

HIAS MOODLE+ RESOURCE

Phonic Readers and Book Band Guidance

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Early
Reading

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Early reading and Ofsted

Early reading has a prominent position within the new OFSTED Education Inspection Framework (September 2019). In reaching an evaluation against the 'quality of education' judgement, inspectors will consider whether:

- the school is determined that every pupil will learn to read, regardless of their background, needs or abilities. All pupils, including the weakest readers, make sufficient progress to meet or exceed age-related expectations.
- stories, poems, rhymes and non-fiction are chosen for reading to develop pupils' vocabulary, language comprehension and love of reading. Pupils are familiar with and enjoy listening to a wide range of stories, poems, rhymes and non-fiction.
- the school's phonics programme matches or exceeds the expectations of the national curriculum and the early learning goals. The school has clear expectations of pupils' phonics progress term-by-term, from Reception to Year 2.
- the sequence of reading books shows a cumulative progression in phonics knowledge that is matched closely to the school's phonics programme. Teachers give pupils sufficient practice in reading and re-reading books that match the grapheme-phoneme correspondences they know, both at school and at home.
- reading, including the teaching of systematic, synthetic phonics, is taught from the beginning of Reception.
- the ongoing assessment of pupils' phonics progress is sufficiently frequent and detailed to identify any pupil who is falling behind the programme's pace. If they do fall behind, targeted support is given immediately.
- the school has developed sufficient expertise in the teaching of phonics and reading.

There are many published schemes available that clearly align phonetically decodable texts with key programme such as Letters and Sounds and Read Write Inc.

Collins - Big Cat Phonics

<https://collins.co.uk/pages/phonics-for-letters-and-sounds>

Pearson - Phonic Bugs

<https://www.pearson.com.au/educator/primary/browse-resources-online/english/bug-club/phonics-bug/>

Read Write Inc phonics

<https://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/programmes/phonics/>

Rising Stars - Rocket Phonics

<https://www.risingstars-uk.com/subjects/reading-and-ebooks/rising-stars-reading-planet/reading-planet-reception-and-ks1/rocket-phonics>

Oxford - Songbirds Phonics

<https://global.oup.com/education/content/primary/series/oxford-reading-tree/songbirds-phonics/?region=uk>

Many KS2 Early Readers have gaps in their phonic knowledge which stop them from making progress. They need access to direct phonics instruction and high interest phonic books that engage and support them.

Phonic Books (Age 8-14)

<https://www.phonicbooks.co.uk/>

A school must have fidelity to one phonic programme and the programme put in place should be clear, show progression and follow schemes that match content and coverage from class to class.

Pupils will require access to reading scheme books that are closely linked to the chosen phonics programme, to ensure they practise and consolidate the GPCs (grapheme phoneme correspondences) they have already learned.

We suggest that phonic books are kept separately from other core reading texts. Phonic readers will always be teacher directed as they are linked to pupils GPC knowledge.

Beyond phonics

It is crucial to avoid reading being reduced only to phonics.

Schools will have reading books that are not entirely decodable through phonics alone. These books provide opportunities to read and enjoy books for pleasure, outside of phonic lessons and the phonic reading scheme. For many years, publishers have supported the organisation of these texts through the use of coloured book bands.

‘Colour Book Bands provide a structure within a range of fiction and non-fiction titles from different reading series can be accommodated. This enables teachers to offer children a rich and varied experience of successful text reading.’

‘Which Book and Why’ (pg 102)

The following chart indicates the progression across Book Bands within a Primary School.

	Book Band	Lexile Level	Phonic Phase to be applied
EYFS	Pink Band 1	0-75	Phase 1
	Red Band 2	75-125	Phase 2
	Yellow Band 3	125-200	Phase 3
Year 1	Blue Band 4	200-225	Phase 4
	Green Band 5	225-300	Phase 5
	Orange Band 6	300-325	Phase 5
Year 2	Turquoise Band 7	325-400	Phase 5-6
	Purple Band 8	400-475	
	Gold Band 9	475-575	
	White Band 10	575-625	
	Lime Band 11	625-650	
Year 3/4	KS2 Brown	650-725	
	KS2 Grey	725-750	
Year 5/6	KS2 Blue	750-900	
	KS2 Red	900-1000+	

Which book and why?

Assessment

'A Running Record is an assessment tool which provides an insight into a student's reading as it is happening' (Clay, 1993).

A Running Record provides information on the following:

- a score of word reading accuracy
- an analysis of a reader's errors and self-corrections
- an analysis of the reading strategies used.

Using a series of established conventions, a teacher can quickly and accurately record what the reader says as they read a text or section of a text aloud. After the reading, the teacher reviews the number of errors and self-corrections, and using a mathematical formula determines the level of text difficulty.

Readers who score 95-100% word accuracy are decoding texts which are easy and do not provide any challenges for problem solving strategies. These texts are useful for promoting phrasing, fluency and vocabulary recognition.

Readers who score 90-94% word accuracy are decoding instructional texts which have the 'right' amount of challenge for developing and practising new reading strategies. This level of text difficulty will be just 'right' if the teacher provides guidance and feedback to ensure students can practise the new skills and support.

Readers who score below 90% word accuracy are decoding text that is too hard, will most likely in a loss of meaning or engagement with the text. These texts are best to read to pupils.

Lexile Levels

Schools can also refer to Lexile Levels. There are two Lexile® measures: the Lexile reader measure and the Lexile text measure. A Lexile reader measure represents a person's reading ability on the Lexile scale. A Lexile text measure represents a text's difficulty level on the Lexile scale. When used together, they can help a reader choose a book or other reading material that is at an appropriate difficulty level.

An explanation of Lexile Levels is available here:

<https://doe.sd.gov/octe/documents/WhatDoestheLexileMeasureMean.pdf>

Text Characteristics – Band 1-10

Adapted from Bodman and Franklin Which Book and Why (2014)

Band 1

- Small amount of text (1 sentence)
- Picture cues are supportive of the text
- Repetition in language patterns
- 25-40 HFW

Band 2

- Increasing amount of text (3-5 lines)
- More interpretation of the pictures required
- Introduction of some book language
- Punctuation beyond a full stop
- Increasing number 50-90 HFW

Band 3

- Introduction of past and present tenses
- Longer structures which are not always repeated
- Changes in order of two-word phrases 'said mum' – 'mum said'
- Increasing range of punctuation
- 100-150 words

Band 4

- Pictures can be used to make inferences
- Text is in different places – layout is different
- Range of tenses used
- More complex sentences that bridge more than one line
- Introduction of subordinate clause
- 150+ words

Band 5

- Illustrations provide limited support
- Events sustained over several pages
- A lot more information can be obtained from the text
- More literary language used
- Varied, longer sentences that are not repetitive
- Mixture of sentence lengths
- A variety of tenses used
- 250+ words

Band 6

- Different genres in each book
- More print than pictures
- Different print devices are used e.g. bold text
- More literary language used
- Structures are more complicated
- Length of sentence and position on the page varies
- Contractions and inflections are used widely
- 250-300 words

Band 7

- More complex episodes in stories and events
- Little support from the illustrations
- May have full pages of print
- More literary language
- More unusual and challenging vocabulary
- Non-fiction texts contain more formal sentence structures
- 300+ words

Band 8

- More complex episodes in stories where the plot reflects the feelings of the writer
- Still some illustrations
- Some books have chapters for more sustained reading
- Characters are developed further
- Wider vocabulary and range of terminology
- Non-fiction texts cover a wider range and contain different features

Band 9

- More complex story plots reflect the feelings of the writer
- Some illustrations within chapter books
- Characters are developed further
- Wider vocabulary and range of terminology
- Sentence structure becoming longer and more complex
- Non-fiction texts cover a wider range and contain different features

Band 10

- Wider range of genre and writing styles
- Plots are more complex and sustained
- More than one point of view expressed in a text
- More metaphorical or technical language used
- Wider vocabulary and range of terminology
- Sentence structures longer and more complex
- Non-fiction texts contain more detailed information and have a wider range of text features

HIAS English Team

The HIAS English team offer a wide range of high-quality services to support schools in improving outcomes for learners, including courses, bespoke consultancy and inhouse training.

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