

# Reading – Guided Practice

## Emergent Readers

### Why?

Guided practice in reading enables differentiated reading instruction whilst students learn at their zone of proximal development. In small groups of common need, students practise strategies already introduced at the whole class level. Small group instruction provides opportunities for targeted assessment and intervention at the point of need.

### How are lessons structured?

Guided practice is part of the explicit teaching sequence, known as the **Gradual Release of Responsibility**. Whole class teaching involves **modelled demonstration** of the intended learning. The Reading Rope outlines the strands woven into skilled reading. For emergent readers, teachers may model aspects of

- **Word Recognition** including decoding, fluency and attendance to punctuation.
- **Language Comprehension** which tends to be more content based and aligned to knowledge, vocabulary and comprehension goals.

The modelled demonstration involves the teacher “thinking aloud” as they read, in order to make explicit to students what effective readers do.

Students have the opportunity to practice the skills being taught through **shared, interactive collaboration** in small groups or with partners as the teacher monitors at the class level.

**Guided practice** involves the teacher grouping students based on a common need, determined through observation and assessment. Whilst maintaining the whole class intended learning, differentiation occurs through the quantity of text, the pace of learning, the use of more complex multi-syllabic words and the use of texts with more complex meaning.

Students who are not in the guided practice group revisit the skills **collaboratively and independently** through activities such as re-reading, paired fluency practice, writing, manipulatives and games.



Figure 1.9 Reading Rope (Scarborough, 2001)

The Big Six Overview P-12

	Pre	R	1	2
1 Early Literacy Experiences (including Oral Language)				
2 Phonological Awareness				
3 Basic phonics				
Advanced Phonics / Spelling				
4 Vocabulary				
5 Fluency				
6 Comprehension				

### What should I focus on?

During **guided practice**, the focus for emergent readers is on phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics and word recognition. Instruction should be explicit, systematic, sequenced and aligned to the whole class teaching. Guided practice is an opportunity to practise these skills in a small group setting. The [National Literacy Learning Progressions](#) outline a typical developmental sequence for all aspects of reading. A reworked document aligned to year levels can be accessed [here](#)

Figure 1 An Outline for Phonological Awareness and Phonics Instruction in Pre-K Through Grade 2 (by Kari Kurto & Susan Brady)

	Pre-K	Kindergarten	Grades 1 and 2
Phonological Awareness Skill	<b>Phonological Sensitivity</b> Awareness of larger speech sounds in spoken words: rhymes, onsets, syllables	<b>Early Phoneme Awareness</b> Awareness of individual phonemes in spoken words using words with simple syllable patterns: CV, VC, CVC Initial → Final → Medial	<b>Advanced Phoneme Awareness</b> Awareness of individual phonemes in spoken words using words with complex syllables that have consonant blends: CCVC, CVCC, CCVCC
		<b>Alphabetic Principle</b> Insight/understanding that printed letters represent phonemes in spoken words	
Letter-Sound / Phonics Skill	<b>Pre-Phonics</b> Students begin to learn letter names and some letter sounds.	<b>Beginning Phonics</b> Students learn and practice grapheme-phoneme correspondences for single letter graphemes and three digraphs: sh, ch, th. Syllable type instruction to provide students with strategies to recognize vowel patterns by noticing what letters follow the vowel (See Moats, 2020). Morphemes are introduced (e.g., -s, -ed, -ing).	<b>Building Phonics, Spelling, &amp; Word Recognition</b> Students learn and practice remaining phoneme-grapheme correspondences for all speech sounds in English. Advanced Phonics: Syllable division strategies, additional common spelling patterns, and and morpheme knowledge. Beyond Grade 2, continue advanced phonics (e.g., final stable syllables, rule breakers, spelling rules, morphemes).

### What texts should I use?

“Text” selection is critical for effective guided practice. For emergent readers methods that involve practice in grapheme – phoneme correspondence have been shown to gain long-term improvement in accuracy and reading speed, decoding of novel words, spelling and reading comprehension. (Brady Susan - Å 2020 Perspective on Research Findings an Alphabetic)

For emergent readers, texts that include words, sentences and decodable texts aligned to the phonics goals should be used. Through repeated practice, emergent readers develop fluency through orthographic mapping. Students could develop their own texts in the guided reading session by writing the graphemes representing the phonemes practised in the session (words, sentences, extended text)

a	it	pit	ant
an	in	sit	ants
as	pin	pan	pants
is	tin	tip	tan

Resource: [Text Complexity](#)