

Good Practice Guidelines: Early Guided Reading

2.04

'Children need a range of opportunities to develop as fluent, enthusiastic and critical readers. A balanced reading programme should include clear and systematic teaching, carefully planned shared, guided and independent reading opportunities and should offer children a range and variety of reading experiences.'

DCSF 2008

The Unique Child

- The books available for guided, shared and independent reading appeal to all children

Positive Relationships

- Adults openly support children when they read independently
- Adults enthusiastically respond to the children's early attempts at reading

Enabling Environments

- Adults encourage a love of reading
- Child interaction is encouraged when adults are sharing books
- Specific praise is given when good reading behaviour is observed
- Children have many independent opportunities both inside and outside to read and enjoy books in their own time and in their own way
- Books are displayed across a variety of areas both inside and outside
- There is a quiet, comfortable area where books are attractively displayed
- There are sufficient good quality, engaging texts including fiction, non-fiction and picture books
- The guided reading sessions take place in a variety of appropriate, comfortable areas e.g. quiet corner, outside, role play area etc
- The guided reading session is enjoyable, positive and undisturbed for all children involved

Learning and Development

Introduction (short)

- Texts are selected which suit the group of children (children able to successfully read 90-95% independently)
- The session is adapted according to the ability and individual interests of the children
- A balance is maintained between child-initiated questioning and adult input
- A clear overview is given of the meaning of the text and what might happen next
- A strategy check is given which allows the children to recall what they can use when they meet new words. (e.g. blending, re-reading, initial sounds with picture clues, breaking down words, self-correction)
- Adults engage the children in the text and illustrations and promote a purpose (objective) for reading it
- Children are guided through the text using a balance of closed and open-ended questions
- Some key words and unfamiliar vocabulary are referred to with children taking the lead role
- Children are encouraged to use their knowledge of familiar graphemes as they read

Independent reading

- Children independently read aloud at their own speed (not taking turns)
- Adults monitor the children's reading focusing on one child for a sentence or so before moving on
- Adults do not listen for every word being read correctly
- Adults only intervene to help solve problems
- If children are unable to decode a word (as they have not been taught those particular letter-sound correspondences) they should be told what the word is
- Specific praise is given for reading strategies and reading behaviours observed
- Children who finish early are encouraged to re-read the book to themselves or to a partner

Return to the text

- Adults highlight and praise children for the strategies used to read new words
- Any words that the children found difficult are looked at together
- Time is given for the children to personally respond to the text e.g. Which part is their favourite? Has anything similar happened to them?
- Adults identify next steps for individual children and groups

Leadership and Management

- Guided reading strategies are regularly monitored and evaluated
- Guided reading is well resourced with branded, graded texts (30-50 titles at the first level)
- The importance of a rich language and literacy environment is promoted

A few tips...

- Guided reading can also be promoted with picture books, supporting those children who are developing their spoken language and those not yet ready to read words, while also encouraging speaking and listening skills, role play, puppet play, etc
- Use the Strategy Check Visual Prompt Cards to support you in the guided reading process
- When asking closed questions focus on using words on the page - these need to be used orally in discussion to support the reading that follows
- It is important to use the language structures and vocabulary on the page when doing the book introduction, particularly in the early stages - it makes such a difference to the children's success in decoding new words
- Ensure that text is large enough for children to maintain interest in the text
- Encourage children to re-read 'familiar' texts in order to practice being readers
- Guided reading groupings should be flexible
- Ensure a print rich environment is in place, including labels, signs, etc

Further Information

We have provided shortcuts to these documents on the EYFS page of our Publications section at www.childrenscentres.org.uk

Early Reading Curriculum CPD Resource (Ref: 00053-2008dvd)
www.publications.teachernet.gov.uk/

EYFS, DCSF 2007
www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/eyfs/

Letters and Sounds, DCSF 2007
www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/local/clld/las.html
www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/local/clld/resources/letters_and_sounds/00282_2007BKT_EN.pdf

Communication, Language and Literacy Development, DCSF 2007
www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/local/clld/

J. Simpson and J. Smith, Guided Reading Develops Fluency, National Literacy Trust
www.literacytrust.org.uk/pubs/simpson.html

Keep up to date with information and publications
www.teachernet.gov.uk

For further information visit www.childrenscentres.org.uk
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