

Can the reintroduction of Daily Support Reading in Lower Key Stage 2 improve reading fluency and comprehension for pupils significantly below age expected attainment?

Orchard School, Lower Key Stage 2 Phase

Abstract

Daily Supported Reading is a guided method to teaching early reading predominantly in Key Stage One and sometimes for lower attaining readers in Key Stage Two. The programme aims to ensure children become fluent readers who are independently motivated. Children are taught to respond to and engage with new ideas, information, and access and comprehend information with increasing autonomy.

The aim of this research study was to assess the effectiveness of the re-introduction of the Daily Supported Reading Programme in improving reading fluency, comprehension and enabling accelerated progress for lower attaining pupils in Lower Key Stage Two. To trial its effectiveness, a small sample group of Year 4 pupils, who were significantly below age expected attainment, were selected to take part in regular sessions of Daily Supported Reading with a trained adult. Each daily session was thirty minutes in length and the intervention ran for a period of 10 weeks. The reading tracker was used to measure impact from starting to end.

Introduction

Orchard Primary School is a multi-cultural primary school situated in the borough of Hackney, London. The proportion of pupils from a minority ethnic group and those who speak English as an additional language are higher than average. In addition, the proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is higher than average and a significant number of pupils enter Nursery and Reception below the expected level for their age across several areas of learning. Pupils make strong progress in reading and achieve above national averages at the end of Key Stage Two.

Following a Lower Key Stage Two team consultation and analysis of the reading book band tracker, it was identified that a group of low attaining readers were accessing texts significantly below age-expected and were either non-movers or progressing at a very slow pace.

Reading is a significant part of the school curriculum, enabling pupils to develop their oracy, learn the knowledge and skills required to become confident readers, so that they can read for both pleasure and information. At Orchard School, pupils are given a vast amount of opportunities to read, share and discuss a wide range of reading books including non-fiction. They largely develop their reading through daily reading sessions which include: Daily Supported Reading (DSR) in Year 1 and a focused reading programme in Year 2 and the rest of KS2 known as Destination Reader (DR), which allows for discussion, analysis and written responses to text.

DSR is used to teach early reading primarily in Year 1 and where necessary in Year 2. Significantly low attaining pupils in Key Stage Two currently receive Lexia intervention, which is a computer based program pupils use independently to develop their reading fluency, phonological awareness as well as their basic reading comprehension skills. Although there are a lot of pros for using Lexia, in order for pupils to make accelerated progress, they need to be guided through a bespoke DSR program, in addition to Lexia, to address gaps in their reading proficiency. This can enable a smoother and more effective transition to DR in the latter part of Key Stage Two.

DSR comprises of pupils reading and conversing in small groups led by an adult. At the beginning, the adult will introduce the text, read and discuss the blurb, then apply a combination of practices including: reading aloud, choral, echo, paired and individual reading aiming to develop pupils' fluency and familiarity with the text as well as their basic comprehension skills.

In addition, DSR ensures pupils are organised in groups of similar learning ability or learning needs. As well as this, practitioners select texts which are accurately pitched and more likely to be read more independently with the right level of adult guidance. This varies considerably to DR, where pupils are placed in mixed or near ability pairs and all children read the same levelled books as the rest of the class, leaving low attaining readers at a disadvantage.

DSR is intended to increase fluency within reading and research indicates that fluency is a key component of skilled reading, which is often given scarce attention, particularly after Year 4 (Mostert & Glasswell, 2011). Pupils who read below the age expected level, get an insufficient amount out of interactions with texts that are simply too difficult for them to read alone. An overload on processing attention can make it hard for pupils to think while reading, and so they often do poorly on independent tasks and assessments. The DSR approach can significantly address such issues through: modelled, shared or coral reading; reading repetitively building stamina and fluency; as well as discussing text and making links to personal experiences.

The DSR approach ensures pupils are guided in reading in the aims of gradually becoming independent and guiding pupils can enable greater control over the reading process through the development of reading strategies which assist decoding and construct meaning. The practitioner 'scaffolds' pupils as they read, talk and think their way through a text (Department of Education, 1997). The 'scaffolding' in DSR can sustain and support people throughout reading and further scaffolds include: exploring new and unfamiliar vocabulary; discussing language structure; and teach comprehension, which Parker & Hurry (2007) argue, should involve practitioners explicitly modelling strategies used by successful and skilled readers. As soon as the strategies have been rehearsed and are adopted, the practitioner can slowly reduce support (or scaffold), enabling the reader to become more independent (Bruner, 1986). Thus the second day of DSR is more pupil-led, with lots independent reading and discussion and retrieval of key events and information.

Research Process

The research was co-ordinated by the Lower Key Stage Two Phase Leader and a member of support staff. A bespoke DSR intervention was delivered three times per week to six low attaining pupils in Years 4 and for a maximum of ten weeks. Before the intervention could commence, all pupils read independently to the adult to clarify and confirm their current reading book band level as a starting point, which also helped with selecting accurately pitched texts.

The research group spent at least two days on each text. Every first session would generally begin with the introduction of the front cover, followed by the adult reading the blurb, before pupils are given the opportunity to share their predictions with their partners before feeding back to the group. Using a range of open and closed questions, the adult would challenge pupil responses encouraging them to explain and refer to evidence in the

text or illustration. Then the adult would read aloud, carefully modelling expression and intonation whilst pupils would follow using their fingers. At various parts of the text, the adult would stop the group and initiate group discussions, including summarising main parts of the text and clarifying any new/familiar vocabulary in context. The second time, the group read would be either a whole group coral read or pupils taking turns reading different parts of the text. Additional questions that were asked during after reading the text were derived from the pupils' home school diaries (see fig. 2).

Day two would usually begin with pupils retelling events in order and answering a range of question, developing different levels of comprehension (literacy, inferential and evaluative). Then pupils would read independently and continuously, whilst the adult would circulate, pauses pupils, challenge using additional questions. At the end of the research, the book band tracker was used to measure progress and impact from start to end point.

Findings

The results show all pupils trialled have made good or exceptional progress (Fig1), with one pupil making more than one year progress. The table below shows that from Autumn 1 to the end of Autumn 2, four pupils were non-movers. However, after the intervention was introduced midway through Spring 1, nearly all pupils, moved up a book band at the end of Spring 1. As the intervention progressed, some pupils started to move up book bands more rapidly.

In addition, pupils who regularly attended the interventions and have displayed high levels of engagement have made more visible progress. For instance, pupil MS attended every session, displayed possibly the highest level of engagement, was evidently reading at home regularly and frequently commenting in their home school diary. As a result, expectedly this pupil made more than one year progress. On the contrary, pupil JK missed a significant number of sessions due to absence and behavioural reasons and showed possibly the lowest level of engagement. Unsurprisingly this pupil made limited progress.

As the study went on, pupils showed significant increase in engagement, confidence and contributed more to sessions (fig.).

Fig. 1 Reading book band tracker

Pupil Initials	Intervention					
	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
MS	Orange	Turquoise	Purple	Gold	White	Lime
NT	Green	Orange	Orange	Turquoise	Purple	Purple
AL	White	White	Lime	Lime	Brown	Brown
JK	Turquoise	Turquoise	Purple	Purple	Purple	Purple
AB	Orange	Orange	Turquoise	Turquoise	Purple	Purple
CL	White	White	Lime	Lime	Brown	Brown

DSR Intervention Comment Sheet (LKS2)

WB: 15.5.23 — The day of the trolleys (white band)

	MS	NT	AL	JK	AB	CL
Monday Chapter 1	Lisa is excited because she says "That's so clever, there's no need to push them."	Glen is annoyed because he does not like apples.	Ollie is clever because he makes the smart trolleys a lot more fun.	Glen is unhappy because the trolleys ride.	The trolleys are boring because they say stop.	"Grove warning" tells me the trolleys want people to buy healthy food.
Wednesday Chapter 2	People were surprised because the trolley was saying "Why not try biscuits".	The key idea is the trolleys are saying no good food.	The key idea is Glen is scared. The trolley's run away. "quick follow the trolley".	Absent	Ollie is sad because he says "I wish I never touched the trolley now".	The main idea is the trolleys leave the shopping place and run away.
Friday Chapter 3 & 4	The main idea is police come and try catch the trolleys.	I think the police will catch the trolley. There are six police.	Ollie is clever. He has brilliant idea.	Lisa said her dog to catch the trolley. Zip is fast.	Absent	It was very clever how Lisa got Zip the dog to chase the trolleys back to the supermarket.

Impact and Conclusion

The organisation and implementation of the research project was straightforward, greatly due to the supporting adult selected to run the intervention sessions having exceptional knowledge and experience of DSR. Additional guidelines provided, were systematic and easy to follow (Fig. 3). Each small group session ensured pupils were given adequate time, reading in a variety of ways, expressing their ideas and opinions with as well as practising answering a range of comprehension questions, opportunities they would have less of under normal in class provisions. The research project enabled pupils to display a great level of engagement and enthusiasm in every session, thus improving their confidence and perception of reading.

The baseline at the beginning of Year 4 indicated how the selected pupils were significantly below age expected attainment, with the majority reading a book band more suited to Key Stage One. Despite some pupils being non-movers at the end of the autumn term, all pupils made good or accelerated progress partly as a result of this intervention, in addition to using Lexia, developing their reading fluency and comprehension skills.

This research project challenged the sole use of Lexia and though it has its advantages, it alone may not guarantee pupils making rapid or acceptable progress in their reading fluency and comprehension. As an alternative, low attaining pupils may benefit greatly from a modified reading scheme, which offers a vast amount of opportunities for pupils to read independently and in various way as well as be modelled a range of vital skills around reading, including reading effectively between the lines before making a smooth transition to DR later in Upper Key Stage Two.

References

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- Bruner, J. (1986). Actual Minds, Possible Worlds. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
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DAILY SUPPORTED READING LOWER KEY STAGE 2

BEFORE INDEPENDENT READING

The story is called *

Read the blurb and look at the front cover. What do you think this story is about? Why do you say this?

- ◆ I wonder if...
- ◆ I predict that...
- ◆ I say this because...

Read the story to the children. Clarify key vocabulary.

- ◆ What does "mean"?
- ◆ I think that means...
- ◆ To help me understand this word I can...
- ◆ What does "mean"?

Give out individual books and echolocal read together. Encourage pupils to summarise in their pairs.

- ◆ The key idea is...
- ◆ This part is about...
- ◆ The main theme is...

Model using a range of strategies to decode complex words (use of visual clues, sound it out, chunk it, go back and reread.)

DURING READING

Pupils to read independently and continuously. Listen to each child read. Encourage pupils to use modelled strategies when decoding challenging words. Ask pupils a range of inferring and evaluative questions (taken from their home school diaries). For example:

- ◆ Can you describe how the main characters are feeling? How do you know?
- ◆ What is the overall mood like? Why do you say this?
- ◆ What does this word/phrase tell you about.....?
- ◆ Where do you think the story is set? How do you know?
- ◆ How does this book make you feel? Why?
- ◆ What words has the author used to create atmosphere? Why do you say this?
- ◆ Which words/phrases work well? Why? The word/phrase "works well because..."

AFTER READING

Discuss the text with the pupils. Encourage pupils to summarise in pairs. Then ask a range of making links questions (taken from their home school diary). For examples:

- ◆ Explain how you would feel if you were in the characters position?
- ◆ Can you explain how this book is similar/different to other books you have read?
- ◆ Are any of the characters like other characters you know? How?

Fig. 3 Lower Key Stage 2 DSR script