

Reading – The Acorn Way

At the Acorn Partnership, we recognise that reading is a vital skill that our children need to learn. We aim to develop fluent, confident readers who enjoy books, understand language, and read for both pleasure and purpose.

We believe every child can achieve their full potential in reading. Through the Acorn Way, we identify and close gaps, promote a rich vocabulary, and inspire a lifelong love of reading.

Our reading-rich environment, diverse texts and high-quality teaching ensure all pupils — including those who are disadvantaged or have SEND — can access learning at or beyond age-related expectations.

Phonics and Early Reading at the Acorn Partnership using the Little Wandle programme

- All children follow the *Little Wandle* phonics programme daily (30–40 minutes) from September.
- Phonic progress is checked every half term through Little Wandle assessments.
- Children who fall behind receive immediate catch-up or keep-up support using Little Wandle resources.
- Fluency is developed during daily reading sessions, as children read a book during each session, which is matched to their phonetic ability. The children read this at least twice over a week and then this book is taken home.

Types of Reading Lessons

At the Acorn Partnership, we follow methods suggested by Christopher Such. The way we organise these lessons depends on the age and reading abilities of the children.

Each year, children will read at least three complete books during their extended reading sessions. These books will be carefully selected from the Reading Spine to ensure a diverse range of authors, cultures, experiences and perspectives. The selection will include texts that reflect different ethnic backgrounds, family structures, gender identities, abilities and worldviews—helping children to both see themselves in the stories they read and develop empathy for the lives of others.

1. Fluency Practice

Fluency lessons focus on developing fluency through repeated oral reading of a short text or extract. The text will be of a level which almost no child will be able to read the text fluently first time without modelling from the teacher.

We use our class reading text for this. Staff select a short section from the text to follow the routine below.

- The teacher introduces and reads the text aloud, emphasising slightly the natural prosody of their voice.
- Briefly discuss tricky words, drawing attention to the pronunciation.
- The teacher will briefly summarise the text – explicitly stating that this is what they are doing.
- Read again while pupils follow, tracking with a ruler.
- Pupils practise reading in pairs. The children will be paired in mixed ability and based on how they can support each other with decoding. (For those less confident in doing this, echo reading with an adult will be used initially.) The children will be given the opportunity to read the text at least 3 times to their partner with the aim of improving their fluency and prosody each time.

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- Pupils perform the text aloud e.g. using choral reading or taking it in turns to read. This gives what they've just done a bit more purpose – they can see it as a performance.
- The session ends with questions and class discussion about the text.

2. Extended Reading – Class reading text

Extended reading involves the prolonged engagement with a longer text, focusing on the development of fluency, word knowledge, background knowledge and text knowledge through exposure to the full text. It also builds stamina in reading.

Texts will be selected from the Reading Spine, they will be age appropriate; be a mix of classic and modern and offer children new experiences as well as opportunities to see themselves reflected in the stories they read.

Extended reading sessions will be undertaken in several different ways depending on the age and current reading abilities of the children:

EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2

- The teacher introduces and reads the text aloud.
- Children in EYFS and Year 1 listen to the story.
- Children in Year 2 keep pace and follow with a ruler. To ensure all pupils are following, the teacher may pause and ask the class to say the next word in unison.

Years 3, 4, 5 and 6

- The above will be used alongside the teacher selecting children to take it in turns to read a few sentences aloud while the rest of the class keep pace with a ruler. The teacher will still take turns to model fluent reading.

Extended reading lessons focus on discussion and related questions to probe children's understanding of the text. Teachers will have read and engaged with the book to ensure they can dissect the text to find the key moments children may need to clarify, summarise or explore the meaning of the text.

The structure of the extended reading sessions is the same for all ages:

- The text will be read by the teacher / children.
- Unfamiliar vocabulary and concepts will be discussed as encountered. (Pre-teaching of vocabulary can be done where necessary.)
- Discussion should take place at key points in the text. (2/3 of the lesson is reading, 1/3 discussion)
- Children may be required to write answers to questions to reinforce what they have learnt; however, this isn't an essential part of the extended reading lesson.

3. Close Reading

Close reading lessons dig deeper into the meaning and language choices within a short text or extract, as well as considering the author's intentions and the impact on the reader.

We use 'Schofield and Sims Complete Comprehensions' for close reading. A close reading session might focus on one or two chunks of text (anywhere between a paragraph and a couple of pages). It might also focus on a particular pattern of language choices that can be explored through a text (e.g. an author's use of figurative language across multiple chapters).

- Briefly explain how the reading sits in the wider context. For example, if it is an extract, explain how it relates to the rest of the text. If it is a complete text, explain the text type – a poem, short speech.

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- The text will be read. This can be teacher-led, paired or silent independent, depending on the reading abilities. This read will focus on the overall sense of the text.
- Unfamiliar vocabulary and concepts will be discussed as encountered. (Pre-teaching of vocabulary can be done where necessary.)
- Read the text again involving discussion with a mixture of explanation (focussing on essential aspects pupils might not understand or be able to work out for themselves) and questions (exploring themes and language choices made by the author).
- Encourage children to ask questions and use discussions to explore their thoughts going beyond the lesson intentions.
- All pupils will be prepared to answer, use techniques such as paired thinking, individual whiteboards and cold-calling.
- Children may be required to write answers to questions to reinforce what they have learnt; however, this isn't an essential part of the close reading lesson.

The diagram below includes literacy devices which are selected as discussion points during extended and close reading. Examples of these will be identified in texts and linked to effect and authorial intent.



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Timetables per year groups:

EYFS				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Phonics daily 30 minutes				
Year 1				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Phonics daily 30 minutes				
Year 2				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Phonics / spelling 30 minutes				
EYFS, Year 1 and 2				
Read 1 for Little Wandle	Read 2 and Read 3 over the week Children read daily to an adult			
Shared reading 10 / 15 minutes				
Year 3, 4, 5 and 6				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Spelling / phonics 15 minutes daily				
Class reading text – daily 15 / 20 minutes - Fluency				
Close Reading happens at different times of the week for different classes, children follow the pattern below				
Vocabulary – identify unfamiliar words	Read text and discuss questions	Model comprehension	Answer questions independently	Marking and feedback

Core Books (See Reading Spine with extended read texts)

Teachers will be expected to read the texts used for their reading lessons in advance to ensure they can plan and deliver sessions effectively. Lessons should be supported by slides where appropriate, with clearly identified vocabulary and discussion points to guide and enrich learning. Planning for these sessions will be thorough, consistent, and aligned with the curriculum intent, ensuring progression of reading skills and comprehension strategies across the year.

Teachers will use the Acorn Reading Spine. The selection does reflect the diverse themes and experiences relevant to the children in the UK. These books should include a range of topics such as disability, race, gender, family structures, and cultural identity. It is essential that the reading choices include both 'mirror' texts—where children see their own lives and experiences reflected—and 'window' texts, which offer insights into the lives and experiences of others, helping to foster empathy, understanding, and a broader worldview.

Reading for Pleasure

Reading for pleasure helps primary children develop a lifelong love of reading, improves vocabulary and comprehension, and supports emotional wellbeing and empathy.

All children are read to daily by an adult during shared reading sessions, using an engaging, high-quality book selected from the Acorn Reading Spine

EYFS & KS1: Children take home two books each week — one for pleasure and one phonics or ability-level book aligned to their current stage of reading development.

KS2: Children select books matched to their Accelerated Reader ZPD level from the library. They may also choose an additional book for pleasure from their class selection.

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Year 2: Children access the Accelerated Reader programme when they have finished the phonics books.

Assessment: Children are assessed half-termly using Accelerated Reader to ensure that their book choices continue to match their reading ability and to track progress.

Accelerated Reader Quizzes: Children complete quizzes during morning work time after finishing a book. Each class will have access to an iPad to support this.

Reading Interventions

EYFS & KS1:

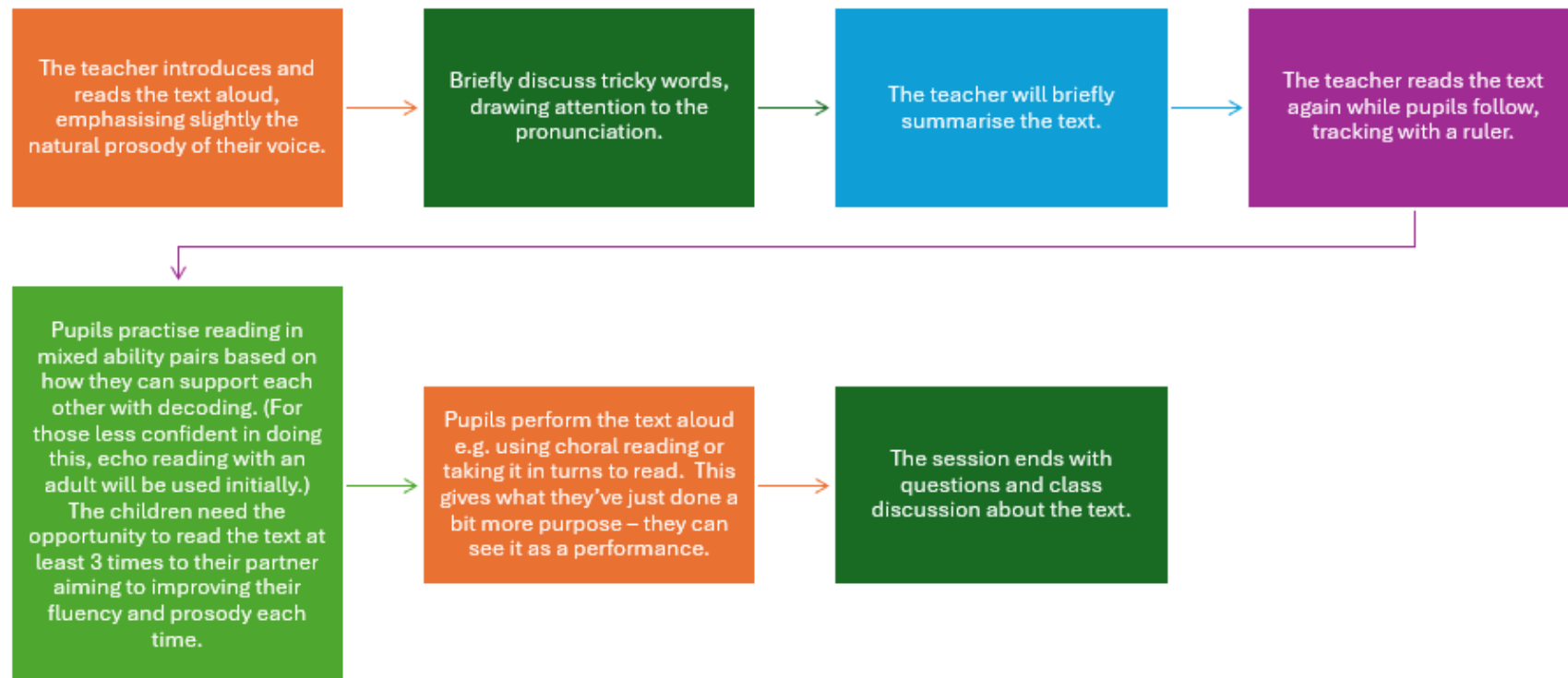
- Children identified as not on track through half-termly assessments will receive 1:1 or small group tutoring regularly throughout the week, for approximately 10 minutes per session.

KS2:

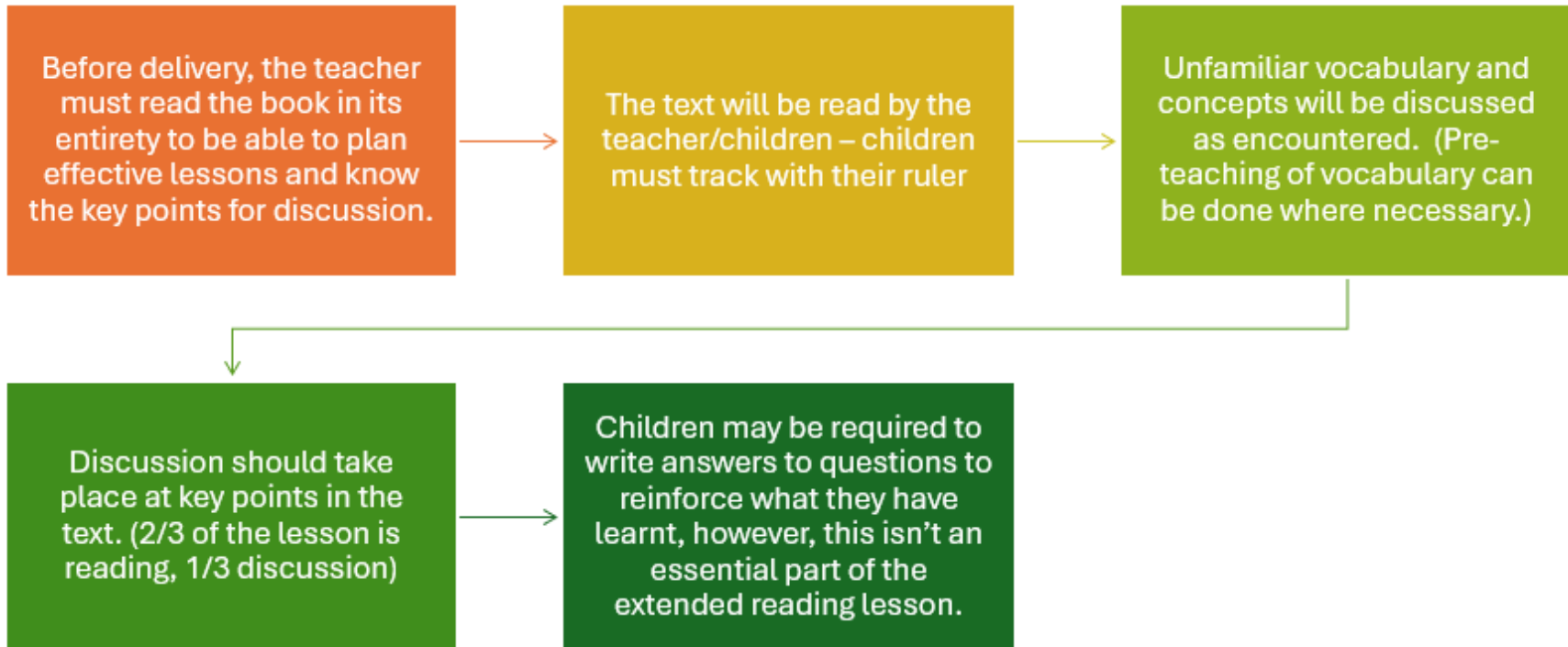
- Children not achieving age related expectations receive 1:1 or small group reading support regularly, focusing on developing decoding, fluency, and comprehension skills.

Appendices

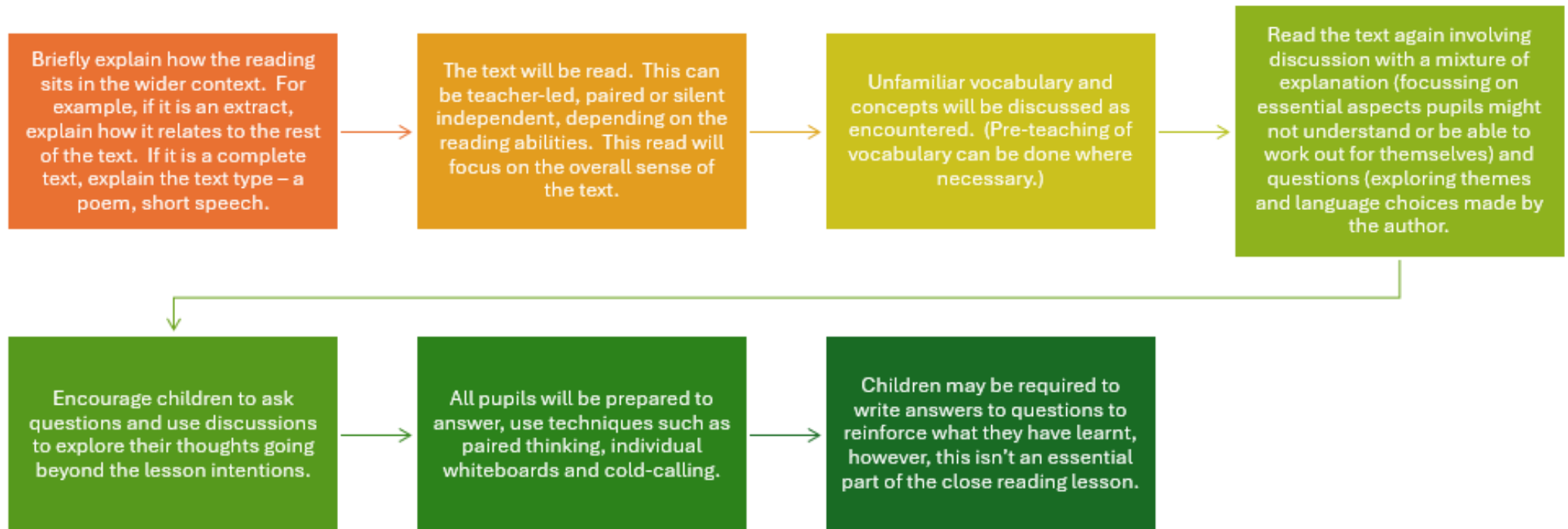
Fluency Sessions



Extended Reading



Close Reading



Literary features to be included when planning extended and close reading sessions.

Repetition

Simile

Metaphor

Idiom

Short sentence for
impact

Suspense

Onomatopoeia

Character/setting

Atmosphere

Appeal to the
senses

Rhetorical
question

Alliteration