

## The Thinking Reader

These lessons can be used to teach children reading strategies to improve their ability to understand what they read.

- ✚ They can be used for fiction or non-fiction texts.
- ✚ It is important that the passage chosen is sufficiently challenging, so that the children have to use the strategies to understand it.
- ✚ The lessons can be used for children working at within the First Level but are also useful for children working at the Second Level, who have not been taught these strategies.
- ✚ The lessons can be used with a 'set' of children working at the same level or with a group. They can also be used with a mixed ability class, with each ability group being given a suitable text.
- ✚ The workbook, which accompanies these lessons, can be used to introduce the strategies. Thereafter, the lessons/strategies can be used without the workbook.
- ✚ The wall display, which is referred to in these lessons, is a useful reference for pupils when they are working independently.

## Lesson 1 – Before Reading

### What is this about?

Aims:

- ✚ To teach before Reading Strategies to help improve pupils’ ability to understand what they read.
- ✚ To help pupils’ understand that, by using these strategies *before* they read, they will improve their ability to understand what they read.
- ✚ To help pupils become Thinking Readers.

Skill	Activity	Display
<p>Look for clues – picture, title, headings</p> <p>Skim the first lines (a lesson on skim reading may be required if children are unfamiliar with this)</p>	<p>Make clear the aims of the lesson, as stated above.</p> <p>Issue a reading passage.</p> <p>Ask pupils what they did first. Children then write in the first arrow on the Before Reading page of the workbook, as shown. In pairs, children then discuss what information they have found out from the title and the picture (if there is one), making notes in the box beside the arrow.</p> <p>Discuss the children’s answers – at this point accept all suggestions. Do not make any comment as to whether suggestions are right or wrong. Use the children’s answers to model thinking – “How did you work that out?” Also model thinking yourself “I thought....”</p> <p>Children write in the second arrow, as shown. Children skim, read and then discuss their answers. Again, making notes in the box beside the arrow. The same techniques are used to model thinking: children articulate their thinking/ the teacher models thinking.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; margin-bottom: 20px;">             Look for clues:              picture, title,              heading           </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">             Skim the first              lines           </div>

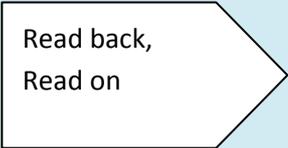
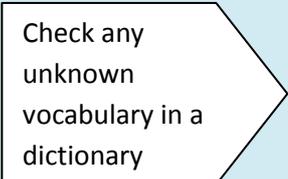
<p>Think of good questions you want answered in the passage</p>	<p>The teacher should give an example of a question they want to find the answer to from the passage. Children should complete the third arrow in the workbook. In pairs, children then think of some good questions they want answered. Again, making notes in the box beside the arrow. The teacher should write suggestions on the board.</p>	<p>Think of good questions</p>
<p>What do you know already?</p>	<p>Explain to children that it can be useful when understanding a passage to think about what you know about that subject (e.g. if passage is about Christmas, what do you know about Christmas?). Children then complete the fourth arrow. Then, as before, in pairs discuss what they know about the subject of the passage. Again, making notes in the box beside the arrow.</p> <p>Recap on the aims of the lesson. Point out to the children how much they have learned about the passage before they begin to read it.</p>	<p>What do you know already?</p>

## Lesson 2 - During Reading

### Stop! Check! – Do I understand what I am reading?

Aims:

- ✚ To teach during Reading Strategies to help improve pupils’ ability to understand what they read.
- ✚ To help pupils’ understand that, by using these strategies *when* they read, they will improve their ability to understand what they read.
- ✚ To help pupils become Thinking Readers.

Skill	Activity	Display
Stop! Check! – Do I understand What I Am Reading?	<p>Recap on information gained from <i>Before Reading</i> activities.</p> <p>Make clear the aims of the lesson, as stated above.</p> <p>Issue the reading passage.</p> <p>Explain we are going to listen to the voice in our head, as we are reading: Stop! Check! – Do I understand What I Am Reading? Children silently read the first section of the passage; listening to the voice in their head as they read (do I understand what I am reading?).</p>	
Read back, read on Look for clues in the text, picture Think “what do I know already?”	<p>After children have read the first section, they should stop. Ask children to tell you what that section was about <i>in their own words</i>. (Children will often read word for word from the text. This does not show they have understood what they have read). If they have not understood the text they should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read back, read on</li> <li>• Look for clues in the text, picture</li> </ul>	
Check any unknown vocabulary using a dictionary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think “what do I know already? (including information from Before Reading)</li> <li>• Check any unknown vocabulary using a dictionary</li> </ul>	
		

	<p>The children can make notes in their workbook in the first box on <i>During Reading</i> page.</p> <p>Discuss the children’s answers – at this point accept all suggestions. Do not make any comment as to whether suggestions are right or wrong.</p> <p>Use the children’s answers to model thinking: “How did you work that out?”</p> <p>Also model thinking yourself “I didn’t understand what.....meant.....”</p> <p>Children then read the next section and repeat as previously, using the strategies as detailed.</p> <p>When they have read the whole passage, the pupils should discuss what they have found out from the text: have they answered their questions from <i>Before Reading</i> activity?</p>	
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## Lesson 3 - After Reading

### Prediction

Aims:

- ✚ To teach pupils how to use clues from the text and their prior knowledge to predict what will happen next in a fiction text.
- ✚ To help pupils become Thinking Readers.

Note:

- ✚ This activity is only suitable for a fiction text.
- ✚ The link can be made with writing.
- ✚ It could be used to introduce the concept of a cliff-hanger, as a writer's technique, to capture a reader's attention.
- ✚ This is also a good activity for considering different ways of ending a story.

Skill	Activity	Display
Find clues in the text	<p>The aim of the lesson should be made clear to the children.</p> <p>Recap on main events in text. Post the question "What could happen next?"</p> <p>In pairs, children discuss clues from the text. Making notes on the <i>After Reading</i> worksheet.</p> <p>Discuss the children's answers; at this point accept all suggestions. Do not make any comment as to whether suggestions are right or wrong.</p>	
What else do I know?	<p>In pairs, children should now make notes on what else they know about the subject.</p> <p>Finally, in pairs, children should brainstorm possible endings. Encourage them to make up two or three. They should use clues in the text and their previous knowledge of the subject to help them. Again, they should make notes on their worksheets.</p> <p>Children should then feedback to the class. Other pupils should discuss the suggestions, asking questions as to why the children decided on a particular ending. The teacher should act as facilitator.</p>	

## Lesson 4 - After Reading

### Summarising

Aims:

- ✚ To teach pupils how to summarise text.
- ✚ To help pupils become Thinking Readers.

Note:

- ✚ This may require more than one lesson, as children often find summarising very difficult. They tend to copy chunks of text.
- ✚ The methodology detailed below has children working individually. They could also work in pairs or in a group with teacher support. This would depend on the ability of the children.

Skill	Activity	Display
Highlight key words or phrases in the text	<p>The aim of the lesson should be made clear to the children. Explain it is important to be able to summarise a text, as it helps you to find out if you have fully understand what you have read.</p> <p>Children should be given a photocopy of the text. The teacher should display a copy on the Interactive Whiteboard. The teacher should model how to pick out key words or phrases. These should be highlighted by underlining or using a highlighter pen. Children should know there are the words which are necessary to understand the text.</p> <p>Example: the <b>first animals</b> that we know much about lived <b>200 million years</b> ago. We call these animals <b>dinosaurs</b>.</p> <p>Children should then complete this for the rest of the text.</p>	
Write a summary of the main points of the text	<p>The teacher should then model how to use these words to write a brief summary of the text. Children should then complete this for the rest of the text. It would be emphasised that a summary should cover the main points only.</p>	