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## Peer tutoring: Cross-age Paired Reading

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# Cross-age Paired Reading



## **Cross-age Paired Reading**

This resource pack is to provide teachers with information and guidance on how to set up and successfully run a 'Paired Reading' programme.

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Fourth Edition

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## Links to Curriculum

In accordance with government recommendations: *English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.* (DfE, 2013).

## English

Using paired reading should develop a number of key concepts as part of the KS2 national curriculum for English (Department for Education, 2013) helping pupils to:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening.

Peer tutoring should promote speaking and listening as pairs talk about, and explore the meaning of, the text they are reading. The technique should obviously develop reading capabilities in pupils. In particular the technique should develop the pair's ability to extract and interpret information from texts; infer and deduce the intentions of the writer; justify their own ideas on what they have read; understand the nature and purpose of texts and understand how meaning is created through the use of text.

## Literacy

Apart from the relationship of the technique to the teaching of English, paired reading should promote the development of general literacy. The White Paper on the importance of Teaching (Department for Education, 2012) places emphasis on the need for Ofsted to assess the teaching of reading (point 4.17). In addition the White Paper calls for '*up-to-date strategies for successful literacy teaching*' to be used by teachers. Paired reading offers a very up-to-date strategy that has been proven through systematic research to improve reading in Year 3-7 pupils. Paired reading should also promote the ability of teachers to

deliver the following aim of the guidance provided by Ofsted on developing literacy:

*'It is clear that literacy within the primary curriculum and across the secondary curriculum will once again have enhanced status as part of the drive to raise literacy standards for all pupils, but particularly for those for whom literacy levels are below those expected for their age.'* (Ofsted, 2012a: p34)

## **Differentiation**

In terms of pedagogy, paired reading ensures 'differentiation' and 'appropriate challenge' as children are paired according to progress levels. Such approaches to differentiation are reported by Ofsted as key elements for outstanding teaching (hence hopefully learning).

Individual differentiation by task in this manner are maximizing the opportunity of the development of resilient, confident, and independent pupils.

According to OFSTED framework 2012 the quality of teaching in school grade descriptor for 'Outstanding teaching reads that *'teachers ... set challenging tasks based on systematic, accurate assessment of pupils' prior skills, knowledge and understanding'*. In addition Ofsted (2012b) grade teaching 'Outstanding' where *'Teaching promotes pupils' high levels of resilience, confidence and independence when they tackle challenging activities'* and *'... every opportunity is taken to successfully develop crucial skills, including being able to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects'*. Paired reading with its focus on talk, and metacognitive strategy should provide an effective medium to demonstrate 'Outstanding' teaching and outstanding learning.

## **Assessing Pupil Progress**

One of the main features of the paired reading process is peer formative assessment. There have been a number of national policy initiatives in England that centre around formative assessment such as Assessment for Learning (Qualification and Curriculum Development Agency, 2007) and more recently Assessing Pupils' Progress (Department For Children, Schools & Families, 2008). The Assessment for Learning Strategy document calls upon teachers to use professional judgement in assessing progress of pupils and to use this information to address gaps in learning of pupils (personalised learning).

Today, formative assessment continues to be advocated, with observational assessment being an important element in this process (Assessment without Levels, 2015). It suggests that formative assessment helps pupils to measure their knowledge and understanding against learning objectives and wider outcomes and to identify where they need to target their efforts to improve. In addition it suggests that formative assessment allows teachers to understand pupil performance on a continuing basis to identify when pupils are struggling, when they have consolidated learning and when they are ready to progress. In this way, it suggests formative assessment supports

teachers to provide appropriate support or extension as necessary. It also enables teachers to evaluate their own teaching of particular concepts and to review their teaching accordingly.

Paired reading gives a pedagogic medium within which formative assessment could be effectively developed. The structured observations that are suggested as part of the process should yield excellent information in allowing a teacher to assess pupil learning at KS2 and KS3 and to review their support accordingly. The ongoing tutor and tutee assessment of their technique and progress should enable pupils to refine their understanding of their progress resulting in ongoing improvement.

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## **How to do paired reading: A guide for teachers**

### **What is peer tutoring?**

The way we interact with peers pervades our everyday lives both in and outwith the school environment. In most workplaces peer tutoring helps new employees learn new skills. In schools when we get pupils to work together to promote learning we call this process 'peer tutoring'. In this process we normally define and fix roles. The pupil working at the higher reading level should take the role of being the tutor. The pupil working at the lower reading level should take the role of tutee. This allows there to be an attainment differential between tutor and tutee. It stands to reason that if the tutee gets stuck, the tutor should have the experience and ability to help!

The role of tutor is not passive. Research has shown us that tutors tend to get even more benefit than tutees during this process. This is because they have to think about a topic, deconstruct what they know about it and then explain it in a straightforward manner to the tutee. In addition, they may be able to see where the tutee is going wrong in their work, whereas awareness of their own errors may be more problematic. Comenius said, 'Through teaching I learn,' and this perfectly described the process of peer tutoring.

Evidence that peer tutoring works effectively is extensive. Some of the reported benefits of peer tutoring have been:

- Increased attainment in mathematics and reading
- Enhanced motivation
- Improved self-esteem
- Improved self-concept in school subjects
- Enhanced interpersonal, social and teamwork skills
- Greater awareness of the needs of others
- Better developed communication skills
- An enhanced sense of citizenship
- Enhanced social cohesiveness and reduced social exclusion for classes as a whole
- Better social, communication and teamwork skills.

Like any other way of effective teaching or managing learning, setting up peer tutor projects needs enthusiasm, careful planning and hard work on the part of the teacher. It would be a mistake to think of peer tutoring as an easy option.

### **Peer tutoring to improve reading - 'Paired reading'**

'Paired Reading' is a form of peer tutoring. Peer tutoring is often used in schools. However, it is all too easy to put pupils together to work together and not have the techniques and support optimised to promote learning. Paired Reading is a form of peer tutoring that is particularly good at promoting reading



development. The technique described in this manual has been developed over years of research.

What are the benefits?

Put roughly the benefits of paired reading are that reading will improve at least by 15% and by up to 50% more in pupils of Year6 age than if not used. The technique can improve reading if used as suggested. The devil is in the detail in respect of how the technique works. The closer you stick to the recommended technique, the higher the benefits are likely to be for pupils.

### **Selecting material at the right level of challenge**

Reading material should be above the independent reading ability of the tutee, but below that of the tutor. The tutee should decide what to read. This encourages them to be interested in what they are reading. This can be any material from magazines, books, technical manuals, newspapers or even football programmes. There is an important role for the teacher in ensuring that the reading materials are challenging enough.

### **Contact time**

'Paired Reading;' should take place once a week for a session of about 30 minutes. Of this about 20 minutes should be quality-reading time. The other 10 minutes may be spent organising exchange of pupils between classrooms and getting pupils settled for reading.

### **How should pupils sit together?**

The pupils should sit comfortably close to each other. They should be close enough to be able to hear each other. Sitting next to each other at a desk or in a quiet corner of a library would be fine. The point is that the pupil should be able to listen to each other, and hear each other without straining or having to raise their voices.

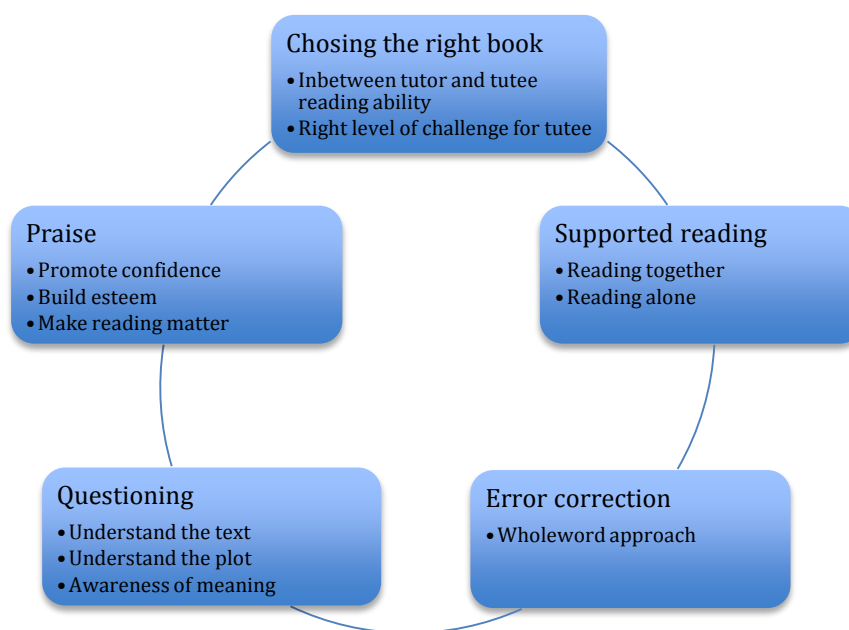
### **Paired reading**

'Paired reading' has five main aspects to it:

- Choosing the right book
- Supported reading
- Error correction
- Questioning
- Praise

These five aspects are all inter-related to each other and are represented in Figure 1, The Aspects of Paired Reading.

**Figure 1: The Aspects of Paired Reading**



### **Choosing the right book**

Choosing something interesting to read

A long-established feature of the paired reading process is that tutees select their own book. The tutee is instructed to select a book that has content that would interest them. This may be from magazines, library books, newspapers, storybooks or even football programmes. Any sort of reading material is suitable. However, as the teacher you may have to exercise some degree of editorial control over content. This will help pairs to experience different genres of text and ensure that the book chosen is at the right level of reading difficulty.

Getting a book at the right level of reading difficulty

The tutee should select a book of the correct readability using a 'five finger technique'. For this the tutee should open the book on a random page and place five fingers onto the page. S/he should attempt to read the words under the fingers. The pupil should repeat this for another four pages. If they can read all the words on the five pages, the book selected is too easy. Pupils should be advised to choose a book where they make between about two and ten errors. This may seem a strange manner in which to assess the suitability of the reading level of a book. However, it is quick and has been used in previous projects and seems to work quite well. The alternative would be to test the reading ability of pupils, convert their scores to reading ages and then calculate the reading age of the text selected to ensure it was suitable. This would be time consuming and cumbersome. The book chosen by pairs has to be above the independent readability level of the tutee, but below that of the tutor. This

will facilitate the tutor being able to help the tutee, by correcting their errors. If you are looking for a rough guide as to what has been found to be the correct 'error rate', put roughly, if you were listening to the reading you might expect to hear an error about every minute. There is a visual reminder for pupils about how to use the five finger test at the end of this pack.

### **Supported Reading**

The cycle of Paired Reading alternates between the tutor and tutee reading together and the tutee reading alone. The tutor helps the tutee gain confidence by modulating the speed of their reading to be just behind the reading of the tutee. This is important because we want the tutee to be reading a book that is slightly harder than their independent reading ability. In addition, the tutor is providing a good model of reading for the tutee. They may be able to read with more expression or intonation and this may help the tutee be more expressive when reading out loud. The tutor should aim to read with the tutee:

- When they start reading
- After a mistake is made by the tutee

### **Error correction**

The error correction technique should be as follows: The tutor and tutee start by reading together. The tutee signals to read alone when they feel confident enough to tackle the text reading independently. When an error occurs the tutor waits 4-5 seconds and if the tutee does not self correct, the tutor corrects the tutee. The tutee repeats the error word correctly, the tutor gives praise and the pair read together again until the tutee signals to read alone again. The tutee reads alone until the next error. This set process of error correction is central to the successful implementation of the technique in classrooms. It is a non-fussy way of correcting errors. By not stopping to decode words using phonics the flow of the reading is maintained and the focus remains on the overall text/story rather than the mechanics of reading individual words. It has a number of important features that include waiting to correct errors, using the correct process to correct errors and moving smoothly between the tutor/tutee reading together and the tutee reading alone.

#### Waiting to correct errors

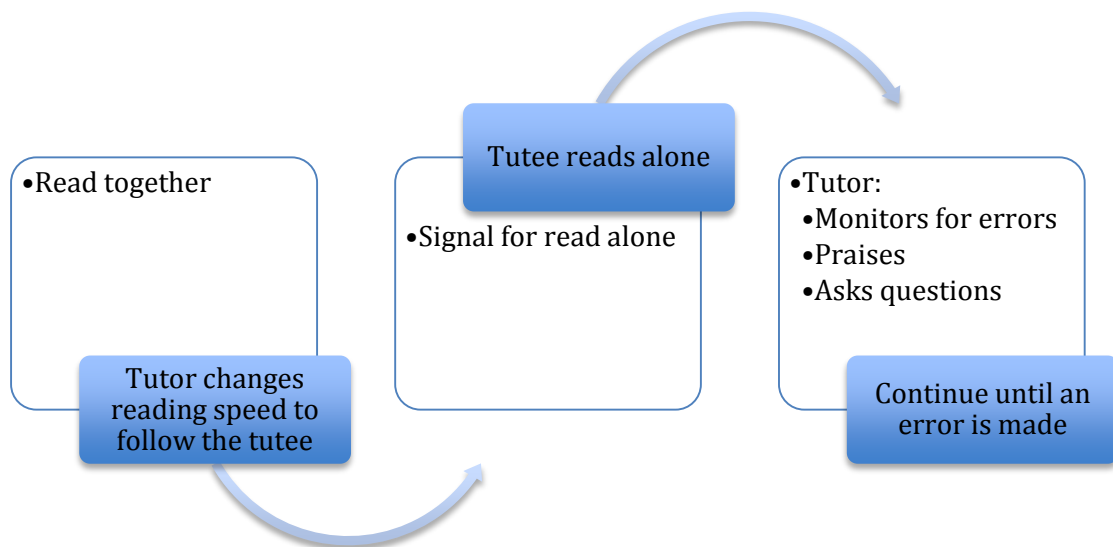
Tutors should not jump in and put the word right straight away when a mistake is made. The rule is that tutors pause and give the tutee 4-5 seconds to see if they will put it right by themselves. This allows tutees space to self-correct. It needs practice. A good way can be to ask tutors to count in their head when they hear an error before they correct it. This timeframe may change dependent upon the reading speed of the tutee. The tutor should learn the pattern of the tutee and start to know when they will not be about to self-correct. If they are past this point then the tutor should correct the tutee. Drawing the tutee's eye back to the error word does this. The tutor may point to the word if this would be helpful. However, generally we do not want tutors/tutee to follow reading with

a ruler or finger. However, some readers will require this support and it should be allowed as exceptions dictate. In addition some tutors may need to point out errors if they have a particularly impulsive tutee.

### Moving between reading alone and reading together

This is an important point in the tutoring support. Tutors and tutees always start by reading together. However, when the tutee feels confident enough they should signal to the tutor that they wish to read alone. The tutor and tutee should agree a signal for this. A finger tap or a similar signal would work well. At this point the tutor should praise the tutee (deciding to read alone may be a big step for tutees on a harder book) and then be quiet. The tutor follows the reading of the tutee carefully and waits for a mistake. If there are no mistakes made, the tutor still has a number of important jobs to do monitoring for errors, praising the tutee and asking questions at the right moment. This process is represented in Figure 2, Reading together and alone.

**Figure 2: Reading together and alone**



### The paired reading cycle

The actual process and cycle of paired reading is shown in the flow diagram represented in Figure 3, The paired reading cycle. In the early stages of establishing paired reading you may wish to make copies of this flow diagram and give each pair a copy to remind them of what they should be doing.

## Questioning

One of the keys to getting the most benefit from paired reading is to get effective questioning going during the tutoring session. Put simply this should involve tutors and tutees asking each other questions about the book:

1. Before reading
  - a. About the book/text
  - b. About the author
  - c. Regarding the reasons for choosing the text
2. During Reading
  - a. Asking questions to make sure the tutee understands
  - b. Asking questions to help the tutee understand
  - c. Asking questions to show interest
  - d. Asking questions to show it matters
3. After Reading
  - a. About what was read
  - b. About what was enjoyable
  - c. About how they would improve it

There are a number of different levels at which such questioning could take place. It may be important for you to give guidance to the tutors and tutees about the sort of questioning that would be appropriate. We have developed a 'Question Mat' to help this process. These include a mat for general use and easier/harder versions of this mat. The mats are included at the end of this guide. Teachers found it useful to print off the appropriate 'Question Mat' for each tutor/tutee to use on A3 paper. Let the pupils keep them on the desk as they read to act as an aid memoire to help prompt and frame effective questioning. Some teachers have preferred to let pupils design their own question mats (but based on those contained in the pack). Other teachers have used the mats and their knowledge of the pupils to fine-tune the design of the mats for their classrooms. In some classes laminating the mats has given them longevity (and allowed pairs to write and make notes on the mats using 'dry-wipe' marker pens), but using plastic wallets can be just as effective at protecting the mats, whilst allowing notes to be made with dry-wipe markers.

Some teachers have found it useful to have a 'Quiz Time' as part of the tutoring session. This could take place at the mid-point of the session or at the end. Teachers have tended to stop the whole class from reading and ask the tutors and tutees to think up questions for each other. If this is in the middle of the session remember to give the class warning that they need to find a suitable place to take a break from their reading. Then they get chance to ask their questions. In more competitive classrooms some pairs have kept 'score' of who answered more correctly and turned this into an unofficial 'competition'. The main points at which to have a 'question time' would be at the start of reading, in the middle of the session and at the end of reading.

Once the reading together/alone, error correction and praise processes are well established you should highlight the need for tutors and tutees to question (as outlined in the section on training in this manual). Move them on from the 'organic' questioning' that may have already been taking place, to using the structured guidance contained on the question mats (you should be thinking about this after about three weeks of the start of the project). For those who become adept at questioning try them with the harder question mat. For those struggling to ask questions use the simpler version. You might wish to use your observations to make a decision on this.

## **Praise**

It is really important that the tutor praises the tutee as they read. They need to get quite good doing this as though they mean it. In addition you may need to work with the tutees to work out different ways to praise. There are set points during the paired reading cycle where the tutor should praise the tutee. However, praise should not be limited to these points and you should encourage spontaneous praise from the tutor also. In particular the tutor might wish to praise when it becomes apparent that the tutee has read a difficult word, or read with expression. In addition there are set points to praise including when transferring to reading alone and after correcting an error that has been spotted by the tutor. The praise is very important. It promotes positive reading and aims to reinforce correct patterns in reading behaviour.

In addition the tutees need to learn to 'praise themselves'. This involves them reflecting on their reading and how it is improving. The tutor can help this process, but so can the teacher. The teacher can model effective praise during the session e.g. 'John is reading with great expression' or 'Siobhan is tackling difficult words well today'. In addition ask the tutee to try and identify how their reading is improving on their Paired Reading Log. If the teacher notices that some tutees have not been able to do this then some individual attention to help them identify how they are improving should rectify this.

## **How to do paired reading: A short guide for pupils**

### **Choosing the right book**

- Read a book, magazine, something from the library or bring something from home
- Tutees get to choose what they want to read, but try to be kind to your tutor!
- Make sure the book is hard enough, but not too hard (use five finger test and ask the teacher for help if you're not sure)

### **Supported reading**

- Once a week for 30 minutes
- Find a quiet, comfortable place
- Sit comfortably side by side - so you both can see the book easily
- Read together until the tutee feels comfortable. Then they should use the signal to read alone. They read alone until they make a mistake that they don't self correct. After the tutor corrects a mistake, read together again.

### **Error correction**

- If the tutee makes a mistake wait 4-5 seconds before you correct them (give them time to put it right)
- If the word isn't put right do the following:
  - The tutor says the word correctly, the tutee repeats the word, the tutor praises the tutee and you read on together

### **Questioning**

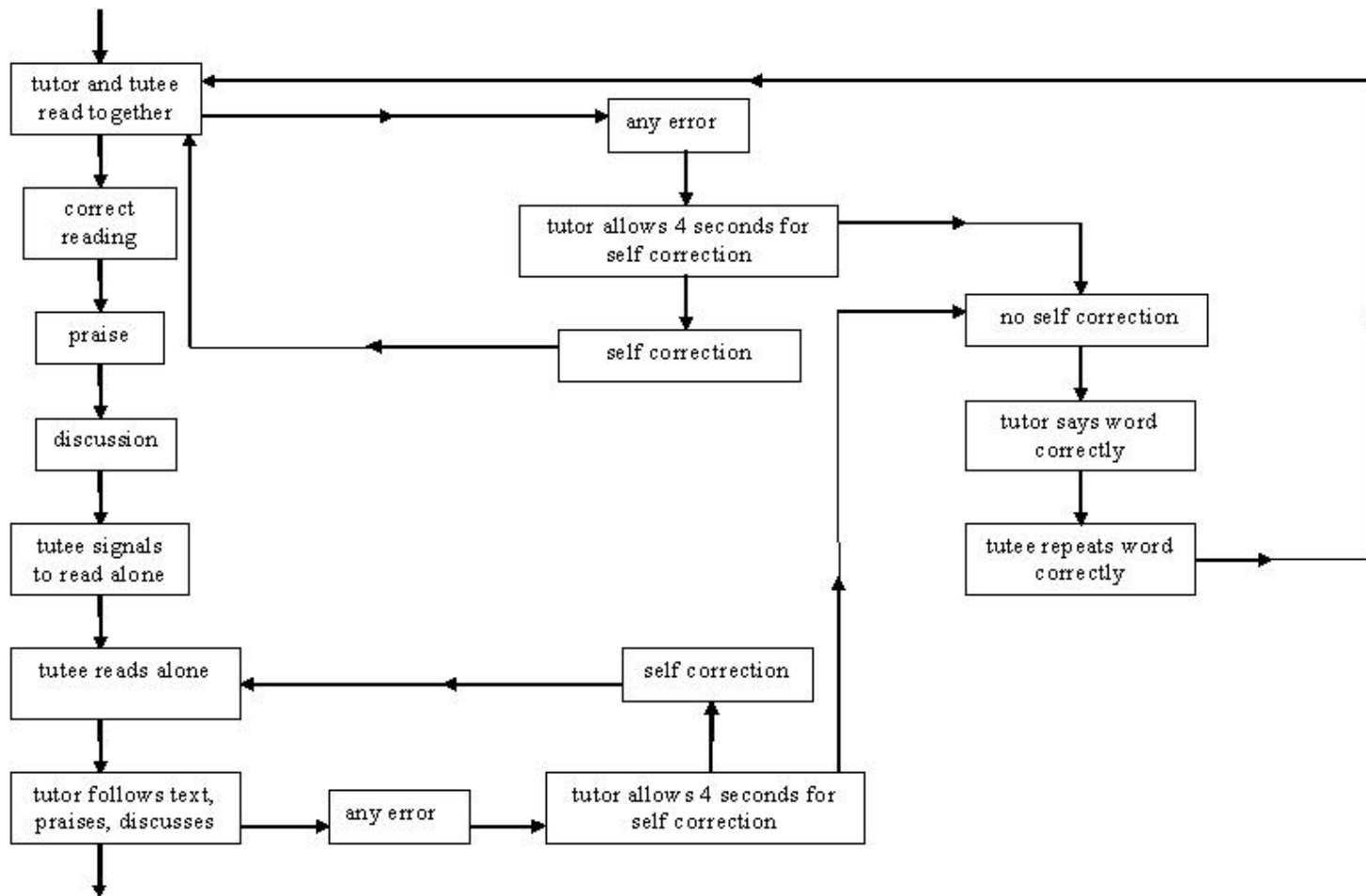
- The tutor and tutee should talk about the book before reading
- As the tutee reads, tutors should ask questions at appropriate pauses and stopping points
  - Ask questions to make sure the tutee understands
  - Ask questions to help the tutee understand
- The tutee should also ask questions
  - Ask questions to see if the tutor was listening
  - Ask questions to help you discuss the book
- Ask the teacher if there are things neither of you understand!
- Use the question mat to help you think about what sort of questions would be best.

### **Praise**

- The tutor should praise the tutee for reading hard words, complex sentences
- The tutor should praise the tutee after errors are corrected
- The tutor should praise the tutee when they signal to read alone
- Tutors need to praise like they mean it!
- Tutees need to identify how their reading is improving

**NOTES:** Remember to complete your reading Paired Reading Log at the end of each session.

Figure 3: The paired reading cycle





## **Advice on how to organise paired reading**

### **Selection and matching of pupils pairs**

All pupils should be included in the project. Ideally we want pupils to work in a pair. That pair should remain the same for the duration of the project. However, pupil absence through illness and/or inclement weather may mean that some pairs have to change on a short-term basis. Do not worry about this.

In addition, it may be that due to uneven numbers of pupils in older and younger classes that there may be a requirement to form some triads. Triads can work well during paired reading. There is still a need to define the role of the 'third pupil' as that of either tutee or tutor. There are a number of possibilities to help with this.

- If the third pupil is from the older class they should become a tutor. If from a younger class they should become a tutee.
- Triads as tutees should be paired in a triad with another tutee of close ability. The tutees should 'share' the time of the tutor. This may be by reading the same book, or by choosing different books and having the tutee switch attention as they read.
- If the triad forms with two tutors then the roles of tutors can be more flexible. One triad member could be used to cover absenteeism. The tutors should share their roles.

### **Matching of Pairs**

Reading ability should be the initial pairing criteria. Follow the steps below when constructing the pairings:

1. Arrange your pupils in terms of reading ability from highest to lowest in the older and younger classes. Use teacher judgement and test results if you have them.
2. Pair the two highest ability pupils from each class together, then the next highest two ability pupils and then the next and so on until all pupils are matched with another pupil (see Figure 4).

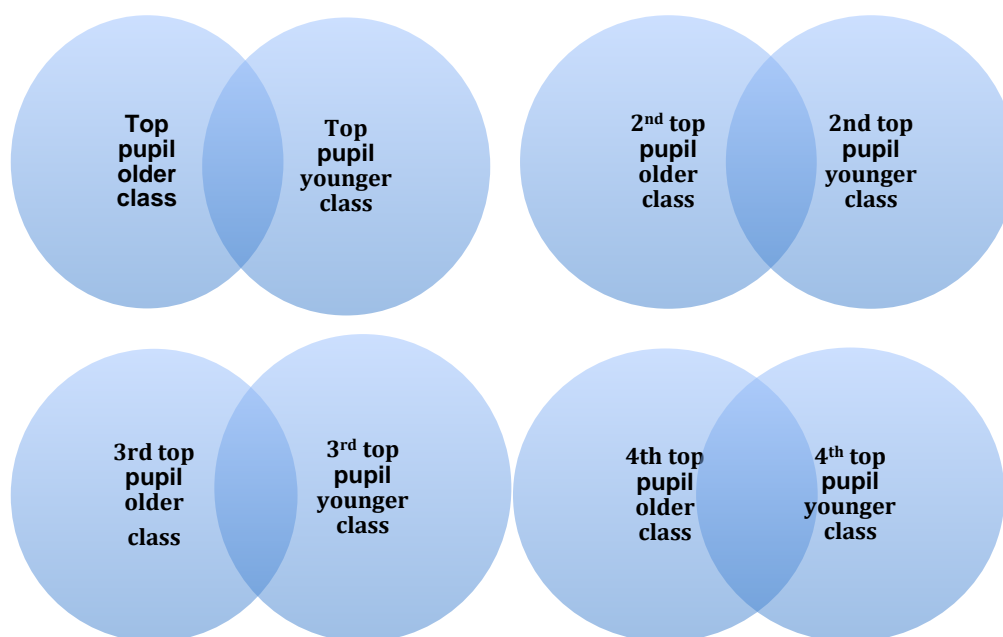
Other factors may have to be taken into consideration e.g. gender, maturity, working habits and personality. If a pairing, based on ability, has problems due to one of these other factors, change the tutor with the one next in line. Endeavour to stick as closely to the ability guidelines as possible.

It is as well to be aware that in some rare instance it has been reported that gender and ethnicity can interact to negatively affect a pairing. For example, this might occur when a younger tutee is male and an older tutor is female. If this is likely to be an issue feel free to change potential pairings or offer additional support. In practice fears of the younger male tutee in such pairings

can dissipate during the act of tutoring, but may still manifest in social situations around the school.

Once matched and teething problems have been ironed out then pairs should remain stable for the full duration of the project. Only a serious incident should result in reconstitution of pairs at this point.

**Figure 4: Matching of pupils for paired reading on the basis of reading attainment**



You may wish to inform parents about the project. Parental permission is not required for you to embed a new teaching strategy. However, you may wish to inform parents about what is happening and what the likely benefits are (particularly for tutors).

### **Organisation of contact**

Tutoring should take place during normal school hours during timetabled contact time. Schools will need to identify an appropriate time and which subject areas will be involved. This may involve teachers in two or more year groups or subject areas working to match the tutees with the tutors. For example, Teachers teaching Year 4 pupils could pair up with teachers with the Year 6 class. Pupils from these two classes would undertake the project together.

Once paired up in terms of ability half the Year 4/Year 6 pupils should work in the Year 4 classroom and half in the Year 6 classroom.

Tutoring sessions should last for about 30 minutes. This includes time to move pupils between classes. Therefore, in reality the pupils should be expecting to engage in paired reading for about 20-25 minutes, once per week. The session should continue for a duration of 16 weeks.

## Training

### Training the Participants

It is essential that the first training session is successful and that paired reading gets off to the best possible start.

The recommendation is to **train all tutors and tutees together** from the outset to ensure that all pupils receive the same message. Importantly, training partners together from the start conveys the immediate impression that “we are all learning together”.

### Planning the Training

Try to specify well in advance the date, time and place of your training sessions. The number of training sessions, their length and frequency should also be made clear to the pupils and staff helpers. This allows the pupils to look forward to their experience and staff to be free to help.

The venue for the training will need the facility for all the pupils to sit in a large group, listen to a talk and watch a demonstration. However, there will also be a need for chairs and tables to be available for subsequent practice. Thus, plenty of seats need to be available and their mobility to fulfil two purposes should be considered.

As the training will be with at least two classes in each school, you may wish to split the training in two venues, or use a large central venue in which both classes can easily be accommodated.

### Materials

The materials to be used for the training session will need to be readily available. For the practice session it will be much better if the reading materials for each pair have been pre-selected. You may wish to ask pupils to bring in something they would like to read. Alternatively, you may wish to get a selection of books from the library or a resource centre in the department. A good tip is to ensure that easier books are used for training. This allows the pairs to focus on getting the tutoring method right, without having to use a lot of brainpower for the actual reading. It also allows the tutee to make ‘pretend’ mistakes in a low-pressure environment on the basis that they are training the tutee. This may make them less self-conscious about making mistakes later in the relationship.

How many practice sessions?

There are many stages in the paired reading procedure and therefore it may be beneficial to run the training in four sessions.

In the first session, you may wish to focus on explaining what paired reading is and why you are doing it. Then try some social/communication starter activities with the pairs working together. There is an example activity on the Powerpoint presentations for session 1, 2, 3 and 4. In terms of the paired reading process, the first session should focus on choosing a book at the right level (five finger tests) and then switching between reading alone and reading together including error correction. Introduce the Paired Reading Log in session 1 and make sure pairs complete this log at the end of each session.

The second session should then focus on praising and consolidate error correction. These strategies should be modelled for pupils during the session and we recommend this is done as a class.

The third session should practice the previous techniques and should introduce questioning. In this session use three 'question time' breaks: One before reading, one about half way through the session and one after reading. Introduce the question mat provided at the end of this pack and get the pupils to practice using it during this session.

The fourth session should be used to consolidate the learning to date and to correct any areas of weakness.

From session 5 onwards the paired reading process should be working for most pairs. There is a Powerpoint presentation to help you structure sessions 5-16.

## Content of the Training

### Introductions

The tutors and tutees might not have worked together very much before so you will probably want to allow some time for general introductions, and perhaps some icebreaker activities.

### Verbal Instruction

A verbal explanation of the overall structure and purpose of the technique will need to be given by way of introduction. It would be helpful to explain the concept of tutor and tutee to the pupils so that they are clear in their roles.

Following this, an explanation of the materials and techniques to be used will be essential. However, keep it brief!

## Written Instruction

Written instruction is provided in this pack for both the tutors and tutees. This is in the form of the error correction flow diagram (Figure 3) and the tutor/tutee help cards for questioning and praise (these follow at the end of this manual), although the instructions will need a small verbal introduction to accompany them.

## Demonstration

It would be valuable to give the pupils a demonstration of the required behaviour. This is better to be done with two adults, one playing the role of tutor and the other tutee. This allows you to show good practice and also point out where the demonstration was a less than perfect example of paired reading. It may also help during this demonstration to point out to the tutors how you are using the materials. Feedback from schools who have used this technique before is that this sort of introduction works very well.

There is a short-film available to help you introduce paired reading and to illustrate the technique.

## Guided Practice and Feedback

Immediately after the demonstration, the pupils should be given the opportunity to practice paired reading. During this practice session, teachers should be monitoring the process and making notes on any good or bad practice. Following this, general feedback should be given to the groups on behaviour that occurred which was positive and behaviour the teacher observed that should be avoided in the future.

## Checking and Coaching

In order to provide the necessary feedback, the behaviour of the pairs in the practice session requires close monitoring. In a practice session of 20 to 30 minutes, a professional cannot effectively monitor more than five or six pairs. This is undoubtedly the most labour-intensive part of the training procedure. Therefore, it may be helpful to have an additional staff member present for this section of the training.

Those pairs who demonstrate that they have learned the procedures rapidly can be praised and left to continue, but those pairs who are struggling or using techniques not specified by the method, will need immediate extra coaching until they have fully mastered the procedures. However, praise is an important factor in paired reading and so it is important to praise each pair for something, even if it is just for mastering one part of the technique.

## Organisation and Contracting

Once the pupils have understood the techniques and materials, they will need briefing about the organisational 'nuts and bolts' of the weekly sessions. This should include details about the access to materials, means of record keeping, arranging times and places for paired reading sessions, and the procedures for further help and follow-up. A brief written reminder of these organisational details may be helpful.

Depending on the maturity and reliability of the helpers and helped, some teachers choose to establish 'contracts' between tutors and tutees. These may include things like how to keep trust and maintaining confidentiality. If not knowing something results in playground 'teasing' or criticism outside of the classroom then working relationships could deteriorate quite quickly. This could be a simple contract written by both pupils. Both should sign it and receive a copy.

It would be useful if the pairs recorded their session in a Paired Reading Log. An example of this is provided. You may wish to adapt it. It asks pupils to make a quick record of the books being read and make comments about the tutoring process. You should look at these briefly about twice during the project. They may inform you as to which pairs may need additional support and coaching. It is important that the tutee gets feedback on how their reading is improving.



# Paired Reading Log

Tutor: \_\_\_\_\_ Tutee: \_\_\_\_\_

Session & date	Book or text read	Comment	
		Tutee comment <b>How is your reading improving?</b>	Tutor comment <b>How has the tutee improved?</b>
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			

Teacher comment and feedback from observation

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# Paired Reading Log

Tutor: \_\_\_\_\_ Tutee: \_\_\_\_\_

Session & date	Book or text read	Comment	
		Tutee comment <b>How is your reading improving?</b>	Tutor comment <b>How has the tutee improved?</b>
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			

Teacher comment and feedback from observation

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Support and Monitoring

### Trouble Shooting

Throughout the session, your role as the teacher is to monitor the pairs, intervening only when a pair is having difficulty to the point of being unable to move forward with the process. However, there may be times when you will need to take a more pro-active role with certain pairs. Some common problems can be:

**Personality clashes** - This can include over-dominant partners, cultural differences and gender issues. Try to work with the pairs to identify the problems they are experiencing. See if the pairs can propose solutions to the issues themselves. Only as a last resort should you change pairings. At the second professional development session activities and advice will be offered to help you support pairs that are having difficulty socially. Use these activities for pairs who need this sort of development.

**Poor communication** - This can include pairs who find the process too complex. In this instance you might try keeping them focused on the 'error correction' and 'praise' parts of the technique. Writing down additional questions that could be asked at the end of a reading session may also help. In an instance such as this you might want to take on the role of tutor to both pupils to model how to structure the process effectively. The second professional development session will offer additional activities that can be used to develop communication and social skills in pupils. After observing a pair, you may wish to select specific activities to help them develop appropriate skills sets.

**Pace and challenge** - Some pairs may race through books and finish quickly, making few, if any, errors. A good technique for a pair such as this is to ask them to focus selecting a book that is harder or to focus on asking regular questions. Pairs that struggle and make too many errors should be encouraged to choose easier books. Previous experience has indicated that this may be a particular issue for male tutees who have low reading ability. They may try to 'hide' their true reading ability by choosing an overly complex book. However, making too many errors will be counter productive and previous research has told us that this will inhibit the potential benefits of peer tutoring.

**Praise** - Previous work suggests that one of the things pupils may find most difficult will be to praise each other. However, ensuring that praise becomes part of the process is an essential ingredient of success. In the past teachers have run specific sessions to act as visual reminders on how to praise and encourage pupils. They have also developed 'praise' help cards. We have included a selection in this pack (Praise Cards). Praising each other build self-concept in reading. There is strong research evidence to suggest that when pupils feel that they are good at a subject, they start to perform better in subsequent tests in that subject. In addition, previously pupils have reported that when they get praise from their tutors it helps them to persevere longer with tricky reading problems. Encouraging them to keep going and find answers.

## Helping pairs improve

One of the best ways of helping pairs to improve will be to take turns at observing pairs. Each observation should last about 6 minutes. You should be able to observe three pairs per session.

You might like to use the following checklist to observe pairs working together. Examine what each pair is doing. Make some notes during the observation. Now think about what coaching and support they will need to improve their work. You might like to think about whether you wish to:

- Praise pairs that are doing well - Reinforce successful pairs with praise and rewards.
- Coach pairs - Do they need a more challenging book or to use a more challenging question mat or even improve how they give praise?
- Demonstrate how to do things more effectively - You may wish to 'join-in' with a pair or you could get them to look at a tutoring pair who is doing the paired reading effectively.

# Tutoring observation checklist

Names of Tutor and tutee:

Date:

Paired reading aspect (praise/coach/demonstrate)	Observations	Action required
---	--------------	-----------------

### Choosing the right book

- 1 Sort of book chosen?.....
- 2 Tutee choosing book?.....
- 3 Was the five finger test used?.....
- 4 Are they making about an error per minute?.....  
(Think-Do you need to help this pair choose a more appropriate book?)

### Supported reading

- 4 Does the pair read together at the start? .....
- 5 Tutor reads at the right pace for the tutee (just behind)?.....
- 6 Does the tutee signal to read alone? .....
- 7 Does the tutor praise tutee for starting to read alone? .....
- 8 Does the tutor praise tutee during reading alone? .....

### Error correction

- 9 Do the pairs use the error correction process? .....
- Mistake made? .....
- Self-corrected, no action? .....
- No self correction, tutor corrects.....
- Tutee repeats error word.....
- Tutor praises.....
- Pair return to reading together.....
- Tutee signals to read alone?.....

(Think- Do the pair need a refresher session or would the flow diagram help them?)

### Questioning

- 10 Do tutor and tutee show interest in the book? .....
  - 11 Do both talk about content? 12 Are tutor and/or tutee asking challenging questions? .....
  - 13 Questions at right level? .....
- (Think- Do you need to get the pair to use a higher level question mat?)

### Praise

- 14 Tutor praises a lot?.....
  - 15 Praise given with feeling?.....
- (Think- Do the pair need advice on how to give praise whilst reading?)

### Other notes

- 16 Paired Reading Log used.....

### Summary of feedback to Pair

# Five Finger Test

## Choosing 'Just Right' books

### Use the Five Finger Test



- Tutor or tutee: put 5 digits on the page
- Tutee: read the words under each digit
- Repeat the process over four pages

Add up the total number of mistakes:

- 1 or less = book is too easy
- 2 - 3 = book is 'Just Right'
- 4 or more = book is too hard

## Peer Tutoring Checklist - Remember all the steps

- To choose the book: use the 5 finger test
- Tutor and tutee: start by reading together
- Tutee: tap the book to read alone
- Tutor: if the tutee makes an error wait 4 seconds to correct them
- Tutor: to correct the tutee simply say the word
- Tutee: repeat the word
- Tutor: praise the tutee
- Tutor and tutee: return to reading together
- Tutor and tutee: remember to question (before, during and after)
- Tutor and tutee: remember to complete the paired reading log

# Praise card

**Well done**



**Great prediction**

**Good reading**



**Brilliant expression**

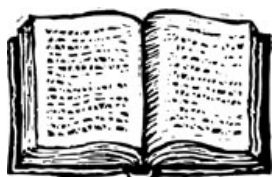
**Great idea you're really doing well**

## Question mats

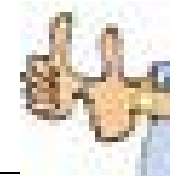
The following pages have example 'Question mats for tutors and tutees'. These are to promote questioning by both tutors and tutees during the process of paired reading. Mats at three levels are provided:

- Standard question mat
- Basic question mat
- Advanced question mats 1 & 2

Use these by photocopying or printing them and have pairs lay them on their tables during reading. Draw the attention of pupils to the question prompts before, during and after reading. You should use your judgement to decide which mat to provide each pair with at the start of the paired reading project. Other studies have shown that the 'Standard question mat' should be suitable for most pupils to start off with. As you observe pairs make a decision about when to move them onto a more advanced (or indeed basic if required) question mat.



## Question mat for tutor & tutee



Before reading questions	During reading questions	After reading questions
Can you identify anything about this book?	Why do you think the author wrote this?	What is the main point of the book?
What kind of book have you chosen?	What is the book about?	How does the book make you feel and think?
How hard do you think the book is?	How do you know whether this is a fiction or non-fiction book?	What is most memorable?
What do you want to get from reading this?	What do you think will happen next?	What kind of book would you like to read next?
Can you describe a book that is similar to this book?	What does this book remind you of?	Can the tutor tell the tutee two things that are good about their reading, and one thing they could improve?

Standard question mat

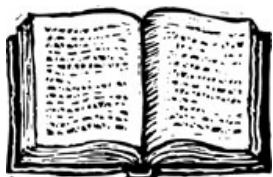
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Question & Answer

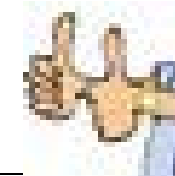
Question & Answer

Question & Answer



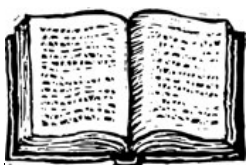


## Question mat for tutor & tutee

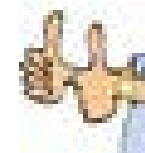


Before reading questions	During reading questions	After reading questions
<p><b>Thinking about books</b> <b>Ask the tutee</b></p> <p>Why did you choose the book?</p> <p>What do you think will happen in the book?</p> <p>What do you think you will like about this book?</p> <p><b>Question &amp; Answer</b></p>	<p>Who are the main characters?</p> <p>Who is your favourite character?</p> <p>What do you think will happen next?</p> <p>What is the text/book about?</p> <p>Can you identify an interesting fact?</p> <p><b>Question &amp; Answer</b></p>	<p>How did you enjoy the story?</p> <p>Would you recommend it to someone? Who?</p> <p>Does the information seem true? How?</p> <p>How could you use this information in life?</p> <p><b>Question &amp; Answer</b></p>

Basic question mat

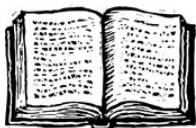


## Question mat for tutor & tutee

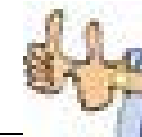


Before reading questions	During reading questions	After reading questions
<p><b>Can you identify the parts of this book?</b> What is the title? Who is the author? What does the cover tell us about the book?</p> <p><b>What kind of book have you chosen?</b> Is it fiction/non-fiction or something in-between? Does anything make this hard to work out?</p> <p><b>How hard do you think the book is?</b> Have you tested the book? Is it hard enough to challenge the tutee?</p> <p><b>What do you want to get from reading this?</b> What interests the tutee about the book?</p>	<p><b>What is the book about?</b> Where and when is the book set? Is it set in a real place? Is it in the past, present or future? Who are the main characters?</p> <p><b>What does the book mean?</b> Do we understand all words/sentences? Have we missed anything?</p> <p><b>What do you think will happen next?</b> Describe what might happen. Can you justify why you think this? What might make it happen? Can you imagine characters and places in your head? Describe them.</p> <p><b>Does the book remind you of something?</b> Does it remind you of another book? Does it remind you of an event in your life or feelings you have had?</p>	<p><b>What is the main point of the book?</b> Draw a mind-map of the main points. Can you summarise the book to another pair?</p> <p><b>How does the book make you feel and think?</b> Did it end in the way you thought it would? Were there any bits that puzzled you? Would you recommend it to someone else? Who and why?</p> <p><b>What is most memorable?</b> Which bits did you like/dislike? What was most memorable? What was most exciting?</p> <p><b>Does it make you want to read another book?</b> Will you change the type of book?</p>

### Advanced question mat 1



## Question mat for tutor & tutee



Before reading questions	During reading questions	After reading questions
<p><b>What information can we find out about the book?</b>            What is the title? Who is the author?            Does the cover tell us about the book?            When was it published?            Is there an author biography?            What do you know about the topic?</p> <p><b>What sort of book is it?</b>            Is it a fiction or non-fiction book?            What topic is it on? Is it a biography?            Does it include various forms or styles of writing such as poetry? Does it include specific forms of writing in parts of the book, such as a recipe, or news, or other?</p> <p><b>How hard do we think it is?</b>            Have you tested the book?            Do you need more challenge?</p> <p><b>What do you (the tutee) want from the book?</b>            Why did you choose it?            What drew your interest to it?</p>	<p><b>Why do you think the author wrote this?</b>            What was the author trying to do?            What kind of people was the author writing for?</p> <p><b>What is the book about?</b>            Where is the book set? Is it set in a real place? When is the book set? Is it in the past, present or future?            Who are the main characters? What are the main events?</p> <p><b>What does the book mean?</b>            Is there a theme or a moral? Did the author have a message to convey?            How did people in the book feel about what was happening to them?            What was fact and what was opinion?            Was good evidence presented for facts?            Do you agree with opinions?</p> <p><b>What do you think will happen next?</b>            Describe what might happen. Can you justify why you think this?            What might make it happen? How likely is it to happen?            Can you imagine characters and places in your head? Describe them.</p> <p><b>Does the book remind you of something?</b>            Does it remind you of a book?            Does it remind you of a film or story you have heard told?            Does it remind you of an event in your life? Does it remind you of feelings you have had?</p> <p><b>Thinking forwards</b>            How might the book help you in life? Have you faced similar issues? Have you felt the same way as any of the characters?</p>	<p><b>What is the main point of the book?</b>            Draw a mind-map of the main points.            Do you need to skim read any bits again?            Can you write a review of the book?            Can we design a 'quiz card' for the book?            Leave your quiz inside the front cover.</p> <p><b>How does the book make you feel and think?</b>            Did it end in the way you thought it would?            Were there any bits that puzzled you?            Would you recommend it to someone else?            Who and why would the book be good for?            How well did we read together? What can we improve? How will we improve it?</p> <p><b>What is most memorable?</b>            Which bits did you like/dislike?            What was most memorable?            What was most exciting?            Can you draw a 'storyline' or an 'outline' for the book?            Was the book a good choice for you and why?</p> <p><b>Does it make you want to read another book?</b>            Has the author written other books?            Will you change the type of book?</p>

## **Further information**

Further information on peer tutoring can be obtained from either:

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