

Help Sheet

0 – 25 Specialist Teaching and Support Service

How to support children with reading difficulties in the classroom



Background:

- Some children will have difficulties accessing text and will require some further support. This could be due to difficulties at the word level (e.g. decoding, recognising sight words) or comprehension.

What you might see in the classroom:

- Children might become disengaged in reading activities.
- May display avoidance strategies e.g. asking to go to the toilet, walking around the classroom etc.
- Display low self-esteem and anxiety.



Ideas to support children with reading:

Remember only ask children to read aloud if they are confident to do so!

- **Adapt the text to increase accessibility:**
 - ✓ Make the text larger (no smaller than font size 14 and at least 1.5 spacing). Some children may need larger text.
 - ✓ Less is more on worksheets – do not clutter!
 - ✓ Use a dyslexia-friendly font with NO SERIFS (*the fiddly lines at the end of letters*) comic sans, century gothic, verdana, Tahoma, Arial, Trebuchet, Calabri
 - ✓ Use numbers not bullets for sections of text.
 - ✓ Children with tracking difficulties may prefer a different colour for each line to help **them track**.
 - ✓ Split longer pieces of text into headings and subheadings. **Coloured sections might be helpful for some children**
 - ✓ Have visual references for key vocabulary, e.g. within the text or using word mats.



Many



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worked



on



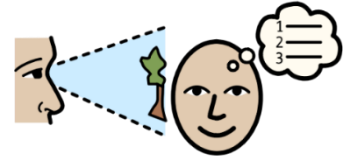
farms.

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- **Support Visual Processing Difficulties:**

- ✓ Use cream or buff paper to avoid glare.
- ✓ Provide access to coloured overlays.
- ✓ Encourage children to use their finger or provide reading rulers/pointers to help with tracking.
- ✓ Avoid using a white background on the Interactive Smart Board



- **Support children to access whole class texts:**

- ✓ Prior to reading a text, point out difficult vocabulary and check the child's understanding. Where possible do this with a small group before sharing with the whole class and provide visual references for key vocabulary.
- ✓ Pair the child with a confident reader for support.
- ✓ Provide access to assistive technology. e.g. text-to-speech such as the speak tools and immersive reader in Word and Microsoft Edge, Clicker, Text Help.



- **Support children reading independently:**

- ✓ Make sure books are reading age appropriate.
- ✓ Provide access to a range of books with high interest but low reading age (Barrington Stoke) and also audiobooks of key texts, where possible

