Supporting pupils with reading.

Children can have reading difficulties for a number of reasons. For example, they may have problems with word decoding, they may have visual difficulties or difficulties with language and comprehension. As well as supporting the development of reading skills, it is crucial that the barrier to the written word is removed as much as possible.   Below are some practical ideas and solutions to enable children with reading difficulties greater access to reading materials and the worlds of fiction and non-fiction.

Select appropriately levelled texts/books

This refers to classroom materials and materials used in one-to-one reading and intervention sessions.

- Make sure you have an accurate reading age to inform book choices
- Ensure that there are no more than **5 unknown words in every 100 words** (that is 1 in 20 words)
- There are a few publishers who provide books for struggling readers where the content age is higher that the reading age. For example:
    - ~ Barrington Stoke barringtonstoke.co.uk
    - ~ Ransom ransom.co.uk
    - ~ Pearson's Rapid Plus
    - ~ Collins Big Cat Readers
    - ~ High Noon Books highnoonbooks.com
    - ~ Oxford University Press Fast Lane
    (If you know of any other publishers, please email details to fiona.whitaker@bradford.gov.uk and we will add it to the list)
- To help you select books, the table below maps reading ages and levels to book bands. It also shows the range of levels you might see in different year groups

| | Level expected at the end of the year. |

Band	Reading Recovery level	Book Band colour	Approx. Reading Age	Level	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
1	1-2	Pink/Magenta			▉						
2	3-5	Red	5		▉						
3	6-8	Yellow	5.5	1C	▉	▉					
4	9-11	Blue	5.5 to 6	1C	▉	▉					
5	12-14	Green	5.5 to 6	1B		▉	▉				
6	15-16	Orange	6 to 6.5	1B		▉	▉				
7	17-18	Turquoise	6.5 to 7	1A		▉	▉	▉			
8	19-20	Purple	7 to 7.5	2C			▉	▉	▉		
9	21-22	Gold	7.5 to 8	2B			▉	▉	▉		
10	23-24	White/Silver	7.5 to 8	2A			▉	▉	▉		
11	25-26	Lime/Emerald		3C				▉	▉	▉	▉
12	27-28	Ruby		"high" L3				▉	▉	▉	▉
12		Sapphire		"low" L4					▉	▉	▉
13				"mid" L4						▉	▉
14				"high" L4						▉	▉
15				"low" L5							▉
16				"high" L5							

Adapt reading materials and work sheets.

1. Remember less is more!! Focus on key points, keep it short and punchy. Don't clutter!
2. Use 1.5 or double line spacing.
3. Use cream or buff paper to avoid glare.
4. Split the text into meaningful chunks – separate longer pieces with headings and subheadings. You could also use colour to separate each section.
5. Use colour to highlight key points.
6. Avoid words with double meanings as these can be confusing.
7. Use simple language which reflects pupils' reading vocabulary.
8. Use pictures to support for complex words. Consider symbolising certain words in texts (e.g. Communicate in Print).

9. Children with tracking difficulties may prefer a different colour for each line to help them stay on the line.
10. Using numbers rather than bullet points will also help with tracking difficulties.
11. Use a dyslexia-friendly font with NO SERIFS (the fiddly lines at the end of letters), e.g. , comic sans, century gothic, verdana, Tahoma, Arial, Trebuchet, Calabri
12. Use a size 14 font at least. Some children may need larger.

Consider the Readability of Texts

Think about the readability of texts. Make sure there are not too many long or phonically complex words or that the content is beyond the pupil's experience.

There are a number of tools you can use to measure the readability of texts. The website below provides access to a variety of tools and will calculate the approximate reading age of text. You have to use at least 150 words but if your text is shorter you can always paste it several times to get an indication of a reading age.

http://www.readabilityformulas.com/free-readability-formula-tests.php

Paired Reading

This is a method which is felt to be very effective. Essentially, you act as a reading partner and provide a reading model to the struggling reader. The reading partner:

1. Talks about the books with the pupil
2. Reads with the reader at the same pace.
3. Provides opportunities to self-correct. If the pupil makes an error pause for about 5 seconds giving the pupil time to self-correct. If they don't manage to self-correct, provide the correct word. Then continue reading together.
4. Pauses occasionally to ask questions and check understanding.
5. Provides praise to encourage and motivate the pupil.

For further information download the paired [reading leaflet](#)

Watch an example of paired reading on [Education Scotland's website](#)

Support Pupils with Reading Comprehension

- Teach new vocabulary before reading the book. Create Word Maps etc
- Walk through the book before reading to provide the general gist of the story.
- Discuss story, characters and pictures with the pupil.
- Link personal experiences to the story. Discuss what the pupil might do if they were a character in the story
- Order and classify events. E.g. create comic strips, use story maps, cause and effect grids, storyboards, chain of events grids. [Find examples here.](#)
- Get the pupil to summarize, retell or role play the story.
- Support the pupil with more abstract language and explore concepts and ideas, e.g. abstract adverbs – utterly; words with multiple meanings/homophones/homographs e.g. His tears fell as he cried, he tears the book and cries "oh no!"; idioms and metaphor e.g. His head dropped and his heart sank.
- Ask appropriate questions – consider the Blank model.
- Get the pupil to ask you questions about the story.

Communicate-inPrint

Communicate in Print is a word processor that adds symbols to text. It is very versatile. You can add symbols as needed, change the text underneath symbols and add your own pictures to text and much more.

For details visit: www.widgit.com. For training see our CPD brochure.

Computer Readers (text-to-speech)

This is software that reads what is written on the screen. It provides independent access to a range of texts and verbal feedback when typing. Some of the software will read any type of document including text from the internet. Others just read text written or copied to their programme.

Reads from any/most programmes
1. TextHelp Read/Write Gold. (USB option available) http://www.texthelp.com/UK
2. ClaroRead http://www.clarosoftware.com/
3. Natural Reader (lite version free to download) http://www.naturalreaders.com/
4. Penfriend (software on USB) http://www.penfriend.biz/home.html

Reads text within the programme
1. Write Online (Crick Software) http://www.cricksoft.com/uk/Home.aspx
2. Clicker 6 (Crick Software)
3. WordTalk (free add-on for Word) http://www.wordtalk.org.uk/Home

Consider using text-to-speech for the following:
1. Researching information on the internet.
2. Reading comprehension activities. Programmes such as Clicker 6 and Write Online are particularly good for this as they provide recording tools (word banks, text prediction) to help the pupil respond to the text.
3. Proof-reading work.
4. Exams and tests instead of a human reader.

IMPORTANT

Computer readers are now allowed in the English comprehension element of the English GCSE paper.

Talking Books

There are now a range of talking book options available.

1. Purchasing books on CD's
2. Purchase books from audio books on itunes or audibile books (Amazon).
3. Subscribing to a charity audio lending library. These are for people with both visual difficulties and dyslexic difficulties. There is usually a one-off subscription of about £20. Some provide facilities for schools to register and lend books to pupils. Examples: Calibre Audio Lending Library; listening books;
4. GCSEpod provides audio GCSE guides

(If you know of any other audio book services, please email details to fiona.whitaker@bradford.gov.uk and we will add it to the list)

Games to Develop Reading Skills

1. Trugs – these are card games to develop word reading skills. They can be purchased from the British Dyslexia Association
2. Snakes and Ladders – this is played in the same way as the traditional game but after the pupil shakes the dice, they have to read a word before they can move.
3. Onset and Rime cards
4. Snap, pellmanism, dominoes, lotto – these are all matching games and can be played with:
    a. Letters – matching letter to letter, picture to letter
    b. Words – words to words, words to picture,
    c. Syllables – matching words to number of syllables (you will needs word and number cards) words with the same number of syllables, pictures of words to number of syllables or picture to picture with the same number of syllables.
    d. Pictures of words that rhyme
    e. Pictures of words that begin with the same letters,
    f. Long or short vowels – match pictures of words with long or short vowel sounds
    g. Onset and rime – match onset and rimes that make up words.
5. Teach your Monster to Read software and app– www.teachyourmonstertoread.com
6. Nessy software and Apps - www.nessy.com/uk
7.

Supporting Struggling Readers in Exams

1. Ensure that pupils are assessed formally for exam access arrangements in year 9 for GSCE or the beginning of year 6 SATs
2. Support for reading should reflect a pupil's normal way of working. Therefore:
    a. All year 7 pupils should be screened for possible access arrangements. This will give them time to get used to using a computer reader or human reader depending on which works best for them. Pupils using computer readers or readers should always have access to this in class.
    b. Primary pupils with reading difficulties should have access to reading support to access age appropriate content, especially when doing tests. Remember Clicker 6 provides text-to-speech (a computer reader)