

Lowton West Primary School

Effective Teaching of Reading Comprehension



Reading is taught through the Sounds Write phonics programme in EYFS and KS1. This is enriched through additional class readers, carefully selected poetry and cross-curricular themed books that promote a love of reading and broaden children's vocabulary and understanding. Children also benefit from additional 1:1 reading opportunities with teachers and teaching assistants, providing targeted support, developing fluency and comprehension, and helping to build confidence and enjoyment in reading.

From the Spring Term of Year 2, pupils who have secured the necessary phonics knowledge transition to Literacy Shed+ whole-class reading lessons built into their reading curriculum. Through the study of high-quality and engaging texts, alongside class novels, poetry and cross-curricular books, pupils continue to develop reading fluency while deepening their comprehension skills. Structured VIPERS questioning supports the development of vocabulary, inference, prediction, explanation, retrieval and sequencing skills, enabling pupils to think critically about what they read, preparing them for the demands of reading across the wider curriculum and into Key Stage 2.

In Key Stage 2, Literacy Shed+ continues to support the teaching of reading; however, greater emphasis is placed on the study of high-quality class novels. Through whole-class reading and rich discussion, pupils explore increasingly sophisticated vocabulary, language structures, themes and authors' choices. Carefully selected novels, poetry and cross-curricular texts provide opportunities for pupils to deepen their comprehension, develop critical thinking skills and foster a lifelong love of reading. This approach enables pupils to engage with a wide range of genres and texts while continuing to develop fluency, vocabulary and higher-order reading skills.

At Lowton West Primary School, reading comprehension teaching follows the 'I Do, We Do, You Do' pedagogical approach so that pupils are explicitly taught how skilled readers construct meaning from texts.

Reading in KS1 and KS2 includes:

1. Phonics Reading (EYFS and KS1)

- Decodable texts matched to children's phonic knowledge through Sounds Write
- Focus on decoding, fluency and early comprehension.

2. Individual Reading

- 1:1 reading with teachers, teaching assistants and volunteers.
- Reading of home-school reading books.
- Targeted support for pupils needing additional practice.
- Focused on specific reading skills.

3. Whole-Class Reading

- Shared exploration of high-quality texts.
- Explicit teaching of comprehension strategies and reading domains (e.g. VIPERS).
- Rich discussion and modelling of expert reading behaviours.

4. Class Novel Study

- Extended engagement with high-quality fiction.
- Development of inference, prediction, vocabulary and understanding of themes and characters.
- Opportunities to build reading stamina and enjoyment.

5. Reading Aloud / Story Time

- Teachers regularly read high-quality texts to pupils.
- Exposure to texts beyond children's independent reading ability.
- Promotes a love of reading and broadens vocabulary.

6. Poetry Reading

- Reading, performing and discussing a range of poetry.
- Development of fluency, expression, vocabulary and appreciation of language.

7. Cross-Curricular Reading

- Reading linked to history, geography, science, RE and other curriculum areas.
- Builds subject knowledge and disciplinary vocabulary.

8. Reading for Pleasure

- Independent book choice.
- Library visits and book corners.
- Author studies, reading challenges and book recommendations.
- Opportunities to discuss and share favourite books.

9. Performance Reading

- Choral reading.
- Paired reading.

1. The teacher reading aloud interspersed with discussion. This will focus on:

- Explaining new vocabulary and providing definitions in language pupils understand.
- Asking pupils to repeat new vocabulary and definitions aloud to support retention.
- Exploring language patterns, sentence structures and key ideas within the text.

Teachers will pause during reading to:

- Think aloud about the meaning of the text.
- Model how skilled readers interpret pronouns or references.
- Comment on interesting or unexpected events.
- Introduce and explain important vocabulary.
- Share contextual knowledge which supports comprehension.

2. When the focus is on building understanding and enjoyment, the teacher reads the text aloud without pupils following the text.

This allows pupils to:

- Listen carefully and focus on meaning.
- Hear a strong model of fluent reading.
- Follow the flow and structure of a narrative.
- Appreciate tone, emotion and character voice.

3. Teacher modelling and explanations are vital.

Comprehension sessions follow the 'I Do, We Do, You Do' structure.

I Do – Teacher modelling:

- Thinking aloud while reading
- Demonstrating how to locate evidence
- Explaining vocabulary and meaning

We Do – Guided practice:

- Discussing ideas together
- Highlighting evidence
- Answering questions collaboratively

You Do – Independent practice:

- Pupils answer questions independently while teachers support and address misconceptions.

4. Teachers occasionally stop to think aloud, commenting as they read.

Teachers might:

- Model how ideas in the text connect with background knowledge.
- Demonstrate how to decode unfamiliar words.
- Comment on the impact of specific words or phrases.
- Model how skilled readers infer meaning.

5. Questioning should be text specific and purposeful.

Questioning should:

- Support pupils in forming a clear mental model of the text.
- Encourage reflection on ideas and language.
- Promote deeper discussion and thinking.

Across the week pupils should experience questions covering key domains including:

Vocabulary

Inference

Prediction

Explanation

Retrieval

Summarising and sequencing

1:1 Reading

Following comprehension sessions, 10 minutes is allocated for individual reading daily across the week.

Priority should be given to:

- Disadvantaged pupils
- The lowest 20% of readers
- Pupils requiring additional fluency practice

Adults should:

- Listen to pupils read aloud
- Support decoding and fluency
- Discuss vocabulary and understanding
- Ask simple comprehension questions

Assessment of Reading

Teachers assess comprehension through discussion, questioning and written responses.

Teachers will explicitly teach pupils how to answer comprehension questions across reading domains.

Teachers should:

- Model how to unpick the text
- Demonstrate how to locate evidence
- Verbalise the thinking process used to answer questions
- Model how to structure written responses

Respect Resilience Kindness Confidence
Aiming High Together