

The Reading Framework

Teaching the foundations of literacy



at Walter Infant School and Nursery



Introduction

The Department for Education has released a new piece of guidance on reading and developing early literacy skills.

It sets out guidance on how to teach reading to children and the fundamentals for early literacy. It is broken down into 6 sections, which we have summarised and contextualised for our school.



Aims of the Guidance



The guidance aims to:

- set out some of the research underpinning the importance of talk, stories and systematic synthetic phonics (SSP) in the teaching of reading
- provide practical support for high-quality teaching, including assessment and the importance of ‘fidelity to the programme’
- support schools to evaluate their teaching of early reading, especially in Reception and year 1, and identify how to improve provision if weaknesses are found
- explain the importance of systematic phonics teaching for older pupils who are at risk of failing to learn to read because they cannot decode well enough
- support schools working with parents to help their children learn to read.

Why Reading Matters

Reading is an important and essential skill for life. At Walter Infant School and Nursery we believe that it is vital for children to read. Reading brings social, cultural and economic value to a person's life. If a child cannot read, it can have a life-long impact.



Developing Children' Spoken Language

- The skills for reading develop before children encounter a book. This is partly driven by the quality of a parent's talk.
- Research suggests that children with wider vocabularies tend to come from wealthier families.
- All talk is useful! Children will develop their vocabulary whilst listening to directed speech, for example listening to instructions, adults or even television. However, when an adult talks to them about it with them will add benefits.

Talking about books brings 'particular advantages'.



At Walter Infant School and Nursery, We have plenty of opportunities to share and discuss books.

- During Guided Reading the children discuss books with their peers.
- Every class listens to an adult read on a daily basis. This provides an opportunity for the children to hear books that might be above their reading ability. The adults discuss the books with the children and ensure they have an understanding.
- We read and discuss many texts and books across the curriculum.

Children Reading for Pleasure



We always celebrate books and reading. Enjoyment of reading is modelled by all the adults. We ensure that we have a good stock of books that interest all of our children. The children develop and have a positive attitude towards their reading. Every class has a reading corner, which is attractive and inviting.

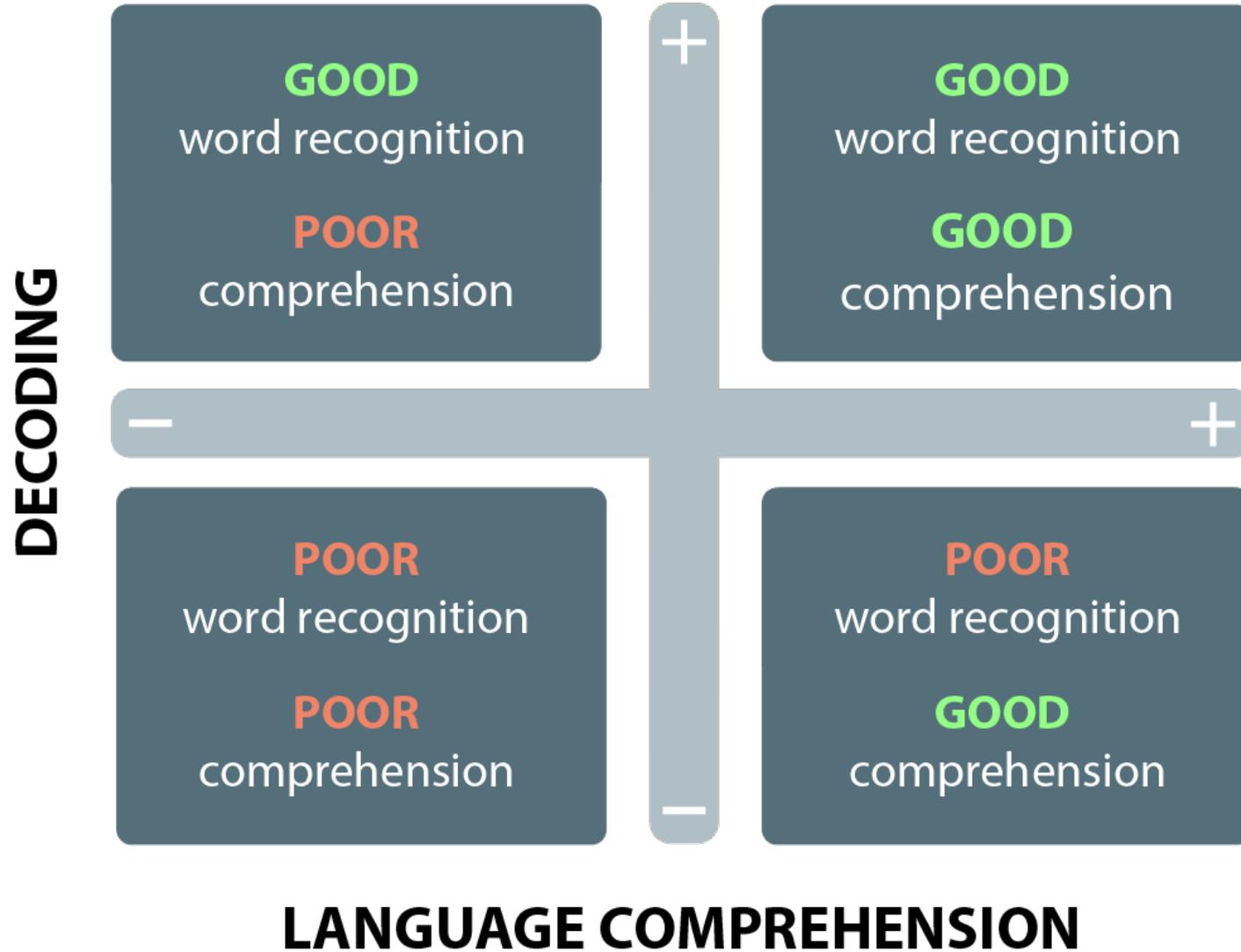
Economic and Social Argument

Teaching children to read as well as possible produces advantages for the individual. Without reading, it is impossible to access written information, on paper or online. Those who cannot read are also excluded from most social media. Crucially, being unable to read significantly narrows the range of work and life opportunities a person can access.

Reading benefits society, too, both economically and socially. Although estimates of the cost of low levels of literacy vary and the methods are often opaque, the costs to the UK are estimated to be very high. In a report published by the EEF in 2019, a foreword by Sir Kevan Collins cites the cost to the UK to be around £20 billion per annum whilst other estimates are much higher. In social terms, better reading might enhance opportunities for individuals to become more engaged politically, increase their tolerance and involve them in their communities more effectively.



The Simple View of Reading



MIND THE WORD GAP

This September, thousands of children will start primary and secondary education with a vocabulary below that expected for their age. But why?

By the age of just 3, children from **low-income families** are exposed to

30 MILLION

FEWER WORDS

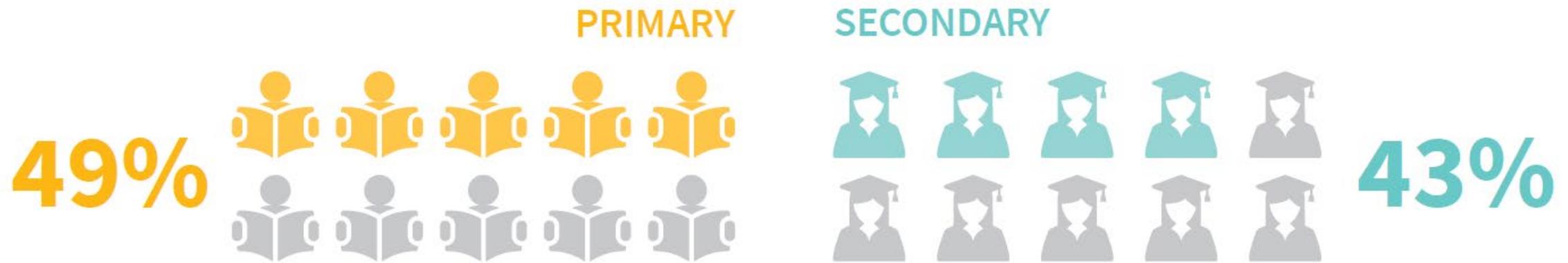
than their peers

(Hart & Risley, 2003)

MIND THE WORD GAP

The “Word Gap” is the **difference** between the extent of a child’s vocabulary when entering education and the expected vocabulary for their age. Research shows that it is not limited to those entering primary school, but continues into secondary education and beyond.

The word gap affects 49% of Year 1 and 43% of Year 7 pupils and it’s getting bigger



Percentage of teachers who say that Year 1 and Year 7 pupils have a limited vocabulary to the extent that it affects their learning (OUP)

The word gap is caused by a lack of reading and words learnt at home

PRIMARY



SECONDARY



Teachers cite **lack of time spent reading** as a root cause (OUP)



between

86%

and

98%

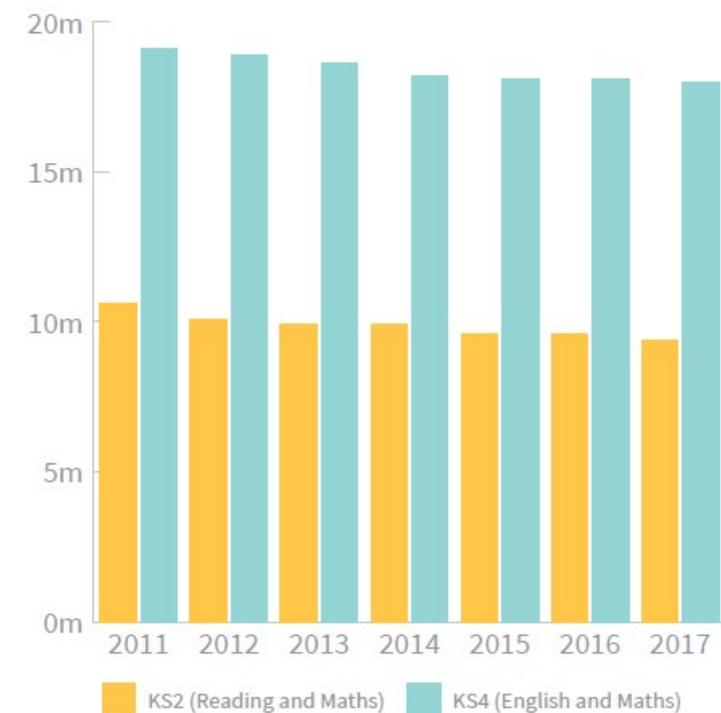
of a 3 year old's vocabulary comes from their parents (H&R)

But the biggest cause is likely to be income

By the age of just 3, children from **low-income families** are exposed to

30 MILLION FEWER WORDS

than their peers (H&R)



The **DISADVANTAGE GAP** estimates the difference in attainment in months between low-income pupils and their peers (EPI)

In **2016**
it was set to close by

2103 → **2155**

In **2017**
it had increased to

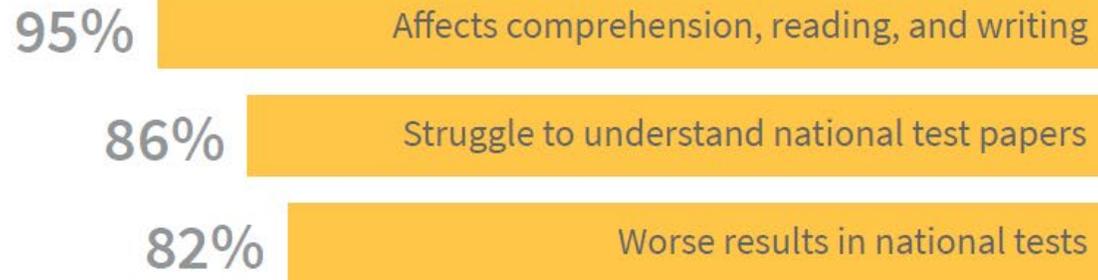
Based on current trends, it could take more than
100 YEARS
for the disadvantage gap in English and Maths to close

“Vocabulary use at age 3 is predictive of language skill at age 9–10” *Hart & Risley (2003)*

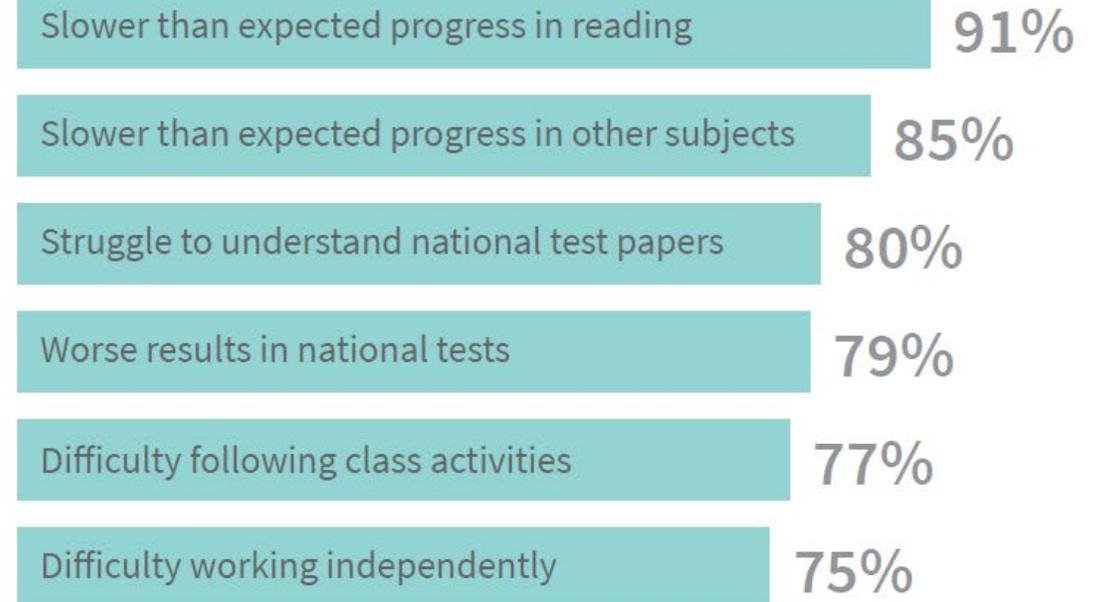
The word gap has a significant impact on academic achievement

How teachers believe the word gap impacts on academic achievement (OUP)

PRIMARY

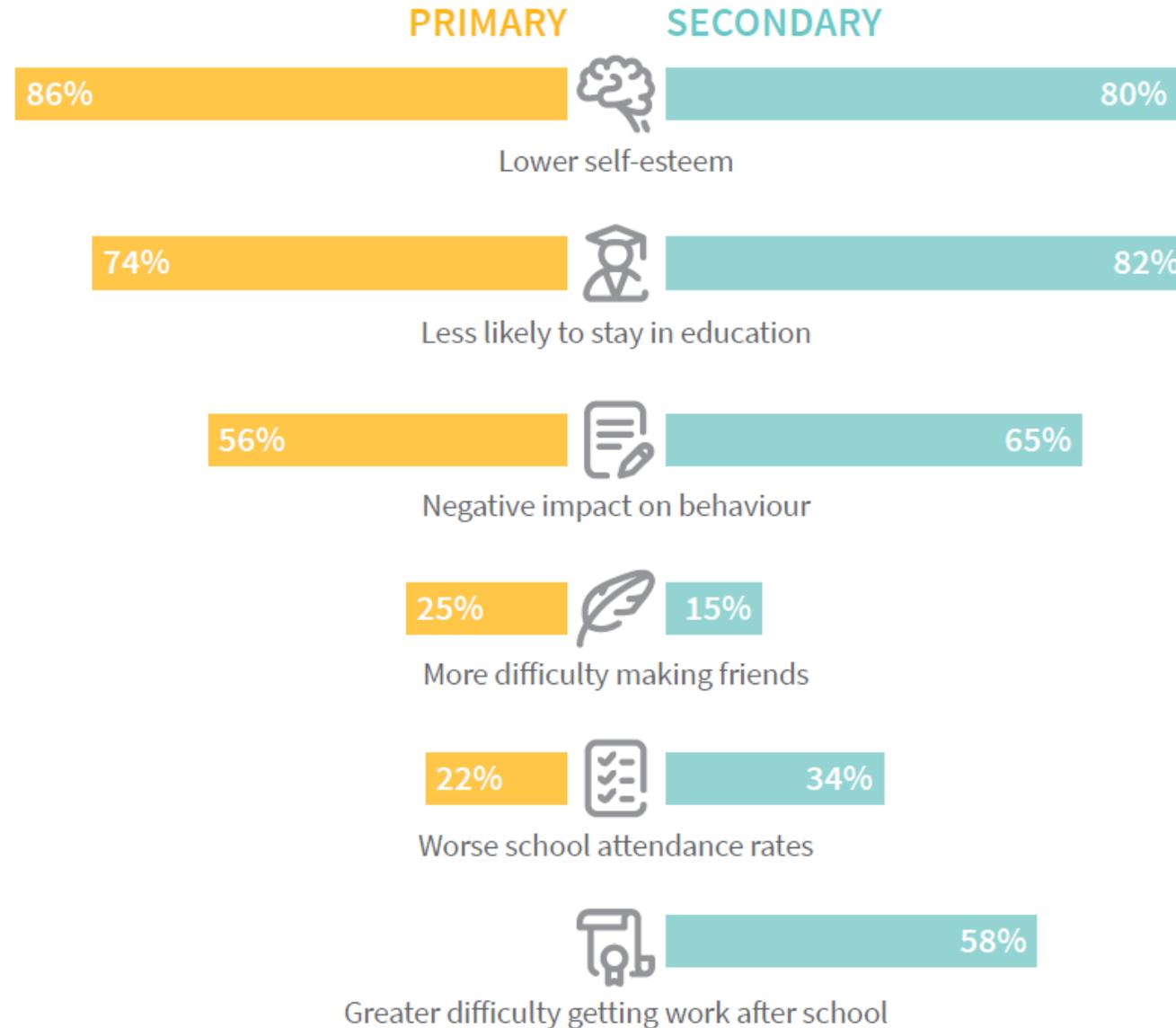


SECONDARY

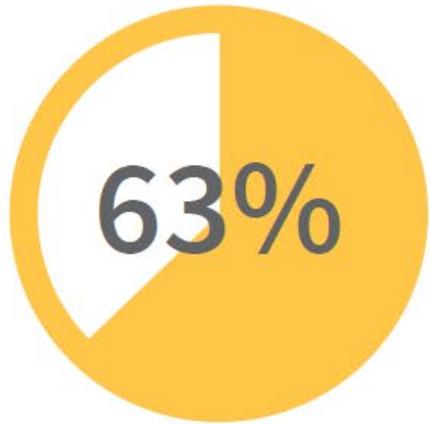


The word gap also impacts on life chances and mental health

How teachers believe the word gap impacts on pupils' wider life chances (OUP)

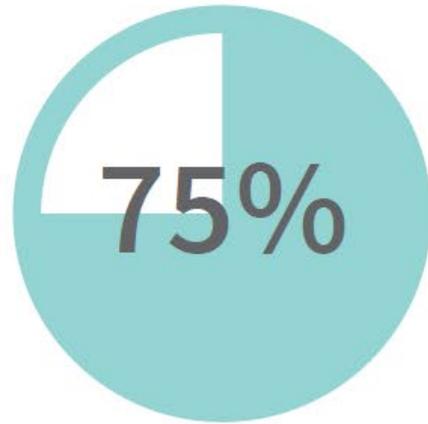


Barriers to closing the gap



PRIMARY

Teachers say they don't have sufficient time to teach vocabulary (OUP)



SECONDARY



Just 27% of primary schools and 29% of secondary schools have a school-wide vocabulary programme (OUP)

Could technology help?

In an analysis of over 13,000 pre- and post-test result pairs, Bedrock Learning's vocabulary software was shown to have a **large and significant effect** on students' vocabularies

Effect size measured using Cohen's *d* to determine impact of intervention

0.948



Bedrock Learning has a **large and significant effect** on a participating student's vocabulary

The average post-test score achieved by a

DISADVANTAGED PUPIL

was

10% HIGHER

than the average baseline figure for a non-disadvantaged pupil

30 Million Word Gap



For more information, visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=779aFxFqrq4>

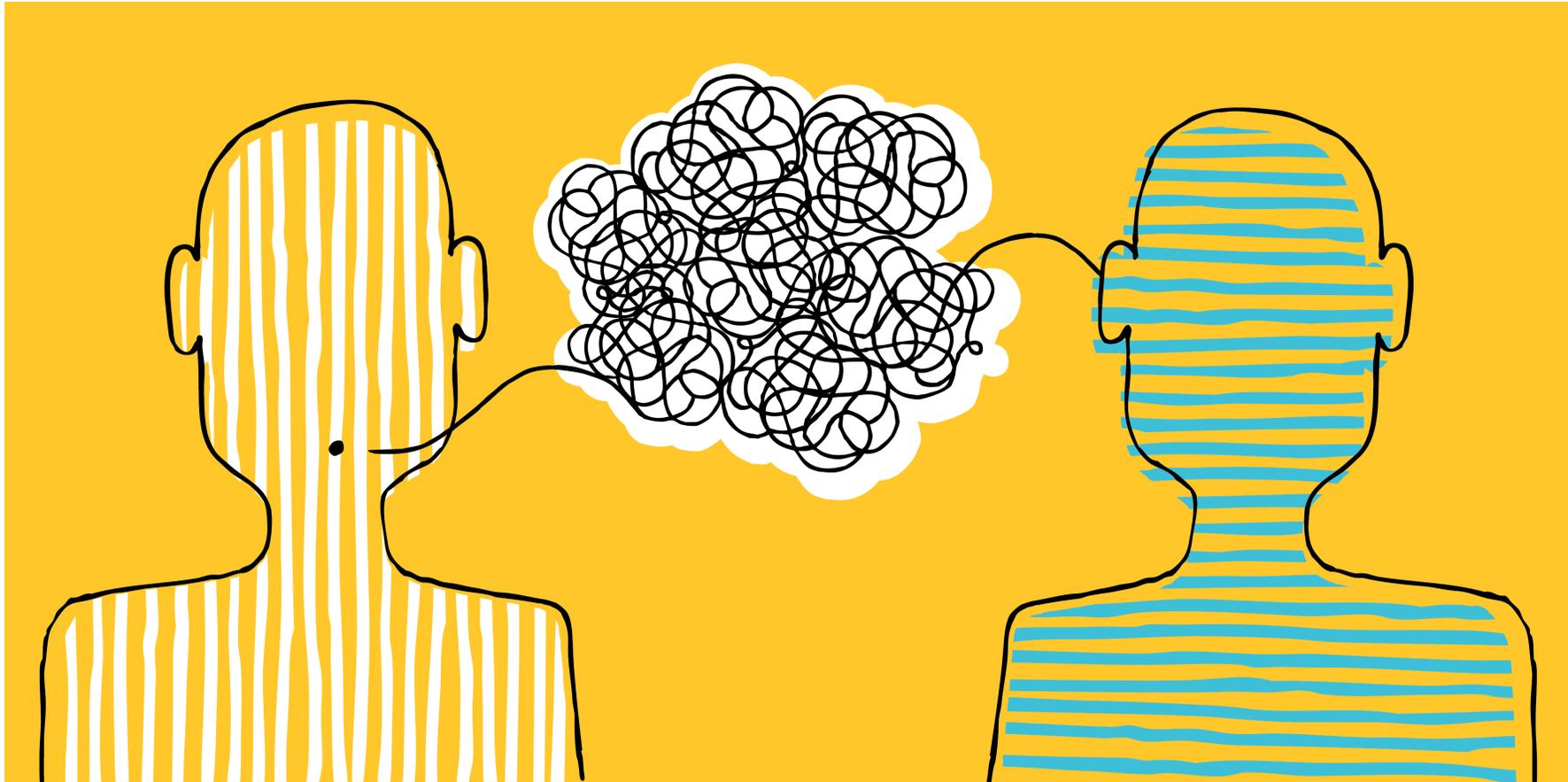
Developing Children's Spoken Language



We provide the children with plenty of opportunities to talk and discuss. Talking is promoted wherever possible and throughout the curriculum.

Back and Forth Talk

AKA: Serve and Return or Turn Taking



EYFS ELGs for Listening and Speaking

ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions;
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding;
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

ELG: Speaking

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary;
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate;
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

The New EYFS Development Matters Document has Talk Across the Curriculum! This emphasises its great importance, particularly in the early stages on development.



The word talk appears 90 times in the development matters document and word listen 53 times.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1007446/6.7534_DfE_Development_Matters_Report_and_illustrations_web_2.pdf

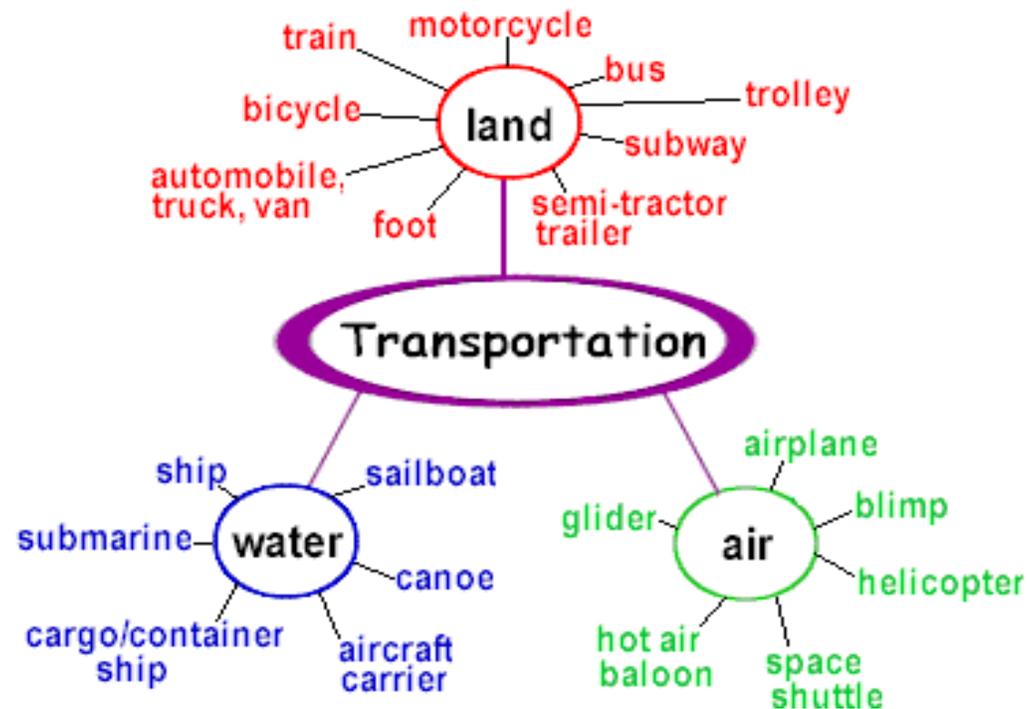
Back and Forth Interactions

We do all of these at Walter Infant School and Nursery

- thinking out loud, modelling new language for children
- paying close attention to what the children say
- rephrasing and extending what the children say
- validating the children's attempts at using new vocabulary and grammar by rephrasing what children say if necessary
- asking closed and open questions
- answering the children's questions
- explaining why things happen
- deliberately connecting current and past events ('Do you remember when...?')
- providing models of accurate grammar
- extending children's vocabulary and explaining new words
- connecting one idea or action to another
- helping children to articulate ideas in well-formed sentences.

Semantic Fields

A semantic field is a set of words (or lexemes) related in meaning. The phrase is also known as a word field, lexical field, field of meaning, and semantic system. Linguist Adrienne Lehrer has defined semantic field more specifically as "a set of lexemes which cover a certain conceptual domain and which bear certain specifiable relations to one another" (1985).



Story Times

We have story times daily and sometimes more than once during the day. These are so important for developing language, listening and comprehension skills.



We consider the following when choosing books.

Choosing books

Does the book:

- elicit a strong response – curiosity, anger, excitement, laughter, empathy?
- have a strong narrative that will sustain multiple readings?
- extend children's vocabulary?
- have illustrations which are engaging and reflect children from all backgrounds and cultures?
- help children connect with who they are?
- help children to understand the lives of people whose experiences and perspectives may be different from their own?

Poetry and Rhyme

- Through enjoying rhymes, poems and songs, and reciting poems or parts of longer poems together as a class, teachers can build children's strong emotional connection to language.
- Poetry in language-rich classrooms builds shared memories for all children.
- The predictability of rhymes in poems and songs also helps children to memorise and re-use newly acquired words and phrases.
- Learning poetry and songs using 'call and response' allows children to join in gradually. Each repetition strengthens their vocabulary, embedding new words.
- Word knowledge exists on a continuum. As each word is acquired in the young child's lexicon, it moves from the barest familiarity to an in-depth knowledge of that word, with all manner of associations and contexts.
- As the children say each word of a poem, the cadence of the lines helps to convey the meaning and the mood. Children pick up the rhythm and, by speaking more slowly, gain awareness and control of their voices.
- Learning rhymes, poems and songs is an end in itself. However, learning poems including traditional nursery rhymes such as 'Hickory Dickory Dock', 'Little Jack Horner' and 'Baa Baa Black Sheep' can also heighten children's awareness of the individual sounds within words through alliteration, assonance and rhyme. For instance, because rhymes share the same end sound, they alert children to the contrast of the phonemes at the start of each word, as well as the repeated phonemes at the end, as in 'dock'/'clock', 'Horner'/'corner' and 'Incy'/'Wincy'.

Section 3: Word Reading and Spelling



Phonics

Phonics is taught daily at Walter Infant School and Nursery. It is modelled, taught and practised as the prime method for spelling and reading new words.



Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) Programmes

Synthetic phonic programmes have one thing in common: they teach children GPCs, to blend phonemes into spoken words and segment spoken words into phonemes. However, programmes use programme-specific systems and terminology such as actions, mnemonics, prompts, key words and routines to teach knowledge and skills. It is important not to confuse children by mixing material from different programmes or across different classrooms – hence the phrase ‘fidelity to the programme’. For example, one programme might use the term ‘split digraph’, while another might refer to ‘magic e’ for the same vowel GPC in a word such as ‘late’.



We ensure that we are using the same ‘language’ or technical vocabulary across the school when we are teaching phonics.

These are common exception words.
You cannot use phonics to read or spell them.

a	is	said	be	no	put
ask	his	says	he	go	push
	has	the	me	so	pull
are		they	she		full
our		there	we	of	one
	was	here		love	once
do	were	I	by	come	school
to	where	you	my	some	friend
today	want	your			house

These are examples of split digraphs.

a-e

wave

shade

o-e

joke

alone

i-e

line

inside

u-e

rule

duke

e-e

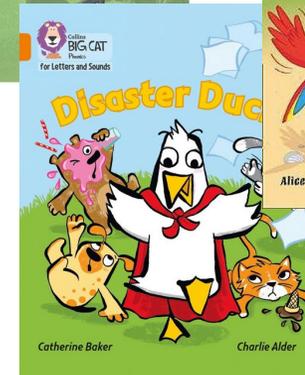
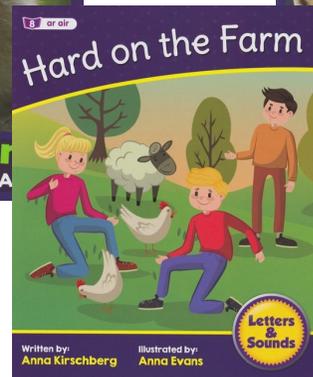
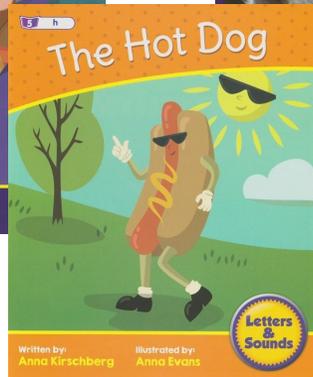
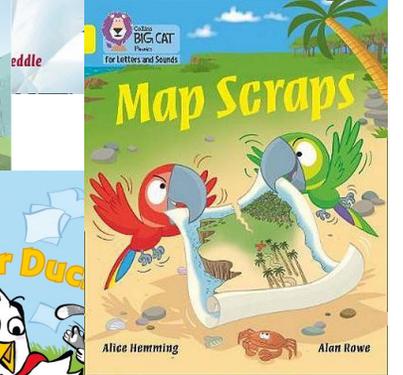
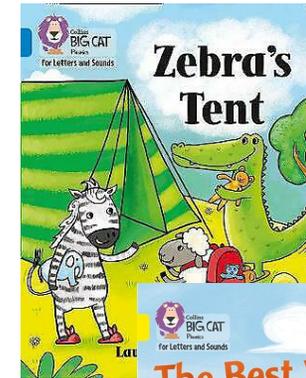
serene

delete

These are referred to as the letter 'k' and 'c' (the letter names), **not** kicking 'k' or curly 'c'.



An SSP at Walter Infant School and Nursery



Handwriting

1 2 3
4 5 6
7 8 9
0

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
H	I	J	K	L	M	N
O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
V	W	X	Y	Z		

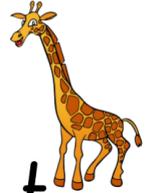
a b c d e f g h i j k l m
n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Tortoise Letters 

a c e i m n o
r s u v w x z

Monkey Letters 

f g j p q y

Giraffe Letters 

b d h k l t

What the DfE says!

Information for schools

There is no statutory requirement for schools to choose one of the SSP programmes on the validated list. However, validation status indicates that a programme has been self-assessed by its publisher and judged by a small panel with relevant expertise and that both consider it to meet all of the [Department for Education \(DfE\) criteria](#) for an effective systematic synthetic phonics programme.

A complete systematic synthetic phonics (SSP) programme is one that provides:

- all that is essential to teach SSP to children in reception and key stage 1 years of mainstream primary schools
- sufficient support for children in reception and key stage 1 to become fluent readers
- a structured route for most children to meet or exceed the expected standard in the year one phonics screening check
- all national curriculum expectations for word reading through decoding by the end of key stage 1

For more guidance on choosing an SSP programme that is best for your school, speak to your local [English Hub](#). English Hubs can offer guidance on the details of each validated programme above, to help with your decision.

If you are or are about to become a partner school that is supported by one of our [English Hubs](#), contact your local English Hub to discuss which SSP programme to use in your school. The English Hubs programme will only support schools to implement an SSP programme from this updated validated list.

Our SSP

It is important to remember that our SSP is the complete or holistic package that we offer our children!

It is not just, that we use Phonics Play or Big Cat Collins. It is our 'whole package' for Reading and Early Literacy.

We will of course review this as it continues to develop. Currently, there is a lot of misconceptions around this, and, at present, it is slightly contentious.



The Walter Reading Hub

We have developed a website called the Walter Reading Hub.

The website has information, hints and tips on how to teach your child reading at home. We have loaded it with videos which include, phonics lessons and the adults in school reading and sharing books. The website also links into the Big Cat eBook Library, which the children can access at home.

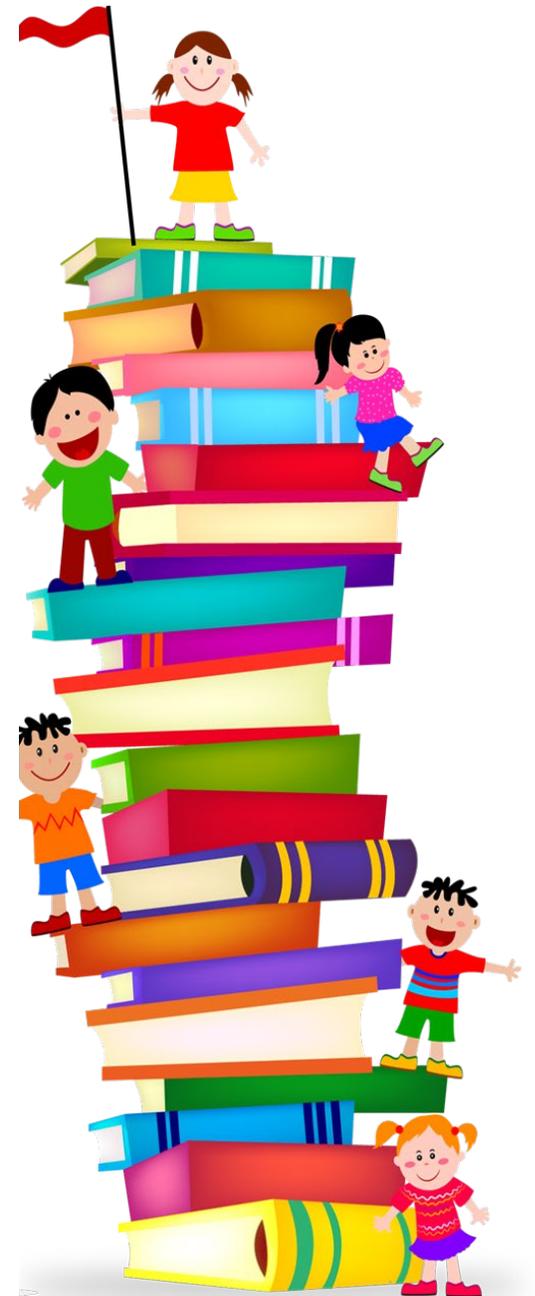


<https://wisreading.weebly.com/>

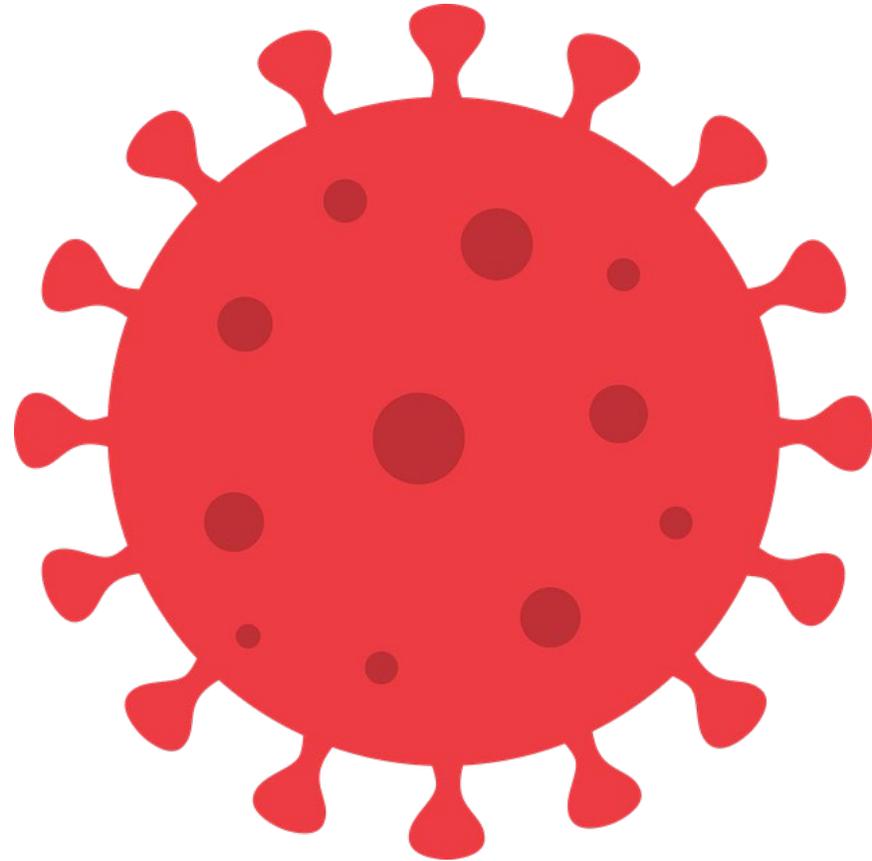
Section 4: Children at the Risk of Reading Failure



Our lowest attainers or lowest “20%” of readers receive a personalised provision to suit their needs and learning ability. This might include reading more easily decodable texts, smaller phonics or reading groups or additional reading throughout the week. This is to help them to continue to make progress with their reading.



We also have catch up plans for any children not working at age related expectations due to the loss of teaching because of the COVID-19 Pandemic.



Rapid Closure of Gaps

After year 1, learning in the wider curriculum depends increasingly on literacy. Pupils who cannot read well enough do not have full access to the curriculum. Those who fail to learn to read early on often start to dislike reading. They read less than others –and less often – and do not accumulate the background knowledge and vocabulary from reading that their peers do. The word-rich get richer, while the word-poor get poorer.

Most of them will catch up if they receive a few months of intensive individual or small-group teaching; they should not need this extra support indefinitely. Late arrivals into the school may also need to catch up with their peers, particularly those who are new to the English education system or whose first language is not English.

Those with learning difficulties may need longer, but every pupil needs to master the alphabetic code, whether they have special educational needs or not.

If pupils' reading is below what is expected for their age, it is important to determine whether they have difficulty with word reading (decoding), language comprehension or both of these, since different kinds of teaching are needed for each. Remember the Simple View of Reading!

Section 5: Leadership and Management



A Team of Experts within our School



Our school has a team of experts in reading. All of our teachers are experts at teaching reading, because our data shows this. By the end of Year Two our data has been consistently above the national and local average for Reading and Writing. However, everyone's knowledge is at different levels. Therefore, we have a team of experts within the school.

Some of our experts have different roles at Walter.

Mrs Wheeler, our Head Teacher



Headteachers are ultimately responsible for building the reading culture in their school and ensuring that the teaching of reading is as effective as possible. They have to make sure that all their staff, including the special educational needs co-ordinator, and their ITT trainees, have the knowledge, skills, understanding and professional support to teach reading effectively and thus transform children's life chances.

Mr Lee, our English Subject Lead



At Walter Infant School and Nursery, we have an English Subject Lead for English, Literacy, Reading and Phonics across the school. Currently, this is Mr Lee.

Mr Lee is specialised in English whilst at university. He is also an external Key Stage One moderator and works with the local authority to help other schools with their writing and reading.

Our Teachers and LSAs



We constantly monitor and reflect on our skills and how we teach our children.

All of our staff are trained to teach reading. All of our teaching on reading and early literacy has been developed in-house and designed to be bespoke to our school. Every school teaches reading differently. We ensure that our staff are experts in teaching reading with good pedagogical knowledge, and that they are not just following instructions from a scheme of work. Always remember you can ask for help!

We teach reading across the curriculum!



Reducing Workload



Our SSP is designed to reduce teacher's workload.
Here are a few ways in which we do this:

- Planning on Phonics Play
- Our shared Guided Reading plans and resources
- Share PPA time on Fridays.

What other things do we do at Walter to reduce workload?

Section 6: Building on the foundations with older pupils – a summary



This section discusses older children and is not necessarily relevant to our school.

Essentially, it discusses that it is more challenging for older children to learn to read and develop their early literacy skills. Therefore, it is essential that we get it right at Walter Infant School and Nursery before they move on. We need our children to be Junior School Ready when they leave us!

The Reading Framework Document



Department
for Education

The reading framework

Teaching the foundations of literacy

July 2021

‘The Reading Framework - Teaching Foundations of Literacy’ documentation is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-reading-framework-teaching-the-foundations-of-literacy>

The documentation contains appendices that others might find useful, including an Audit for leaders and teachers (appendix 8) and a very handy glossary (appendix 9).