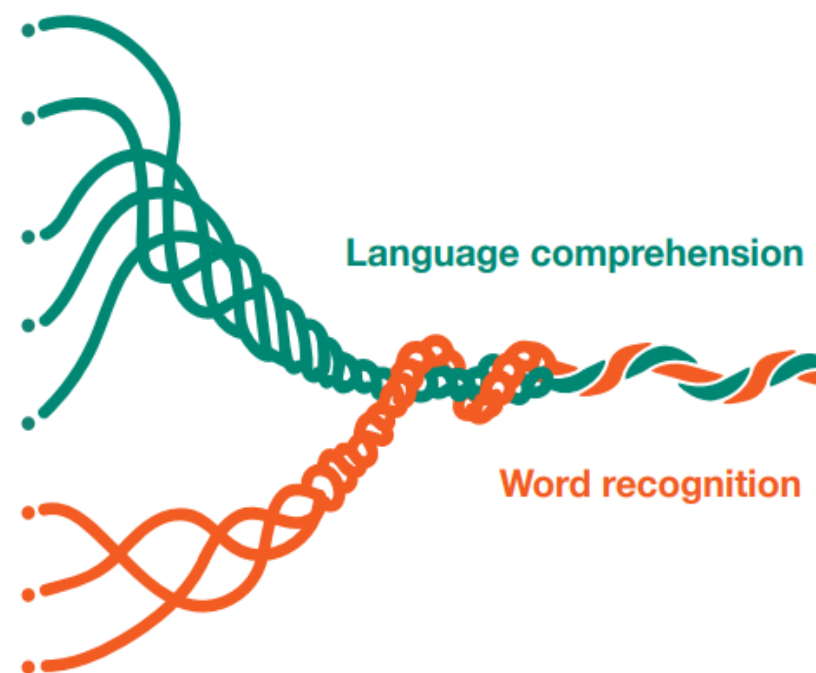


Rationale for the teaching of reading at Oldbury Park RSA Academy

At Oldbury Park Primary we use the thinking shown in the image of the reading rope below to help us to plan, teach and weave together the different strands of reading. All of these strands are vital components of children becoming skilful and thoughtful readers. To be a confident reader, children need to use all of these skills simultaneously; however, in order for the children to develop these skills, teaching will often prioritise different strands of the rope within our teaching over time, striking a balance between explicit instruction and guided work. The “Word Recognition” strands, which are the focus of daily phonics instruction from Reception onwards, become more and more automatic with practice and aim to develop fluency. Fluency in decoding underpins how children are able to read increasingly demanding material. The “Language Comprehension” strands, which begin with being read to and immersion in stories, show a movement over time towards becoming more deliberate in their use as children read increasingly demanding texts with deeper levels of complexity. Our teaching enables the children to become more aware and in control of what they are doing, and more thoughtful in their responses to what they read.

LC1 Verbal reasoning : how children make sense of what they are reading, learning to explore and detect multiple meanings which make them think hard and think differently about what they are reading and how we teach this
LC2 Vocabulary : how children broaden the range of vocabulary they understand and more precise in its use, making connections with different meanings and word origins and how we teach this
LC3 Language structures : how children explain how writers use sentence and grammatical structures for specific effects and how we teach this
LC4 Literacy knowledge : how children identify features that help them to read books in specific ways and make connections between different types of books and how we teach this
LC5 Background knowledge : how children develop factual or conceptual knowledge which underpins what they read and how we teach this
WR1 Decoding : how children master letter/sound correspondence and how we teach this
WR2 Phonological awareness : how children master building phonemes and breaking words into phonemes and how we teach this
WR3 Sight recognition of familiar words : how children acquire essential sight vocabulary which uses irregular phonemic patterns and how we teach this



Reading rope based on Scarborough (2001)

Language comprehension

There are five strands that sit within language comprehension, interwoven to ensure a child develops good understanding of what they read. To develop this at Oldbury Park we use whole class guided reading, choosing books for focused study which make demands of the reader. These demands may be in their vocabulary, their language structures, their context or their levels of meaning or several of these together. Books and texts are chosen which are usually pitched above the decoding ability of the majority of the children in the class, in order to maximise the comprehension opportunities and outcomes we want the children to gain from them.

<p>LC1 Verbal reasoning</p>	<p>Readers need to be able to make inferences and construct meanings from the text: that is, they need to be able to THINK logically about what they read in order to understand it, and its possible implications. In narratives for example, they need to be thinking about what is happening at that moment in the story, what has already happened and how these connect, what could happen next and what the story so far shows about the impact of events on characters. All of these demands require children to be given time to reflect and speculate, to dig deeper into their thinking, explore possibilities and rehearse responses and explanations. Teachers model and develop the key skills of predicting, questioning, clarifying and summarising to support children to explore their understanding of the text.</p>
<p>LC2 Vocabulary</p>	<p>Readers need to explore the meaning of words and vocabulary patterns which they encounter in texts. This is done through questioning and clarifying. Children are taught to look for patterns in words which link them to their meaning, to explore the etymology of familiar and unfamiliar vocabulary to enable them to make further connections and to define more precisely words in relation to words of similar appearance, and similar meaning. Teachers plan opportunities for children to build up their vocabulary knowledge by exploring how authors choose to use specific vocabulary for effect. This helps them to appreciate how the selection of words can be linked to purpose and intended effect on the reader, and has in turn significant benefit to the planning and content of their writing.</p>
<p>LC3 Language structures</p>	<p>When teachers focus on the sentence structures, the grammatical and language choices in a text, children gain an insight into the author’s choices when writing the text, and how these decisions are made to create a certain reaction in the reader. Questioning and clarifying support children to think “What is it about how this sentence is written that makes me respond in a particular way?” and this becomes the model for how we want readers to ask themselves similar questions and clarify their thinking in their own minds. They are taught how to identify and talk about the different grammatical structures and functions of written language, and how to apply this to what they read.</p>
<p>LC4 Literacy knowledge</p>	<p>Literacy knowledge begins with understanding concepts of print such as reading from left to right and top to bottom, how to hold a book, and how texts are organised to help the reader follow. As children become more experienced readers, they are guided by teachers through questioning, predicting and clarifying to make connections between</p>

	<p>books, between types of characters and events, between stories that work the same way and between how different types of text and language choices make the reader respond. We call this “book talk”, and it is a feature of all our Guided Reading teaching. Teachers plan for it, model it and support children to get better at it. It is important that children get better at answering questions about what they read, but the teaching process to secure this is rooted in exploratory talk about what the children notice, what puzzles them and what else they need to know to understand the text better. Carefully guided and scaffolded talk underpins more sophisticated and skilled reading.</p>
<p>LC5 Background knowledge</p>	<p>Teachers plan for children to build up their background knowledge. The knowledge about the world which children possess is crucial to them reading effectively because readers use familiar contexts to help them to understand unfamiliar contexts. They make sense of new information by making connections to what they know already. Sequences of learning are designed so that children encounter key information in order to access the texts they are reading, and then to create a context for their understanding. Summarising is an important skill which is developed so that children draw together their knowledge effectively to support their comprehension.</p>

Through our teaching of guided reading, we model and develop key skills to support the comprehension process :

Predicting

We encourage readers to predict action and events in ways which support their comprehension. We want children to think about the clues in what they have read which are supporting their predictions so “What *could* happen next ?” is better than “What do you think *will* happen next?” because it invites other alternative possibilities and leads to justification, i.e. “What do you know so far which makes you think that that could be what happens next ?” We want children to build their experience of wondering why things have happened the way they have, or why characters have said what they have said, or what the author may be showing but not telling the reader. Prediction is a way of priming children to think more deeply about the reasons for the way in which the writing progresses. It can be linked to thinking harder about purpose and can help children to watch out for twists : “Why might the author want you to think that ?”

Questioning

On the simplest level, readers need to be given the opportunity to retrieve information from the text. In oral discussion and rehearsal, this can either be where the question uses exactly the same language as the text, or where the question mirrors the language of the text but requires the reader to make an extended connection. On the next level, readers need to be given the opportunity to infer meaning. This is best built on from retrieval questions so that one represents the first layer of thinking from which deeper thought is prompted by adding a layer to the question. On a deeper level, readers need to be encouraged to ask speculative questions of their own reading. This ‘layered’ approach can be summed up through Aidan Chambers’ sequence : “What are you sure of ?” → “What are you not sure of yet ?” → “Is there anything which is puzzling you ?” → “What would it help you to talk about ?”

Clarifying

This gives the reader the opportunity to seek and build clarification about their thinking by becoming more specific or precise. In particular this supports how vocabulary is developed. Some vocabulary from the text itself may be pivotal in securing understanding; some vocabulary may be pivotal in helping children to talk and think about the text. Teachers anticipate how they will clarify key vocabulary, for example by exploring etymology, by breaking words into recognisable morphemes, by seeking definitions and by considering alternatives which the author could have used to get meaning across.

Summarising

Summarising allows the reader to monitor their own comprehension. By synthesising key points briefly, the reader distinguishes between what is pivotal and what is relatively unimportant. Children need to be prompted to summarise using prompts like “What are we sure of so far ?” which anticipates “What are we expecting to find out next ?” - which links back to prediction. This process develops greater accuracy and precision of explanation.

Word recognition

At Oldbury Park the children learn to read through a scheme called Read Write Inc Phonics (RWI). Daily, systematic phonics instruction gives children the skills to decode our written language. As part of this, children receive a daily Speed Sound Lesson which aims to teach children to decode, to segment and blend, and recognise familiar sight words, all whilst building fluency in reading. During this early reading development, children are taught in groups where the teaching is matched to the children's individual ability, with regular assessment and re-grouping where necessary. It is a fluid and tailored approach to ensure all children are receiving exactly what they need to make rapid progress in their word recognition ability. Books selected to practise early reading skills are matched to the child's level of phonic knowledge.

<p>WR1 Decoding</p>	<p>When learning to read, the children are first taught how to decode. This includes an understanding of the alphabetic principle, that is that a letter of the alphabet represents a sound, and that these letters can be blended together to create sounds or phonemes. This therefore involves systematic and discrete teaching of the phonemes, grouped into Set 1, 2 and 3 sounds, supported by the use of memorable pictures and mnemonics.</p>
<p>WR2 Phonological awareness</p>	<p>The children are then taught how to use their decoding of phonemes to read phonetically decodable words during RWI Speed Sound Lessons and RWI Story Book Lessons. They learn to blend together the phonemes which they have been taught using an approach called Fred Talk, where Fred is a puppet who can only speak in sounds and needs help from the children to blend the sounds together to read the words e.g. c-a-t, cat. Once secure in oral blending, children are taught how to segment a word into phonemes (spot the phonemes and split the word up) and then blend these together to read it accurately e.g. shark sh-ar-k. Again, this is taught systematically and books are used to support skill development which require children to practise with the phonemes they have been taught.</p>
<p>WR3 Sight recognition of familiar words</p>	<p>During Story Book Lessons, children are taught how to read 'Red' words, words that are not phonetically decodable. The 'tricky' parts of the words are taught to the children and there are frequent opportunities throughout lessons to read and review these words.</p>

Further reading

The Reading rope analogy and the strands shown comes from Hollis Scarborough (2001). Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis)abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice. Pp. 97-110 in S. B. Neuman & D. K. Dickinson (Eds.) *Handbook of Early Literacy*. NY: Guilford Press.

‘Book Talk’ is a feature of the dialogic teaching approaches outlined by Aidan Chambers in *Tell me : Children, Reading and Talk* (1993)

The skills of Predicting, Questioning, Clarifying and Summarising are the key elements of Reciprocal Reading. See The Education Endowment Fund’s review of its use and effectiveness : <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/reciprocal-reading/>