

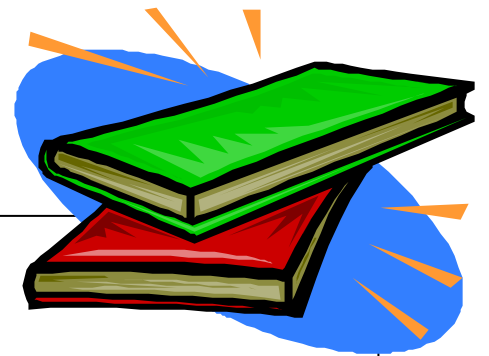
English Departments

Question:

Are all your students' reading skills improving when they study a novel as part of your KS3 Curriculum?

Answer:

Maybe not? Then, consider using Guided Reading in your lessons!



Summer 2004
Hertfordshire Schools'
Guided Reading Pilot:

Should we use Guided Reading?

What is Guided Reading?

Guided Reading is a short teacher led session involving a group of 5/6 students within an English lesson. The teacher models a strategy for reading which is exemplified using the novel which the group are reading. The students then try to apply the same strategy as a small group or independently via discussion and group learning. Guided Reading is highly focused and tightly planned to teach reading skills.

Hertfordshire English teachers wanted to pilot Guided Reading in order to have:

1. A focused approach to teaching the skills of reading for all ability students thus preventing the meandering approach to novel study at KS3 which, thankfully, is almost a thing of the past!
2. A clearly focused use of teacher led guided work which has encouraged a renewed awareness of individual teachers' approaches to the teaching of reading.
3. An excellent opportunity to make reading strategies explicit to students and help students acquire a repertoire of reading strategies.
4. A great opportunity for independent work.



Teaching Reading Hertfordshire English Departments Whole Class Readers

What we're doing right:

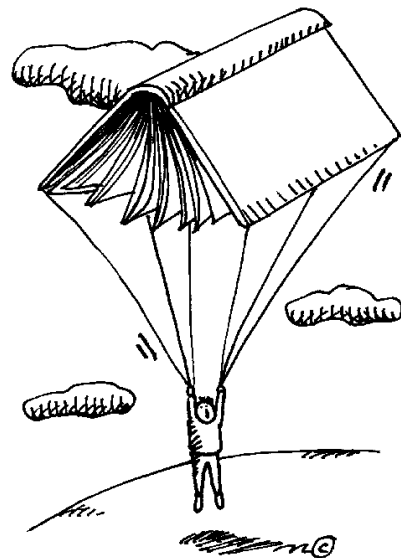
- Excellent choices of novels in schools across Hertfordshire
- Inspired and innovative speaking and listening, drama and writing activities which are thematically linked to the novels

Where we're quickly improving:

- Planned use of non-fiction texts which are thematically linked to the novel
- Modelling of the writer's craft using extracts from the main novel or other linked fiction and non-fiction extracts

How we would like to move forward:

- Explicit teaching of reading strategies and the terms associated with these strategies
- Intervention at the point of reading using Guided Reading and Group Reading sessions with small groups



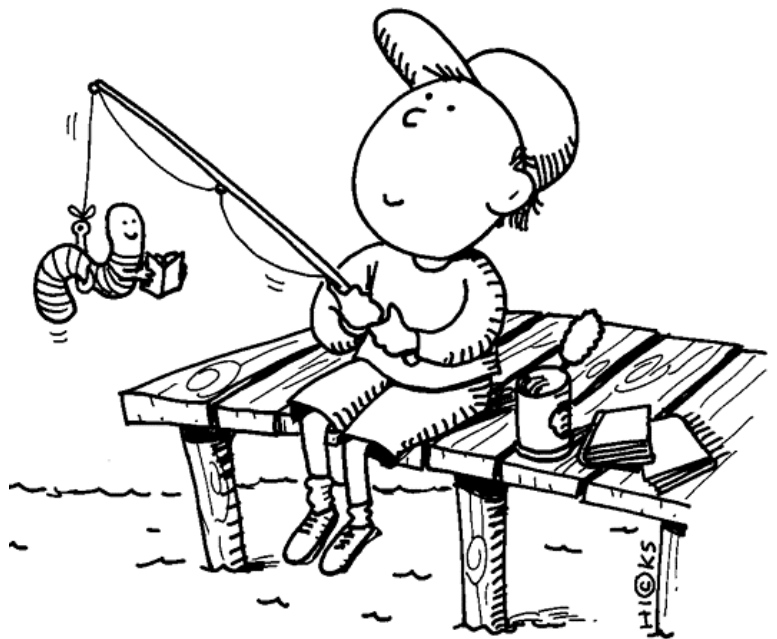
Guided Reading Pilot in Hertfordshire

How do students learn to read?

Students learn to read using the Searchlights Model of Reading:

1. Graphic Recognition – students recognise the visual shape of the word before they know what each letter represents.
2. Phonics – students learn the sounds in words and how these sounds can be different according to their placement within a word or the word itself.
3. Context – students learn a word and its relationship to a picture or the description surrounding the word
4. Grammar – the place of a certain type of word within a sentence.
Students can anticipate what type of word should go where in a sentence.

These different searchlights are deployed at different times in a student's reading development depending on the type of learner they are and the type of reading they are doing.



How do students of all abilities continue to improve their reading skills?

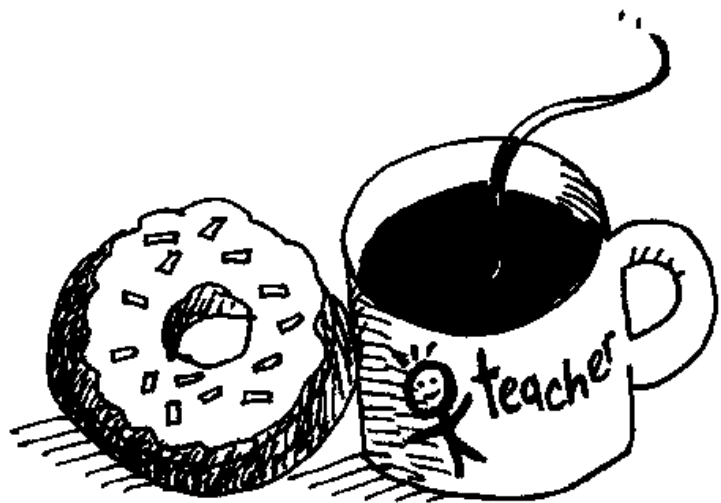
Improve students' reading by allowing them to use their searchlights but by explicitly prompting them to use and talk about a range of reading strategies which they may not even know they are using! Use this list of strategies as a card sort. Give students a task or a question and get them to tell you which reading strategy they anticipate using:

Reading Strategies	
Predicting	You make informed guesses about the text
Skimming	You read quickly through the sentences getting a gist of the understanding of the text
Scanning	Your eyes dart around a text searching for a specific word/phrase/number
Close reading	You pay close attention to the sentences, taking time to understand the meaning
Questioning	You ask questions about a text to clarify your ideas
Reading backwards and forwards	When you have to read back in a text or read forward in order to make connections or clarify your ideas
Empathising	When you put yourself in someone else's shoes and feel what they feel
Visualising	You see a picture in your mind to help gain a better impression or understanding of the text
Inferring	When someone makes a point that isn't obvious and you have to read 'between the lines' to find the meaning

Students need to understand that they are already often using these reading strategies and students should be prompted to recognise when they use them or when it is appropriate to use them. Guided Reading sessions offer the opportunity to intervene at the point of reading so that students can learn how to understand more about a text.

How do I set up Guided Reading in my Department?

Hertfordshire English teachers have piloted Guided Reading. Some schools have used the materials available on the NATE website (comprising a sequence of 11 lessons with extra resources and Guided Reading plans and Group Card activities for students available for free) and other schools have taken the basic premise of Guided Reading and designed their own implementation system. Feedback from the pilot schools has suggested that GR can be implemented using different formats according to the needs of each individual school:



Option 1

Description:

Option 1: Students in Groups of 5. Each group reads their own novel over a period of 11 lessons. Groups work independently of the teacher using a Group Work instruction card, unless they have a Guided Reading session which is led by the teacher. (Group and Guided Reading Cards are already written and available for free at www.nate.org.uk – for the novels on the Nate GR list.)

Comments from Teachers:

Option 1 was successful where the teacher used pre-prepared resources and the students were confident enough to be able to work independently during their Group Work. Several teachers felt that this lesson structure was a good transitional link from Year 7 back to Year 6 allowing continuity with the GR lesson structure in Year 6. 'Routine' was the key message from teachers who tried this format with Year 8 or Year 9 classes where they had had a one or two year gap from this lesson structure since Year 6.

Option 1 Advantages :

Promotes wider reading and the sharing of reading experiences

Option 1 Disadvantages:

Requires close attention to classroom logistics and extra planning and preparation for classes with extreme differences of ability and/or behaviour management issues.



Option 2

Description:

Option 2: The whole class reads the same novel over a period of 11 lessons. Groups work independently of the teacher using a Group Work instruction card, unless they have a Guided Reading session which is led by the teacher.

Comments from Teachers:

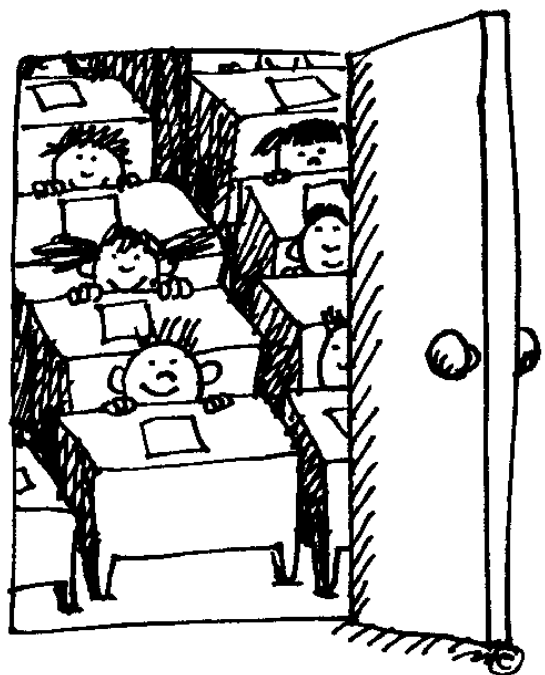
Option 2 was successful when the teacher used pre-prepared resources and adapted the Group Card activities into Guided Reading Teaching Sequences so that the teacher could do GR with a different group every lesson.

Option 2 Advantages :

It is easier to manage Group Tasks because all groups apart from the Teacher led GR group are doing the same task.

Option 2 Disadvantages:

Students are not sharing their wider reading experiences as they are all studying the same book.



Option 3

Description:

Option 3: The whole class reads the same novel over a half term during which time, one lesson a week will be dedicated to GR apart from the first week and last week of the half term which will have 3 lessons dedicated to GR. The first week has three lessons to introduce students to GR and the last week has three lessons because students use these lessons to prepare for a presentation of the book. In the dedicated GR lessons, groups work independently of the teacher using a Group Work instruction card, unless they have a Guided Reading session which is led by the teacher. In the other lessons the novel is used to teach objectives for writing, speaking and listening and drama as well as incorporating linked themes to non-fiction extracts or activities.

Comments from Teachers:

Option 3 was successful where a scheme of work was already in place for a particular novel yet the teachers also wanted to raise the profile of focusing on the skills of reading. This was achieved by using the Guided Reading Cards and Group Reading Cards which were adapted into the scheme for one lesson a week. In some schools, this was known on the timetable as the 'Guided Reading' lesson. The nature of GR is about focused reading skills and so the students would often have to re-read an extract or chapter to do their Group/Guided work activity – an activity which always had a new and different focus from their other lessons.

Option 3 Advantages :

All the learning opportunities of GR can be delivered without displacing any of the key curricula entitlements for the students. GR works alongside the good practice activities for writing, speaking and listening and drama and is not a discrete entity.

Option 3 Disadvantages:

Re-educating students that re-reading with a new purpose is a vital part of learning about the skills of reading



From the NATE GR book list, Pilot schools in Hertfordshire recommended the following books for options 2 and 3:

Year 7
Goodnight Mr Tom
Two Weeks with the Queen

Year 8
Holes
The Windsinger

Year 9
Stone Cold
Tulip Touch

Other New Class Novels which would need GR sessions writing for them are available on the Herts website

<http://www.thegrid.org.uk/learning/english/ks3/reading>



Top 5 Reasons to implement Guided Reading

1. Guided Reading helps to focus planning for the teaching of active reading
2. Demystifies reading for many students
3. Reinforces skills which the students already use
4. Gives students the meta-language to talk about their repertoire of reading strategies
5. Students can answer the question: 'What have you learned about ways of reading?'

The effective deployment of the teacher can really make the difference in improving students' reading. The teacher is not just facilitating or 'doing' reading but is teaching reading.

Pilot Hertfordshire Schools

Thank you to the schools and teachers who took part in the Hertfordshire GR pilot (not all the teachers are listed here but the KS3 team extends their thanks to all who took part):

- Roxanne Wilkins at Fearnhill School, Letchworth
- Katie Fisher at St Albans Girls School, St Albans
- Sue Hill at Townsend School, St Albans
- Wendy Proctor at Forest House Education Centre
- Cait Rickard at Sir John Lawes, Harpenden
- Pippa Conroy at Stanborough School, Welwyn Garden City
- Jan Baker at Edwinstree Middle School, Buntingford
- Helen Russell at The Highfield School, Letchworth



Appendix of resources which GR Pilot schools found helpful.

1. Good Readers poster
2. Reading Journal Ideas
3. Using Plenaries
4. Top Tips for Students
5. Good Readers Card Sorts
6. Books need good hooks
7. Example of Lesson 3 Group Work for Two Weeks with the Queen (plan)
8. Example of Lesson 3 Guided Work for Two Weeks with the Queen (plan)
9. Guided Reading plan as 'slotted in' to 'King of Shadows' (Highfield School)
10. King of Shadows extracts

