



How we Teach Reading and Writing at Campton Academy EYFS

When children come to us they have had lots of different experiences of early reading. Many have done phase one and are used to listening to and responding to sound, rhyme and alliteration. During the first two weeks of term we give the children a chance to settle in to our school and they take part in a variety of listening activities and games to assess and recap phase one learning. We also make a lot of time to read them good quality texts, some of which are patterned or have refrains that engage the children and help build their language structures, which will help them later when they start to compose their own writing.

We use ELS (Essential Letters and S Sounds) as our phonics resource-this is a government approved scheme for synthetic phonics and is taught for 5 sessions a week-four with new sounds and one with a review day.

Phonics lessons involve a review, teach, practise and apply element to them. They last approximately 10 minutes when we start teaching phonics and this increases to about 25 minutes by the summer term.

Children are encouraged to go through their sounds regularly in class and the sounds they are learning are sent home in their sounds book so parents are aware of what sounds are covered. These are reviewed regularly by staff. Children who do not know all the sounds taught are identified for intervention and their sounds are reviewed regularly.

At the end of every half term an assessment is done, to check who needs more support. This is recorded on an electronics tracker, along with blending progress.

Tricky words will be learnt alongside the phonic sounds each week too. These will be given out with the sounds being learnt, so that they can be regularly reviewed too.

The children take part in a daily poetry basket activity and classroom songs to help develop vocabulary, rhythm and rhyme to support their phonics acquisition. These are cross curricular and reflect the topics covered and even the maths skills we are learning

Reading books

In week 2 the children visit the library for the first time and library books are given out. A note is sent home with ideas of how to share a story with your child and it is emphasised that this is about book sharing rather than the child reading. During week 3 reading books are given out. These are lilac level and without words. An explanation is given to parents about how to use these. Parents are also encouraged to record home reading experiences in their child's reading diary.

Reading books are changed once a week. The expectation is that the class teacher or TA will share the book with the children once a week. Reading the same book three times and discussing it gives children familiarity and confidence with the text they are looking at.

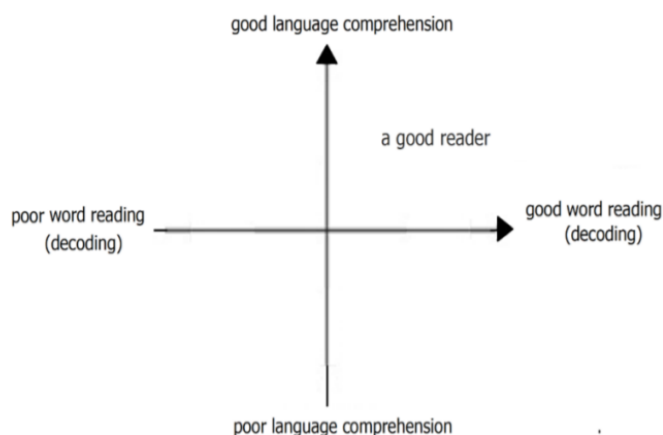
When the children have learnt their first two weeks of sounds and are confident with blending using CVC blending sheets, they will be given a reading book that is in line with the sounds they are learning. Sounds are added to their sound books every week, with the expectation that they are reviewed every day. Tricky words (harder to read and spell words) are added to the back of the pink books. In order to facilitate an enjoyable reading experience for our children parents are invited in for a phonics workshop and given advice on how to support their children at home. Parents are very much seen as partners in the early reading process and if support is needed then this is provided. Because of this process we find that we have good parental engagement with reading and children who love reading.

Children who are finding reading more tricky will take part in a daily intervention, to try and keep them up with their peers.

Due to significant investment in our reading scheme we are able to closely match the readers we provide our children with to their reading ability to ensure that early reading is fun and achievable.

Comprehension

Figure 1: The knowledge of a good reader



We recognise that we not only have to teach the children how to read but also need to spend a lot of time teaching early comprehension skills when we read a book. As part of a shared book experience we teach children to predict, reflect, infer and retrieve information about the text, so that when they go up through the school they are able to use these skills alongside their decoding skills to access all areas of the curriculum confidently. We aim for the children to hear good quality texts every day, and often revisit texts we have already read, so children can gain confidence by using a familiar text for new skills e.g. early inference and reading, and have the chance to embed the language structures and vocabulary which will help develop their vocabulary their writing later on too.

As well as reading books, children in reception class are exposed to a wide range of texts-recipe books, how to do books, non fiction books, comics, newspapers, recipes, cookbooks, e-books etc.

Handwriting

Although grapheme formation is taught kinaesthetically in a variety of ways with the ditty from the ELS scheme, it is felt that more attention is needed for this, so this is done as part of a fine motor or handwriting lesson 3 times a week (15 minutes) as well as a fine motor focus in early morning work. Activities are set up in the continuous provision and in PE to help children develop core strength and balance, then the gross and fine motor skills that they need. In order to encourage good letter formation the Letter Join scheme is used. In line with school policy on handwriting, continuous cursive is modelled and encouraged only when it is appropriate developmentally for the children-most likely in the summer term.

Mark making is encouraged at every opportunity –as part of morning work, name writing, through the messaging centre, in continuous provision and through purposeful responses to texts and learning prompts. As we progress with sounds and high frequency words, the children's writing will reflect their learning and they will start to write grammatically plausible attempts at words that they know. Sounds mats and tricky words mats are available to the children at all times and writing caddies and station mean that our children can access mark making resources through out the day, inside and outside.