CLPE
Centre for Literacy
in Primary Education

The Reading Scale

reading
and writing
scales

The Reading Scale

What are the Reading and Writing Scales?

The Reading and Writing Scales describe the journeys that children make in order to become literate. We have distilled the complex and individual patterns of progress into, what we hope, are accessible and informative scales.

The purpose of the scales is to help teachers to understand what progression looks like in reading and writing. We have designed this publication to illustrate how schools can provide an environment that supports children's development as readers and writers and to suggest some next steps that teachers can plan in order to take children into the next phase of their development. The pedagogy underpinning the scales and the Next Steps is grounded in a coherent theory of children's language and literacy development, exemplified by the research element of this document, a review of current relevant research.

We are very clear that these are progression and not summative assessment scales. They are designed to support and develop teacher subject knowledge in literacy development, not to set out a linear sequence of targets that children need to reach in order to move to the next phase.

By publishing the scales we hope to support teacher subject knowledge in the development of reading and writing, providing a tool that will help strengthen teacher understanding. If used correctly, this publication will enable schools to recognise and document children's very different learning styles within a common framework and to plan for varying needs of individual children.

How to use this publication

There are several parts to this publication:

■ The Reading and Writing scales

There is one scale for reading and one for writing. Each scale offers a description of the observable behaviours of pupils at different stages. Teachers will be able to think about where on the scales they could place the children that they teach. Once they have thought about this they will be able to see what is the next set of observable behaviours they are likely to see if the child is progressing with reading and writing. Using one of the scales to reflect on the attainment of children in their class will give teachers a clear idea about what to look for in day to day assessment and the key areas they need to plan for next. Every child will have a different journey through these scales. Their starting points and their rate and pattern of progression will depend on many factors including their prior experience, their interests and their learning preferences.

■ The 'Next Steps'

For each of the 'points' on the scale we have also described the provision, practice and pedagogy a teacher would want to plan for in order to help the child move forward in their literacy. We have designed this section to be used alongside the scale. Once the teacher has observed the child's behaviour and worked out where on the scale the child is, they will be able to work out where there are gaps in learning and then look at the next steps to support future planning.

■ The Research and Reading

These scales are underpinned by well-evidenced research. In the Research and Reading section we have outlined the evidence that supports this work. By using this section, teachers will be able to access the theory and evidence that underpins learning and teaching in reading and writing, enabling them to develop their understanding of why, when and how different practices can be most effective.

How this publication came about

This publication was created by a task group consisting of staff from the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE) and representatives from United Kingdom Literacy Association (UKLA), English and Media Centre (EMC), National Association for Advisors in English (NAAE) and the National Association for the Teaching of English (NATE). Over the course of a year, the group worked to create a framework that built on the CLPE reading and writing scales, originally developed as part of the widely used Primary Language Record. The group's aim was to create and pilot a rich framework for teachers to help them identify each pupil's current stage, analyse progress and consider the next steps. Our motivation was, among other things, to help to ensure that any sort of end of Key Stage performance descriptors become more meaningful and to help teachers develop practice that was drawn from established research about children's literacy development.

At each stage of the work the scales were trialled with a group of ten primary schools who were part of the Power of Reading Plus programme. The practitioners attending the project used the scales in school, shared them with other staff and collected evidence about their efficacy and accuracy. All this evidence was fed back into the work of the steering group. This was followed with a wider trial with all 600 teachers who are part of the Power of Reading project. We are collecting the evidence from this group of teachers which will enable us to exemplify the scales in due course.

We are keen to develop the scales to have the widest possible audience and applicability. We are working with the English and Media Centre to trial the scales in Key Stage Three and to develop ways in which they can be used in a secondary as well as a primary environment.

The history of the reading and writing scales

For over forty years CLPE has pioneered approaches to formative, observation-based assessment in literacy and developed The Primary Language Record (PLR) and then The Primary Learning Record. These assessment records were developed between 1985-87 by Myra Barrs and her colleagues with large numbers of teachers working in multilingual inner London primary schools. The PLR was almost immediately recommended by the Cox Committee, which developed the English National Curriculum, as a model for a national system of recordkeeping. It went on to influence language and literacy records in all parts of the UK and become an accepted means of assessment for the English National Curriculum. The PLR was accompanied by four five-point scales, two in reading and two in writing. These enabled teachers to assess and monitor children's progress in the primary school. The thinking about learning and assessment behind these original scales forms the core principles and approach behind our revised scales and this publication.

CLPE Reading Scale
Dependence to Independence

The Reading Scale describes the progression through the complex process of learning to read. It offers teachers ways of looking at and analysing their observations of children's developing skills, knowledge and understanding of the reading process. Different children will have a varied and broad range of starting points and experience and the route of their individual progress will very much depend on this prior experience. The scale is based on extensive evidence and research about children as readers and will support teachers to understand and plan for individual progression in the journey towards reading independence.

Learning to read is a complex process and one that places great demands on a child's cognitive ability to draw on their prior learning and emotional willingness to take visible risks. The first and most important resources that young readers have are a strong foundation of spoken language. Children will also need to have experience of sharing reading for pleasure and purpose and opportunities to play an increasingly participatory role in reading alongside adults. They need to have knowledge of the conventions of reading, and understanding of the large and small shapes in texts. Children will benefit from a repertoire of core texts which broadens as reading material becomes increasingly complex and wide ranging and will be able to respond to texts with increasing inference, long before they can decode fluently. A diet of high quality texts, rich in vocabulary with supportive features with strong shapes and tunes will enable children to learn how to co-ordinate the use of phonic, semantic and syntactic cues as they become increasingly mature, independent readers.

As children mature as readers, they begin to engage with a greater selection of books and texts. It is crucial that they are supported in their endeavours to take on the multi-faceted reading demands of the curriculum. In assessing children's progress and development as readers, there is consideration for a widening of reading horizons. The notion of range and variety play an increasingly important part in interactions with texts in addition to a growing ability to read silently, fluently and with ease. Children may not read equally across the range of text types but at different times will need to read more in one area than another, as well as developing preferences and special interests within the range. Children will develop as readers if they experience personal involvement in reading. Reading for pleasure often begins as shared pleasures and emotional satisfaction arising from reading with an adult or experienced reader. Provision of a rich reading programme that enables shared experiences and the opportunity to encounter a wide variety of books will ensure the range of personal reading choice grows. Observation of both silent reading and reading aloud will reveal strategies used in approaching the task and enable next steps to be developed. Children will need to talk about books in order to clarify ideas, relate reading to experience and to reflect on what they have read. This is the real meaning of comprehension. They need to understand that readers respond differently to the same book, and explore the idea that texts or illustrations might be biased, inaccurate or inadequate. If children are well read, they are better able to evaluate what is read and to make informed choices.

Dependence ← → **Independence**

| Beginning Reader | Early Reader | Developing Reader | Moderately Fluent Reader | Fluent Reader | Experienced Reader | Independent Reader | Mature Independent Reader |

Beginning Reader | Early Reader | Developing Reader | Moderately Fluent Reader

Stage	Describing the Child's Reading Behaviours
Beginning Reader	The main feature of this stage is that readers are not yet able to access print independently and may not yet have awareness that the text carries meaning. They are likely to need a great deal of support with the reading demands of the classroom. Most children have favourites that they want to share and will be able to talk their way through a known book, drawing on picture cues and patterns of language remembered from hearing the book read aloud. Children may join in with simple nursery rhymes, poems, songs and rhyming texts, which should be an integral part of the curriculum at this stage. They generally enjoy listening to, sharing and joining in with a range of familiar texts. They react and respond to illustrations, character and narratives through questions and imaginative play. Children at this stage know how to handle books, are aware of directionality and how print works from being read to. Some children may be engaging with other kinds of texts, e.g. print around them, digital and media texts. They may know a few core words, letter names or sounds, often of personal significance, such as names or other words, letters or sounds of interest. Children engage with activities that develop their early phonological awareness through play with sounds, such as recognising sounds in their environment, using musical instruments and their bodies and voices to create a range of sounds. Reading at this stage relies principally on memory of the story and a willingness to perform, interpret and invent, based on what they have heard and recall. Older readers at this stage might have a limited experience of reading and may not choose to read for pleasure. Children at this stage are building up a repertoire of known texts to which they want to return again and again, as they are being read to and as they are developing as readers. Such readers may not yet have developed strategies to lift the words from the page. They are familiar with the storyline, the tune on the page and have a natural inclination to predict when working with memorable texts; so they become the storyteller and re-enact the text. It is this familiarisation that helps these children develop a growing awareness of what is involved in being able to do it themselves. On each occasion and over time, the children play a more active role in reading.
Early Reader	Early readers can tackle known and predictable texts with growing confidence but still need support with new and unfamiliar ones. They show a growing ability to make sense of what they read, drawing on illustrations, their knowledge of language and the world as well as the words on the page. Children within this stage are at an important transition from dependence on memory or on reading alongside an adult, to a growing independence in reading texts that are familiar but not known by heart. They are developing a growing enthusiasm for a wider range of reading material, which may include simple information books and picture books as well as text in the environment, in digital form and through media. Familiarity with a text provides a supportive framework of meanings and language patterns from which a child can draw, while beginning to focus more closely on print. They are beginning to evidence one-to-one correspondence, drawing on their developing phonic knowledge by linking graphemes and phonemes to help them decode simple words and recognition of a core of known words. They can read and understand simple sentences. As fluency and understanding develop children will begin to self-correct. With support, children reflect on their reading and respond personally to what they have read, making links to prior knowledge, significant experiences and popular culture. They begin to evaluate the books they meet, expressing likes and dislikes with reasons for their views. Older readers at this stage may have a narrow range of independent reading as they are still likely to be drawn to texts that are familiar and do not pose sufficient challenge in extending vocabulary and comprehension skills. Unfamiliar material can be challenging. However, they may be able to read their own writing confidently. They continue to need support with the reading demands of the classroom. Such readers could be over-dependent on one strategy when reading aloud, often reading word by word. They may be over reliant on phonics.
Developing Reader	A developing reader is gaining control of the reading process. Children within this stage link reading to their own experiences and are able to read simple texts independently. They show interest in a growing range of reading material and are able to branch out into a variety of books and other texts, which include simple information texts, poetry and picture books, as well as digital texts and print in the environment. Children apply their developing phonic knowledge when reading words containing known graphemes, recognising alternative graphemes for known phonemes and alternative pronunciations for graphemes, checking that the text makes sense. They read words containing common suffixes and contractions and understand their purpose. They have a more extensive vocabulary of sight words and fluency is beginning to develop through recognition of larger units within words. Children continue to develop self-correction strategies when reading does not make sense and are able to use more than one strategy. Children bring varied sources of information in order to enable them to make meaning of what they read. Their improved fluency enables them to comprehend more of what they are reading. Children reflect on their reading, respond personally to what they have read by drawing on personal connections to the texts. They evaluate the books they meet and are able to articulate views and preferences, making connections to other texts they have encountered. Older children at this stage are developing fluency as readers and are reading certain kinds of material with confidence, such as short books with simple narrative shapes and with illustrations. They will often re-read favourite books.
Moderately Fluent Reader	Moderately fluent readers are well-launched on reading. They read with confidence for more sustained periods, but still need to return to a familiar range of texts, whilst at the same time beginning to explore new kinds of texts independently. Children at this stage will be looking at larger units of words to help them to decode more effectively and read more fluently. Moderately fluent readers are developing confidence in tackling new kinds of texts independently. They are showing evidence of growing enthusiasm for a wider range of reading material that they self select; this may include but is not limited to information books, longer picture books, comics, graphic novels, age appropriate newspapers, short chapter books and a range of digital texts. They are likely to move between familiar and unfamiliar texts in their reading choices, linking new texts to others read, and to personal experiences. They are more confident to express opinions including likes, dislikes and challenges, as well as responding to the questions and listening to the views of others. Older readers at this stage may still need help with the reading demands of the classroom and especially with reading across the curriculum. As their reading experiences increase, children's reading strategies and the language cues of print begin to mesh and they take on more and more of the reading for themselves, bringing to the activity all they know and can do to make the text meaningful.

Dependence   Independence

| | Fluent Reader | Experienced Reader | Independent Reader | Mature Independent Reader |

Stage	Describing the Child's Reading Behaviours
Fluent Reader	Fluent readers are capable readers, who now approach familiar texts with confidence but still need support with unfamiliar materials. They are developing stamina as readers, are able to read for longer periods and cope with more demanding texts. They will begin to read silently and monitor their reading. This transition period is an important one: in the initial stages, they sub-vocalise the words reading at the same pace as if they were reading aloud, but with experience and maturity, the words become 'thoughts in the head' and the rate of reading increases. During this time children still need support and guidance. Children at this stage use a fuller range of cueing systems, relying less on phonics, and are able to identify larger units such as syllables, using these to decode unknown words. Their increased fluency aids comprehension and allows them to start to self-correct. Readers within this stage are confident and independent with familiar kinds of texts, such as shorter chapter books, but may need support with the reading demands of information texts or longer and more complex fiction, poetry and digital texts. They select books independently and can use information books and materials for straightforward reference purposes, but still need help with unfamiliar material. Children's growing understanding of poetry, stories and texts of different sorts is revealed through discussion and writing. They are willing to reflect on reading and often use reading in their own learning. They are receptive to the views of others and engage in discussions about texts and their impact. They begin to infer beyond the literal from books and stories read independently.
Experienced Reader	Experienced readers are avid readers; making choices from a wide range of material. They are comfortable with reading both silently and aloud to others. Students at this stage are fully launched as readers; they are able to read a wide range of texts independently and with ease. They are more able to cross check across a range of cues to ensure comprehension. They can confidently break up words in ways that support them in decoding unknown vocabulary without impeding their fluency. They are likely to be developing strong reading preferences and showing interest in new authors and genres. They recommend books to others based on their own reading preferences, giving reasons for their choices. They ask questions to enhance their understanding of the text and are able to make comparisons within and across different texts. They are more able to appreciate nuances and subtleties in text. Through discussion and in writing about their reading, they show that they are able to read between the lines and make explicit connections with other reading and personal experience, such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, justifying their inferences with evidence.
Independent Reader	Independent readers are self-motivated, confident and experienced, and may be pursuing particular interests through reading. They are capable of tackling some demanding texts and can cope well with the reading of the wider curriculum. They read thoughtfully and appreciate shades of meaning. They are capable of locating, retrieving and drawing on a variety of sources in order to research a topic independently and of presenting information to the reader. Across a range of texts, they can distinguish between statements of fact and opinion. Students at this stage will be willing to take on more extended and more challenging texts. They become more fluent and experienced across the wide range of reading demands that exist in the primary classroom. They make predictions based on details stated and implied. With encouragement, these children become more critical of what they read, and what writers have to say, as well as beginning to notice the effect that writing has on them as a reader. They comment on how organisational structures and language, including figurative language, are used to contribute to meaning and how this impacts on the reader. They express views formed through both independent reading and the books that are read to them, explaining and justifying personal opinions, and courteously challenge those of others whose views may differ from those of their own.
Mature, Independent Reader	Mature, independent readers are enthusiastic and reflective, with strong established tastes across a range of genres and reading materials. They enjoy pursuing their own reading interests independently and have read and demonstrate familiarity with a wide range of books. They can handle a wide range of texts, including some young adult texts. They recognise that different kinds of texts require different styles of reading. Readers at this stage can identify the effect of a text on the reader, with some explicit explanation as to how that effect has been created. They can identify themes and conventions demonstrating, through discussion and comment, an understanding of their use in and across a wide range of writing. They are able to evaluate evidence drawn from a variety of information sources. They can explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read in a variety of ways including cross-curricular presentations or writing. Students at this level are developing critical awareness as readers, analysing how the language, form and structure are used by a writer to create meanings and effects, and developing an appreciation of how particular techniques and devices achieve the effects they do. They become more able to question and/or admire aspects of content, form and function. They also come to realise that some texts contain elements of prejudice, which they learn to recognise, criticising texts and/or illustrations that are biased. Such readers are also extending their understanding of features such as ambiguity or irony. They can compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed.

Stage	Reading Behaviours
Beginning Reader	The main feature of this stage is that readers are not yet able to access print independently and may not yet have awareness that the text carries meaning. They are likely to need a great deal of support with the reading demands of the classroom.
	Most children have favourites that they want to share and will be able to talk their way through a known book, drawing on picture cues and patterns of language remembered from hearing the book read aloud.
	Children may join in with simple nursery rhymes, poems, songs and rhyming texts, which should be an integral part of the curriculum at this stage. They generally enjoy listening to, sharing and joining in with a range of familiar texts. They react and respond to illustrations, character and narratives through questions and imaginative play.
	Children at this stage know how to handle books, are aware of directionality and how print works from being read to. Some children may be engaging with other kinds of texts, e.g. print around them, digital and media texts. They may know a few core words, letter names or sounds, often of personal significance, such as names or other words, letters or sounds of interest.
	Children engage with activities that develop their early phonological awareness through play with sounds, such as recognising sounds in their environment, using musical instruments and their bodies and voices to create a range of sounds.
	Reading at this stage relies principally on memory of the story and a willingness to perform, interpret and invent, based on what they have heard and recall.
	Older readers at this stage might have a limited experience of reading and may not choose to read for pleasure. Children at this stage are building up a repertoire of known texts to which they want to return again and again, as they are being read to and as they are developing as readers. Such readers may not yet have developed strategies to lift the words from the page. They are familiar with the storyline, the tune on the page and have a natural inclination to predict when working with memorable texts; so they become the storyteller and re-enact the text. It is this familiarisation that helps these children develop a growing awareness of what is involved in being able to do it themselves. On each occasion and over time, the children play a more active role in reading.

Dependence   **Independence**

Beginning Reader

Supporting the Beginning Reader in developing independence as a reader – next steps

Develop close links between home and school to allow all adults around the child to observe and evaluate reading behaviours and preferences. This will enable teachers to fine-tune provision of reading materials, support and resources based on the information gleaned.

Encourage parents to develop a bedtime story routine and an ethos of reading for pleasure and purpose. Foster an awareness with parents of opportunities to enjoy rhyme and song with their children, both in reading and general conversation.

Make sure children have access to a range of high quality texts, reading materials and print in the environment, which will engage and extend their interest in reading. Create reading environments rich with high quality texts and reading experiences, these should include alphabet songs and books, name games and name cards to sort. Display information texts and use these within real, meaningful contexts and routines. Provide plenty of opportunities to hear songs and stories read aloud in English and in home languages.

Model enjoyment in stories by reading aloud frequently and support the development of a core of personal favourites for children to share at school and home.

Demonstrate reading for pleasure, purpose and meaning through shared reading, enabling children to predict both words and events and discuss characters and themes with curiosity and enjoyment. Model directional principles: finger pointing, return sweep, word location.

Encourage children to become confident in retelling favourite narratives, read aloud from memory and take risks to innovate their own storylines, drawing on appropriate behaviours, skills and strategies necessary in learning to read. Develop children's confidence by ensuring there are opportunities to read alongside familiar adults and other children as well as reading on their own.

Ensure children are developing a repertoire of favourite stories, songs, poems, chants and jingles as well as planning activities that support and extend listening skills and sound recognition. These experiences are essential for children to develop phonological awareness. Play with rhyme should be a regular activity, to enable children to recognise and continue rhyming strings. This will help children to develop auditory memory as well as embedding understanding and recollection. Point out words that are met with more frequency helping children to begin to build a stock of known words.

Provide opportunities for independent re-reading, responding and re-enacting through imaginary play in order that key refrains and sequences can be re-enacted and internalised.

Make sure children have regular opportunities to talk about what has been read to them and encourage children to ask and answer simple questions and make predictions about aspects of texts such as characters, settings and storylines.

Nurture children's literary tastes by providing high quality texts that will enthuse and motivate them with a balance of the reassuringly familiar and the more linguistically and intellectually demanding. Include song lyrics, poetry, short stories, comics, audio books, graphic novels and serials as well as continuing to foster pleasure in picture books. Include a range of non-fiction texts which appeal to personal interests and drive reader motivation. Provide a school print environment which is richer than the outside world, modelling a natural use of language and purposeful print in the environment.

Demonstrate supportive reading strategies and cues that exploit a child's understanding of the world, knowledge of patterns in story, and experience of grammatical conventions in oral and written language. Contextualise and enable decoding by eliciting predictions thereby enabling the reader to develop productive strategies.

Provide a range of well-chosen reading material that enables children to draw upon their better-developed knowledge of language to anticipate, predict, hypothesise, confirm and reject rather than texts that contain controlled vocabulary or oversimplified linguistic structures. Include digital texts that allow children to experience and comprehend texts that are beyond their current decoding ability.

Focus attention on gaps in early phonological awareness, such as ensuring children can discriminate between similar sounds, create and describe a range of voice sounds and appreciate the rhythms of language and syllables in words. Draw attention to alliteration and assonance in the environment and in rhymes and poetry. Play games involving oral blending and segmenting through words. Link rhyming words to spelling patterns, using onset and rime to increase the stock of readable words.

Enable new knowledge, skills and strategies to be contextualised and applied meaningfully by offering intervention within a rich reading programme: plentiful cross-curricular opportunity, reading aloud, one-to-one reading, shared and group reading. Include a routine of free reading when children can exchange recommendations, share enjoyment of books with peers and observe more experienced readers finding fulfilment in the world of a book. Ensure children are included in the 'reading to learn' culture enjoyed by their peers through reading aloud texts that meet their intellectual needs.

Utilise story props to aid sequencing; storyboxes to ignite language and explore character and themes; book based games to develop the child's awareness of significant features of print; and recorded stories alongside books to allow the rhythm of the language to be revisited whilst matching to print. Engage children in collaborative performance reading to consider the way in which the language is used for impact and enhance the social and pleasurable essence of the reading experience.

Reinforce the process of writing into reading, by modelling writing and reading for a range of purposes across the curriculum. Support children in making and publishing their own books, which can be displayed and revisited, giving authorial status to the writers.

When working with older readers at this stage, the following points are also important:

Next steps for older readers who are at this stage will require a thorough analysis of children's reading and engagement to understand their behaviours and determine the underlying issues and, therefore, the most effective course of action. Observe and sample reading from a range of sources to monitor reading behaviours, strategies adopted and text preferences. Develop a dialogue between home and school, and fine-tune provision of reading materials, support and resources based on this information. Adopt a relaxed and reflective approach when listening to children read their self-chosen books and, as trust develops, encourage children to monitor themselves, appreciate their own strengths and see themselves as readers.

Stage	Reading Behaviours
Early Reader	Early readers can tackle known and predictable texts with growing confidence but still need support with new and unfamiliar ones. They show a growing ability to make sense of what they read, drawing on illustrations, their knowledge of language and the world as well as the words on the page.

Children within this stage are at an important transition from dependence on memory or on reading alongside an adult, to a growing independence in reading texts that are familiar but not known by heart. They are developing a growing enthusiasm for a wider range of reading material, which may include simple information books and picture books as well as text in the environment, in digital form and through media.

Familiarity with a text provides a supportive framework of meanings and language patterns from which a child can draw, while beginning to focus more closely on print. They are beginning to evidence one-to-one correspondence, drawing on their developing phonic knowledge by linking graphemes and phonemes to help them decode simple words and recognition of a core of known words. They can read and understand simple sentences. As fluency and understanding develop children will begin to self-correct.

With support, children reflect on their reading and respond personally to what they have read, making links to prior knowledge, significant experiences and popular culture. They begin to evaluate the books they meet, expressing likes and dislikes with reasons for their views.

Older readers at this stage may have a narrow range of independent reading as they are still likely to be drawn to texts that are familiar and do not pose sufficient challenge in extending vocabulary and comprehension skills. Unfamiliar material can be challenging. However, they may be able to read their own writing confidently. They continue to need support with the reading demands of the classroom. Such readers could be over-dependent on one strategy when reading aloud, often reading word by word. They may be over reliant on phonics. |

Dependence   **Independence**

Early Reader

Supporting the Early Reader in developing independence as a reader – next steps

Foster positive attitudes to reading by ensuring it is a fundamental part of home and school routines. Ensure accessibility to a wide range of texts at home, as well as in school, through established school lending programmes and links with local libraries. Observe and sample reading frequently to inform next steps and fine-tune text choice.

Create attractive and accessible reading environments, rich with stories, poems and rhymes, as well as information texts organised effectively to support browsing and text selection. Gather texts that may spark interest and provide regular opportunities for children to read for enjoyment; quietly to themselves, with each other and to known, supportive adults.

Continue to provide a wide range of high quality texts with meaningful and supportive features, strong shapes and tunes to develop children's ear for language across a range of text types. A core collection of texts gives children opportunity to know texts well, establish firm favourites and read for information. Maintain routines of reading aloud familiar, less well-known and unknown texts with children playing a participatory role in reading such texts alongside adults.

Choose shared texts that can be drawn upon to establish flow, allegiance to the storyline, and build stamina. Model one-to-one correspondence of printed words, a balance of cueing systems and strategies; developing confidence through the use of familiar texts. Attend to the recognition of high frequency words, increasing the vocabulary of sight words. Encourage children to reflect on their reading, respond personally to what they have read and begin to evaluate the books they meet, making recommendations. A rich stock of digital texts should form an integral part of the provision, so that children can hear and see models of reading and work on their comprehension beyond their current decoding ability.

Teach phonics in context, introducing grapheme, phoneme correspondences and the skills of segmenting and blending through a word. Ensure children learn a core of common sight words that will also help to facilitate fluency. Encourage children to self-monitor as they read, checking for sense and accuracy and promote self-correction where reading does not make sense.

Continue to provide regular and meaningful opportunities for discussions about what the children have read or have had read to them. Promote a deeper understanding by facilitating opportunities to summarise texts, link them to personal experiences and answer questions directly relating to the text.

When working with older readers at this stage, the following points are also important:

Provide a rich reading programme for older readers at this stage; reading aloud and responding to intellectually appropriate texts, developing visual literacy, and ensuring inclusion in a community of readers for recreation and learning across the curriculum. Continue to provide an encouraging reading environment, rich in meaningful print and stocked with a range of high-quality texts, chosen with the children's strengths, interests, cultures, and emotional and intellectual needs in mind. Establish an ethos of shared enjoyment in stories between children and supportive adults or more experienced readers.

Continue to develop a relaxed and trusting relationship with older readers at this stage, regularly sampling reading from a range of sources and gradually involving them in reflecting on their reading strategies and behaviours following miscue analysis. Focus on strengths, self-corrections and substitutions to help identify next steps. Ensure the text choice enables opportunity to practise orchestrating the reading cues and that the adult teaching reading facilitates growing independence. Support children in risk-taking and reading aloud by allowing them to revisit familiar texts and carefully choosing less well-known texts that have supportive features.

Model, in shared and group reading, how to take risks with print by making informed guesses based on semantic, syntactic and grapho-phonic information and using a number of strategies to try out hypotheses and to confirm or reject them as new knowledge is added to the old. Model and elicit different styles of reading for the demands of different texts encountered, providing experience for a greater variety of books and reading material across all areas of the curriculum.

Develop orthographic approaches to reading words and prioritise growing independence in reading and spelling strategies, introducing editing partners, making word collections, and developing self-monitoring and self-help strategies. Make explicit the interdependent nature of reading and writing. Provide rich and meaningful experiences that put the writing system and written language in context, such as: bookmaking; using characters, settings, themes or storylines from familiar texts to inspire their own creative writing; writing for specific purpose and audience. Display such texts as an integral part of the environment in order to develop a sense of authorship. Encourage children to read their own writing and that of others.

Stage	Reading Behaviours
Developing Reader	A developing reader is gaining control of the reading process. Children within this stage link reading to their own experiences and are able to read simple texts independently. They show interest in a growing range of reading material and are able to branch out into a variety of books and other texts, which include simple information texts, poetry and picture books, as well as digital texts and print in the environment. Children apply their developing phonic knowledge when reading words containing known graphemes, recognising alternative graphemes for known phonemes and alternative pronunciations for graphemes, checking that the text makes sense. They read words containing common suffixes and contractions and understand their purpose. They have a more extensive vocabulary of sight words and fluency is beginning to develop through recognition of larger units within words. Children continue to develop self-correction strategies when reading does not make sense and are able to use more than one strategy. Children bring varied sources of information in order to enable them to make meaning of what they read. Their improved fluency enables them to comprehend more of what they are reading. Children reflect on their reading, respond personally to what they have read by drawing on personal connections to the texts. They evaluate the books they meet and are able to articulate views and preferences, making connections to other texts they have encountered. Older children at this stage are developing fluency as readers and are reading certain kinds of material with confidence, such as short books with simple narrative shapes and with illustrations. They will often re-read favourite books.

Dependence   **Independence**

Developing Reader

Supporting the Developing Reader in developing independence as a reader – next steps

Sustain home school links to ensure positive reading routines and behaviours continue to develop. Such integrated routines will provide children with the opportunity to read widely and often, illustrating the pleasures reading can bring. Observe and sample reading regularly to analyse strengths, self-corrections and substitutions and identify next steps.

Provide stimulating reading environments which include a wide range of materials which encourage children to broaden their reading experiences. Create reading areas that reflect the curriculum and the children's interests. Ensure children have access to a variety of digital texts so that children can see, read and respond to texts in a wide variety of formats and for different purposes. Provide opportunities for children to read for pleasure and purpose as a regular part of classroom routines. Allow children to choose their own material and facilitate a range of reading experiences such as dialogic groups, paired reading, book clubs, reading aloud, sustained periods of quiet, uninterrupted and independent reading. Provide opportunity for adults and peers to make recommendations.

Continue to read aloud regularly, with opportunities for children to participate, question and give opinions. Give reading purpose and provide meaningful contexts, such as performing poetry, reading for information across the curriculum and collaborative reading opportunities such as 'buddying' areas in order to increase confidence in reading to a wider range of audiences.

Foster positive reading attitudes and maintain children's confidence in reading by modelling, through shared reading, a wide range of strategies (predicting, sampling, confirming, self-monitoring, and self-correcting) and demonstrating the full range of cueing systems (semantic, syntactic and grapho-phonic).

Teach phonics systematically, enabling children to read a wider range of words that may not be easily encoded through syntactic or semantic cues. Encourage improved fluency by supporting children to look at larger chunks of words through a more analytic approach. Provide support by demonstrating rhyme and analogy and using onset and rime to relate unknown words to those they know. Provide word investigations and sorting activities. Intervene sensitively in moving children on, based on close observations in a range of contexts and record keeping.

Further embed comprehension and interpretation of texts by developing children's questioning skills and inference. This includes reading illustrations in picture books that may give a deeper meaning than the text on the page. Elicit ideas relating to character motivation, story structure and use of language, encouraging the children to draw on personal experience. Follow up initial responses with prompts that will extend thinking and support reasoning skills.

When working with older readers at this stage, the following points are also important:

Observe and sample the reading of older children at this stage to analyse progress in meeting the demands of a wider range of reading material. Involve older readers in reflecting on their reading through retrospective miscue analysis. Continue to model orchestrating all cueing systems and supportive reading strategies when encountering unknown words. Consolidate orthographic approaches, exploiting increasing independence in reading and spelling strategies through the use of editing partners, drawing on word collections, and facilitating self-monitoring and self-help strategies particularly in the absence of illustration.

Develop a culture of book clubs throughout the school community to promote older children's engagement in reading, wider discussion skills and inferential understanding. Support readers to view reading as a social activity as well as one in which a reader can find fulfilment in entering the world of a book. Ensure that teacher knowledge of high quality books is wide ranging so that text choices are well considered and children are better able to make informed choices.

Stage	Reading Behaviours
Moderately Fluent Reader	Moderately fluent readers are well-launched on reading. They read with confidence for more sustained periods, but still need to return to a familiar range of texts, whilst at the same time beginning to explore new kinds of texts independently.
	Children at this stage will be looking at larger units of words to help them to decode more effectively and read more fluently.
	Moderately fluent readers are developing confidence in tackling new kinds of texts independently. They are showing evidence of growing enthusiasm for a wider range of reading material that they self select; this may include but is not limited to information books, longer picture books, comics, graphic novels, age appropriate newspapers, short chapter books and a range of digital texts.
	They are likely to move between familiar and unfamiliar texts in their reading choices, linking new texts to others read, and to personal experiences. They are more confident to express opinions including likes, dislikes and challenges, as well as responding to the questions and listening to the views of others.
	Older readers at this stage may still need help with the reading demands of the classroom and especially with reading across the curriculum. As their reading experiences increase, children's reading strategies and the language cues of print begin to mesh and they take on more and more of the reading for themselves, bringing to the activity all they know and can do to make the text meaningful.

Dependence   **Independence**

Moderately Fluent Reader

Supporting the Moderately Fluent Reader in developing independence as a reader – next steps

Keep informal records of observations in reading diaries, take samples and hold conferences with families and children to establish perceptions, reading preferences and engagement.

Ensure that children have dedicated time to explore, browse and self-select from a well stocked, inviting and accessible reading environment, including access to a growing variety of digital and multimodal texts. Encourage an ethos of peer recommendation and evaluation and know books that enthuse children and encourage avid reading. Demonstrate being a reader yourself as well as making links with bookshops and libraries that can further children's engagement in books.

Provide a rich reading programme which includes reading aloud and sustained independent reading time, as well as encouraging social and collaborative aspects of reading when sharing books with peers for both recreation and information.

In shared and group reading, continue to model the full range of strategies and the ways in which to cross check for meaning, self-correcting where necessary. Support children in tackling an increasing range of reading material in independent reading; including texts that do not have familiar features of repeated refrain or rhyme, but still have other supportive features, such as illustration to draw on as readers.

Ensure a focus on analytic approaches in phonics teaching to facilitate the recognition of written language as units, such as words within words, rime, syllables, common spelling patterns rather than individual graphemes and phonemes. Closely observe reading until fluency is achieved to ensure all cueing systems are being employed.

Facilitate deeper, inferential response to texts and ignite children's curiosity when reading through asking and answering their own questions and the questions of others. Give opportunity for children to read then respond in dialogic groups to explain ideas and clarify thinking. Consider providing children with personal reading journals to record responses at home and school through writing and illustration.

When working with older readers at this stage, the following points are also important:

Maintain a rich reading programme that will nurture the older child's increasing experience of literature, including high quality text choices in the reading area, and routines that include reading aloud, reading illustration, uninterrupted free reading time, reading for purpose and pleasure across the curriculum and reading to a range of listeners. Continue to hone the older reader's increasing competence in orchestrating cues, ensuring that text choices enable them to practice, thus developing fluency and reading stamina.

Nurture the skills of reflection and constructive criticism through discussion, debate, book talk and book club groups, all of which help to deepen understanding of language and vocabulary to clarify their ideas, to relate reading to experience, and to reflect on what has been read.

Stage	Reading Behaviours
Fluent Reader	Fluent readers are capable readers, who now approach familiar texts with confidence but still need support with unfamiliar materials. They are developing stamina as readers, are able to read for longer periods and cope with more demanding texts.
	They will begin to read silently and monitor their reading. This transition period is an important one: in the initial stages, they sub-vocalise the words reading at the same pace as if they were reading aloud, but with experience and maturity, the words become 'thoughts in the head' and the rate of reading increases. During this time children still need support and guidance.
	Children at this stage use a fuller range of cueing systems, relying less on phonics, and are able to identify larger units such as syllables, using these to decode unknown words. Their increased fluency aids comprehension and allows them to start to self-correct.
	Readers within this stage are confident and independent with familiar kinds of texts, such as shorter chapter books, but may need support with the reading demands of information texts or longer and more complex fiction, poetry and digital texts. They select books independently and can use information books and materials for straightforward reference purposes, but still need help with unfamiliar material.
	Children's growing understanding of poetry, stories and texts of different sorts is revealed through discussion and writing. They are willing to reflect on reading and often use reading in their own learning. They are receptive to the views of others and engage in discussions about texts and their impact. They begin to infer beyond the literal from books and stories read independently.

Dependence   **Independence**

Fluent Reader

Supporting the Fluent Reader in developing independence as a reader – next steps

Continue to encourage a routine of reading aloud at home. Continue to use observations, records and conferences with families and children to establish and build upon perceptions, reading preferences and engagement.

Clear daily reading routines and supportive reading environments are a constant feature. Provide a wide access to a range and breadth of reading materials for the children to read together or alone, encouraging increasing periods of silent reading time for both purpose and pleasure. Regularly support children to self-select texts across a range of platforms that broaden and enrich their reading experience. Such choices might be influenced by author, genre or reading purpose.

Ensure that reading is embedded throughout the curriculum by displaying and referencing information texts in context, relevant to the children and the topic. Through modelling across curriculum areas, encourage children to reference a variety of texts and information to answer questions, broaden knowledge and deepen understanding.

High quality texts that enthuse children and have the potential to ignite further choices, like books in a series and collections of poems, are a regular part of the read aloud programme. Emphasise intonation and expression when reading aloud to encourage children to appreciate the nuances and subtleties in texts. Continue to model the full range of strategies and orchestration of cueing systems when tackling more demanding texts.

Enable children to identify whole words and read print with growing confidence and accuracy by encouraging them to observe the ways in which unfamiliar words are constructed and draw on a growing repertoire of morphemes and spelling patterns.

During shared and group reading, and when reading with children individually, facilitate regular discussion inspired by a range of high quality reading materials; more complex picture books, graphic novels digital and multi-modal texts to develop visual literacy skills that enrich comprehension, elicit interpretation and deepen response. Develop a culture of book clubs throughout the school community to promote engagement in reading, wider discussion skills and inferential understanding.

Stage	Reading Behaviours
Experienced Reader	Experienced readers are avid readers; making choices from a wide range of material. They are comfortable with reading both silently and aloud to others.
	Students at this stage are fully launched as readers; they are able to read a wide range of texts independently and with ease. They are more able to cross check across a range of cues to ensure comprehension. They can confidently break up words in ways that support them in decoding unknown vocabulary without impeding their fluency.
	They are likely to be developing strong reading preferences and showing interest in new authors and genres. They recommend books to others based on their own reading preferences, giving reasons for their choices. They ask questions to enhance their understanding of the text and are able to make comparisons within and across different texts. They are more able to appreciate nuances and subtleties in text.
	Through discussion and in writing about their reading, they show that they are able to read between the lines and make explicit connections with other reading and personal experience, such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, justifying their inferences with evidence.

Dependence → **Independence**

Experienced Reader

Supporting the Experienced Reader in developing independence as a reader – next steps

Use observations, records and conferences to establish perceptions, reading preferences and engagement.

Continue to provide access to a wide range of reading material and opportunities for children to browse, select and make choices. Provide sustained periods of silent, uninterrupted reading daily, whilst continuing to enjoy reading aloud and asking children to share their reading aloud. Nurture a culture of book gossip in which children and adults become accustomed to discussing, sharing, recommending and signposting future reading. Book Groups can be set up to ensure engagement of those children that are fluent readers but may choose not to read.

Create a reading environment and routines that enable peer recommendations and evaluations to take place. Provide personal reading journals and class reading journals to record a range of responses to shared texts. Ensure children are well-read and able to draw on a range of texts in order to make connections.

Elicit effective use of cueing systems and appropriate reading strategies when encountering unknown words. Consolidate orthographic approaches, exploiting increasing independence in reading and spelling strategies through the use of editing partners, word collections, and enhancing self-monitoring /self-help strategies particularly in the absence of illustration.

Provide opportunities for children to develop deeper responses to text and illustration through art, music, performance and drama. Model and elicit inference and deduction in response to increasingly challenging and extended texts, including in digital and multimodal formats, and hone visual literacy skills, through shared reading and book talk around illustration. Facilitate Literacy Circles, fostering independence during group sessions, each child taking on key roles and working collaboratively to respond more deeply to their shared text.

Stage	Reading Behaviours
Independent Reader	Independent readers are self-motivated, confident and experienced, and may be pursuing particular interests through reading. They are capable of tackling some demanding texts and can cope well with the reading of the wider curriculum. They read thoughtfully and appreciate shades of meaning. They are capable of locating, retrieving and drawing on a variety of sources in order to research a topic independently and of presenting information to the reader. Across a range of texts, they can distinguish between statements of fact and opinion. Students at this stage will be willing to take on more extended and more challenging texts. They become more fluent and experienced across the wide range of reading demands that exist in the primary classroom. They make predictions based on details stated and implied. With encouragement, these children become more critical of what they read, and what writers have to say, as well as beginning to notice the effect that writing has on them as a reader. They comment on how organisational structures and language, including figurative language, are used to contribute to meaning and how this impacts on the reader. They express views formed through both independent reading and the books that are read to them, explaining and justifying personal opinions, and courteously challenge those of others whose views may differ from those of their own.

Dependence   **Independence**

Independent
Reader

Supporting the Independent Reader to continue their development as a reader – next steps

Facilitate ongoing dialogue between adults and the children informally and in their reading journals, evaluating books, critiquing author intent and reflecting on book choices. Observe and sample reading to analyse progress in meeting the demands of a wider range of reading material.

Maintain a rich reading programme that will nurture children's increasing experience of literature, including high quality text choices in the reading area and routines that include uninterrupted free reading time and reading for purpose and pleasure across the curriculum and for a range of audiences. Ensure that knowledge of both classic and contemporary books is high amongst teachers, making for meaningful and personalised recommendations. Provide opportunities for children to read challenging texts beyond those that they might not self-select, including ones across a range of forms and formats, including digital and multimodal texts, across cultures and centuries.

Demonstrate how to tackle the demands of a range of increasingly challenging reading material through shared and group reading sessions. Reinforce and apply reading strategies in a range of contexts, including exploring specific text features through writing. Scaffold and extend talk through which to express critical thinking, engaging children in debate, discussion and book talk around character, themes and intent.

Stage	Reading Behaviours
Mature Independent Reader	Mature, independent readers are enthusiastic and reflective, with strong established tastes across a range of genres and reading materials. They enjoy pursuing their own reading interests independently and have read and demonstrate familiarity with a wide range of books. They can handle a wide range of texts, including some young adult texts. They recognise that different kinds of texts require different styles of reading. Readers at this stage can identify the effect of a text on the reader, with some explicit explanation as to how that effect has been created.

They can identify themes and conventions demonstrating, through discussion and comment, an understanding of their use in and across a wide range of writing. They are able to evaluate evidence drawn from a variety of information sources. They can explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read in a variety of ways including cross-curricular presentations or writing.

Students at this level are developing critical awareness as readers, analysing how the language, form and structure are used by a writer to create meanings and effects, and developing an appreciation of how particular techniques and devices achieve the effects they do. They become more able to question and/or admire aspects of content, form and function. They also come to realise that some texts contain elements of prejudice, which they learn to recognise, criticising texts and/ or illustrations that are biased. Such readers are also extending their understanding of features such as ambiguity or irony. They can compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed. |

Dependence   **Independence**

Mature
Independent
Reader

Supporting the Mature Independent Reader to continue their development as a reader – next steps

Sustain and challenge children's literary tastes with book collections, routines and a rich reading programme that inspires critical reflection and provide plentiful opportunity to engage with and experience a wide variety of texts. Ensure that teacher knowledge of high quality books is wide ranging so that children are better able to make informed choices when selecting challenging texts from a range of forms, formats, cultures and centuries. Encourage children to make comparisons across texts and to identify where individual texts fit in with their extended reading knowledge.

Nurture the skills of reflection and constructive criticism through discussion, debate, book talk and book club groups in order to clarify their ideas, to relate reading to experience, and to reflect on what has been read. Refine discussion skills when presenting viewpoint in response to readers who hold a different position on a book. Deepen understanding about an author's use of language through drama and performance reading, providing the framework to evaluate the intent and impact of language choice on the reader. Elicit reflections on the relationship between illustration and text and how structure and presentation contribute to meaning. Demonstrate that texts or illustrations may be biased, inaccurate or inadequate, providing time for children to explore this idea further using a range of sources.

Research Towards a Comprehensive Pedagogy for Reading and Writing

Introduction

In this section we indicate the research that underpins the approach we have taken in these reading and writing scales and the accompanying 'next steps' pedagogy, pointing to the sources of evidence they are based on. So the section is intended to help teachers to develop their understanding of why, when and how different practices are productive.

We recognise that literacy teaching is a passionately contested area. The discourses surrounding teaching children to read and write are constituted by widely differing views from a range of disciplines about the nature of language and its acquisition. These lead to differing pedagogic and assessment practices. Moreover, disputes about literacy pedagogy often emanate from fundamental differences over the approaches to researching the best ways to teach reading and writing: arguments continue to rage over the validity of different research methods used to investigate literacy practice (Rassool 1999).

We have adopted an approach to research that is at once both rigorous and wide-ranging. The studies we draw on are concerned with reading and writing as making meaning from coherent text. The vast majority concern real children reading and writing texts in authentic circumstances – not word lists in laboratories. They are focused on successful children, teachers and schools. Some of these informing studies are rooted in psychology, some in linguistics and some in sociolinguistics. But all incorporate a view of reading and writing as essentially concerned with making meaning.

We consider that the work of Luke and Freebody has been particularly helpful in clarifying what it is that children have to learn to become fully literate. They argue that to become a successful reader and writer, an individual needs to develop and sustain the means to play four related roles: code breaker, meaning-maker, text-user, and text critic. This is the conception of literacy learning that informs our approach (Luke and Freebody, 1999).

The research we draw on does not lead us to a neat sequential train of activities, but it does establish important principles.

- All children come to school with a range of experience of literacy, including digital and media text, much of it framed by popular culture.

- Establishing strong two-way links between home and school substantially aids all literacy learning; reading is particularly sensitive to parental influence.

- The 'basics' of literacy learning involve an awareness of what it is to be literate, and a familiarity with the language of books, as well as knowledge of the alphabet and the sound/symbol relations of the orthographic code.

- Approaches to reading and writing that both balance and integrate technical concerns with attention to the making of meanings that are interesting to the learner are more successful than those that focus on technical matters alone.

- Teachers who tailor their teaching to the needs of individual children, drawing on their understanding of the children's backgrounds and experiences, as well as close monitoring of their progress, are more successful than those who impose uniformity.

- Learning to read and learning to write are interdependent processes: making links between reading and writing help both forward.

The reading and writing scales, along with the 'next steps' materials embody these principles and offer a holistic and comprehensive approach to the teaching of reading and writing. They give teachers a framework to conceptualise and discuss the progression learners make, one that is fully rounded and accompanied by a wide spectrum of sound strategies to ensure progression.

In the rest of this section we set out these and other principles, together with references to the research from which they derive.

References

Luke, A. and Freebody, P. (1999) Further notes on the 4 resources model. *Practically Primary* 4, 2. 5-8.

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Key principles derived from research evidence

Reading and writing together

All children come to school with a range of experience of literacy, including digital and media text, much of it framed by popular culture. (Heath, 1983; Moll et al., 1992; Dyson, 2001, 2003; Millard, 2003; Marsh et al., 2005; Marsh, 2005; Kendeou et al., 2008; Wohlwend, 2009; Levy, 2009; Ofcom, 2011)

Establishing strong two-way links between home and school substantially aids all literacy learning; reading is particularly sensitive to parental influence. (Tizard et al., 1982; Topping, 1991; Close, 2001; Sénéchal and Lefevre, 2002; Aram and Levin, 2004; Nutbrown et al., 2005; Levy, 2011; Mullis et al., 2012)

The 'basics' of literacy learning involve an awareness of what it is to be literate, and a familiarity with the language of books, as well as knowledge of the alphabet and the sound/symbol relations of the orthographic code. (Clay, 1972; Wells, 1981a; Bussis et al., 1985; Solsken, 1993; Raban and Coates, 2004; Pressley, 2006; Davis, 2013)

Approaches to the teaching of reading and writing that both balance and integrate technical concerns with attention to the making of meaning are more successful than those that focus on technical matters alone. (Medwell et al., 1998; Wray et al., 2000; Taylor and Pearson, 2002; Berninger et al., 2003; Hall and Harding, 2003; Pressley, 2006; Torgerson et al., 2006; Shapiro and Solity, 2008; Parr and Limbrick, 2010; Wolfe, 2013)

Teachers who tailor their teaching to the needs of individual children, drawing on understanding of the children's background and experiences, as well as close monitoring of their progress, are more successful teachers of literacy than those who impose uniformity. (Medwell et al., 1998; Pressley et al., 2001; Allington et al., 2002; Dyson, 2003; Comber and Kamler, 2004; Belfiore et al., 2005)

Learning to read and learning to write are interdependent processes: making links between reading and writing help both forward. (Smith, 1982; Cairney, 1990; Tierney and Shanahan, 1991; Sipe, 1993; Calkins, 1994; Barrs and Cork, 2001; Pantaleo, 2007; Manak, 2011; Ofsted, 2011)

Children tend to make a good start in learning to read and write where their teachers model and share the processes of reading and writing. (Wheldall and Entwhistle, 1988; Campbell, 1989; Clay, 1991; Geekie et al., 1999; Fisher, 2002; Cremin et al., 2010)

Encouraging and supporting wide and copious reading, including non-fiction and poetry, yields benefits for writing as well as reading. (Cairney, 1990; Frater, 2001; Pantaleo, 2007; Ofsted, 2011)

Both reading and writing poetry create opportunities to enrich children's awareness and knowledge of language (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988; Andrews, 1991; Dymoke et al., 2015)

Listening and responding to engaging, substantial texts, that are read aloud with skill, enhances children's command of written language, improving their writing as well as their reading. (Fodor, 1966; Cohen, 1968; Elley, 1989; Dombey, 1994; Vivas, 1996; Rosenhouse et al., 1997; Sipe, 2000; Barrs and Cork, 2001; Hepburn et al., 2010; Manak, 2011)

Engaging children in reading and writing on subjects of interest to them is, especially for boys, more productive than ignoring their interests. (Anderson et al. 1988; Guthrie et al., 1996; Wigfield and Guthrie, 1997; Cunningham and Stanovich, 1998; Cunningham and Allington, 1999; Cremin et al., 2006; Nixon and Comber, 2006; Walsh, 2007; Teale and Gambrell, 2007; Taboada et al., 2009; Rowe and Neitzel, 2010; Bearne et al., 2011; Mahiri and Maniates, 2014)

Children are more likely to engage in reading and writing in classrooms rich in inviting displays, interesting texts and a variety of writing materials. (Morrow, 1990; Sulzby and Teale, 1991; Neumann and Roskos, 1992; Gunn et al., 1995; Roskos and Neumann, 2001)

A classroom culture in which teacher and children collaborate to construct high-level meanings through talk significantly improves the learning of reading and writing. (Nystrand et al. 1997; Corden, 2000; Alexander, 2000; Dombey, 2003; Taylor et al., 2003; Pressley, 2006; Bitter et al., 2009; Feigenbaum, 2010; Fisher et al., 2010; Peterson and Taylor, 2012; Wolfe, 2013; Cremin et al., 2014)

Children have the power, especially where they are trained in group work, to help each other move forward in their literacy learning. (Palincsar and Brown, 1984; Topping, 1991; King and Robinson, 1995; Chinn et al., 2001; Nystrand, 2006; Mercer and Littleton, 2007; Savage and Pompey, 2008; Aukerman, 2007; Murphy et al., 2009)

Engaging in drama and dramatic play has a positive effect on learners' achievements in reading and writing, giving greater meaning to reading and enabling learners to produce written work with greater depth, power and detail. (Morrow, 1990; Vukelich, 1994; Roskos, 2000; Barrs and Cork, 2001; Crumpler and Schneider, 2002; Paley, 2004; Fleming et al., 2004; Cremin et al., 2006)

Children's delight in playing with rhyme, rhythm and tune contributes to their learning of the sounds, structures and meanings of language and to its symbolic use in both reading and writing. (Maclean et al., 1987; Bryant et al., 1989; Opie, 1993; Goswami, 1999; Grugeon, 1999; Cumming, 2007; Coyne et al., 2012)

Reading and writing in the 21st century involves iconic as well as verbal text, making different demands on the learner. (Gee, 2000; Marsh and Millard, 2000; Kress, 2003, 2012; Bearne and Marsh, 2008; Maine, 2015)

Digital texts have a key role to play in school reading and writing. (EPPI 2003; Lenhart et al., 2008; Carrington and Robinson, 2009; Clark and Dugdale, 2009; Waller, 2010)

Reducing the gender gap

Schools where boys read and write well have, in addition to the features itemised above and below, a school and classroom culture where:

■ intellectual, cultural and aesthetic accomplishments by boys are recognised,

■ value is placed on succinctness as much as elaboration, and logical thought as much as expressiveness,

■ there is enthusiasm for, access to and expertise in ICT.

(Moss, 2000; Ofsted, 2003; Safford et al., 2004; Younger and Warrington, 2005; Andrews et al., 2009; Clark and Dugdale, 2009; Clark, 2012)

Bilingual literacy learners

Language diversity is a resource and an opportunity for learning for all pupils, as knowledge and understanding of other languages can enhance learning of English and literacy. (Cummins, 2001; Torres-Guzmán et al. 2002; Kenner et al., 2008; Almaguer and Esquierdo, 2013; Conteh, 2015)

As do monolingual children, bilingual children learn most effectively when there is a focus on meaning and understanding. (Cummins, 1986; Bialystok, 1997; Drury, 2007)

Word identification in reading

The identification of words in fluent reading involves a combination of 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' processes in which neither side predominates. (Cattell, 1886; Rumelhart, 1976; Pressley, 2006; Strauss et al., 2009)

Both synthetic and analytic phonics have a part to play in literacy learning and teaching. (Brown and Deavers, 1999; Ehri et al., 2001; Juel and Minden-Cupp, 2001; Ziegler and Goswami, 2005; Coyne et al., 2012)

Phonics is not sufficient on its own to teach children to read and write English, with its complex spelling patterns. (Sampson, 1985; Torgerson et al., 2006; Strauss and Altwerger, 2007; Davis, 2013)

When they meet more complex words, children learning to read English successfully tend not to restrict themselves to a synthetic phonic approach, but to use a wider range of strategies. (Brown and Deavers 1999; Goodman et al., 2005; Coyne et al., 2012)

Children use fundamentally different processes to identify words as they make progress in learning to read. (Clay, 1972; Bussis et al., 1985; Frith, 1985; Wolf, 2008)

Reading comprehension

Fluent readers use a range of strategies to foster and monitor comprehension, making connections between what they know and what is presented in the text. (Palincsar and Brown, 1984; Pressley, 2006; Anderson and Pearson, 1984; Dole et al., 1991; National Reading Panel, 2000; Dignath et al., 2008)

Teaching comprehension from the earliest years in school makes a significant difference to children's effectiveness as readers (Raphael and Pearson, 1985; Mallett, 1992; Mallett, 2002; Berninger et al., 2003; Paris and Stahl, 2005; Tennent, 2015; Oakhill et al. 2014)

Grammar, spelling, handwriting and punctuation

Children's talk demonstrates their implicit command of grammar and develops through putting language to use, as they make sense of the world around them. (Halliday, 1975; Wells, 1981b; Fletcher and Garman, 1986; Deacon, 1998)

Explicit knowledge of grammar may improve children's writing, if taught in the context of the teaching of writing. (Williams, 1995; Hunt, 2001; Myhill et al., 2012)

Encouraging invented spelling in the early stages helps children get their words down on paper. (Peters, 1970; Bissex, 1980; Gentry, 1982; Treiman, 1994; Levin and Aram, 2013)

To make progress in spelling, children need to use visual and morphemic approaches as well as 'sounding words out'. (Peters, 1970; O'Sullivan and Thomas, 2007; Hilte and Reitsma, 2011; Adoniou, 2014)

Children benefit from investigating spelling through, for example, mini lessons, classroom word collections, displays and print hunts, focused on words sharing meanings, letter strings, prefixes and suffixes can all help. (O'Sullivan and Thomas, 2007; Cordewener et al., 2015)

Children profit from explicit instruction in both a fluent handwriting style and (later) keyboard skills, since those who write more easily tend to write better texts. (Berninger and Amtmann, 2004; Medwell and Wray, 2007; Connelly et al., 2010)

As with other technical aspects of literacy learning, handwriting and keyboard skills are best taught in the context of producing meaningful text. (Berninger and Graham, 1998; Medwell and Wray, 2007)

In classrooms where writing is purposeful and attention is focused on the effect on the reader, children use a wider variety of punctuation marks and use them more effectively than those in classes where punctuation is learned through rules. (Calkins, 1980; Hall, 2001)

The principal criterion used by the most skilled punctuators tends to be semantic: what the mark makes the words mean. (Hall, 2001)

Research specific to the teaching of writing

Children make progress in writing where their teachers engage in writing themselves, sharing experience and expertise with their classes. (Cremin, 2006; Gannon and Davies, 2007; Yeo, 2007; Andrews, 2008; McKinney and Georgis, 2009; Ofsted, 2009; Cremin and Baker, 2010)

Children's writing improves when their teachers work with them, demonstrating the process of writing, acting as scribes, response partners, editors and advisors. (Cremin and Baker, 2010)

Children who write every day, sometimes for sustained periods, learn to write better than those who do so less often and less substantially. (Cunningham and Allington, 1999; Berninger et al., 2006; Ofsted, 2011)

Carefully established writing workshops and/or communities of writers can significantly raise the quantity and quality of children's writing. (Graves, 1983; Ofsted, 2011; Cremin and Myhill, 2011)

Different forms, or genres, of writing are best learnt when children write for authentic purposes and engage with authentic audiences. (Littlefair, 1993; Parr and Limbrick, 2010; Duke et al., 2012; Stagg Peterson, 2014)

Assessment and literacy learning

High-stakes accountability testing has consistently been demonstrated to undermine teaching and learning. (Smith, 1991; Allington and McGill-Franzen, 1995; Morrison and Joan 2002; Rex and Nelson 2004)

This is particularly true for low-achieving students. (Harlen and Crick 2003).

Assessment that purports to measure comprehension but fails to recognise its complexity and the key roles played by prior knowledge and metacognition does not yield useful information. (Duke and Pearson, 2002; Paris and Stahl, 2005)

Assessment measures that take into account that people engage in literate practices differently in different contexts yield more useful information than those limited to one context. (Barrs et al., 1989; Johnston and Costello, 2005).

Assessment measures that attend to what children can do with different kinds of support as well as what they can do independently yield the most useful information about their next steps in learning. (Vygotsky, 1962; Goodman et al., 2005)

Classrooms in which self-assessment is encouraged allow children to regulate their own literacy learning and extend their literacy achievements. (Harlen and Crick 2003; McDonald & Boud 2003; Johnston and Costello 2005)

and finally...

Effective teachers of literacy have developed a coherent philosophy towards literacy, involving substantial attention to meaning, are readers themselves and demonstrate that language and literacy are interesting, pleasurable and purposeful. (Medwell et al., 1998; Frater, 2000; Cremin et al., 2014)

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