.]



Read the text **to**
the group

• Step 1

Survey the text –
point out the
clues

• Step 2

Re-read the text
to the group

• Step 3

Re-read the text
with the group –
echo read,
choral read etc.

• Step 4

Practising
reading –
children read
together

• Step 5

Reading Fluency Lesson sequence

Using a short paragraph or section of the text,
which is complex enough to be interesting
[specific to the year group]

Lesson 1 and 2 each week Fluency focused lesson	
Reading to / with	<p>Familiar book reading The adult re- reads the familiar text (text 1) with the group, together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will be a book or text read the previous week or previous lesson so it is known to the group. (It is likely to be a section rather than a complete text.) With the group means that the children join in with the reading as much as they can, applying the skills that they learnt in the previous lesson It is important that the children can see the text, so they need their own copy or the text must be enlarged You could read it together more than once
Reading to	<p>New book reading The adult introduces and reads a section of a text (text 2) to the group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the text aloud, modelling fluent reading To the group means that the children aren't asked to join in. (They may do this without direction which would be lovely!)
Return to the text	<p>Survey the text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask children to comment on the way that you read the text Point out any obvious clues (punctuation, words in bold) which led you to read the text in that way Highlight other clues which help the reader read the text well <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may need to be more detailed and specific as the programme develops Link and make a strong connection between your oral reading and the clues in the text, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E.g. point out how the punctuation, requires you to pause (at full stops and commas), or change your voice (at speech marks)
Reading to then reading with	<p>The adult re- reads the text (text 2) to the group again</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask them to listen carefully to how you are reading it, e.g. can they hear the pause at the full stop...? <p>Leading into ...</p> <p>The adult and the group read the new text together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group read the text with the adult <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading with – e.g. choral reading. The children read the text at the same time as the adult, with the same intonation and phrasing Reading after (Copy reading or echo reading). The children read after the adult <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The adult stops reading at appropriate points (e.g. at the end of each sentence) The children read the same sentence copying the adult's phrasing, pace, intonation and expression
Practising reading	<p>Children practise reading the text to each other or together as a group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create opportunities for more re-reading and repetition, for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In pairs, children echo read The group read collectively and chorally to the adult One child reads to the group 3 children develop a reading, while the adult reads with 1 child The reading could be in character, or adopting a particular tone of voice, or even delivered as a song

Boo!



Boo!

SHE DIDN'T LIKE IT at all when her father had to go down to London and, for the first time, she had to sleep alone in the old house.

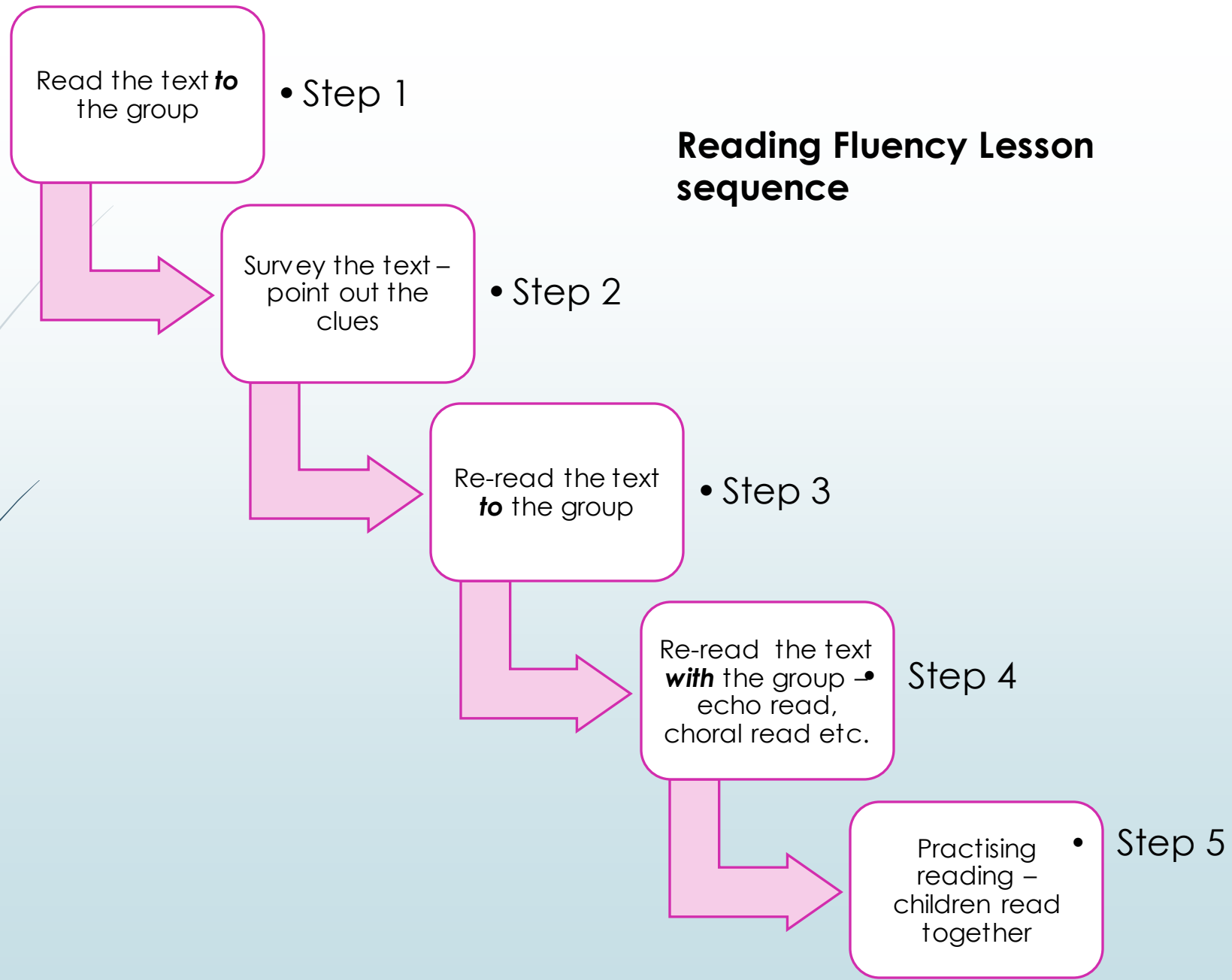
She went up to her bedroom early. She turned the key and locked the door. She latched the windows and drew the curtains. She peered inside her wardrobe, and pulled open the bottom drawer of her chest-of-drawers; she got down on her knees and looked under the bed.


She undressed; she put on her nightdress.

She pulled back the heavy linen cover and climbed into bed. Not to read but to try and sleep—she wanted to sleep as soon as she could. She reached out and turned off the lamp.

'That's good,' said a little voice. 'Now we're safely locked in for the night.'







Step 1 – model the reading
to the group

Boo!

She didn't like it at all when her father had to go down to London and, for the first time, she had to sleep alone in the old house.

Step 2 – survey the text – point out the clues you’re using

Adverbial phrase between commas – chunk the words together as a unit

Exclamation mark tells me to read it with excitement – like I’m jumping out and surprising someone

Natural (slight) pause after *all*

Boo!

She didn't like it at all when her father had to go down to London and, for the first time, she had to sleep alone in the old house.

Comma after *and* means that you pause there. *And* given emphasis


Sentences run on past the end of the line, keep reading!



Step 3 – re-read the text
to the group

Boo!

She didn't like it at all when her father had to go down to London and, for the first time, she had to sleep alone in the old house.



**Step 4 – re-read the text *with*
the group, e.g. echo and
choral reading**

- Read after me – using the echo reading technique

Boo!

She didn't like it at all when her father had to go down to London and, for the first time, she had to sleep alone in the old house.

Step 4 – re-read the text *with* the group, e.g. echo and choral reading

- Read with me – using the choral reading technique

Boo!

She didn't like it at all when her father had to go down to London and, for the first time, she had to sleep alone in the old house.



Step 5 – children practise reading **together**

- ▶ Practise reading aloud in your pair
 1. Echo read – take it in turns to lead the reading and the other echo your phrasing and intonation
 2. Choral read – read the text together, in turn being the leading or dominant voice

Boo!

She didn't like it at all when her father had to go down to London and, for the first time, she had to sleep alone in the old house.



Providing practice – (Applying reading)

- ▶ Confidence is built by providing lots of opportunities to practise successfully at the skill. Opportunities such as
- ▶ Reading aloud to themselves (everyone reading together at the same time) or to the adult
- ▶ Reading in pairs and small groups
- ▶ Pair echo and choral reading
- ▶ Reading to an audience (when confident)
- ▶ Reading to older or younger children not in their group (only when very confident)



Paired reading

- In a paired reading activity, partners read aloud to each other. Pairs can be of the same reading level or you could combine a better reader with a weaker, less fluent reader.
- The partners take turns to read, reading sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph or section by section. The amount to be read might be agreed beforehand or you might ask children to develop a signal which indicates when they want their partner to take over the reading.
- You might also want to discuss with the pairs what should happen if a reader makes a mistake or can't read a particular word.



Have fun with it!

Reading in a specific manner

- ▶ Paired reading can take many forms and you may settle quickly into an approach that the group enjoy and therefore want to repeat, alternatively you may want to try different models. You might ask the pairs to
- ▶ Read in a particular tone of voice
- ▶ Read as if one of the characters was speaking or telling the story
- ▶ Read with a particular emotion in their voice, e.g. as if frightened, angry
- ▶ Read as if they were a newsreader on television, or someone making an important announcement

Pie – Corbett's Suggested Reads	Who's afraid of the big bad book? Emily Brown and the Thing The Hodgeheg	Amazing Grace Gorilla The Giraffe, the Pelly and Me.	Tuesday The Flower Flat Stanley
Reading Reconsidered Reads	The Three Billy Goats Gruff by Paul Galdone The Night before Christmas by Clement Clarke Moore One Candle by Eve Bunting The True Story of the Three Little Pigs by John Scieszka The Red Tree by Shaun Tan Wolves by Emily Gravett The Colour Monster by Anna Llenas	Aesop's Fables (e.g. The Hare and the Tortoise, The Boy Who Cries Wolf) When the Rains Come by Tom Pow The Very Smart Pea and the Princess to Be by Mini Grey Dr Xargie's Book of Earthlets by Jeanne Willis After the Fall by Dan Santat Not Now Bernard by David McKee	The Magic Faraway Tree by Enid Blyton Voices in the Park by Anthony Brown Fantastic Mr Fox by Roald Dahl The Wolf Story: What Really Happened to Little Red Riding Hood by Toby Forward Grandad's Island by Benji Davies The Book With No Pictures by B.J. Novak

Text choices

It is easier to read fluently on known texts, but also on texts which give the reader plenty of clues.



Texts to develop fluency

- ▶ Sections of familiar texts
- ▶ Retellings of well – known stories
- ▶ Texts that children have read before

- ▶ (Familiarity builds confidence which can be extended through the repeated re-readings)



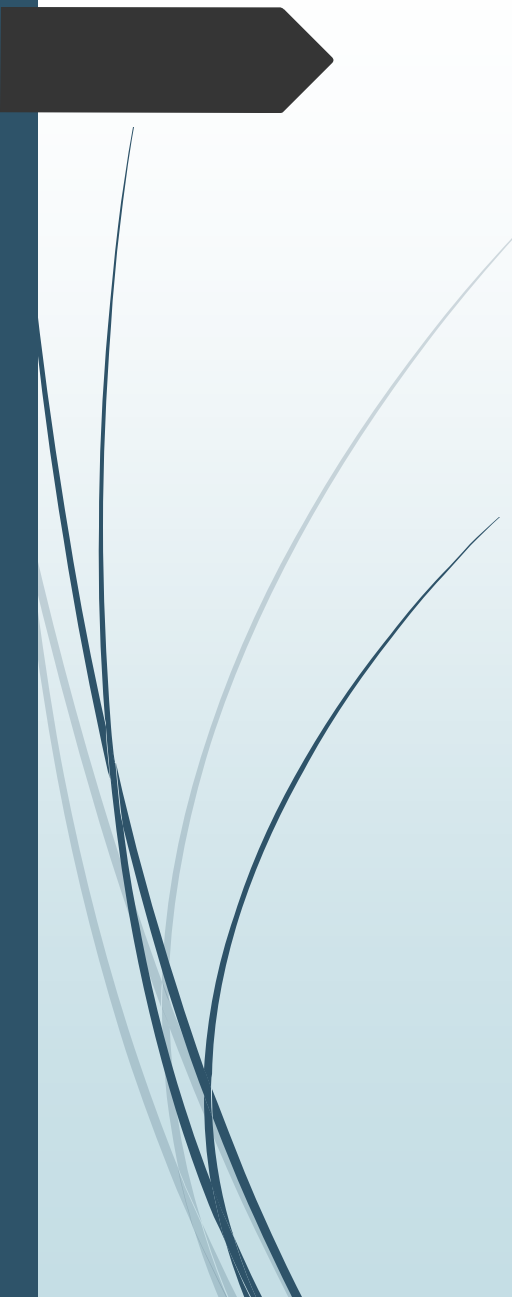
So what are good texts for reading aloud?

- ▶ Really any texts which uses language in lively, interesting ways are likely to work well.
- ▶ Texts where the language is patterned, where there are repetitions or refrains, where there are opportunities for emotions to emerge from the words or where the readers can have fun with the language.
- ▶ Texts written to be recited, sung or spoken are likely to work particularly well.
- ▶ Quality of language should support reading aloud
- ▶ Texts should contain the features ('the clues') which underpin effective reading aloud, e.g. range of punctuation marks, run on lines, chunked text, dialogue



Continued...

- ▶ (Short) poems
- ▶ Well-written picture books
- ▶ Texts with strong phrasing
- ▶ Texts with dialogue
- ▶ Texts with imaginative use of punctuation and text formatting
- ▶ Texts with a limited amount of technical (tier 3) vocabulary
- ▶ Short sections of texts where meanings are clear and/ or interesting
- ▶ Song lyrics
- ▶ Poetry
- ▶ Nursery rhymes
- ▶ Important speeches from history
- ▶ Letters

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Useful features – texts should include some of the following

- ▶ A range of punctuation, but particularly full stops and commas
- ▶ Clauses punctuated by commas
- ▶ Dialogue with speech punctuation
- ▶ Sentences of different length, but including some examples where the sentences run on, past the end of the line
- ▶ Phrases and clauses, e.g. noun phrases, which can be read as a ‘chunk’, a meaningful unit, e.g. the little red hen
- ▶ Other text features, e.g. bold print

Example: Structure of the Week

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Lesson Focus	Cracking Comprehension Teaching Text	Cracking Comprehension Practice Text	Pathways to Read/ Class Novel Clarifying & unpicking the text	Pathways to Read/ Class Novel Fluency on familiar text broken into short chunks	Pathways to Read/ Class Novel Reading for Pleasure
Reciprocal Reading Strategies <i>Predicting, clarifying, summarizing, sequencing</i>					