

# Improving Literacy in Key Stage Two – Recommendations Summary

<p><b>1</b></p> <p><b>Develop pupils' language capability to support their reading and writing</b></p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p><b>Support pupils to develop fluent reading capabilities</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p><b>Teach reading comprehension strategies through modelling and supported practice</b></p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p><b>Teach writing composition strategies through modelling and supported practice</b></p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p><b>Develop pupils' transcription and sentence construction skills through extensive practice</b></p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p><b>Target teaching and support by accurately assessing pupil needs</b></p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p><b>Use high-quality structured interventions to help pupils who are struggling with their literacy</b></p>
<p>Purposeful speaking and listening activities support the development of pupils' language capability and provides a foundation for thinking and communication.</p> <p>Purposeful activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reading books aloud and discussing them;</li> <li>activities that extend pupils' expressive and receptive vocabulary;</li> <li>collaborative learning activities where pupils can share their thought processes;</li> <li>structured questioning to develop reading comprehension;</li> <li>teachers modelling inference-making by thinking aloud; and</li> <li>pupils articulating their ideas verbally before they start writing.</li> </ul>	<p>Fluent readers can read quickly, accurately, and with appropriate stress and intonation.</p> <p>Fluent reading supports comprehension because pupils' cognitive resources are freed from focusing on word recognition and can be redirected towards comprehending the text.</p> <p>This can be developed through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>guided oral reading instruction—teachers model fluent reading of a text, then pupils read the same text aloud with appropriate feedback; and</li> <li>repeated reading—pupils re-read a short and meaningful passage a set number of times or until they reach a suitable level of fluency.</li> </ul> <p>It is important to understand pupils' current capabilities and teach accordingly. Most pupils will need an emphasis on developing reading fluency, but some pupils may need a focus on more basic skills, such as decoding and phonological awareness.</p>	<p>Reading comprehension can be improved by teaching specific strategies that pupils can apply both to monitor and overcome barriers to comprehension. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prediction;</li> <li>questioning;</li> <li>clarifying;</li> <li>summarising;</li> <li>inference; and</li> <li>activating prior knowledge.</li> </ul> <p>The potential impact of these strategies is very high, but can be hard to achieve, since pupils are required to take greater responsibility for their own learning.</p> <p>The strategies should be described and modelled before pupils practise the strategies with feedback. Support should then be gradually reduced as pupils take increasing responsibility.</p> <p>Texts should be carefully selected to support the teaching of these strategies.</p>	<p>Purpose and audience are central to effective writing. Pupils need to have a reason to write and someone to write for.</p> <p>Writing can be thought of as a process made up of seven components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>planning;</li> <li>drafting;</li> <li>sharing;</li> <li>evaluating;</li> <li>revising;</li> <li>editing; and</li> <li>publishing.</li> </ul> <p>Effective writers use a number of strategies to support each component of the writing process. Pupils should learn how, when, and why to use each strategy. For example, pupils' planning could be improved by teaching the strategies of goal setting and activating prior knowledge.</p> <p>The strategies should be described and modelled before pupils practise them with feedback. Support should then be gradually reduced as pupils take increasing responsibility.</p>	<p>A fluent writing style supports composition because pupils' cognitive resources are freed from focusing on handwriting, spelling, and sentence construction and can be redirected towards writing composition.</p> <p>Extensive practice, supported by effective feedback, is required to develop fluent transcription skills.</p> <p>Spelling should be explicitly taught and diagnostic assessment should be used to focus effort on the spellings that pupils are finding difficult.</p> <p>Pupils should practise sentence-combining and other sentence construction techniques.</p>	<p>High-quality assessment and diagnosis should be used to target and adapt teaching to pupils' needs.</p> <p>Rapid provision of support is important, but it is critical to ensure it is the right support. Diagnostic assessment can be used to inform professional judgement about the best next steps. Diagnostic assessment makes teaching more efficient by ensuring that effort is not wasted on rehearsing skills or content that a pupil already knows well.</p> <p>A range of diagnostic assessments are available and staff should be trained to use and interpret these effectively.</p> <p>This approach can be used for high- and low-attaining pupils and for whole-class and targeted interventions.</p>	<p>Schools should focus first on developing core classroom teaching strategies that improve the literacy capabilities of the whole class. With this in place, the need for additional support should decrease. Nevertheless, it is likely that a small number of pupils will require additional support.</p> <p>There is a strong and consistent body of evidence demonstrating the benefit of structured interventions for pupils who are struggling with their literacy. The first step should be to use accurate diagnosis of capabilities and difficulties to match pupils to appropriate interventions.</p>
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