

The Art of Creating an Effective Reading Strategy

With Vicky Kennard and Professor Jessie Ricketts

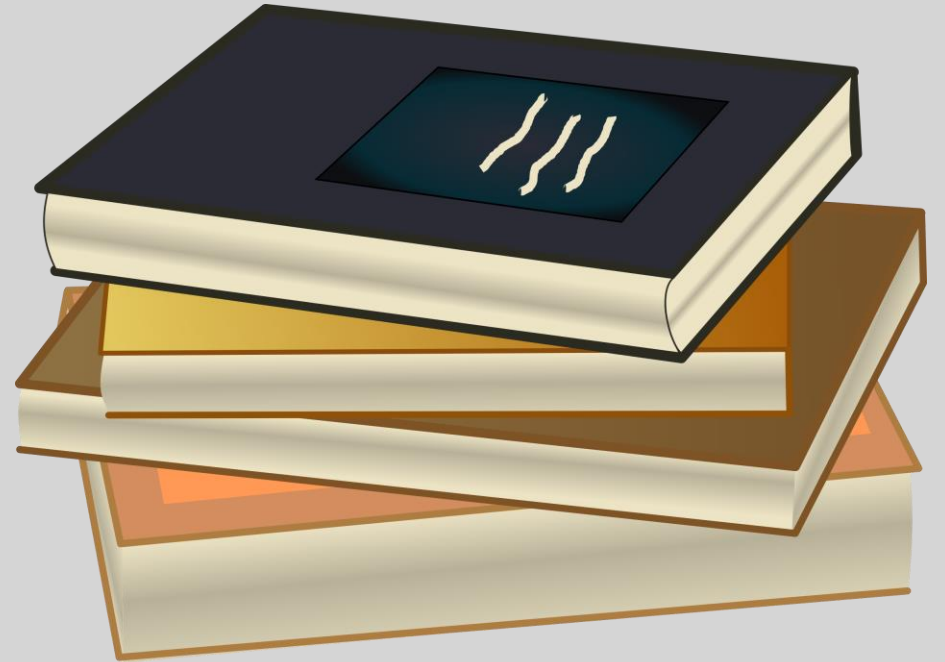
The Balancing Act - Cornerstone English Hub Conference March 2025

Objectives of Today's Session

- To explore the key components that contribute to an effective reading strategy
- To consider what is already in place in your setting
- To reflect upon which areas need further development
- Discuss how to implement clear, achievable reading goals

Discuss:

What composes a reading curriculum?



What composes a reading curriculum?

Reading for pleasure

Reading to children

Reading in the curriculum

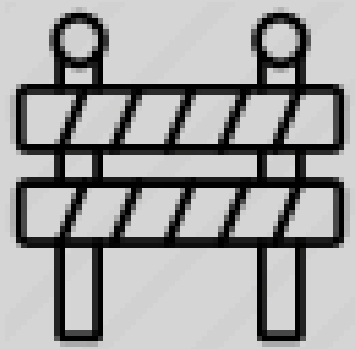
Teachers as readers

Fluency

Independent reading

Phonics and Early Language

The Barriers



- Time
- Whole-texts
- Discussion

**“It is [therefore] essential
that schools plan
systematically to nurture
pupils’ desire to read. It
cannot be left to chance”**

The Reading Framework, 2023

The Six Pillars to an Effective Reading Strategy

The *Balancing Act* - Cornerstone English Hub Conference March 2025

EEF – Improving Literacy Guidance

Links to the Guidance:

[Improving Literacy in KS1](#)

[Improving Literacy in KS2](#)

[Improving Literacy in KS3](#)



Education
Endowment
Foundation

IMPROVING LITERACY IN KEY STAGE 2

Summary of recommendations

Sections are colour
coded for ease of
reference

1

Develop pupils' language capabilities

- Purposeful speaking and listening activities support pupils' language development. Purposeful activities include:
 - collaborative learning activities where pupils can share their thought processes;
 - reading books aloud and discussing them, including use of structured questioning; and
 - pupils articulating their ideas verbally before writing.
- Promote high quality dialogue in the classroom, between the teacher and the pupils and between pupils, to support pupils to develop their thinking and use of language.
- Extend pupils' vocabulary by explicitly teaching new words,

2

Support pupils to develop fluent reading capabilities

- Fluent reading supports comprehension because pupils' cognitive resources can be redirected from focusing on word recognition to comprehending the text.
- Develop pupils' fluency through:
 - guided oral reading instruction—teachers model fluent reading, then pupils read the same text aloud with appropriate feedback; and
 - repeated reading—pupils re-read a short and meaningful passage a set number of times or until they reach a suitable level of fluency.
- Prioritise understanding pupils' current capabilities and teaching accordingly. Most pupils benefit from an emphasis on reading fluency in Key

3

Teach reading comprehension strategies through modelling and supported practice

- Teach specific strategies that pupils can apply to monitor and overcome barriers to comprehension. These include:
 - prediction (based on text content and context);
 - questioning;
 - clarifying;
 - summarising; and
 - activating prior knowledge.
- Model and scaffold these strategies; then support pupils to increasingly use reading comprehension strategies independently, with less and less prompting from the teacher.
- Texts should be carefully selected to support the teaching of these strategies.

4

Teach writing composition strategies through modelling and supported practice

- Writing can be thought of as a process made up of five components:
 - planning;
 - drafting;
 - revising;
 - editing; and
 - publishing.
- Effective writers use a number of strategies to support each component of the writing process. For example, planning can be improved through the strategy of goal-setting. Describe and model how, when, and why pupils should use each strategy, support pupils to practise with feedback, then gradually reduce support as pupils increasingly use the strategies independently.
- Giving pupils a reason to write—and someone to

5

Develop pupils' transcription and sentence construction skills through extensive practice

- Fluent writing supports composition because pupils' cognitive resources are freed from focusing on handwriting, spelling, and sentence construction and can be redirected towards writing composition. Extensive practice, supported by effective feedback, is required to develop fluent transcription skills.
- Monitor pupils' handwriting to ensure accurate letter formation habits, providing effective feedback to promote efficient and fluent handwriting.
- Consider the types of spelling error pupils are making to identify appropriate strategies for improving pupils' spelling. Explicitly teach spellings and provide pupils with extensive opportunities to practice

6

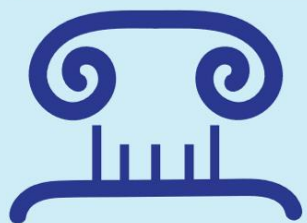
Target teaching and support by accurately assessing pupil needs

- Use high quality assessment and diagnosis to target and adapt teaching to pupils' needs. Rapid provision of support is important, but it is critical to ensure it is the right support.
- Integrate formative assessment into classroom teaching strategies to help ensure that teaching is appropriately targeted and that pupil needs are identified.
- Diagnostic assessment can be used to inform professional judgement about the best next steps; it also makes teaching more efficient by ensuring that effort is not wasted on rehearsing skills or content that a pupil already knows well.
- A range of diagnostic assessments are available and staff should

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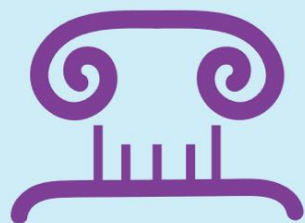
Use high quality structured interventions to help pupils who are struggling with their literacy

- Schools should focus first on developing core classroom teaching strategies that improve the literacy capabilities of the whole class. With this in place, the need for additional support should decrease. Nevertheless, it is likely that a small number of pupils will require additional support.
- There is a strong and consistent body of evidence demonstrating the benefit of structured interventions for pupils who are struggling with their literacy. The first step should be to accurately diagnose capabilities and difficulties in order to match pupils to appropriate, evidence-informed interventions that target specific areas of difficulty.



Pillar 1

Early Language
&
Phonics



Pillar 2

Fluency
&
Confidence



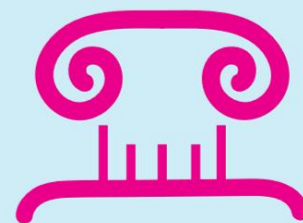
Pillar 3

Comprehension
&
Quality Texts



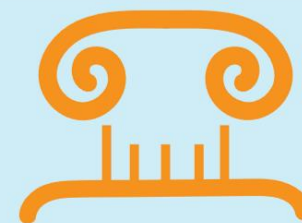
Pillar 4

Vocabulary
&
Wider Curriculum



Pillar 5

Reading Culture
&
Love of Reading



Pillar 6

Assessment
&
Progress



1. Early Language and Phonics

- The importance of early language development
- Phonics as the foundation to reading:
 - Code knowledge
 - Blending
 - Segmenting
- Effective monitoring

2. Fluency and Confidence

- Building reading fluency through repeated practice
- Techniques to support fluency:
 - Repeated reading
 - Choral reading
 - Text marking
- Reading mileage

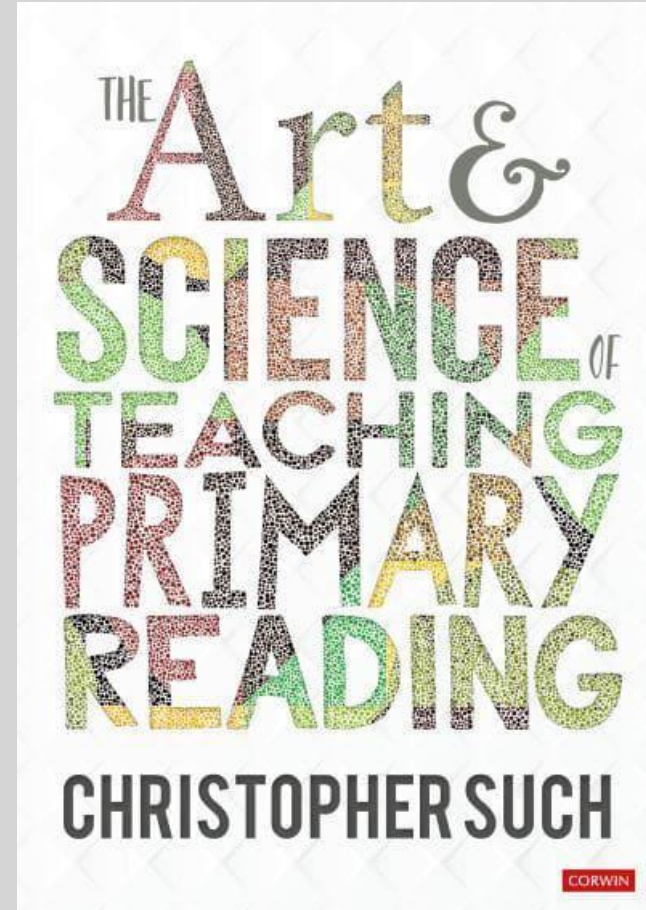
3. Comprehension and Quality Texts

- Selecting quality texts that engage and challenge students
- Opportunities to read and discuss whole-texts
- Strategies for improving comprehension (e.g. effective questioning, summarising, re-reading)

3. Comprehension and Quality Texts

Christopher Such talks about the three kinds of diversity to consider:

1. Diversity of perspectives
2. Diversity of content
3. Diversity of language



4. Vocabulary and the Wider Curriculum

- A text-based curriculum
- Consider the complexity of the vocabulary
- Morphology: the study of words and their parts e.g. prefixes and suffixes
- Etymology: the study of the origin of words

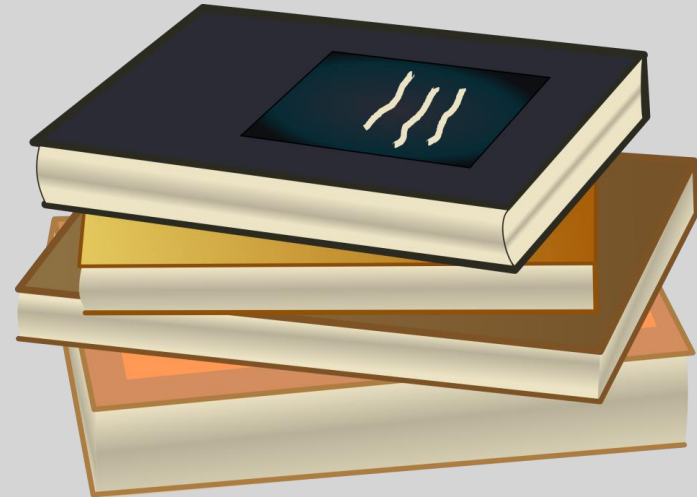
5. Reading Culture and Love of Reading

- Encouraging a love of reading through diverse and interesting materials
- Accessibility and visibility
- A balance of text types – fiction, non-fiction and poetry
- Author visits
- Book clubs
- Informal Book Talk

Discuss:



What does this mean for our struggling readers?



6. Assessment and Progress

- Methods for assessing reading progress
- Using assessment to inform instruction
- Senior Leaders and Reading Leads are required to oversee the assessment process and select the follow-up interventions required

Discuss:



What are the challenges to assessment?

Audit: Assessment

Assessment	Current practice
Teachers understand the difference between formative and summative assessment in relation to reading.	
Teachers use formative assessment throughout a lesson.	
Teachers assess pupils' GPC knowledge, skill in blending GPCs into words and reading words 'at a glance', and the speed pupils can read these words in a text.	
Actions to be taken (by term)	

The West Somerset Reading Project

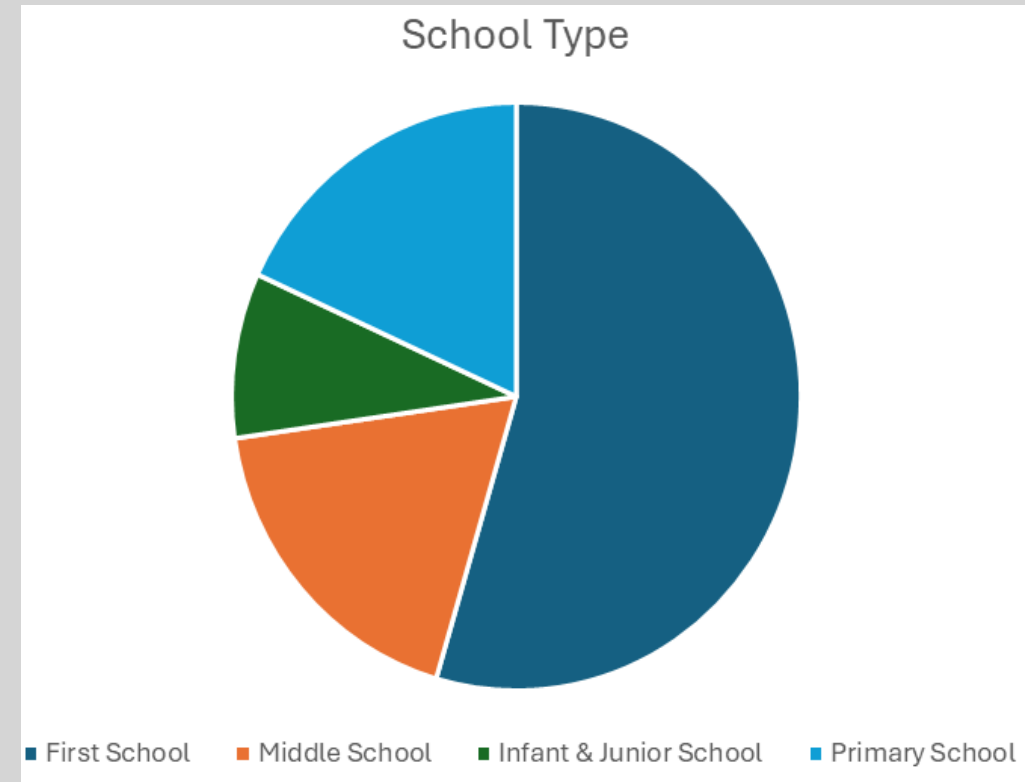
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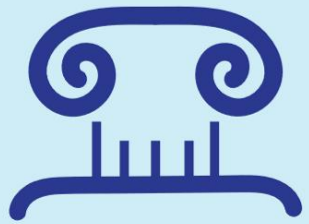
English Hubs
The Cornerstone English Hub

Evaluating impact

Survey

- 13 responses
- 14 schools
- Roles:
 - Senior Leadership (Head/Assistant Head) (n=3)
 - English/Literacy/Reading/Department Lead (n=9)
 - Classroom Teacher (n=3)



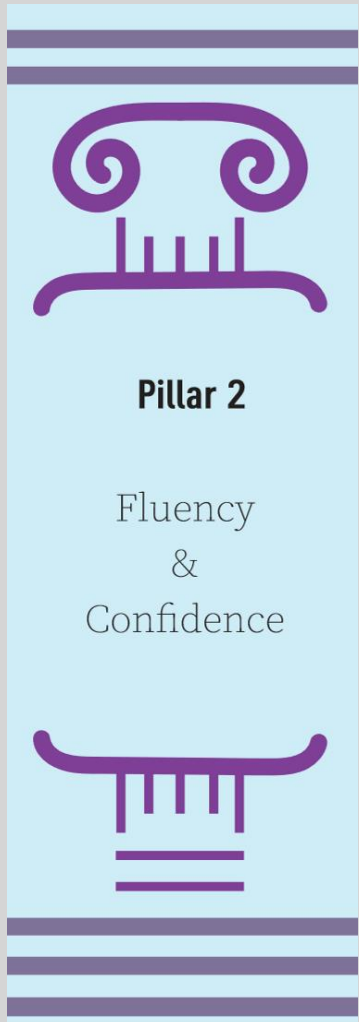


Pillar 1

Early Language
&
Phonics



- Schools widely adopted phonics programmes
- Assessments specific to the programme used to monitor progress and identify those in need of support
- Professional development and parental engagement important



- York Assessment of Reading Comprehension (YARC) used to assess reading fluency
- Interventions included Herts for Learning Fluency Project
- Whole class and peer reading approaches integrated to build confidence

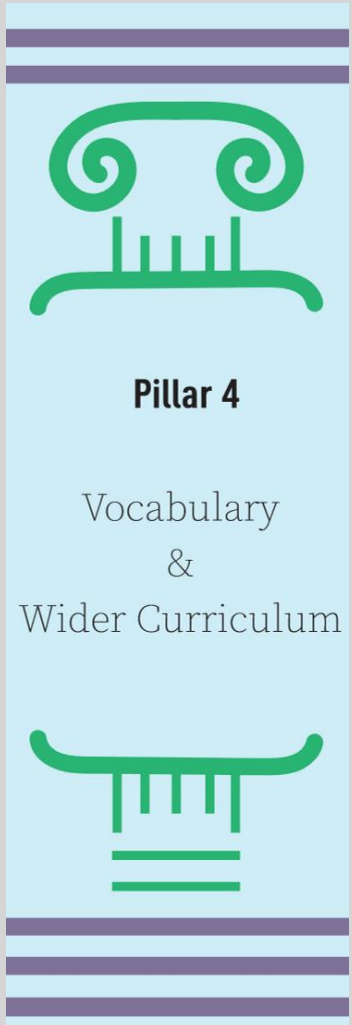


Pillar 3

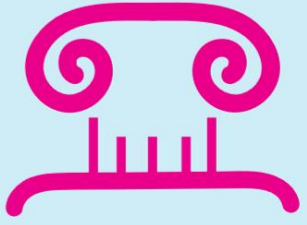
Comprehension
&
Quality Texts



- Investment in high-quality, diverse texts
- Guided reading, Accelerated Reader and Literacy Tree used



- Vocabulary embedded across all subjects
- Explicit teaching of Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary
- Professional development on Freya Model and oracy

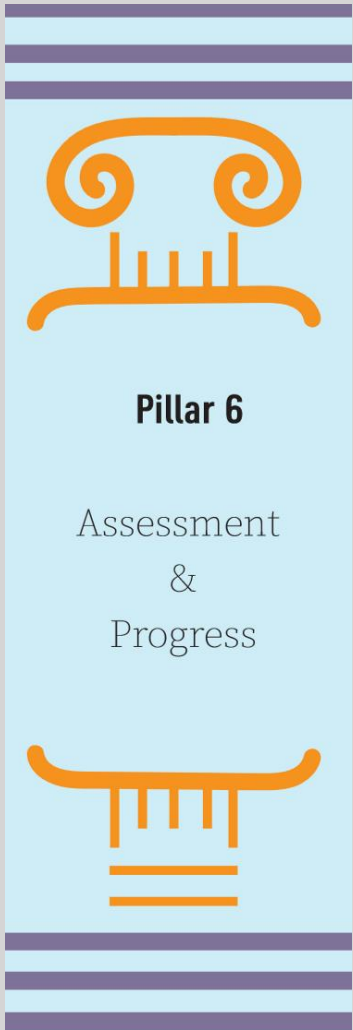


Pillar 5

Reading Culture
&
Love of Reading

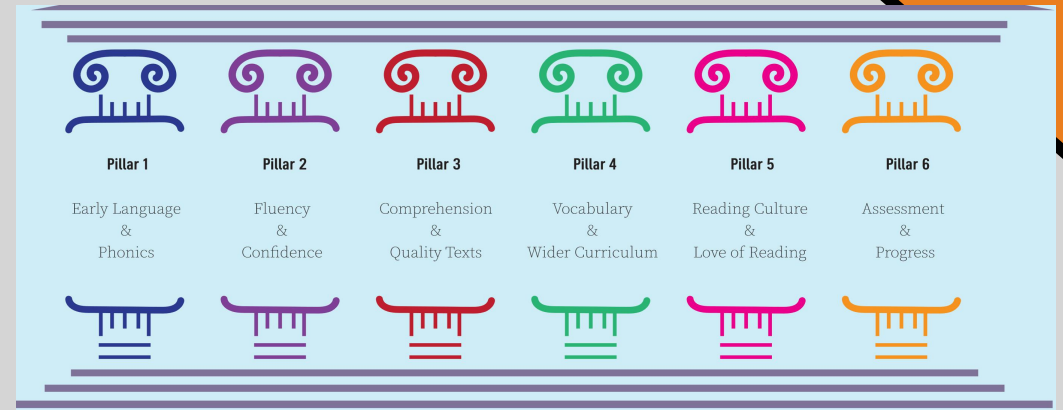


- Investment in library spaces and trained student librarians
- Dedicated reading time and championing reading



- Standardised assessments combined with internal monitoring tools to track student progress
- Professional development on interpreting data

Summary of impact



Schools say:

- Reading strategy more structured and data driven
- Teachers more confident
- School could build on their foundations to refine best practices
- Value of targeted interventions, regular assessment and whole school reading culture

Any Questions?