The National Accelerated Literacy Program is jointly funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and the Northern Territory Government through the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) and supported by Charles Darwin University.
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Materials are produced under agreements between DEEWR and other education providers in relation to the National Accelerated Literacy Program. These education providers are:

- Department of Employment, Education and Training, Northern Territory;
- Western Australia Aboriginal Independent Community Schools;
- Department of Education and Children’s Services, South Australia;
- Shalom Christian College, Queensland; and
- Catholic Education Office of Western Australia.

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**Oral and literate texts**

For readers to take a literate orientation to texts, the texts themselves should be literate. Even though all the text in books is written, it can be written in an oral or literate style.

Writers of books for beginning and emergent readers have worked on the assumption that children will make sense of reading if they start with a book that has one or two words per page accompanied by an illustration (caption books). The illustration is meant to help the reader with meaning prediction, and the simple obvious language will similarly be easily predictable.

When the child has mastered reading caption books, they can work on books with a sentence a page, then two sentences a page and so on until they can read. Step by step the reader has to bridge the progress into a harder level. With cognitive overload reduced by the use of highly predictable texts, readers can somehow learn to decode words.

Other assumptions writers make about meaning prediction of these early ‘readers’ are that:

- books are more accessible to young readers if they are about everyday topics from the children’s own world
- a repeating pattern of language through the book makes meaning prediction easier.

For example, in *Yuk Soup* by Joy Cowley, it is presumed that all children know something about food and cooking. It details the making of a very awful soup by what appears to be alien beings. Each illustration is accompanied by up to four words. To make sense of this story the reader has to actually understand what is going on. The participants appear to be speaking to each other and listing what should go in the soup.

This imaginary conversation is one of the features that makes this text ‘oral literate’. The text itself is not an example of a procedure with a procedural structure. It does not have a narrative structure. It is simply a series of observations about the illustrations. The text does not make sense without the illustrations and prior knowledge; it presupposes that the reader knows what is going on already. Readers have to be able to see for themselves that the big round pot on a fire has something to do with the soup making. They also have to make some sense of the two weird participants and realise that they are talking to each other. The book presumably uses these strange creatures and the odd ingredients to make the story amusing.

However, to ‘read’ this text a student only has to hear it once then commit it to memory. They need not even look at the words to ‘read’ it. It is not a model for literate writing and teaches nothing about literate language.

A whole publishing industry is built upon the production of oral literate books carefully graded into levels of difficulty for early readers. While many children have learned to read despite these books, and perhaps even with their help, they do not have the intended outcome for children who come to school without a background of literate discourse that has been developed at home.

The National Accelerated Literacy Program does not use oral literate books, but rather literate books as discussed below.

A text for middle primary students may still have illustrations but it contains much more information
for readers in the wording of the text than in books for younger readers.

When there are illustrations in books for students at this level they serve as an interpretation of some of the incidents that take place rather than expanding on the written text in detail.

The language choices in texts of this kind use words rather than pictures to depict contexts and characteristics of people. In the book ‘Fantastic Mr Fox’ by Roald Dahl, the author writes to influence the emotions of the reader. He tells readers that Boggis kept thousands of chickens, but he doesn’t stop there. Roald Dahl tells readers that Boggis was enormously fat then expands on that statement by explaining exactly why he was enormously fat. The food he eats also has the effect of showing readers that he was quite a gross and greedy person.

This information makes the story more explicit and colourful but it also makes it harder to read for those who don’t have an orientation to literate language: these types of readers don’t expect this language and don’t realise its significance.

If students never learn to read and comprehend text at this level they will never be successful in upper primary school.

By upper primary and certainly by secondary school students must be able to read and discuss, as well as write like, the following highly descriptive text from ‘Tomorrow when the War Began’ by John Marsden. This text has been benchmarked at an early secondary level and is typically taught in English in about Year 8.

**Identify the feature**

One thing that’s different up here is the sky.

**Description of feature**

**General**

This night was like any clear dark night in the mountains:

**Detailed**

the sky sprinkled with an impossible number of stars, some strong and bright,

some like tiny weak pinpricks,

some flickering,

some surrounded by a hazy glow.

**Summary (of feelings about the feature)**

Most views I get tired of eventually, but never the night sky in the mountains, never.

I can lose myself in it.

In this part of the text the author stops the progress of the story to describe the night sky as seen through the eyes of the narrator of the story. As well as understanding the literal meaning of the
words, the reader has to be able to visualise the night sky, understand the effect of that view on the narrator and that at a deeper level, the tranquillity and peace of the scene is about to be shattered by the noise and menace of war. A student who cannot read and interpret text at this level will not succeed academically in English at secondary school, and indeed, will find every subject that uses academic English difficult.

The books recommended on the NALP booklist are all included because they are written in literate language. They are given approximate year levels based on the complexity of the literate language used by the author.


**Accelerated Literacy Teaching Notes**

The National Accelerated Literacy Program has a list of texts recommended for use in teaching Accelerated Literacy. The current booklist can be downloaded from [http://www.nalp.edu.au/supportmaterials.html](http://www.nalp.edu.au/supportmaterials.html)

In addition, there are a number of texts for which comprehensive Teaching Notes have been written to support your Accelerated Literacy teaching in the classroom. They can be purchased or downloaded from [http://www.nalp.edu.au/supportmaterials.html](http://www.nalp.edu.au/supportmaterials.html) (username: supportmaterials, password: nalp)
**Literate orientation**

During literate orientation the teacher models a literate orientation to the text and shows students how and why the author made language choices in the text.

Literate orientation is a pre-reading strategy and provides the conditions necessary for students to be successful when they read independently.

The teacher needs to be very familiar with a text to carry out any literate orientation activities on it. This familiarity includes not only knowing the main events in a story but also considering texts to the level of their themes, characters’ motivations, and authors’ intentions as well as identifying the language techniques authors employ to achieve their goals.

Asking students to answer questions so that they can answer successfully is an important part of teaching them to operate as members of literate discourse. There is a separate section that provides some details about the questioning strategies used in Accelerated Literacy.

**Low order literate orientation**

In low order literate orientation the teacher starts the process of ‘pointing the students’ brains’ at the text by modeling for them a literate interpretation of the text including its illustrations.

Low order literate orientation is carried out on all levels of texts from those with illustrations meant for younger readers to all texts without illustrations including novels written for secondary students.

For a book with illustrations low order literate orientation uses the illustrations to bring the story to life for the students by discussing the following points:

- relevant circumstances within the contexts: e.g. setting – what’s happening;
- identification with characters: e.g. characters’ motivations, feelings, intentions, reactions, thoughts – relations between them: e.g. lion>mouse;
• plot structure and plot devices: e.g. finding a complication, finding cues to text development;
• links between language and illustrations: e.g. choice of some words;
• significant inferences implicit in the language and illustrations;
• how the illustrations expand, qualify or extend the text content;
• author’s purpose, stance, theme;
• reader’s judgments, evaluations and interpretations: teacher models (& discusses) the taking of a position or ‘stance’ toward the text – interprets messages.

Books without illustrations are generally longer and more complex than those with illustrations – the words have to do all the work the pictures did in illustrated books. Because of the length and complexity of books for older students they cannot always be read to students in one lesson. It is important then for teachers to read the text to the class over a period of time.

The teacher models a literate reader’s stance towards the part of the text to be studied that day.

Discuss:
• plot structure and plot devices: e.g. finding a complication, finding cues to text development;
• significant inferences implicit in the language;
• author’s purpose, stance, theme;
• reader’s judgments, evaluations and interpretations: teacher models (& discusses) the taking of a position or ‘stance’ toward the text – interprets messages.

Immediately following low order literate orientation the teacher reads the text to the class. Where a text has been worked on for more than one lesson, it should still be read to the class.

Low order literate orientation is not simply going through a book asking students to predict what they think will happen or what they think the book is about. Low order literate orientation is the beginning point in a teaching sequence in which students learn to take a literate orientation to a text, a process which cannot be left to chance.

High order literate orientation

High order literate orientation shifts the students’ focus on the text to a close examination of the author’s wording. In high order literate orientation the teacher systematically shows students how to attend closely to the author’s wording of the text and how it constructs meaning. The teacher will have decided on the focus of the lesson and the language features important to that focus e.g. one focus could be to show how Tim Winton uses the weather to create atmosphere in *Lockie Leonard – Human Torpedo*.

Books for younger students have less complex language features than books for older students but finding and discussing the actual wording the author uses is central to high order literate orientation at all levels.

During high order literate orientation discuss:
• How the author achieves his/her purpose in the language of the text, ie:
o What wording and grammatical choices the author has made and why
o What effect the author’s words have on readers
o What inferences can be drawn from the wording

• How the author uses language to construct the plot, i.e.:
o Does the author use a simple orientation, complication, resolution structure (usually in books for younger students)? or,
o Does the author interest readers in the story by describing a dramatic event first? (a strategy often used in books for older children.)

• How the theme of the story is realised through the language the author uses. For example, in the story ‘Lockie Leonard – Human torpedo’ by Tim Winton, the author describes the difficulty a teenager has in adjusting to new situations such as making new friends, starting at a new school and the challenges of puberty through the experiences of Lockie Leonard when he moves to a new town.

• How particular language choices made by the author work to position a reader/writer/character.
o How does an author describe characters positively so that readers will identify with them and approve of them or,
o How does an author persuade readers to identify with and approve or disapprove of actions taken by characters central to a plot?

• During high order literate orientation the teacher often asks students to underline, on a whiteboard, overhead transparency or laminated copy of the text, the words they have identified. This activity is designed to help all students in the class identify and read the appropriate part of the text.

Transformations
Transformations is an activity designed to change students’ orientation to the text under consideration from that of a reader looking for meaning from the text to that of a writer learning how the author of the text used a writer’s techniques to achieve a purpose.

In the transformations activity teachers take short passages from a text and transfer them to cardboard strips. Having the text written out on cardboard strips provides conditions for it to be cut up into meaning chunks or single words and manipulated.

Transformations provide flexibility for teachers to take different approaches to the text for a number of purposes, e.g.:

• Transformations can be used to show the effect on readers of particular language choices including words, phrases, clauses, and paragraphs.

• Transformations can be used to show the effect on readers of the author’s choice of word order. To discuss word order parts of the text can be removed then replaced and discussed so that the effect of that particular wording can be observed clearly.

• Transformations can be used by as a context for discussing use of punctuation e.g. full stops, exclamation marks, and speech marks etc. Here the punctuation would be separated
out from the words and cut out.

- Transformations can be used by teachers of beginning readers to teach word recognition skills and 1:1 correspondence. In these instances the text would be cut into single words. Transformations are not simply a repeat of high order literate orientation with cutting out substituting for underlining parts of the text.

**Spelling**

Transformations can be a transition point from literate orientation to either spelling or writing. The transition into spelling is appropriate for students learning to decode or with ineffective decoding strategies.

Spelling is most effectively taught from words that students can read out of context. With younger students the emphasis in spelling strategies is to teach children how spelling patterns work in English, using words they can read out of context. With older students who have developed negative mindsets and ineffective strategies, the emphasis is on developing an effective orientation to spelling. The following progressive steps apply to students with negative mindsets to spelling.

Using words that students can recognise out of context:

- Direct and consolidate a shift away from already established negative strategies (e.g. letter copying, phonic spelling). Show students how to segment words by telling them directly (e.g. m/ouse).
- Establish a realisation that there exists a commonality between words based on visual patterning (initially links must be established between two already known patterns).
- Expand students’ repertoire of known visual pattern relations (e.g. make charts, individual lists of discovered commonalities from reading – initially emphasise ‘taught’ words not ‘spontaneous’ additions).
- Establish ability to generate/find words with similar patterns (do this simultaneously with previous step e.g. ‘You know m/ouse do you think you could write h/ouse?’).
- Establish an ability to analyse words without available reference models – (‘How would we best break up this word to remember it?’ e.g. dreams > dr/eam/s, ‘Can we find some other words with any of these patterns?’ e.g. dr/ip cr/earn etc).

**Joint reconstructed writing**

Joint reconstructed writing follows transformations and is a part of the spelling activities on the text. This strategy forms a link with the writing strategies in that students and teacher work together to reconstruct the text the way the author wrote it. They use the actual words of the text. The activity reduces cognitive overload for students because they can use the author’s wording, they know how to spell these words, and, as they work through the reconstruction, they can also discuss the reasons why the author made particular language choices in the text.

The strategy provides a context for successful writing for students with little or no previous experience of literate writing in school.
Writing

Scaffolded writing can follow either transformations or spelling activities, especially joint reconstructed writing.

Writing activities capitalise on students’ ability to read like writers. Patience is needed before attempting writing activities. Before writing activities will be successful, students have to share common knowledge about:

- What authors do (techniques);
- Why they do it (the effect of these techniques on readers);
- How they do it (structure, language choices).

Writing activities must be planned from the beginning of a teaching sequence and worked towards from the literate orientation stage.

We teach students to read texts that demonstrate specific writing techniques. These techniques can be, for example:

- How and why authors describe characters physical features – what they achieve by describing them from positive and negative viewpoints (e.g. Boggis, Bunce and Bean in ‘Fantastic Mr Fox’ by Roald Dahl).
- When do authors describe characters’ appearances, and when do they describe their feelings (e.g. Miss Pebble and the ghost of Ned Kelly in ‘Spooks Incorporated’ by Paul Jennings).
- How and why authors describe setting in text. How do they develop atmosphere that is inviting or frightening or melancholy? When is this a good strategy to use?
- How and why do authors make their writing suspenseful? When is this appropriate?

Once students can understand these features of writing, they can use them to make their own writing literate and engaging.

A teaching sequence that includes writing needs:

- An overall focus or goal
- Workshop activities (planned around paragraphs, sentences or phrases) that provide practice in the techniques children need to achieve the goal.
- Longer writing activities that provide an opportunity for students to use the techniques they have practised in the workshop activities.

See also the notes at http://www.nalp.edu.au/documents/TeachingSequence300407_000.pdf and the booklet The Accelerated Literacy teaching sequence.
Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

There are different approaches to the notion of individual achievement levels of children in a class. Individual differences do not have to mean individual programs or low-level programs for some and high-level programs for others. To explain how the Accelerated Literacy program teaching operates we need to discuss the notion of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

The Accelerated Literacy program uses the Individual Level (IL) of students as baseline data, by asking each child to read an unseen text until the level at which they can read at 90% – 95% accuracy without any help at all is established. Importantly, this Individual Level data is used as pre-program data, and is not a starting point for that child. Though it helps teachers make decisions about the level of text to work on with a class, the actual text chosen is as close as possible to the group’s age appropriate level.

The dilemma for teachers then appears to be how to teach a book that seems too difficult for low achieving students in such a way that it doesn’t appear to disadvantage average and high achieving students.

Once again, it seems common sense, when there are two children achieving at different levels, to intervene or teach just ahead of each child’s individual achievement level. Conventionally, a teacher might strive to pitch the level of reading difficulty just a little bit higher than the child can do on his/her own, so that they only have to make a tiny step to progress. The aim is to judge the level well so that children progress at an appropriate pace without stress.

This individualised or child-centred approach has been dominant in Western Education largely because of the influence of Jean Piaget and programs based on his work. His research led him to believe that children had to pass through stages of development where they interacted with their environment and worked their way from concrete operations to abstract thinking. He described children as individuals each working to assimilate to their environment. In this model teachers create suitable learning environments in which children can develop at their own pace. A teacher’s role in this model is to know what each child in a class can do then use a ‘repertoire of flexible practices’ to address the needs of each student.

There is another option to basing programs around individual differences, which is teaching practice based on the work of Lev Vygotsky, who suggests an alternative to child-centred pedagogy in his description of the ‘Zone of Proximal Development’ (ZPD).

Rather than teaching each child just ahead of the point of individual achievement, there is zone of potential development, not an exact point, in which a learner can operate successfully with help. Vygotsky’s research showed that true learning only takes place ahead of a child’s individual achievement. A child is not actually learning if they can complete a task independently. That is what they can already do. A child’s true potential for learning is shown by what he/she can achieve ahead of his/her individual achievement with the assistance of an adult or expert.

The Accelerated Literacy program takes advantage of the flexibility of the ZPD, which offers potential for all children to work ahead of their individual achievement level and make quite large leaps in achievement. As a result, two children with quite large individual difference can both learn by studying one text pitched in the ZPD for both students, which is what Accelerated Literacy does.

Outcomes from teaching in the Accelerated Literacy program have shown repeatedly that the ZPD can be highly flexible; allowing skilled teachers to teach at the highest level possible for a class,
sometimes 4–6 reading levels or more, where students are significantly behind. For example, a Year 6 child (like Annette) may not be able to read any book accurately by herself (eg. *Yuk Soup*). However, she was able to join with the teacher in learning how to read books at an age appropriate level.

An interesting aspect of working in the ZPD, is that a reader can read a difficult text fluently while at the same time be unable to read a very easy one. For example a child may be barely able to read a simple Year 1 book without assistance, having completed an Individual Level assessment at transition level. Left to read individually, the student’s uncertain decoding skills leave him floundering after reading part of the first three pages of the story. Nevertheless, he could read the other, more difficult text, ‘The Bad Kangaroo’ by Arnold Lobel, fluently and accurately. This is because he had been taught about how the text worked. Despite the text being three years above his individual performance level and appearing to be high in his ZPD he could actually read this higher-level text easily. This ability is a feature of Accelerated Literacy teaching, particularly when the program starts in a school. We call the child’s performance on a text that has been taught in class their Working Level (WL). A child’s Working Level, in Vygotsky’s terms, shows the child’s true potential as a reader.

Once the student is able to work on the class text confidently, the teacher then works to hand over control of the reading to the student. Over time the student will be able to transfer the reading skills to complete a new task. Teachers often feel impatient to have students ‘transfer’ their reading skills to unseen text but working in the ZPD requires a change in mindset. Successful transfer of skills is a feature of the program but the exciting consequence of working in the ZPD is that a whole class can work on a text at, or close to, an age appropriate level in literacy lessons. This is a very different position for teachers who teach in classes where few children are able to work on appropriate material for their year level.

There are three points for teachers to consider when planning lessons and teaching Accelerated Literacy:

1. **The level at which the student can join with you in performing the learning activity:**
   This statement refers to the process of choosing text to work on with the class that is as high as possible within the ZPD for that class. The text has to be as near as possible to age appropriate but not so high as to completely exclude the lowest achieving students. The choice of text is a crucial element of the program.

2. **The level at which the student can perform the specific task independently:**
   There is provision, at every stage of the Accelerated Literacy teaching sequence, for students to take over control of the discourse around each text. Control also includes the student being able to actually read the text at or above 90% accuracy. Being able to read the text, comprehend it at an inferential level, spell words from it and write using some of the author’s literary writing techniques, are all elements of performance that constitute control of a text.

3. **The level at which the student can transfer skills to complete a new task:**
   The student’s independent performance on a specific task that is the subject of study in class is important. At the same time, however, teachers are also working on the skills the students need to transfer to complete new tasks at the same level. The teaching sequence is also pitched at ensuring this happens. While a transfer to independence is not the first aim in teaching a text, it is an important one.
**General principles for planning**

Start by reading the text and analysing it. It is often easier to see patterns or stages in written texts if you break it into clauses.

Then, analyse the text considering the following dimensions:

**What are we trying to teach?**

- Reflect on:
  - What type of story is this? (a fable, a narrative)
  - Why do authors write stories like this? (to entertain, to teach a lesson about life, to teach children about how they should behave)
  - What could we teach students about this writer’s writing techniques that would be valuable? (good example of the orientation, complication, resolution structure of a narrative; how to write about an unlikely possibility eg. a little character helping a bigger, much more powerful character)
  - How is the story organised? (orientation, complication, resolution)

- What understanding do students need to enjoy this story? (What concepts or difficult ideas does the author write about? Why?)

- How does the author use language to:
  - Tell readers what happened? (Experiential)
  - Engage readers’ emotions? (Interpersonal)
  - Organise the text? (Textual)

- What part do illustrations play? (in books that have them)
  - Are they literal interpretations of the text? (and so add more meaning than the words on their own as with books for young children)
  - Are they illustrator’s interpretations of parts of the text? (taking key parts of the text and illustrating that part only)
  - What will you need to focus on from the illustrations to make links to the story? (particular words, phrases, concepts)

Remember that you don’t have to always know everything there is to know about a story but you do have to know a great deal or lessons will soon become boring because you have run out of things to talk about. It is always helpful to talk about a text with a group of people.

**How are we trying to teach?**

- The Accelerated Literacy teaching sequence is a teacher’s resource for scaffolding classroom interaction around the text.

- In planning the teaching sequence remember that you are not planning one lesson but planning a sequence of lessons that allow you to:
  - Engage students with the story.
  - Engage students in a way that allows them to participate in the lesson
Build common knowledge as a basis for teaching and learning.
Promote and guide students into control over the discourse.

In planning the teaching sequence therefore decide on:
- Long term goals – that you aim to achieve across the course of the teaching sequence
- Short term goals – that you will work towards in each lesson in order to reach the long term goals.

**How do you establish goals for a teaching sequence?**

- After you have analysed the text and decided to use it for teaching purposes:
  - The first goal is always to have all the students in the class be able to read the text at 90% accuracy or above (preferably above 95%).
  - A second goal is for the students to understand the story and to able to discuss it.
  - Other goals will be spelling and writing goals.

- Look at the text for spelling patterns that add to patterns studied in previous texts as well as words with patterns not studied previously. Also look for words with interesting derivations that could add the students' knowledge about English spelling generally.

- Look for writing techniques used by the author and decide how to use these techniques to extend the students' understanding of how authors make language choices in writing.

- When you have established goals for the overall teaching sequence decide on shorter term goals:
  - For the first week,
  - For each lesson in the week.

- At the end of the first week review your progress and plan how to proceed in the second, third, fourth week etc.
How to find ‘useful chunks’ which relate to other letter patterns

Children, particularly confused spellers, need the support of this strategy to learn to look at words effectively so that they see the larger chunks in words, e.g. to see that peach consists of two chunks, p and each. Children who are tense about moving from memorising words letter by letter or who persist in sounding out and writing what they hear, need this support to develop a more effective visual memory for spelling words. You will need a strip of cardboard and a pair of scissors for this activity.

To identify chunks work through the following steps in your mind from first to last. You will need to decide from your knowledge of the child’s/children’s development just how many chunks you wish to use. (In the beginning you will generally create more chunks to facilitate the shift from phonetic processing)

Steps for chunking
1. Consider compound words:
   Pigpen          pig - pen
   playmate       play – mate

2. Next consider syllables:
   complete       com // plete
   admit          ad // mit
   appear         app // ear

3. Consider prefixes and suffixes: These two will often coincide.
   remove         re // move
   going          go // ing
   advancement    ad // vance // ment
   dogs           dog // s

Steps two and three will often coincide.

4. Identify onset/rhyme pattern in core elements. The onset/rhyme pattern is identified by cutting the core word element before the first vowel.
   play           pl / ay
   mate           m / ate
   com // plete   c / om // pl / ete
   app // ear     a / pp // ear
5. To reduce the letter patterns further you can cut after the vowel unit:

p / eace  \rightarrow  p / ea[ce

Or if you recognise a common consonant combination you can cut out between consonants:

s / ingle  \rightarrow  s / ing[le
f / ierce  \rightarrow  f / ier[ce
**Questioning techniques for use in Accelerated Literacy lessons**

Literate orientation employs a non-typical approach to teacher questioning. The questions are not asked to test children’s knowledge or reasoning ability. Questions are only asked when the teacher is sure that the children will be able to answer them. Furthermore, questions are not targeted directly at individual children.

Over the course of a lesson sequence the teacher employs a broad range of question types from closed to open. In the beginning, however, when very little common knowledge exists between teacher and children, the teacher employs a highly supportive questioning strategy. The first step in this strategy is referred to as “preformulation”. Preformulation prepares the children to answer the question. Once children have responded, the teacher accepts their answers positively then expands on them using a strategy termed, “reconceptualisation”.

Examples of preformulation and reconceptualisation are given below.

**Preformulation:**
And you might think that the lion is sleeping. But if you’ve got very, very sharp eyes you might be able to look here and see something here.

T: Who can see what is open here?

S: Eyes

**Reconceptualisation:**
T: Yes. Can you see that eye open? I bet you can. It’s open because the lion is resting. It’s not fast asleep. It’s resting. So it looks as if it’s asleep but it’s not.

The whole sequence of questioning shifts is set in motion with the introduction of Low Order Literate orientation. At the very start with Indigenous children the teacher will typically introduce the story largely through monologue. Thus, during the course of a sequence of Literate orientation lessons the didactic structure would move from:

- A Largely monologic teacher input; to
- B Highly supportive preformulation – child response—reconceptualisation; to
- C Largely open questioning and/or child control of interaction.
Discussion questions and activities

Session 1
Some of the problems – Annette reading Yuk Soup
1. Annette read the title of the book as firstly, ‘yook’ for ‘yuk’, then settled on ‘Soak So Up’ for ‘Yuk Soup’. What reading resource did she use to make that decision about the title of the book?

2. What resource does she use to confirm whether she is right or wrong about words?

3. When Annette comes to a word she cannot read (eg. ‘feathers’) what resource does the teacher direct her to use?

4. What effect could this direction have on Annette’s reading development?

The effect of teaching (after six months)
Compared with Annette’s reading of ‘Yuk Soup’ consider:
1. What has changed about her demeanour? Why?

2. What reading resources does she use when she encounters a problem?

3. What cues does she use to self-correct?

The effect of teaching (after two years)
Compare Annette’s reading of ‘Call it Courage’ with her reading of ‘Yuk Soup’ and ‘Lighthouse Blues’.
1. What has changed about her reading competence? Why?

2. What reading resources does she use when she encounters a problem?

3. What cues does she use to self-correct?

4. How well does she understand what she is reading?
Session 3
Sample one

Text: ..............................................................

Low order literate orientation
Look for examples of how the teacher:
1. describes the purpose of the lesson

2. provides an overview of the text to be studied: what aspects of the story does she point out?

3. engages the students in the discussion about the story.

High order literate orientation
Look for examples of how the teacher:
1. introduces the strategy

2. frames questions

3. involves students in the task of text marking

4. selects words to underline.

Transformations
Look for examples of how the teacher:
1. states the purpose of the activity

2. revisits information from the High order literate orientation:
   a) what information was introduced previously in this lesson?

   b) what additional dimension is added to this activity that was not part of High order literate orientation?

Spelling
Look for examples of how the teacher:
1. Introduces the activity: what purpose does she give for the spelling activity?

2. Implements any of the spelling strategies mentioned – these will be listed on a work sheet for
you to refer to during the clip.

3. Jointly reconstructs the study passage.
   a) what spelling knowledge does she identify?
   b) What writing knowledge does she identify?

**Writing**
Look for examples of how the teacher:
1. describes the workshop activity.
2. supports joint construction
3. has provided the resources for students to move from joint construction to independent writing.

**Sample two**

**Text:** …………………………………………………

**Low order literate orientation**
Look for examples of how the teacher:
4. describes the purpose of the lesson
5. provides an overview of the text to be studied: what aspects of the story does she point out?
6. engages the students in the discussion about the story.

**High order literate orientation**
Look for examples of how the teacher:
5. introduces the strategy
6. frames questions
7. involves students in the task of text marking
8. selects words to underline.
Transformations
Look for examples of how the teacher:
3. states the purpose of the activity

4. revisits information from the High order literate orientation:
   c) what information was introduced previously in this lesson?
   d) what additional dimension is added to this activity that was not part of High order literate orientation?

Spelling
Look for examples of how the teacher:
4. Introduces the activity: what purpose does she give for the spelling activity?

5. Implements any of the spelling strategies mentioned – these will be listed on a work sheet for you to refer to during the clip.

6. Jointly reconstructs the study passage.
   c) what spelling knowledge does she identify?
   
   d) What writing knowledge does she identify?

Writing
Look for examples of how the teacher:
4. describes the workshop activity.

5. supports joint construction

6. has provided the resources for students to move from joint construction to independent writing.
Session 4

Texts

On Sunday afternoon Old Stephen nodded to the dark clouds spreading in the south. ‘Big rain coming,’ he said.
But on Monday there was no rain.
The night was so warm Rosie’s kids dragged their beds outside to maybe feel some breeze while they slept.
On Tuesday there was still no rain.
The panting dogs at Roberta’s camp dug themselves dusty holes to keep cool.
Wednesday came, and still no rain.
The children swam in the billabong after school.
The water was warm and still.
By Thursday night there was still no rain.
The fat green frogs huddled around the leaky tap on the rain-water tank.
Then on Friday evening the thick grey clouds over the hills were echoing with thunder. ‘Big rain coming,’ said Stephen.
But there was still no rain.
On Saturday, there was rain.
Wonderful cool wet RAIN.
The Lion and the Mouse  Retold by Patricia Scott, OF MICE, LIONS AND ELEPHANTS, 1993, Macmillan Education Australia Pty Ltd, Melb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Lion and the Mouse</th>
<th>Retold by Patricia Scott, OF MICE, LIONS AND ELEPHANTS, 1993, Macmillan Education Australia Pty Ltd, Melb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One day a lion was resting when a little mouse, who lived nearby, ran playfully over his back and down over his head to the ground. The lion stirred and, reaching out, caught the mouse beneath his paw. “Mouse,” he said, “you have disturbed my sleep. I think I will eat you.” “Oh, pardon, my Lord,” said the mouse. “Please do not eat me. Perhaps, if you forgive me, someday I may be able to do something to help you.” The lion laughed. “You, a little mouse, help me, the king of the beasts?” He laughed again, but he lifted his paw, allowing the mouse to go free. With a hasty ‘thank you’, the mouse ran off before the lion could change his mind. Over the next few days, the lion thought of the mouse often, but she kept well away from him. Sometimes he would laugh again at the thought of a little mouse helping the king of the beasts. But even kings can get into trouble. One day the lion became caught in a net set by hunters. As he struggled to free himself, the net tightened and held him fast. As luck would have it, the mouse came running that way in search of food. Seeing the lion caught in the net, she called all her friends. They came and gnawed at the strands of rope. Before long, they had broken the net and the lion was free. Bowing, the lion thanked the mouse. “You were right,” he said. “Even the small and weak can help the strong and mighty.”</td>
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Text from Truly Packin’ Death (page 5)

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<tr>
<td>The first day Lockie Leonard saw this town it was raining. The old family Falcon had been loaded down like a refugee boat as they rolled into this little place fresh from the city. The whole family tried to be cheerful about it, but the place looked awful. The town was small and crummy-looking and when they saw the house the police force had organized for them, everyone in the car went quiet. Lockie’s little brother looked at him, pegging off his nose with his fingers. His baby sister squirmed on the front seat. His dad left the motor running. His mum just started bawling.</td>
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</table>
What are we trying to teach?

Using *Big Rain Coming*, *The Lion and the Mouse* or *Lockie Leonard Human Torpedo* as an example, make some notes about:

**Questions about the story:**

1. What type of story is this? (its genre or text type)
2. Why do authors write stories like this? (its social purpose)
3. How is the story structured? Where does the orientation end and the complication begin? Where does the resolution begin?
4. What interesting literate language choices can you identify in the wording of this story that might make it hard to read?
5. Can you identify a writing technique that could be taught to students from this story? Is there a structure you might want to teach students to use? Is there a particular wording that you could teach students to use? Is there a specific use of language to evoke emotion that you could teach students to use?

**Questions about the illustrations**

1. What part do illustrations play in this story?
2. What element of these illustrations might be used to make links to the wording of the story?
3. How could a teacher use the illustrations to make the story easier to read?

**Questions about the literate orientation in the lesson**

1. What information about the text could you choose to make the focus of this lesson:
   a) In low order literate orientation
   b) In high order literate orientation
# Planning sheets

**Class:** Year 4/5 (class depicted on video)  
**Text:** The Lion and the Mouse  
**Week:** 1  
**Term:** 1  
**Teaching focus:** Comprehension and reading of orientation of text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy Sequence</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
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<th>Friday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low Order Book Orientation</strong></td>
<td>Tell story based on illustrations – emphasise power relationship between characters, intelligence of mouse and narrative sequence.</td>
<td>Retell story. Determine comprehension of concepts from e.g. lion resting, mouse lived nearby &amp; ran playfully. Discuss how the lion woke up.</td>
<td>Retell story. Discuss the lion’s reasons for letting the mouse go. Focus on pages 3 &amp; 4. How did the mouse persuade the lion?</td>
<td>Discuss the problem for the mouse and the problem for the lion. How does the mouse resolve her problem? How does the lion resolve his?</td>
<td>Review the function of a story with a moral. How does the lion react to the idea of the mouse helping him? What does this tell us about the lion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High Order Book Orientation</strong></td>
<td>Focus on language choices in the first sentence, particularly the use of one day, the lion resting, that the mouse live nearby and that she ran ‘playfully’ over the lion’s back.</td>
<td>Revisit first sentence and underline more of it as appropriate. Focus on the actions of the lion in waking e.g. 1. stirred, 2. reaching out, 3. caught the mouse beneath his paw.</td>
<td>Review page 2 – discuss language choices. Page 3 review lion’s actions. Underline the lion’s speech. Focus on the choice of ‘think’ in his reaction.</td>
<td>Review page 3. Look at the mouse’s language choices on page 4. How does her choice of words influence the lion?</td>
<td>Review pages 3, 4. Look at the lion’s language choices when he reacts to the idea of a mouse helping him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transformations</strong></td>
<td>One day/ a lion/ was resting/ when/ a little mouse/ who lived/ nearby/ ran/ playfully/ over his back/ and down over his head/ to the ground/ - word recognition</td>
<td>Return to first sentence – jumble phrases. Discuss word order and why it is important. Cut into single words. Word recognition games e.g. tic tac toe.</td>
<td>Ask students to explain the first sentence. Word recognition activities.</td>
<td>Ask students to explain the first sentence. Word recognition activities.</td>
<td>Put ‘A lion was resting when a mouse ran over his back’ on the Transformations board. Ask students to add the missing words and explain what work they do in the sentence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scaffolded Spelling - Chunking</strong></td>
<td>D/ay, r/est/ing, m/ouse. Explain origin of the word ‘mouse’. (mus’ meaning muscle)</td>
<td>Revise day, resting and mouse. Teach n/ear/by and pl/ay/full/y, h/ead.</td>
<td>Revise previous words. Put nearby and head together in an ‘ea’ list. Teach l/itt/le, b/ack, gr/ound. Put ground and mouse in an ‘ou’ list.</td>
<td>Revise previous words. Put nearby and head together in an ‘ea’ list. Teach l/itt/le, b/ack, gr/ound. Put ground and mouse in an ‘ou’ list.</td>
<td>Jointly reconstruct the first sentence. Discuss its function and word choices.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Scaffolded Writing - Joint Reconstructed Writing</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Scaffolded Writing</strong></td>
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<th>Strategy Sequence</th>
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<th>Tuesday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low Order Literate Orientation</strong></td>
<td>Overview of story using illustrations. Focus on modelling feelings of suspense while reading.</td>
<td>Revise last lesson. Share feelings of suspense, introduce concept of participants’ reactions to the heat.</td>
<td>Revise what happens in story. Encourage student discussion. Discuss why author staged story using days of the week.</td>
<td>Discuss part of story where author first talks about what participants do in reaction to the heat. Ie: Rosie’s kids. Students should be able to read story along with teacher.</td>
<td>Discuss next part where the dogs react to the heat. Focus on patterns within the story. Students should be able to read story along with teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High Order Literate Orientation</strong></td>
<td>First sentence. Focus on author’s Orientation to story. Discuss “On Sunday afternoon”, “Old Stephen”, “dark clouds”, “spreading”.</td>
<td>Second sentence. Revise last lesson as it leads into what Old Stephen said when he saw the clouds.</td>
<td>Third sentence. Discuss first time expectations of rain not met.</td>
<td>Sentence about what Rosie’s kids did.</td>
<td>Revise or complete from last lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transformations</strong></td>
<td>First sentence. Aim to cut into meaning chunks and focus on author providing information on When, Who and What</td>
<td>Revise First sentence. Aim to cut into single words. Play word recognition games.</td>
<td>Second sentence. Aim to cut into two meaning chunks: what was said and who said it. Introduce quotation marks and their job.</td>
<td>“But on Monday…” Focus on why author wrote “but”. Work towards cutting into words and play word recognition and word order games.</td>
<td>Begin on sentence about Rosie’s kids.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spelling/Joint Reconstructed Writing</strong></td>
<td>Initial sounds b, r or c. OR d/ar/k, cl/ou/d. Depending on class/student.</td>
<td>Revise. JRW “On Sunday afternoon…” When and who.</td>
<td>Continue with JRW on first sentence. What Stephen did and what he saw.</td>
<td>Introduce new initial sounds or words as needed.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Writing</strong></td>
<td>Begin to attempt some class writing workshops. Keep lists of ideas.</td>
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<td>Continue from last lesson.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategy Sequence</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Low Order Literate Orientation</strong></td>
<td>Overview of story and purpose of first paragraph. Inferences implied in it. How the author uses the description of the weather.</td>
<td>Review structure of para. Review use of weather. Focus on the depiction of the car and town.</td>
<td>Discuss: What does ‘the whole family tried to be cheerful about it’ tell us about the Leonard family?</td>
<td>Ask students to tell what they know about each family member from the first para. Does it agree with the rest of the story (as it has been read to the class so far)?</td>
<td>Briefly review the structure of the paragraph and discuss. Students should be able to lead the discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High Order Literate Orientation</strong></td>
<td>Text marking – underline phrases that make the overall structure of the passage clear.</td>
<td>Text marking – look at how Tim Winton wrote about the car and town.</td>
<td>Find the language choices that tell readers about each family member. Why did the author make those choices.</td>
<td>Briefly review each family member’s description.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transformations</strong></td>
<td>The first day/Lockie Leonard/ saw this town /it was raining/. The old family/ Falcon/had been loaded down/ like a refugee boat/ as they rolled into this little place/ fresh from the city/.</td>
<td>Review Transformation from previous day. Discuss ‘refugee boat’ and revise with emphasis on high level comprehension and hand-over of control.</td>
<td>The whole family/tried to be/ cheerful about it/ but /the place/ looked/ awful/. The town /was /small and crummy-looking /and when/ they saw /the house /the police force/ had organised /for them/. /everyone/ in the car /went quiet/.</td>
<td>Lockie’s little brother/ looked at him/ pegging off/ his nose /with his fingers/. / His baby sister/ squirmed/ on the front seat/ /His dad/ left /the motor/ running/. / His mum/ just/ started bawling/.</td>
<td>Whole paragraph. Turn over sentences and discuss their purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scaffolded Spelling - Chunking</strong></td>
<td>First/ Day</td>
<td>Practice first and day. Then discuss how to chunk town, rain/ing.</td>
<td>Review previous words then chunk tram/ily, whole, creer/tin. Discuss the use of ‘ful’ as a suffix. Then chunk awful</td>
<td>Review previous words. Then chunk br/other, sis/ter, squirm/ed, svara/ed.</td>
<td>Chunk /look/ing, p/egg/ing, /run/ning, b/awling, tin/g/ers. Put er words together and ing words together. Discuss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scaffolded Spelling - Joint Reconstructed Writing</strong></td>
<td>Write: The first day, discuss why the author used these words.</td>
<td>Jointly reconstruct the first sentence. Locate it as part of the overall structure of the paragraph.</td>
<td>Jointly reconstruct the part of the text that tells of the family’s reaction to seeing the town (from Transformation)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Scaffolded Writing</strong></td>
<td>As you read on in the story and locate other examples of descriptions of the weather eg p14 – when Lockie started school.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Look at a plan of the paragraph. Discuss what the author could have written if the family had loved the town. What would the weather have been like. What would the town have looked like? Do together.</td>
<td>Plan some possible scenarios for writing where a character has something bad happen to them. Work out how you would depict the weather to introduce the character. How would you write it.</td>
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# Accelerated Literacy lesson planning proforma

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Week:</th>
<th>Term:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text:</td>
<td>Teaching focus:</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Teaching sequence</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low order book orientation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Read story to/with class</td>
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<td>High order book orientation</td>
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Session 5

Low order literate orientation – a book with illustrations (*Big Rain Coming* or *The Lion and the Mouse*)
1. Who are the main characters in this story?

2. How are they depicted in the illustrations?

3. What elements of the illustrations could be discussed to introduce and explain complex language and ideas?

4. Do the illustrations contain any information that is not contained in the wording of the text?

5. Do the illustrations influence your attitude to the characters in any way?

Low order literate orientation – a book without illustrations (*Lockie Leonard Human Torpedo*)
1. Why might the story of Lockie Leonard, Human Torpedo begin with a description of his arrival in a new town?

2. What part does the weather play in the orientation of the story?

3. What mood do the references in the text to the town construct?

4. What does the description of the Leonard family's car tell readers about the family?

5. What do the reactions of each member of Lockie's family tell readers about the appearance of the town?
**Questioning**

Choose a sentence/passage from any of the texts you have worked on today. Decide on a question you might ask the students to get them to predict the part of the text the teacher wants them to identify. Draw up a three-column table.

Write this question in the centre column of the sheet.

Then consider what the teacher might say to preformulate this question.

Finally, what might the teacher say to reconceptualise the answer given by the student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preformulation</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Reconceptualisation</th>
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</table>
High order literate orientation
1. Which words does, or might, the teacher ask the students to underline? Why might she have made those choices?

2. What aspects of the story might the teacher choose to discuss in relation to the words underlined?

3. What inferences implied in the text could the teacher discuss?

4. How might the teacher identify the structure of the text?

Transformations

*Big Rain Coming*
This is the first transformation the class has worked on in this book. Note that the teacher has not taken the first sentence in the story but has selected ‘’Big rain coming,’’ he said.’
1. Why might the teacher have chosen this sentence and not the first sentence in the story to use for transformations?

2. What activities related to the transformation help students with word recognition?

3. What activities related to the transformation help students with one to one correspondence?

4. How well do the students participate in the activities?

*The Lion and the Mouse*
The first sentence has been used for transformations.
1. How do the questions asked by the teacher and the words the students cut from the text relate to the earlier discussion in literate orientation (high and low order)?

2. What activities related to the transformation help students with word recognition?

3. Is punctuation discussed? If so how?

4. How well do the students participate in the activities?
Lockie Leonard Human Torpedo

Note that the whole first paragraph has been written on the cardboard strips and displayed but only the first two sentences were worked on in the first lesson.

1. How do the questions asked by the teacher and the words the students cut from the text relate to the earlier discussion in literate orientation (high and low order)?

2. What appears to be the purpose of changing the word order of the first sentence?

3. What purposes does turning over words and working out what they are serve in the transformation?

4. How does transformations allow for a different conversation about the text than was possible on low order literate orientation and high order literate orientation?

Further text from these books

Big Rain Coming

“Big rain coming,” he said.

The Lion and the Mouse

“The lion stirred and, reaching out, caught the mouse beneath his paw.”

Lockie Leonard Human Torpedo

“The town was small and crummy-looking and when they saw the house the police force had organized for them, everyone in the car went quiet.”

Spelling

Big Rain Coming

1. Look for the spelling focus taken by the teacher.
2. Why might one letter have been enough to deal with here?

Lockie Leonard Human Torpedo

1. Look for the steps the teacher works though to make the segmenting of the word clear to the
students and to provide students the opportunity to spell the word correctly.

2. What words were used for spelling?

3. Why might these words have been chosen?

The Lion and the Mouse

There is not a spelling segment for The Lion and the Mouse video.

1. Discuss the words the teacher might have chosen for spelling in the next lesson.

The reading model

Big Rain Coming
Discuss how this lesson is based on the understanding that beginning readers need to learn fundamental understandings about letters and sounds.

The Lion and the Mouse

From all the discussion and film viewed of the lessons on this text, you have seen the work that has been carried out to ensure that students will be able to read this text independently. Discuss the parts of the text that students should be able to read despite previously being non readers.

Lockie Leonard Human Torpedo

There were many unfamiliar concepts presented in this text about Lockie’s introduction to the little country town. Discuss how the teacher worked to make the meanings of language choices clear. What parts of the text should students be able to read independently after this lesson?
Video Transcripts

*Note: Transcripts for video clips 1-10 are currently unavailable.*

**Transcripts for Big Rain Coming**

**Video clip 11 – Low order literate orientation: Big Rain Coming**

**Part 1**

T: Okay, be very good listeners now. You’ve cleaned your ears out and blown your noses so you’ve got extra good listening ears and extra good watching eyes. So, I’ll tell you first of all that my name is Wendy. Okay, Wendy. And this is William, and we’ve come from Canberra to see your school because we heard you’re such good children and that you’ve been working hard at AL, learning to read the books, so your teacher said we could come and do some work with you so we’re very lucky and I want you to see if you can show me all the things you know, show me what clever children you are. Can you do that? You’re clever children.

S: Yes

T: That’s great, and what we’re going to do is look at this book today and see what we can find out about it, because it’s quite good fun, okay. So we’re going to look at the pictures first. Now, this book is called “Big Rain Coming”.

S(all): Big rain coming.

T: That’s right, and look, the sky is all blue there, isn’t it? There’s no rain on a day when there are no clouds, are there? There’s no rain yet. But the book, “Big Rain Coming” was written by Katrina Germein, a lady who lived at Minyarrri for a while, and the pictures were drawn by Bronwyn Bancroft, and look, you can see happy children, can’t you? They’re very happy; they’re all playing and having fun because they think big rain coming. Yeah, they think there’s a big rain coming and we’re all happy when it rains, aren’t we?

(turns page) Now look, this man is called Old Stephen, his name is Stephen, and he’s been alive for a long time and he looked over at those clouds - see him pointing at the clouds, and he’s nodding his head at those clouds and he’s saying, “Big rain coming”. And the day that he sees the clouds is Sunday. So everybody on the Sunday thought, “Oh, old Stephen says big rain coming, so maybe it will rain tomorrow”. So here are the big clouds and there’s Stephen sitting down saying, “Big rain coming” but now the next day is going to be Monday and you watch for the clouds, see if there’s any clouds Monday.


S: Thunder.

T: Well done. And it’s so hot. Everyone says, “It’s so hot”. They’re all sweating. And when the kids go to bed, look, here it’s night time, and these kids are all Rosie’s kids and they’ve taken their beds outside. Look. Because outside there might be a bit more cool breeze and they might be a bit cooler, because it’s so hot.

Okay, now that was Monday, now it’s going to be Tuesday. We’ll see if there’s any rain on Tuesday. Look for the clouds. Are you ready? Any clouds?

S: No.

T: (turns page) No, there’s no clouds, just blue sky. Still no rain. So Stephen said there was a big rain coming but it hasn’t come, has it? No. What’s this?

S: The sun.

T: It’s making everyone so hot. They’re all saying, “It’s so hot. I wish it would rain”.

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Part 2

T: Well done. So it didn’t rain Monday, it didn’t rain Tuesday, it didn’t rain Wednesday, it didn’t rain Thursday, it didn’t rain Friday, but it did rain on Saturday. And look, everybody, there’s Stephen, all the kids, they’re dancing in the rain, they’re all getting wet, they’re saying, “Hurray, it’s raining, it’s raining” and they all run out and I bet the frogs are all thinking, “That’s wonderful, I don’t have to be in the dripping tap and the dogs are all thinking, “Oh, we’re cool at last”, and the kids with their beds outside, they would have to get them in really fast, so their beds didn’t get wet. So now everybody is happy.

(turns page) Let’s see. There they are, all playing in the rain, even the lizards are happy. Wonderful cool, wet rain. Okay. So that’s the story of “Big Rain Coming”. I’m going to read the words. Can you watch while I’ll read the words? I’ll come back and just read the words, and you watch them as we go. So the book is called -

S(all): Big rain coming.

T: So clever. And it starts off (reads to class)

“On Sunday afternoon, old Stephen nodded to the dark clouds spreading in the south”, there they are - “Big rain coming”, he said.

“But on Monday, there was no rain, no rain. The night was so warm; Rosie’s kids dragged their beds outside to maybe feel some breeze while they slept.

Video clip 15– High order literate orientation: Big Rain Coming

T: Okay, beautiful listening. Now can you do another thing for me? I need your eyes watching closely. I need some help here because this book is all about waiting or the rain, isn’t it? Stephen says there’s big rain coming, does it come Monday? No. Does it come Tuesday?

S: No.

T: Does it come Wednesday?

S: No.

T: Does it come Thursday?

S: No.

T: Does it come Friday?

S: No.

T: Does it come Saturday?

S: Yeah.

T: Well done. They had to wait a whole week for rain. So the word ‘rain’ is really important here. You watch my finger, you watch really closely because I’m going to get somebody to come out here and find the word on the page that says ‘rain’. We’ll see if we can find it in the book. Now would you, would you like to come over here for a little bit, you won’t be able to see when I point. That’s the way. Can you see here now? Can you see the words? So everybody get so you can see the words. Okay, watching my finger. This is Stephen, isn’t it? Here’s the words. They say “Big rain coming”, he said. Do you think you can see the word that says ‘rain’, you will be looking at that whiteboard. You will be looking for the word that looks like this. [Draws ‘r’ on whiteboard]. It starts with R, r-a, [writes i-n], so that words says ‘rain’. That’s the word we’re looking for. You watch my finger again. Put your hand up if you think you know which word says ‘rain’. Watch my finger. Put your hands down now. I’ll ask you in a minute. Big rain coming, he said. Would someone want to point to the word that says ‘rain’ for me? Come on, you can. Your hand was up first.

Wonderful! You are so clever. Oh clever people. Would you like to take the pen and put a line
under the word that says ‘rain’?

Aren’t you clever kids! Lots of people put their hands up. Oh look at you! Fantastic. Well done. You can see on the next page, we will see if there is any ‘rain’ on the next page. “There’s no rain in the sky”, but the word rain says. You watch my finger again. Put your hand up when you can see the word that says ‘rain’.

Watch, watch. That's the way. “But on Monday there was no rain”

S(all): Rain.

T: Who can see the word that says ‘rain’?

Oh look at all the people. Alright, you’re nice and close.

Well done! Good work. It says there was no rain on this day. Alright, watching again.

Video clip 19 & 20 – Transformations: Big Rain Coming

Part 1

T: Who said that? Big rain coming, he said. Well done. You can read. That’s so good. So if I just get the book back, I’ll show you where that sentence comes from. Look, who said ‘big rain coming’? Who said, ‘big rain coming’? Can anyone remember? No, in the book, in the book. It’s okay, I know you were the clever person who could read. In the book, this is the sentence, watching, “Big rain coming, he said”, and that ‘he’ is Stephen. Stephen said it, didn’t he?

Now I’m going to see if somebody can help me cut this sentence up.

Look at the helpers. So good. You read it altogether for me first.

S(all): Big rain coming, he said.

T: He said. Well done. Now who can come and cut the word that says ‘rain’ out for me? [points to child] Can you?

You might be able to help me next time. That’s right, that’s the way. Look how good you are with scissors. Very good. Is this Grade 3? Are you Grade 3? I thought you were Grade 1/2, but you’re very grown up. Very good. So these little marks here, that’s right big, see those – I need another one there. I’ve got two on one side and one on the other. They’re speech marks; they tell us that someone is saying this. Would someone like to cut the speech marks off for me?

I just want you to cut down there. Would you like to do that? Thanks. Who can see the word that says ‘coming’ up here?

S: Me.

T: It was big rain -

S: Coming.

T: Coming, yes. Just straight up there that’s the way. Well done. Brilliant. So it’s big rain coming. It isn’t there yet, it’s coming. Who’d like to cut out ‘coming’ for me? Okay.

You can do that then. Just cut the speech marks off. Good work, really good. And you can cut the comma off as well, or I can cut that off. Thanks. I’ll just quickly do that. Okay, and I’ll leave those two words; I’ll leave ‘he said’. Now read it for me.

S(all): Big rain coming.

T: He said. Well done. Now I want you to shut your eyes. Can you all shut your eyes, I’m going to try to trick you. I’m so good at tricking. Open your eyes.

You don’t know what I’m going to ask. You think you know what I’m going to ask? What does this say?

S(all): Big rain.
T: Okay, well I'm not sure if it's rain, I'm not sure, we'd better check, hadn't we? Okay you come and turn it over and see if it says 'rain'. Come and turn it over. You come and check. If it's rain, what is the first letter? What will it start with?

S: r

T: r – that’s right. With an R, good. [child at white board] Well done. Is that ‘rain’? Is that word ‘rain’?

S(all): Yeah.

T: Okay. Shut your eyes again. Open them. Now put your hands down. Everyone can help me this time. I wonder if you can read the words here, you’ve got to look very carefully.

S: Car

T: I couldn’t trick you. I mixed the words up and you knew.. I couldn’t trick you. Okay, read it then, watching.

S(all): Coming rain big.

T: He said. I couldn’t trick you. I tried and tried. Who can come and put the words back the way they should be?

Would someone like to do that? Would you?

Where’s the word that says ... Would you like to read it to us now? You point to the words and read it for us. You do it for me.

S: Me!

T: Alright, you point to the words and read it. Come and point to the words like the teacher. That’s it.

S: Big rain coming.

T: Good work. Alright, shut your eyes and I’ll mix them up again.

Part 2

T: Okay, I’ll mix them up like this. Put your hand up if you know which word I’m holding. What am I holding up there? Are you ready? Ready.

S: Coming.

S: Rain.

T: Okay, starts with c doesn't it? Coming and if we look at the book, that’s what it says, Big rain coming. That’s right, well done. What about this one?

S: Big

T: Okay. What’s this one?

S: Rain.

T: Okay. Now how do we know this is rain though. How do we know this word says ‘rain’?

S: Big rain coming.

T: Can you tell me what it starts with?

S: r

T: Well done. Okay, so we’re just going to look at that word now. And I’ll leave a space for it. Are you okay? What’s the matter? Alright?

S: He had a headache.

T: We can always check when we’re not sure of a word by looking at the book, see, it’s got ‘big rain coming’ and it starts with an r, just like that one.
Now I’m going to do something very tricky this time – you watching – I’m going to cut the first letter off, are you watching? Now-

S: r
T: Well done, and what does this bit say?
S: R ain
T: Ain, can you say the bits, r - ain, watch and everybody help me, r – ain.
S(all): r – ain.
T: Fantastic. Now I’m going to give you one of these.
S: What?
T: One of the boards. Okay, and we’re going to do a little bit of writing and we’re going to see if we can do the R, so I’ll give you the boards and you can find a space on the floor then I’ll give you a pen and a rubber, a duster or whatever. This person has found a beautiful spot on the floor where he’ll be able to write and there’s someone over there has found a good spot. That’s the way.

Video clip 23 – Spelling: Big Rain Coming

T: Okay, so I want you to practise writing the letter R, but watch I’ll do one for you, I guess over here, if you just turn your heads, right because you are going to go down, up, and a little way over, alright, down, up and little way over. Okay, can you do one of those for me? Look at it carefully. And I’ll rub it out and see if you can remember how it goes. Can everyone do an R for me, the r, R says r in rain.
Well done. What letter is it?
S: r
T: Good. Yes, it’s the letter R which says r in rain. Okay, rub off the R. Okay, see if you can do another one. Can you remember how to do the R? Going down, up and a little way over. See if you can do another. R for rain. Go down, up and a little way over. Did you get it? The first letter of rain. Well done. Good. Okay. I bet we can find it on here if we looked. See, here it is, so you know a little bit about R I think already. Okay. Now if we were writing the rest of the words, this is how we do it. We’ve got an A and an I that go together, A-I, and a N. So you’ve got R-ain. Okay. You can have a go at writing the whole of rain if you like. Just have a go, but remember that the A and the I go together, and then it’s N. Oh so good. Okay.
S: I’ve finished mine.
T: Too clever for anything, aren’t you? Just so clever. Good. What’s that word?
S: Rain.
T: Yes, Stephen knew that there was a big rain coming. Okay, rub them off. Well done. You’ve worked very, very hard. Okay. Can you do me one more R for rain, r once more, just before we finish. Got it. So careful, beautiful writers. Okay. Alright. That’s beautiful. If we were going to write the rest of rain, the bit that says ain, you need to do the A and I together, that’s the bit that makes ai , that’s this bit and then the N, alright. Alright. Rub the boards off and see if there’s anybody who can write all the word ‘rain’. That’s perfect, see if you can write r-ain. Alright. Say it as you do it, go r-ain.
S(all): Rain.
T: That’s the way. Well done. You can do it with me if you like. How does it start? What’s the first letter?
S: r
T: That’s right. And what makes the A, ai, and what comes last?
S: N
T: N, that's right. Get it? I wasn’t going to write the whole of the word but you’ve worked so hard. That’s perfect. Good. Well done. Alright. When you’ve rubbed them off, can you come and put your boards back in here,
**Transcripts for The Lion and the Mouse**

**Video clip 12 – Low order literate orientation: The Lion and the Mouse**

T: What I will do first of all is talk about this book that we are all going to read later on and we are going to see if we can find out as much as we can about how Patricia Scott wrote this book. Patricia Scott is the lady that wrote it.

Okay, so let’s have a look first of all. If you look here, lots of you have already told me that you have seen this book in the library and some of you can even read its name. So can you read its name? What is it called?

S: The Lion and the Mouse.

T: Okay now this is a story about a little tiny mouse who helps a great big, strong, lion. This kind of story is called a fable and it comes from long ago. It’s the sort of story that people told their children to teach them lessons about life. So if you were a child, long ago and your Mum and Dad were telling you this story, they would be telling you to teach you that even if you are little and you are weak and not very strong at all you can still do things that are really very helpful. Like in this story a little tiny mouse helps a great big strong lion. That doesn’t seem possible does it. You wouldn’t think a mouse could do anything to help a lion but in this book that’s what happens and it helps the lion in a way that the lion never could imagine.

So what I want you to do now is to help me to have a look at these pictures. That picture is a bit bigger here.

Who do you think this is?

S: Lion

T: He is huge, isn’t he? He is a big strong lion and you might think that that lion is sleeping but if you have got very, very sharp eyes, you may be able to look down here and see something here. Who can see what is open here?

S: Eyes.

T: Yes

Can you see that eye open?

S: No.

T: I bet you can. It’s open because the lion is resting, it’s not fast asleep, it’s just resting so it looks like it’s asleep but it’s not.

And who do you think this little tiny animal is?

S(all): Mouse

T: Yes, that’s right. That is the mouse in the story and look the mouse has come out from its home. It just lives over here, somewhere quite close, nearby, and it’s just come over to play and it sees the lion lying there and it thought, ‘Oh, I know what I will do, I will run over its back. That will be a good game and so it’s running over the lion’s back; and when it got down there, what would the lion be able to do?

S: eat it

T: The lion would be able to see the mouse down there. So what the lion does, is catch the mouse beneath its paw, but we can’t see that.

What we can see here, we have to just think that in our heads, because what we can see here, is just the lion’s great big eye. Look how huge it is.
And can you see what’s up here?

S: Nail

T: That’s right the sharp claws of the lion. That’s the lion’s paw with its sharp, sharp claws.  
Ooh! I wouldn’t like to be caught by them, would you?
And here’s the little mouse about to be caught.

Now what do you think that the lion was going to do with that mouse, now it’s caught it beneath his paw.

What do you think a lion would do?

S: Eat it.

T: That’s right. And I bet is that the mouse thinks, ‘Oh no, I am going to be eaten now for sure.’

But a mouse would only be a tiny little meal for a lion, wouldn’t it? Lions like to eat a lot because they’re so big and mighty. So this little mouse thinks to itself, ‘Maybe I can get out of trouble.’

She’s a brave little mouse, and she thinks quickly and she thinks of a story.

Video clip 13 – Handover, Day 2 The Lion and the Mouse

Low order orientation

• Engaging students with literate discourse
• Working from common knowledge
• Inviting students into the discourse and validating their right to belong
• Guiding students into control over the discourse

Description of lesson purpose [01;00;07;15]

T: What we are going to do today is see how much we can remember about the Lion and the Mouse story that we looked at yesterday and we’re going to see just how much we know about it now because we read it yesterday didn’t we? So I bet we know lots of things and we’ll see if we can remember what’s going on in this story.

Working from common knowledge - page 2 [01;00;24;15]

T: So first of all who can remember what the story is called?

S: The Lion and the Mouse (a few children respond)

T: That’s right, The Lion and the Mouse. I’ll open it up. Oh, this is the name of the person who wrote it. It’s been retold by Patricia Scott and it’s a very old story, this story. People have been telling it for hundreds of years. Because it teaches us a lesson, doesn’t it? About even the small and weak being able to help the strong and mighty.

So who is the strong and mighty animal here?

S: Lion (2 children respond others join in)

T: Oh right, and here he is and who is this?

S: Mouse (Most children respond)

T: Yes, that’s right, great. The mouse isn’t strong and mighty is he, what’s the mouse?

S: Weak and (one child responds)

T: Yes.

S: Tiny (another child responds)

T: Yes, it’s tiny and it’s weak and he is not anything like as strong as the lion. That’s great. Can anybody remember what this little mouse is doing here?

S: Running down his back.
T: Yes. And what did you say?
S: Playfully.
T: Yes. Both exactly right. What did you want to say?
S: Ran down over his face.
T: Yes, good. That’s right. He is going to do that isn’t he? So you have got great memories. That’s fantastic and I was really proud of the person who said playfully. He was playing because remember he is not being a nuisance he is not meaning to bother the lion is he? He is just out playing. Can anybody remember where the mouse lives?
S: Nearby (most children respond)
T: You are so clever. Well done. Yes, and nearby means its not very far away, it’s fairly close isn’t it. So it probably just lives over here in these trees. Can anybody remember why it’s important for the mouse to live nearby? Yes, why?
S: Help him (one child responds)
T: That’s right. So when the lion gets into trouble the mouse is likely just to be playing around close by, not going to be far away. You are so good at remembering you people.

Working from common knowledge - page 3 [01;02;48;10]

T: Now, oh, whose eye is this?
S: Lion (most children respond)
T: And, oh, I forgot on this page (quickly returned to page 2): Is the lion asleep?
S: No. (most children respond)
T: What is the lion doing?
S: Resting (two children respond)
T: Yes, he is awake and he is resting. Well done both of you. He is not asleep like the mouse thinks. He has got one eye open, but from over here the mouse wouldn’t see that eye. The mouse would think that the lion was asleep. (Turns back to page 3) Now there’s that eye over here. Who can remember what these are up here? (pointing to lion’s paw in illustration)
S: Claws. (one child responds)
T: What is the lion going to do?
S: Catch it. (one child responds).
T: Yes, that’s right. So a lion has big paws doesn’t it and in its paws it has these claws and the lion is going to catch the mouse beneath hi paw, under his paw. Can you make a lion’s paw? Just show me your lion’s paw. That’s right.
S: (all respond)
T: And you are going to reach out and pretend to catch a mouse beneath your paw. That’s right. Good. Well done. And here is the little mouse (points to illustration). I can’t tell if the little mouse looks worried but remember the lion says he is going to eat the mouse. Why is he going to eat him? Can anybody remember why the mouse is going to be eaten? Why the lion is going to eat the mouse rather?
S: He is hungry (one child responds).
T: Yes, the lion has just probably woken up and he is feeling a bit hungry and he is also very, very cross with the mouse because the mouse has disturbed his sleep.

Working from common knowledge - page 4 [01;04;39;00]
T: Okay, so who’s this?
S: Mouse. (All children respond)
T: and the person who drew the pictures in the book didn’t draw the mouse squashed by the lion’s paw. Did it? With a little mouse under the paw. It drew the mouse just here. So we get the idea.
that the mouse is talking and remember this is a quick talking mouse. It’s talking the lion out of eating it. Can anyone remember what the mouse says to the lion to stop the lion from eating her?

S: Yes.
S: Don’t eat me (one child responds)
T: Yes, it says don’t eat me because …?
S: I’ll help (one child responds)
T: Well done. That’s right. What were you going to say? You were going to say that too. Well done. Good. So the tiny little mouse says, ‘Perhaps if you forgive me,’ that means, if you let me go, ‘then some day I may be able to do something to help you,’ and
S: (child interjects – unintelligible)
T: Yes, well done. That’s pretty funny isn’t it, otherwise the lion would have got caught.

Working from common knowledge - page 5

T: This is the page where the lion laughs. You can see the lion over here laughing. So why did the lion laugh?
S: Funny (one child responds)
T: Yes you only laugh if something is really funny, don’t you? What did the lion think was really funny?
S: Mouse (one child responds)
T: Yes, he is laughing at the mouse saying such a silly thing.
S: Yes ………… (one child responds).
T: Yes. That’s exactly right. Well done. Because the mouse said the lion laughed because he said, ‘You a little mouse, help me, the king of beasts?’ Because the lion is the biggest animal in the jungle and he is the king of all the other animals and so lions are often called the king of the beasts in stories. That’s one of the things they are called. So the lion thinks that’s very funny and he thought it was so funny that he thought he would let the mouse go.

So what does he do with his paw? Can anyone remember? He had the mouse under his paw so he had to lift his paw and let the mouse go free and what does the mouse do when the lion lifts his paw?
S: She ran away (one child responds)
T: Yes, the little mouse ran away as fast as she could go. She just said, ‘thank you’ as fast as she could go and a really hasty ‘thank you’ away she went as fast as she could go because I bet she thought the lion might change its mind and eat her after all. So it got out of the way.

Working from common knowledge - page 6

T: Then this page is actually over the next few days. So the lion would be thinking and it would think about the mouse and what do you think the lion did every time he thought about the mouse?
S: Laugh (most children respond)
T: ‘Ha, ha! Fancy a little mouse helping the king of the beasts.’ That is funny but what’s going to happen
S: ……… (one child responds)

Working from common knowledge - page 7

T: Yes, there is going to be a big problem with the king of the beasts, isn’t there? A big problem for the lion. What’s he going to get caught in?
S: The net (one child responds)
T: Oh good, very good memory. There he is and who set the net out on the ground to catch the lion? Who set it?
S: The hunters (all children respond)
T: Yes, that’s right. Hunters go round catching animals like lions and taking their skin so that they can make rugs for the floor or to hang on the wall.

S: Like a jumper (one child responds)

T: So, the hunters can say that they have killed the king of the beasts. So, here is this poor lion. Look at his face. He is not laughing now is he?

S: He is sad (one child responds)

T: Very sad. Well done. He is thinking about what might happen to him and can he get out of there by himself?

S: No (all children respond)

T: However much he struggles; when you struggle you push and you shove and you kick; however hard he struggles, the net just tightens and holds him very fast.

Working from common knowledge - page 8
T: Okay. So who’s this?

S: The mouse (all children respond)

T: And why is the mouse running?

S: To help the lion (most children respond)

T: Yes, she is just running around looking for food and she comes and sees the lion caught in the net. Then look what she does.

Working from common knowledge - page 9
T: Who are all of these?

S: Friends (most children respond)

T: And what are they all doing? Yes?

S: Cutting the rope (one child responds)

T: Well done. That’s right. Biting the string. They are gnawing through the strands of the rope. Remember that special word, gnawed, which means biting and chewing through the rope?

Working from common knowledge - page 10
T: And what’s the lion doing here?

S: He’s free (one child responds)

T: Yes, he is free. The lion is free and he is saying something to the mouse. Can anybody remember what he is saying to the mouse?

S: You were right (one child responds)

T: Well done, you are extra specially clever because you were reading that weren’t you? That’s terrific. Yes see the lion here is bowing. That means he is bending over bowing to the mouse and usually when people bow to things it’s a sign of being respectful, but this time the lion bows to the mouse and says, ‘You were right’ because remember the little mouse said before, ‘If you let me go some day I may be able to help you.’ The lion thought that was really funny but this time it turns out to be true. The little mouse did help the lion and so the lion says, ‘Thank you, you were right. Even the small and weak, (that’s the mouse), can help the strong and mighty.’ So even though the lion didn’t really believe the mouse, it turned out to be true.

Teacher reads story to the class
T: Now I will read it to you and if you want to read along with me you can and if you just want to listen, that’s fine.

The Lion and the Mouse

One day a lion was resting when a little mouse, who lived nearby, ran playfully over his back and down over his head to the ground.
The lion stirred and, reaching out, caught the mouse beneath his paw. “Mouse,” he said, “you have disturbed my sleep. I think I will eat you.”

“Oh, pardon, my Lord,” said the mouse. “Please do not eat me. Perhaps, if you forgive me, someday I may be able to do something to help you.”

The lion laughed, “You, a little mouse, help me, the king of the beasts?” He laughed again, but he lifted his paw, allowing the mouse to go free. With a hasty “thank you”, the mouse ran off before the lion could change his mind.

Over the next few days, the lion thought of the mouse often, but she kept well away from him. Sometimes he would laugh again at the thought of a little mouse helping the king of the beasts. But even kings can get into trouble. One day the lion became caught in a net set by hunters as he struggled to free himself, the net tightened and held him fast. As luck would have it, the mouse came running that way in search of food. Seeing the lion caught in the net, she called all her friends. They came and gnawed at the strands of rope. Before long, they had broken the net and the lion was free. Bowing, the lion thanked the mouse. “You were right,” he said. “Even the small and weak can help the strong and mighty.”

Summary of moral – transition into high order orientation
T: So that was lucky for the lion wasn’t it? That’s pretty funny, isn’t it? That he let that mouse go; otherwise the story would have ended when the lion got caught.

High order orientation
• Engaging students with literate discourse
• Inviting them into the discourse and validating their right to belong
• Building common knowledge
• Guiding students into control over the discourse

Introduction of high order orientation [02;00;05;15]

Description of the activity
T: Now I wonder if there is anyone can remember what we did yesterday with the pen: how we found some words with a pen. You can? Such good rememberers. All right. So see if you can help me remember how the author wrote this part of the story because the author chose her words really carefully so we would know what was going on in this story.

Text marking activity to identify the author’s language choices [02;00;28;18]

Page 2
T: So the author starts off telling us when this happened. Remember we don’t know exactly when it happened it just happened on ‘one day’ long ago. So did anybody see the part that tells us when the story was taken place?
S: One day (one child responds)
T: You are so clever. Did anyone else know it was going to be ‘one day’?
S: …(another child responds)
T: Terrific. Would you like to come up and put a line under the words that say ‘one day’? You watch and see where ‘one day’ is. Okay. Can you do day as well? That’s the word that says ‘one’ (teacher points) and do ‘day’ as well. Fantastic.
T: Then it tells us about the first character, what the first character was doing ‘one day’. So ‘one day…’, who’s this?
S: A lion (about 4 children respond)
T: That’s right, a lion. Do you want to underline ‘a lion’?
S: Yes
T: I think it will be all underlined today. Did you know which words were ‘a lion’? (to one child as a compliment) You may be able to help me with the next one. And remember to do ‘a’ lion this time (to child with the pen) because we are just meeting the lion for the first time. It’s just one particular lion that is walking through the jungle at this particular time.

T: And what was the lion doing?
S: Resting (all children respond)

T: Can anyone see the word ‘resting’? Can you see this? Come on. Come and underline it. I’ll help you.
S: Me (another child asks)

T: Yes, I will have to choose you. You are working so hard. Excellent. Make sure you sit up so you can see. That’s great. Alright. So he was resting. Then what happened?
S: The mouse came along (all children respond)

T: What sort of mouse? Were you going to say a mouse? (to several children) You were. You were. Well done. Can you see where it says ‘a mouse’ and it doesn’t just say ‘a mouse’ does it?
S: A little mouse (some children)

T: because it’s not a big mouse it’s only a little mouse. Where does it say ‘a little mouse’? A little mouse. Mouse starts with M. Well done. Good. You see, it doesn’t just say a mouse it emphasises it’s little and weak. A little mouse. Now it doesn’t tell us what the mouse did next, it tells about where the mouse lived. Where did the mouse live?
S: Nearby (all children respond)

T: Can you see the word “nearby”? Okay, you can and do the word nearby. Good you knew it didn’t you. Look at all the people who are helping. Well done. What did the mouse do? What’s the actual thing the mouse did?
S: ‘Ran’, (most children respond)

T: That’s right, and can you see the word that says ‘ran’. Come and do it. ‘Ran’. Look at this see how much is underlined (of the page of text). Aren’t you the cleverest people? Now this is tricky. Who can remember how the mouse ran?
S: Ran on his back
S: Over his back
S: On his head (several responses)

T: Yes, it did run on his back, that’s right and that’s where he ran, well done. That’s the next bit. How did he run? Remember he was playing he wasn’t being naughty, he was playing. Can you remember?
S: Playful (one child responds)

T: Oh, you are pretty clever. What were you going to say?
S: Playful (one child responds)

T: Yes, he ran ‘playfully’. Who can see the word that says playfully? All right come on then. Did you know what it was too? That’s good. Look at this word very carefully, play-full-y. Good. Then it just doesn’t tell us he ran over his back, it tells us he ran ‘over his back and down over his head to the ground’. So who can see the first place that the mouse ran.
S: Over his back (most children respond)

T: Do you want to come up and underline this? You can. I will help you. Oh you are going to. Well done. They’re the words that say it. And the next one (to child doing the marking) b-ack. This is such a clever class. Right. So in the first place he ran was over his back. Then where did he go?
S: Head, head (most children respond)
S: ground (one child responds)
T: Yes, the ground is the last place. And down over his head. Good. Now the mouse is up to here.
Right you come and do that. That’s brilliant. Such good workers. The author tells us exactly how
the mouse got to the ground doesn’t she? Great. Now can everybody try really hard to help me
read this page.
S: …. (one child)
T: No, they’re not quite all underlined are they? Help me? (starts to read)
“One day a lion was resting when a little mouse, who lived nearby, ran playfully over his back and
down over his head to the ground.” Well, you are fantastic. Well done all of you. Everybody is
helping me. That’s great. Now we’ll look one more page just quickly. Then I will do something else
with you. Yes.
Text marking of part of page 3 [02;07;51;14]
Short activity to develop meaning of a particularly literate part of the text.
T: What you can do first of all is pretend to be the lion. Can all of you go to sleep on the floor like
the lion? You pretend that you are the lion. (children lie down on the floor) Just make sure you
have enough space because this is what happens on this page.
Okay, so the lion is asleep and now a little mouse disturbs your sleep, so you have to stir first, that
means just start to stretch and wake up. Alright, just start to stretch and move slowly that’s how
you stir. The lion stirred. So start to wake up, start to sit up and pretend that in front of you there
is a little mouse. A little mouse who disturbed your sleep. So stretch, reach out with your paw.
Everyone reach out and catch the mouse beneath your paw.
Okay, go to sleep and I will tell you. You do it while I say it. ‘The lion stirred.’ Okay stir means you
start to stretch. Start to get up, pretend to see a mouse, reach out with your paw and catch the
So sit up well done and see if we can see the words that tell us this. Now remember, what’s the first
thing that the lion does?
S: Stretch  (most children responded)
T: Yes, the special word for that is the lion stirred. Stirred. Not like this, this is stirring (her arm goes
round in circles) Yes, (to child moving). Just starts to move and wake up. The lion stirred. Who
can see the words that say ‘the lion’? Who hasn’t had a turn? You haven’t. You can do the next
one. You underline ‘the lion’ for me That would be great. See, ‘the lion’, lion starts with L. It
doesn’t call it ‘a lion’ this time it’s ‘the lion’. ‘The lion’ we met on the first page. Who can see the
word that says ‘stirred’? Come on. Stirred that’s just when it starts to wake up. He does three
things doesn’t he? He stirred. What’s the next thing he does?
S; He stirred, then he has to reach out, reaching out  (most children respond)
T: Can you do ‘reaching out’? That’s what you were doing when you woke up wasn’t it, you were
reaching out. Well done and when he was reaching out what was the next thing, catching
S: … (a few children respond)
S: paw (one child responds)
T: that’s right, the mouse was beneath his paw.
T: The lion stirred and reaching out …
S: caught (one child responds)
T: that’s right, would you like to do caught. This class is so clever. And what was it that the lion
catched?
S; mouse (most children respond)
T: Do you want to do the mouse? Good. See it says ‘the mouse’ this time, it is the same mouse the
author was talking about on the last page and ‘reaching out caught the mouse’ and where did he
catch the mouse? Beneath his paw, that’s right. So you want to do beneath his paw? Good.
What were you going to say? You were going to say beneath his paw too. You are working very hard back there. Beneath –his- paw. Can you all help me read that sentence? It’s very important because the lion has done three things, he stirred, he was reaching out and the third thing was, he caught the mouse beneath his paw. Can you help me read it?

‘The lion stirred and, reaching out, caught the mouse beneath his paw.’

Well done, then, he says something. Because if he just caught the mouse beneath his paw and left the mouse there, the mouse just would have died, but he says something to the mouse. Yes?

S: don’t eat me (one child responds)

T: Yes, that is what the mouse is going to say. Well done. The mouse is going to say, ‘please do not eat me’. Well done. The lion tells the mouse why he caught him and why he is cross. “Mouse” he said, “you have disturbed my sleep. I think I will eat you”. (some children join in the reading). He is not sure yet. He doesn’t just say, ‘you have disturbed my sleep. I will eat you.’ Chomp. Does he?

S: No (child)

T: He says ‘I think’ I will eat you. He hasn’t made up his mind up yet. Okay. So when you say someone has disturbed your sleep. What does it mean?

S: Head (child)

T: Remember how the little mouse was running over the lion’s back. Yes.

S: Disturbs (one child responds)

T: When the mouse ran across the lion’s back it ‘disturbed’ the lion’s sleep, it was sleeping peacefully till then. But the little footsteps of the mouse spoilt his sleep. Disturbed it. Okay, so if you were fast asleep and the mouse ran up your back, it would disturb you wouldn’t it? Okay, so, can anybody see the first thing that the lion says. What’s the first thing he says?

S: Mouse (most children respond)

T: Right. (video excerpt ends here) [02;14;32;21] Who would like to underline mouse for me?

Would you? “Mouse” he said and what did he say to the mouse

S: ………. (a few children respond with their opinions)

T: Well done. Okay, so you have disturbed my sleep. Who would like to underline “you have disturbed my sleep”? Would you? Oh sorry you can do the next time. You are sitting up so beautifully. Let read it while he underlines it “you have disturbed my sleep”.

T: And what does he think he will do?

S: Eat it (one child responds).

T: Do you want to come up and underline “I think I will eat you.” Do you want to do that bit? Great. Can you all help me read the whole page now? Now you get your lion voices ready because you have to say it like a cross lion. Alright.

T: ‘The lion stirred and, reaching out, caught the mouse beneath his paw.’ Got your lion voices ready? ‘Mouse,’ he said, ‘you have disturbed my sleep’. I think I will eat you.’ That would make me scared if I was a mouse. Well done. So look how well you can read that. Well done.

Transformations

• Change in focus from what this sentence means to why it was written this way. Word recognition was also a focus of this transformation which also has the effect of:

• Engaging students with literate discourse

• Inviting them into the discourse and validating their right to belong

• Building common knowledge

• Guiding students into control over the discourse

Description of the activity [03;00;08;01]
Workshop Material – PD1 Introduction to Accelerated Literacy

(Teacher places strips of cardboard on the transformations board. They have the sentence from page 2 of the book written on them.)

T: I am just going back to this page now, first page, and we are going to have a look at this board over here. We will see if there is anybody who knows which part of the story this is I am putting up here on this board. Make sure you can see won’t you? You can move right up here if you like. Some of you people can move over this way because I really want you to be able to see.

Identification and reading of the sentence on the board [03;00;31;04]

T: Okay, which bit?

S: (2 children respond)

S: One child reads alone. ‘One day a lion was resting when a little mouse, who lived nearby, ran playfully over his back and down over his head to the ground’

T: Fantastic, well done. Okay that’s the part. Would everybody like to read it now? Can you read it together without me even helping?

S: All children start reading (without teacher). ‘One day a little mouse.’ (They should have read ‘One day a lion’)

T: Oh, start again. It’s alright. Remember it tells us the lion first. It’s easy to get tricked because lion and little both start with L, don’t they? Okay. Have another go. (children read correctly)

S: ‘One day a lion was resting when a little mouse, who lived nearby, ran playfully over his back and down over his head to the ground.’

T: Well done.

Description of the activity (continued) [03;01;42;03]

T: I hope you are good with scissors. Good cutters? Because I am going to see if you can cut words off this and we are going to look really carefully at why Patricia Scott, the author of the book, why she chose these words.

Identification of chunks of meaning [03;02;00;08]

T: So who can see the words and tell us when the story happened? Remember, it starts off telling us when it happened, it didn’t happen just recently it happened on ‘one day’ far, far in the past, long ago. So who can see the words that tell us when this happened?

S: One day (one child responds)

T: You are the champion at finding one day aren’t you? Would you like to come and cut it off? You watch what she does. We’ll cut into single words later. The two words tell us when it happened. And if we didn’t have them it would just start off a lion was resting, wouldn’t it? And we wouldn’t know when it happened. We might think it happening just outside, we might it was just happening yesterday but it wasn’t, was it? I was happening ‘one day’ (child cut off ‘one day’). And, who is the big animal in this story?

S: Lion (all children respond)

T: Would you like to cut out ‘a lion’? And remember it is ‘a lion’. It is not any particular lion, it’s just ‘a lion’ who there on that ‘one day’. OK. Well done. (to child cutting) And what was the lion doing?

S: Lion (all children respond)

T: Resting (many responses)

T: Well done. It wasn’t asleep. Come on (to child) you do ‘was resting’. Look how quick everybody is. Cut out ‘was’ and ‘resting’ together because they go together in this one. (child cuts out words and drops strip, while some children laugh) It’s all right. Would you like to pick that up and put it back? That’s the way. Everybody drops it. I do all the time. The next words say ‘a’… (many children call out ‘a little mouse’) Oh, I didn’t even get to ask the question. What was I going to ask you? (pause) Who’s the little mouse?

S: (all children respond)
T: That’s right. The other character isn’t it. I was going to ask you who came along and you were going to say ‘a little mouse’ weren’t you? And this word tells us (points to ‘when’) that this mouse came along at the same time as the lion was resting. So cut off ‘when’ and then cut off ‘a little mouse’. See that little comma there? You can cut that off as well. That comma comes just before the bit that tells us where the little mouse lived. Does anybody remember where the little mouse lived?

S: Nearby (all children respond).

T: Oh, yes. OK then. I don’t know anybody’s names so I can’t ask you properly. I am sorry about that. Where’s the bit that says, ‘who lived nearby’? OK, you can cut that bit off. You can cut that comma off there. That just helps us understand the way it is written and tells how to read it. Good, so now we know that this wasn’t just any mouse this was the mouse, ‘who lived nearby’. And what was the thing that the mouse actually did?

S: Ran (most children respond).

T: Ran, right. Do you want to do ran?

S: (some children calling out ‘playfully’)

T: You’re already with ‘playfully’ aren’t you? The thing that he did was just ‘ran’, wasn’t it? First of all. OK? Which one is ran? Yes. Brilliant! (as child cuts off ‘ran’). OK. Now all of these other people, are you ready?

S: Playfully (all children respond)

T: Well, what am I going to ask you about ‘playfully’? What does playfully tell us?

S: Back, Over his back, playfully (many children respond)

T: ‘Playfully’, tells us how he ran, doesn’t it? He didn’t run naughtily over his back, he didn’t run happily, he ran playfully he was just playing. Well done. Good. Everone just look at playfully. If I just cover that up (teacher covers up ‘fully’) it just says ‘play’ play-full-y. Where was the first place he ran?

S: Over his back (all children respond)

T: Okay, that’s the first part that he ran. Would you like to do ‘over his back’. You can cut that bit off the end. Over his back.

S: Over his head (most children respond).

T: You want to do over his head. Well done. We have got some good helpers. Everybody is having a go. (to child cutting out) We’ll just put that bit down here, we don’t need it do we? ‘over his back’. And where is the next place he ran?

S: Over his head, and down his, To the ground and over his head and, and down his, over his head… (most children respond)

T: OK. ‘Over his head’. Do you want to do ‘over his head’? Well done! We’ve got some good helpers. Everyone is having a go. And- down- over- his- head (teacher reads and points so that the child cutting out knows where to cut). That’s it. That’s the exact right place (as the child cuts). OK. Well done. And where does he get to?

S: To the ground (many children respond)

T: Alright. OK. Do you want to do ‘to the ground’? (children point to one child) What’s his name?

S: (Children respond ‘Edward’)

T: (teacher to Edward) Do you want to do some cutting? (child does and comes and cuts out ‘to the ground’) Good. You’re thoughtful thinking about him aren’t you (to children who had suggested this child). Good. So now we know. Just let’s check that we have got it all. ‘One day a lion was resting when a little mouse, who lived nearby, ran playfully over his back and down over his head to the ground.’ (children read together). Well done, I don’t have to do any work, do I?

Transition into activities that foster word identification [03:08:57;18]
1: Word identification and discussion about the function of the phrase ‘who lived nearby’
T: Well I am going to see if I can trick you. Do you think I can? You shut your eyes I am going to turn a part of this over. Shut your eyes. (teacher turns over ‘who lived nearby’) Open them. (Child starts to call out and teacher asks them to wait.) Just keep it a secret. Just for a minute. (Reads without ‘who lived nearby’). ‘One day a lion was resting when a little mouse ran playfully over his back and down over his head to the ground’. That makes sense.
S: No (replied one or two children)
T: What’s missing?
S: Nearby (most of the children respond)
T: Yes, that right. What did you think? Yes. What did you think? Yes. Let’s see if all of you are right shall we. (reads) ‘A little mouse.’ I wonder where he lives. . If that bit’s not here I don’t know where that little mouse lived.
S: Nearby (most children respond)
T: A little mouse ‘who lived nearby’. Well done. So now I know, I can put that over there, (puts the phrase next to ‘s little mouse’) because it tells me where the mouse lived and if that bit wasn’t there I wouldn’t know that when the lion was caught in the trap that the little mouse could, would just be running around playing and see the lion was caught in the net set by the hunters.

2: Word identification and discussion about the function of the word ‘playfully’.
T: Shut your eyes. (teacher turns over the word ‘playfully’) Open your eyes: I bet you won’t know. I’ll read it, and see it, without this word. ‘One day a lion was resting when a little mouse, who lived nearby, ran over his back and down over his head to the ground’.
S: Playfully (most children respond)
T: Well done. Well, I’ll just see if you are right. If this word is playfully then I will know how the little mouse ran over the lion. I would know that the little mouse was not just being naughty he was just playing. And what do you think the word ‘playfully’ would start with?
S: ‘P’ (most children respond)
T: Let have a look. Play-full-y. Well done.

3: Word identification and discussion about the function of the words ‘one day’.
T: Well shut your eyes and I will see if I can trick you again. (teacher turns over ‘one day ‘) Open them.
S: One day (most children respond).
T: Can anybody remember what ‘one day’ tells us? So why did the author put one day in there?
S: Just ‘one day’ (one child replies)
T: Right, so why did the author put one day in there?
S: Because it happened one day (on child responds)
T: Good. We know now when the story happened don’t we? Let’s see if you are right. If it was ‘one day’ you would see the number one and then day ‘one day’. Well there is not much I can do to trick you is there? Okay.

4: Word identification and discussion about the function of the phrase ‘and down over his head’
T: Close your eyes. Shut your eyes again. (teacher turns over ‘and down over his head’) Open them. What have I left out this time? (reads sentence without the words turned over) ‘One day a lion was resting when a little mouse, who lived nearby, ran playfully over his back to the ground.’
S: Head (several child respond)
T: ‘Down over his head.’ Yes. What were you going to say? You were going to say over his head too, weren’t you? Very good. ‘Over his back.’ We know that much, don’t we? And if it just went
over his back to the ground the mouse would be down there wouldn’t it and the lion wouldn’t see
the mouse with his open eye. So the author told us ‘over his back and down over his head’ (child
adds) …to the ground’. So the mouse ends up there. Would you like to come and turn it over?
S: Me. (two children responds)
T: Come and turn it over and see if it is ‘and down over his head’. (child turns words over) Is it?
Let’s have a look. (Everyone reads with the teacher) ‘And down over his head’.
5: Word identification and discussion about the function of the phrase ‘to the ground’ [03;14;15;22]
T: Alright, what if you shut your eyes and I turn one more over? (teacher turns over ‘to the ground’)
Open your eyes. (Reads) ‘One day a lion was resting when a little mouse, who lived nearby, ran
playfully over his back and down over his head.’
S: Down to the ground. (most children reply)
S: To the ground. (one or two children respond)
T: OK, and why do we need to know ‘to the ground’? Yes?
S: so the lion can see him (child responds)
T: Well done, that’s right. If it was just ‘down over his head’. I don’t know where (observer
interrupts, ‘Maybe someone in the group could turn it over because they are such good readers’) Well, who
would like to turn it over and see if it does say that? Would you? Who hasn’t had a shot?
S: Me.
T: Oh big fib (laughingly) Is it right?
S: To the ground (about three children respond)
T: Well, I can’t trick any of you can I. That’s very, very good.
6: Word identification – jumbled phrases [03;15;30;05]
T: I wonder if we can cut some words out now. Who can, oh, we’ll do another game first. Shut your
eyes again. Don’t peep. (teacher mixes all the cut out phrases up) Open your eyes. (Reads) ‘Playfully/went/to the ground/ and/a little mouse/who lived nearby/ a lion/ one day /was resting/ and down over his head /over his back/ran.’
T: Well, that’s an odd story isn’t it? Did that make sense?
S: No.
T: Who can help me put it back. S: Me.
T: What will be the first think I will have to have? How do I start it off?
S: ‘One day’. (many children)
T: Yes? What do you think?
S: One day (all children respond).
T: Why would it start off ‘one day’? (Several children respond – indistinct) Right, that just tells us
when it happened. Who would like to come and put ‘one day’ in?
S: Me.
T: Come on. Just put it up here. (helping child) Who comes next?
S: Lion (most children respond)
T: Why is the lion next? Do you know?
S: I know … (child’s answer indistinct)
T: That’s right, it’s the first character. Yes. Would you like to come and put ‘a lion’ where it
belongs? What comes next?
S: A lion (child responds)
T: Good. ‘One day a lion…’
S: was resting (child responds)
T: Come and find that then. This is what the lion was doing. ‘One day a lion was resting’…?
S: when a little mouse (several children respond)
T: ‘When’ means that the same time he was resting something else was going to happen. (helps child find when)
S: ‘Little mouse’.
T: OK come and find the next character. Can you see it. Little mouse. Check if it is right. Where did the little mouse live rather? I nearly forgot where the little mouse lived.
S: Nearby (most children respond). Yes.
T: Who can see the bit that says nearby. Can you? (points to child)
S: Me (another child)
T: Sorry (to child who wanted a turn) I’d asked this person first. Good. And these commas help us read that too. Okay? ‘The commas just help us know how to read it we say, ‘A little mouse, comma, (one child responds) who lived nearby.’ Now, what did that little mouse who lived nearby do
S: Playfully/lion (two answers, most children respond with one or the other)
T: He did something else before he did it playfully. He…?
S: ran (most children respond).
T: Do you see the word that says ‘ran’? You have got sharp eyes, I couldn’t see. Now how did he run?
S: Playfully (all children respond).
T: Alright you come and do playfully. You all know this well. I bet you get mixed up on this. Where did he run?
S: over his back (most children responded)
T: That’s the first thing he did over his back. Where does he go next?
S: And down over his head (all children respond)
T: Ok, you come and do and down over his head. Down-over-his-head (helps child)
S: to the ground (all children respond)
T: Come on then (points to child) And I think we have got it. Can we see? (everyone reads)
S: ‘One day a lion was resting when a little mouse, who lived nearby, ran playfully over his back and down over his head to the ground.’
T: Goodness, are you tired? No. You are not! But, you have been working so long, haven’t you? You have worked all the way up to recess time and everybody has just worked and worked. You should just think that you are very clever. Thank you very much. Alright. I will look forward to seeing you next time. You are such good workers.

**Video clip 16 and 17 – High order literate orientation: The Lion and the Mouse**

Part 1
T: Okay, now I am going to ask someone to help me again. We are going to have a look a little bit harder at how the person who wrote this book chose their words. I am going to ask someone to come and help me here. Let’s see if we can remember, or we can find out rather, all the things that the person who wrote the book told us about who is in the story and when it happened and
what the little mouse is doing.
Okay, so the very first thing that the person who wrote the book tells us, is when this happened
and he tells us it happened ‘one day’ and so when you say something happened ‘one day’ it
means that it didn’t happen any particular day it just happened ‘one day’ usually it means long,
long ago, and then it tells us who the story is about, or one of the characters it’s about.
So who can tell me who the first character is that it tells us about? ‘One day…?’ (teacher reads
and pauses) Who is it about? Who is the big creature the story is about?
S: Lion.
T: Okay, can anybody see the words that say a lion? Can anybody help me?
S: Lion.
T: Can you come and point to where it says a lion? Can anybody help me?
S: Lion.
T: Right, would you like to put a line under where it says ‘a lion’? That would be great
Just under ‘a lion’. Good.
Can you see lion starts with L?
Would you like to just sit down where you can see really well?
That’s great.
Who can tell me what the lion was doing?
S: Resting.
T: Fantastic. Can you see where it says that?
S: ‘One day a lion was resting when a little mouse, who lived nearby, ran playfully over his back and
down over his head to the ground.’
Parts
T: You are all right. He is running over, and here it says, ‘One day a lion was resting when a little
mouse, who lived nearby, ran …’ so it says ‘ran’.
Then it doesn’t just say ‘he ran over his back’, it tells us something really important; it tells us how
the mouse ran. It wasn’t trying to be a nuisance to the lion. He didn’t want to bother the lion, so
he ran ‘playfully’.
Can anyone see the word ‘playfully’. Can you? Can you? All right can you do ‘playfully’?
See if the mouse was just playing it means he wasn’t trying to bother the lion, he was just playing.
Now, look at all the places that he runs. Can you read this bit with me? Over his back, and down
over his head to the ground’
Okay just before everybody goes out to play, can everyone try really hard to help me read this?
And what I want you to do is read the bits that you have underlined and I’ll read the other bits. So
be ready.
‘T & S: One day a lion was resting when a little mouse who lived nearby ran playfully over his back
and down over his head to the ground.’
T: That is just fantastic, and remember if you were a little mouse and you were just going out to play
you would run ‘playfully’. When you go outside to play you would run "playfully" because you are
going out to play.

Video clip 21 – Transformations: The Lion and the Mouse
S: ‘One day a lion was resting when a little mouse, who lived nearby, ran playfully over his back and
down over his head to the ground.’

T: Well done.

I hope you are good with scissors. Good cutters? Because I am going to see if you can cut words off this and we are going to look really carefully at why Patricia Scott, the author of the book, why she chose these words.

So who can see the words and tell us when the story happened? Remember, it starts off telling us when it happened, it didn’t happen just recently it happened on ‘one day’ far, far in the past, long ago. So who can see the words that tell us when this happened?

S: One day

T: You are the champion at finding one day aren’t you?

Would you like to come and cut it off?

You watch what she does. We’ll cut into single words later. The two words tell us when it happened. And if we didn’t have them it would just start off a lion was resting, wouldn’t it? And we wouldn’t know when it happened. We might think it happening just outside, we might it was just happening yesterday but it wasn’t, was it? I was happening ‘one

And, who is the big animal in this story?

S: Lion (all children respond)

T: Would you like to cut out ‘a lion’? And remember it is “a lion”. It is not any particular lion, it’s just ‘a lion’ who there on that ‘one day’. OK. Well done.

And what was the lion doing?

S: Resting (many responses)

T: Well done. It wasn’t asleep. Come on you do ‘was resting’.
**Transcripts for Lockie Leonard Human Torpedo**

**Video clip 14 – Low order literate orientation: Lockie Leonard Human Torpedo**

T: Now the thing about Lockie is that his dad is a policeman, and so they moved around a lot. At the start of this story they’ve just come to this brand new town and he hates it. I don’t know if you’ve moved much, but sometimes when you go to a new place, it’s pretty horrible. It’s not much fun to go to a brand new town. You’ve got to make new friends; he had to go to a new high school. And when they first went to the town it was awful, he just hated it.

The bit of the story we are going to look at, going to look and see how Tim Winton, the person who wrote it, makes the story seem sad at the start – by telling us it’s raining, he uses rainy, cold weather to make the story seem sad, cause it’s really hard for poor old Lockie going to this new town.

So I’ll read a bit of it to you, but for a change, I thought we would use the tape if we could and the part that we are going to work on in a lot of detail is this part.

The first chapter is called “Truly Packing Death”, and it’s called that because when he comes to town he is not happy; he’s quite scared about the whole thing. He feels really bad about having to go a new town and this tells us about it. The first thing tells us about how horrible it was when he first went there, but then a little bit later he gets to like the place. So in this chapter we find out about how they arrived at the town, and how sad it seemed, and how horrible. Then, it goes to tell us about how he got to like the place, what his bedroom was like in his house, and how they settled in. Then what he did in the first few weeks of the term. So we’ll just listen to the first bit. Later on you’ll get your own book.

**Video clip 18 – High order literate orientation: Lockie Leonard Human Torpedo**

T: And so Tim Winton makes the mood for us by talking about the first day he goes into the town, it was raining. OK?

So we’ll just have another look at this bit because it is a good way to start a story. If you’re thinking “how can I write something that people read and know how I was feeling when I wrote it, or how the characters are feeling?”, then you can talk about the weather. Happy things happen on a nice day, sad things happen on rainy days quite often in books. If you watch out, you’ll see that rain usually means the story is going to be a bit sad. OK? So that’s what he’s done. And he’s done it like this.

So this is the bit we’ve just heard. It starts off by telling us ummm, I’ll just go through this bit again, and you can see, then I’ll ask you some questions about it. And what we are going to do is have a really good look at the language he uses, the English words he uses here.

“The first day Lockie Leonard saw this town, it was raining. The old family Falcon had been loaded down like a refugee boat, as they rolled into this little place, fresh from the city.”

So that tells us how they got there. Then it tells us how the whole family was feeling.

“The whole family tried to be cheerful about it, but the place look awful.”

And then there’s a bit more about the town....

“The town was small and crummy looking, and when they saw the house, the police force had organised for them, everyone in the car went quiet.”

And then he tells us how each person reacts, what they think.

“Lockie’s little brother looked at him, peeing off his nose with his fingers. His baby sister squirmed on the front seat. His dad left the motor running. His mum just started bawling.”

So she was crying. So that’s how everybody felt about the town. Did anybody like it?

S: No.
T: No. Not one person in all their family. So as this we read this, it doesn’t just start off saying Lockie Leonard was a boy 12 years old, does it? It starts off, we find out about his family as it goes.

So have a look at the first bit, and is there anyone then that can tell me what the weather was like on this particular day, as they came into the new town? Can you tell me what the weather was like? What does it tell us here?

Alright? What we are going to do is have a look at the story, the way it's written and see if we can find parts of it to underline, so that everybody knows exactly what it is about. OK? And everyone know how it’s written. Then you’ll all be able to read it really well.

So in this first bit, in the first sentence rather, what does Tim Winton tell us the weather was like?

S: Raining.

T: OK. So could you underline “It was raining” for us, the bit that says that. Then everyone can see it.

Had Lockie Leonard ever been at this town before?

Thanks. Good

Had Lockie been in this town before, do you know? How do we know? What does it say that tells us he’s never been there before?

If you look at the top it tells us. “This was … the first day Lockie Leonard saw this town.” OK? So this was the first time, they are just driving into town, and what was the weather like? Raining. Nothing looks so good in the rain does it?

Video clip 22 – Transformations: Lockie Leonard Human Torpedo

T: … “fresh from the city.”

“The whole family tried to be cheerful about it, but the place looked awful.”

We’ll just look at that much. And I’ll ask you to cut some bits off for me.

So, can anyone see the bit that tells about the weather on this day? What was it like the day Lockie Leonard first saw town? Can you remember what it was like?

S: raining.

T: That’s right, it was raining. Do you want to cut out “it was raining”? And we’ll just put that bit together.

That’s terrific. OK, and then, if you just cut the full-stop off as well. I wanted you to cut if like that actually.

So we can put that up here and cut off the bit that says “it was raining”. And it’s interesting “it was raining” was the end of the sentence, because Tim Winton could have put it like this … Can you read it like this?

S: It was raining the first day Lockie Leonard saw this town.

T: That’s right. He could have done it like that. And that might have been more and that might have been more the way you’d expect it to be, with “it was raining” first. But, Tim Winton wants us to know it’s raining but he wants us to know first of all that this was the first day Lockie Leonard saw this town. The most important thing was it was the first time he saw the town.

So how do we know, what words does he us to tell us, that Lockie Leonard hasn’t been in this town before? He’s new there today? Can you see the way it tells us that? It doesn’t tell us straight out, “Lockie Leonard was moving to a new town”.

S: City.

T: Yeah, that’s right. It says, “he was fresh from the city”. That’s how you know he was coming from another place. But it also tells us it was “the first day”. OK? So the first day means he mustn’t
have ever been there, this is the first time he’s come. Would someone like to cut off “the first day” from there? OK, good. Just the bit that says “the first day”.

So we know he hasn’t been here before. His dad and mum can’t have brought them to see where they were moving to, before. He’s just having to come this day.

Terrific, thanks.

So we know right from here that this is the first time they’ve been there.

S: Lockie Leonard.

T: OK. How about you cut off Lockie Leonard’s name for me? Thanks.

Video clip 24 – Spelling: Lockie Leonard Human Torpedo

T: Once you understand what Tim Winton’s written… that’s a really good start to help you with your own writing. If you learn to write some of the things the way he does, that helps you with your writing too. And especially if you know how to spell some of the words.

So I won’t do this word. I think everyone can write “the” in this class, but we’ll have a practise with “first”. But I don’t want you to write it yet. I just want you to watch a moment.

So, when we write the word, “first”, if you are not sure about how to spell it, the way that helps you learn it is to think about the patterns that it has in it.

And when we write “first”, the pattern that occurs in other words, that is useful to you, is this bit that says, “irst”. So the word’s got two bits. It’s got the bit that says “ff”, and the bit that says “irst”. OK? And the bit that says “irst” has “IR” making “ir”. So it’s “IR .. st”. OK? Now I want you to have a really good look at it, and remember that it’s “I.R.S.T. … irst”. OK, got it? OK, have a go at writing “irst”, just the bit that says “irst”.

… I’ll do it again. Right? Remember “irst”? (starts writing on whiteboard). “I R S T”. “irst”. Did you get it?

S: Yes.

T: Good. If you weren’t sure, have a good look at it now. OK? Now have another go at writing “irst”. Just the bit of the word that says “irst”.

Well done. Good. You can rub it off. Everyone got that. That was really good. So, all you have to do to make it into “first”, is put the “F” in front. But as you write it, I don’t want you to go “FIRST”, like that. That’s the hard way to spell. The easy way is to think of it in it’s patterns, and as you write it, say under your breathe, “ff … irst”, and write it like that, OK? Go “ff … irst”, and write it.

Excellent, that’s really good kids.
Additional reading

Preparing to read


Nicholson reviews the literature on the importance of print and meaning in learning to read. For example, he compares the top-down theory argued by Frank Smith (Whole language), who saw reading as a meaning driven process, with Gough’s notion that it is a bottom-up decoding process. Frank Smith argued that reading is too complex a skill to be directly taught and that children can only learn to read through the experience of reading or being read to. Gough claimed reading is print-driven and that readers only use context as a back-up for predicting words they can’t figure out. Is there an element of truth in both these assertions, do you think?

Nicholson concludes that both print and meaning are important in learning to read and that the reading process may be both top-down and bottom-up at different stages of children’s reading development. Think about how this process might be different for beginning readers compared with children who have learnt to decode; and the implications for teaching students at different stages of reading development.

Read Nicholson’s chapter, and think about the Accelerated Literacy reading model. What connections can you make between this chapter and the AL reading model?
3: Theories of Reading Acquisition

Children’s theories about reading

Did you know that children have their own theories about reading? In fact there may be 35 different theories in your classroom as well as your own.

How do we find out about children’s theories? One way of doing this is to ask them to comment on certain kinds of reading ‘errors’. For example, you could show some children the following story.1

(See also Figure 3.)

I live near this canal.
Men haul things up and down the canal in big boats.

Let’s say you then play them a tape recording in which this same story has been deliberately misread in four different ways by another child. In other words, this same story is read to them four times, and each time different mistakes are made. The mistakes are intended to reflect children’s ‘theories’ of reading. What would happen?

Well here are some comments from an eight year old pupil who is also a good reader.2

Theory A — where the child on the audio-tape reads canal as c/can/cannel working through the word letter by letter apparently not using context clues.

How did he work out the word ‘canal’? Well, when he gets to canal, he’s sounding the words out, halving them sort of.

What would you have done?
I think I would have done the same. I would have sounded out the words.
Do you think he is a good reader?
No. He’s too slow and he doesn’t know all the words.

Theory B — where the child on the audio-tape simply omits the word canal when it first appears in the story and reads it as channel when it appears the second time. In other words the child seems to be using both context and print clues to specify the word.

How did he work out the word ‘canal’?
I don’t know. Probably guessed it instead of working it out. Silly really. It’s easy to work out from the letters.
What would you have done?
I would have tried to work it out, of course, looking at the letters, and if I couldn’t do that, I would ask the teacher prob’ly.
Do you think he is a good reader?
No! Because he didn’t know the word ‘canal’ and he should have gone back and worked it out — using the first letters.

Not all pupils, however, are as intolerant of this type of inaccuracy — especially if they tend to do the same thing themselves. As one child put it — “He missed out a word to go onto the next sentence to find out what word’s that. He most probably when he came down to the end of the sentence he could of
Figure 3: Illustration to go with the “Canal” story — page 26.
worked out what that word was”.

Theory C — where the child on the audio-tape reads canal as candle seeming to take note of the whole shape of the word or trying to remember a word which looks the same yet not attending to the meaning of the story.

How did he work out the word ‘canal’? He was saying the start of the word and then he’s probably tried to work out the next bit. What would you have done? I would have went can-nal.

Do you think he is a good reader? Well no! You couldn’t live near a candle or use it to haul big boats up and down. But yes! He did work out the bit ‘can’, didn’t he?

Theory D — where the child on the audio-tape reads canal as aeroplane, apparently relying on picture clues and not attending to the print or the story context.

How did he work out the word ‘canal’? To make it different, and so the word wasn’t so hard. He probably didn’t know “c”, or “can”, you see. What would you have done? Sounded it out, I think.

Do you think he is a good reader? Yes. um. No! Why not?

Well, he gets all the other words right, but he’d better stop that guessing pretty quick, and learn to work it out. “C” and “can” are pretty easy to say.

What is interesting about these comments is the importance given to print and meaning in reading. But are children’s theories correct? After all, children may not really know what they do when reading. They may simply be repeating what they have been told or they may be saying what they think you want to hear.

An activity to try

Take a stand on the teaching implications of your own theory of reading. Do you focus mainly on print clues? Do you focus mainly on predicting meanings using only a few letter clues? Do you stress both? How do these ideas tie in with your own theory or reading model?

Theory and research on reading acquisition

How can we check these children’s theories? To do this we need to review the research on the importance of print and meaning in learning to read. But first a note of warning — this is still the thorniest issue in reading research. On the one hand there is the view that reading is a “top-down” process and only incidentally visual. In other words the reader is seen as an active seeker of meaning in print, exploiting context clues and using linguistic knowledge to facilitate the processing of print. Put briefly, reading is seen as meaning-driven where the reader pays only as much attention to print as is needed.

On the other hand there is the view that there are limits to the use of meaning in reading. It is argued that context and the reader’s own linguistic knowledge do not provide enough information to enable the reader to achieve sufficient accuracy. So it could be that reading must finally be a “bottom-up” process even though it may start in other ways. In other words the reader is actively trying to discover the complex links between the printed and spoken forms of words. Reading is viewed as print-driven where the use of context is regarded as a back-up strategy which the child uses only when unable to figure out the print clues. Context is nice but not necessary. It’s also too slow and inefficient to enable fluent reading to happen.

Then there is a middle position, often called “interactive” theory, where it is argued that the reading process involves both top-
down and bottom-up processing. Reading is sometimes meaning-driven when context is rich but sometimes print-driven as well. In brief it is argued that the reader can operate in a top-down or bottom-up way depending on the task and the difficulty of the text. 67, 68.

The interactive view is appealing but it is also vague. It does not explain what usually happens in reading. It could be that reading is usually top-down, except when context is poor, and the reader has to use bottom-up strategies. Yet the reverse could also be true. Reading may usually be bottom-up except in situations where the print is difficult and the reader has to use context. In short the interactive view does not solve the question about the role of context and print in reading. Instead we need to look carefully at the arguments for and against both top-down and bottom-up processing. And to do this we will also need to look at the research base for each point of view.

Top-Down Theory. A strong advocate of this theory is Frank Smith6. He argues that we do not need all the print on the page in order to understand what we read. Instead we need to use “non-visual information”, our knowledge of the world, knowledge already in our heads, to predict the meaning in the text. According to Smith prediction does not mean guessing the exact words coming up in the text but it does mean having some idea of what the word is likely to be. As he puts it10 —

‘If a child can predict that the next word is likely to be cow, horse or sheep he or she will not need much knowledge of spelling-to-sound correspondences to decide which it is’.

What is this “non-visual information” which enables us to predict the meaning in the text? It is our linguistic knowledge, especially our knowledge of syntax and semantics. It’s presumptuous to give a thumbnail sketch of such complex understanding — but here goes. If you know about syntax you know how to produce and recognise sentences which seem like real talk even though they may not make much sense11 —

“Twas brillig and the slithy toves did gyre and gimble in the wabe. All mimsy were the borogoves and the mome raths outgrabe.”

Of course our semantic knowledge enables us to do more than this. It enables us to know that sentences also make sense. When Smith talks about “non-visual information” he means using both kinds of knowledge together. After all, a sentence that makes sense will normally be syntactically correct as well. This use of non-visual information alerts the young reader that something has gone wrong. For example —

*Text* Can you make socks?
Can you make mouse socks?

*Child* Can you mouse socks?
Can you mouse mouse ... That’s not right. (pause)
I thought that (points to “mouse”) was mouse but it isn’t cause that’s mouse (points to “make”).

In the above example, the reader was still confused by the visual information. She did not know whether mouse or make represented the spoken word “mouse”. Yet she knew that something was wrong. Her non-visual knowledge told her that she couldn’t say “mouse mouse”.

The research of Marie Clay12 and the miscue studies of Ken Goodman and Carolyn Burke13 also show that many mistakes which children make are bound up with their attempts to make sense of what they read. The child who reads “canal” as “channel” may simply be using some non-visual information to help out with a difficult word. It does not necessarily mean that the child is blind to the print or does not know the letter “c”. The studies showed the need to look at patterns of reading behaviour rather
than pouncing on single errors as indicators of general reading progress.

And children may also be able to recover from some of their mistakes if given a chance. The teacher who pauses and gives children time to consider the print is giving them a chance to help themselves\(^{14}\). This does not mean that children do not need teacher help. Remember that they usually do not self-correct more than 1 in 3 of their mistakes. And the low progress readers usually self-correct only 1 in 10 mainly because they make so many mistakes\(^{15}\). Yet if children learn to use their semantic and syntactic knowledge they can narrow the range of meaningful possibilities, correcting some of their mistakes and hopefully maintaining the sense of the story as well.

There is another kind of linguistic knowledge which we have yet to discuss. It is our knowledge of phonology. Very roughly, phonological knowledge is a set of rules for making sense of the sounds of talk. It enables children to know that slight differences in what they hear can lead to big differences in meaning. Sometimes children are unable to articulate these sound differences but they know them when they hear them — as in the following example\(^{16}\).

**Want a chocolate fis?**  
A chocolate fis?  
No, a chocolate fis.  
Fis?  
No, fis!  
Oh a chocolate fish?  
Mm.

Let’s be more specific about phonological knowledge. What it does is enable the child to know that you are saying different things when you say, for example, up cup and pup even though there are only slight sound variations from one word to the next. These small differences caused by sound segments such as /c/ and /p/ are called phonemic variations because they actually lead to a change in meaning. Not all variations are phonemic. For example, the sounds of /p/ at the start and end of pup are slightly different but in our heads we still regard them as /p/. Somehow we have learned to categorise only certain sound variations as phonemically different. In English there are more than forty phonemes like /c/ and /p/ but only 26 letters of the alphabet to represent them.

Interestingly Smith would argue that we use our syntactic and semantic knowledge a lot when reading but not our phonological knowledge. Instead we can go direct from print to meaning. And we do this by using prediction. He thinks it’s important to avoid getting bogged down in processing letters and the sound segments they represent. Instead we should be able to predict the meaning of the text using context clues as much as possible and print as little as possible.

To illustrate the role of prediction Smith uses the analogy of the radar control operator in wartime who has to distinguish the blips on the radar screen as signals or noise. If the radar operator waits too long to make a decision then some enemy planes will slip through; if the operator decides too soon and the blip is only noise then there is a false alarm. The ideal is to make the right decision — that the blip is a signal or that the blip is noise. The skilled radar operator is able to get as many hits as possible based on a minimum of ‘blip’ information.

Perhaps the same strategies are needed in learning to read. That is, the child tries to recognise as many words as possible as quickly as possible using as little of the print information as possible. It is risky and mistakes will occur but it avoids the problem of getting bogged down in all the ‘blips’ or print details where reading becomes slow and the meaning is lost.
So it can be argued that prediction is essential if children are to overcome the speed problem in reading. The speed with which we read depends on our ability to process visual information on the page. The value of prediction is that the reader can use non-visual information to reduce the amount of visual information required to recognise words on the page. It does not matter if the reader's meaning does not exactly match that of the writer. Smith would be tolerant of mistakes which reflect non-visual information like reading canal or channel — or even river. This is because the mistakes make sense. They show that the reader is focused on meaning.

Prediction is possible because there is redundancy in text language. The context in which a word occurs can often enable the reader to predict a word without having to read all the letters or even any of the letters in their usual form. The example Smith gives is "loaf" which is difficult to recognise in isolation but much easier when embedded in a rich sentence context such as — "for breakfast I had loaf and marmalade". In other words the reader does not ignore the print information but does not get bogged down in it either. Smith agrees that prediction is not everything but that even when it does not work it has a fail-safe mechanism.

"One of the beautiful advantages of reading sense is that it provides its own feedback; errors become self-evident."

Put briefly, the gist of the top-down argument is that children will learn to read more easily if they use their linguistic knowledge which they bring to the text as well as the context or general sense of the story to work out the meanings of unfamiliar words. As Smith puts it —

"Provided that what we are trying to read has the possibility of making sense to us, the parts that are unfamiliar can usually be deciphered because of all the other clues that are available."

What this says is that children can use prediction to reduce the complexity of reading. The child can use print and meaning clues to work out unfamiliar words, thus enabling them to read for themselves.

And this point is crucial to another of Smith's arguments — that children cannot be taught to read. Why is this so? Well it seems impossible for us to tell children some of the things they need to know. For example, children learn how to distinguish the letter A. But how do they learn that each of the following symbols represents A?

\[aAqAQ\]  

We can tell them and give them lots of examples but eventually we have to accept that the child has to figure out the distinctive features of A.

And the same reasoning can be applied to words. Smith argues that it is impossible to teach children how to recognise words letter by letter. It's too complex — mainly because 26 letters are used to represent more than 26 sounds. Indeed the same letters can represent more than one sound, as in father — fathead, and the same sound can be represented by more than one letter, as in by — buy. As a result he suggests that children have to work out the distinctive features of words for themselves.

To do this they need to read or at least have someone read the words for them until they can read on their own. Only by studying print and knowing what the print stands for can children sort out the differences that make a difference — that enable them to distinguish one word from another. This is where prediction could be an important strategy. It helps children to work out some
words for themselves and it helps them to monitor their reading responses by giving them a chance to match their “best guesses” to the print.

Yet there is another side to this issue. The counter-argument is that reading is much more print oriented than Smith is prepared to admit. In fact it is argued that reading is only “incidentally predictable” and therefore must be a bottom-up process.

Bottom-Up Theory. A powerful exponent of this point of view is Phil Gough. He agrees that prediction is possible in reading and that it accounts for some mistakes which occur in oral reading such as “Mary had a little sheep” or “Little Miss Muffet sat on a chair”. Clearly the child who makes such mistakes is not blind to the print but is using linguistic knowledge to provide a word that makes sense.

But he does not agree that prediction is what drives the reading process. In normal reading, context clues do not seem to work very well. Guesses are wrong more often than they are right. To be specific we can usually only guess one word in four when we rely on context to help us. And even with two initial letter clues to help, children can usually guess no more than two words in five. To Gough this is not powerful enough. Instead he argues that children must confront the fact that print is a cipher — a complex yet systematic way of representing the spoken forms of words.

To illustrate what he means Gough compares two kinds of reader. First, there is the code reader who tries to remember each word according to what it looks like using non-letter clues such as the hole (o) in “dog” or the little cross (+) in “they”. Gough claims that most children start off as code readers. But they eventually give up this idea. Why? — because it does not work very well. There is a hole in “dog” but there is also a hole in “look”.

There is a tail on “frog” but also on “log”. The child who remains a code reader is likely to read the word canal as “candle” simply because it looks like a word seen before — perhaps in a previous book.

The child who is on the way to becoming a cipher reader, however, will be more likely to read canal as “kannel” trying to apply a rule system which links each letter with some kind of phonemic code. It is not a simple code. In other words, the cipher reader does not ‘sound out’ words. This would be too slow. Instead, the cipher reader seems to have the same kind of knowledge as the inventive speller (see discussion in chapter 2). In fact the cipher reader is also likely to be an inventive speller since knowing the cipher should help with spelling as well as reading. Some of the reading and spelling efforts of the cipher reader may not resemble real words at all. But they are not random guesses either. They represent the child’s version of the “rules” which enable us to map print to speech.

Gough would probably make the point that being able to say “kannel” is not reading — but it indicates that the child is headed in the right direction. The cipher reader, once the “rules” are learned, should be able to read most words easily and quickly without having to stumble along trying to remember each word because of some special cue or guessing it simply from the pictures or his memory for the story.

It is no easy jump from being a code reader to being a cipher reader. In fact there will be a stage where the child looks very “interactive”. For example —

How did you know that was “red”?
’Cause it starts with a r.

What is the child doing here? For the teacher it will be hard to tell. But the child could be showing awareness of the cipher. In this example other kinds of clues may be in
use as well such as “non-visual information” to help specify the word. But the child is aware that the letter clues are important. On the other hand, a child may seem to be relying on simple “sounding out” strategies while actually using more sophisticated knowledge. The child may indeed be a cipher reader yet unable to explain the process very well.

**Come**

How did you know that was “come”? I **sounded** **it** **out**.

To the cipher reader, the process may seem a simple matter of “sounding out” when in fact it’s much more complex. In other words, we need to look carefully at how pupils actually do and then compare this with what they say they do. Can a child really read a word like “come” by sounding it out? Try it for yourself — “keh-oh-mm-eh”. And the “silent e” rule does not work well either. It would only suggest that the word was “koam”.

Gough compares learning the cipher with the task of the cryptographer in wartime trying to work out the system of rules which the enemy is using to code messages. For example, the enemy might be using a system where James Bond is enciphered into kbnft cpoe by replacing each letter in the spoken word by the next letter in the alphabet so the “J” becomes “K” and so on. In other words, until the cryptographer works out the cipher there is no way of reading the enemy’s messages.

How does the child become a cipher reader? It seems that four elements are required:

1. The child must have sufficient data to work with. For example, the child needs not only to see the word elephant but to know that it says /ɪləfənt/.
2. The child must be able to recognise the letters which make up the printed words—i.e. the text alphabet (abcd... etc).
3. The child must be aware of the alphabet of talk — that is the phonemes of which spoken words are made up. (See earlier discussion of phonological knowledge page 30.) For example, many children starting school are unable to distinguish the three sound segments in the word “cup”. And this is not really an easy thing to do. After all, there is no break between the sounds in actual talk so they seem to be just one sound to many children.

4. Children must recognise the nature of the cipher problem and try to solve it. How can you tell when they are learning to do this? Often through children’s writing. For example, consider these attempts at the word **doctor**:

   dokr ddkr dd r dkk

When the child has an awareness of the phonemes in words and has figured out that you have to link these with certain letters of the written alphabet then you know that step 4 has been reached. In other words, the child recognises all five sound segments in correct order as in /dəkdrə/ and then writes them down as diktr which is very close.

And again, learning the cipher is something which children probably have to learn for themselves —

For example, we tell the child that **t** is pronounced /t/; but the t in **train** is pronounced /t/ by many of us . . . (as in **ch**rain).

And most fluent readers pronounce **cile** as /sail/ and **cale** as /kel/ without even noticing that they pronounced *c* as /s/ in the first item but /k/ in the other.

How do children learn to do this? Certainly not through direct teaching. The rules are too complex. But they can probably teach themselves by studying words, noticing...
interesting differences and making discoveries for themselves. For example—

Child: (looking at the word “rox”).

If it was a b instead of an r, it would be box.

How important is this kind of awareness for learning to read? It may be crucial according to recent research. Such awareness of the sound segments in talk and the ways they are represented by print seems to predict reading progress.

Are we caught in the middle on the issue of how print and meaning are used in learning to read? Smith has shown how “non-visual” information can reduce the complexity of the reading task; Gough has shown that the visual information must finally be “deciphered” to achieve the kind of accuracy and speed which is characteristic of the fluent reader.

An activity to try

Imagine that you have been approached by your principal to give a talk to parents on how children learn to read. If you were given this task how would you handle it? Keep in mind that the parents want straight talk — and you’ve only been given 45 minutes.

The best of both theories

When it comes to teaching reading in the classroom are these theories really so far apart in their instructional implications? Perhaps not. Smith and Gough both insist that children should be given the chance to study words for themselves — by reading. And they both insist that children have to teach themselves to read simply because the “rules” or “distinctive features” are too complex to teach directly.

And finally they both make the point that children need feedback to help them. For instance with an easy text which is highly memorable the print provides its own feedback. Children can use the context pictures and their memory for the story to help them get to the print. As texts get harder, children need other ways of getting feedback — such as “shared book” reading and “voice support” with “repeated readings” of the story to help them as they study the print. And in the near future we may even be able to use “talking computers” to give similar feedback about the print.

From the child’s point of view each theory has important points to make. First Smith makes the point that we do not give children the opportunity to learn to read for themselves. They grow up in a world of print yet we often do not help them to make use of this information. And when we “teach” reading we often forget what makes sense to the child and instead talk about what makes sense to us. As he puts it—

“Of course it does not hurt for the child to have some acquaintance with the alphabet. If an adult can say ‘see how those two words both begin with D’ this might be helpful in drawing a child’s attention to distinctive aspects of print.

... but the alphabet can also be a handicap if adults use it to train children to sound out words before they are able to make sense of what the adults are talking about”.

Second, Gough makes the point that we do not give children enough opportunity to confront the print problem and learn the links between printed forms and their meanings. Children often do not get a chance to study the regularities that occur in printed language even though there are activities as well as children’s books which could be used to help draw children’s attention to those regularities. For example the use of rhyme to
focus on patterns in words such as *sam ham am*.

"I do not like green eggs and ham
I do not like them
Sam I am."

The system (or “cipher”) may be complex
but there is some regularity and children can
be helped to discover it.

Third, Smith has argued that children
sometimes need to take risks and to make
mistakes. Otherwise they may not want to
read for themselves. If we insist too much on
accuracy our pupils may become fearful
readers. Every difficult word becomes a brick
wall which must be climbed correctly before
reading on. As a result reading becomes slow
and painful. This is especially so for low
progress readers who are sometimes too
tent on picking through each word letter
by letter. They do not realise that a few
mistakes every now and again do not mean
failure.

Fourth, Gough has pointed out that
text clues are only sometimes helpful. So
takes sense that children have all the print
information available when reading. After all,
we did not learn to talk by hearing only some
of the sounds in words and having to guess
the rest. For example, we did not learn the
word *milk* by being shown a glass of milk
and hearing our parents say “*m—*”.

So if we do use worksheets it is better to
give context as well as the print information,
as in the maze technique.

the choir sang a

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{song} & \\
\text{rabbit} & \\
\text{seat} & 
\end{align*} \]

Of course the problem here is that children
often get stuck with the worksheet through
being unable to check their “answers”. So to
get real instructional value from the work-
sheet the teacher really needs to put in time
with pupils trying to understand the
reasoning behind their answers and helping
them to make better decisions.

It’s easy for children to get confused about
what we are trying to teach. We may spend
so much time on worksheets and other
activities that children never get the chance
to read. As a result they see reading as
completing worksheets but not as a process
of confronting the text.

‘the teacher has been so busy teaching
reading and keeping others busy with
reading activities that there is no time for
real reading.’

Again it is easy for children to get the idea
that reading is just memorising the story,
especially if they are kept on the same book
too long.

“Just rushed in from school and said he
could read *The Fire Engine*. Then recited it
off by heart”.

On the other hand, if children are given
“parallel” books all at similar levels of
difficulty then they are learning that the same
words can crop up in different contexts and
that you just can’t read every text from
memory.

So it is important for children to acquire a
coherent theory or set of ideas about what
they need to do in order to read. They will
learn what we teach them but we can easily
confuse them as well. We may need to make
our theories explicit to them by talking about
what we want them to do by modelling and
simulating the process — and by giving them
direct instruction. We will also have to
monitor children’s own theories of reading
and ensure that they know how to cross the
frontier into real reading. As one thoughtful
parent put it, learning to read is a —

“passage from language heard to language
seen. It is a passage taken by small steps

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The “big ideas” in reading theory

If we had to sum up this short introduction to reading acquisition what would be the “big ideas”, the main points that need to be restated?

1. We need to be aware of how our own theories can be misinterpreted by children in the classroom situation. Children will develop their own theories of reading very quickly, often based on what was taught to them but not well understood by them.

2. Children who make progress in reading seem to be saying that there are three important goals in reading — sense, accuracy and speed. Yet to achieve these goals requires them to make trade-offs when first starting to read. They may need to take risks, perhaps making more mistakes than they would like.

3. Linguistic knowledge and the sense of the story are often used by children as they are learning to read. The child who says “Mary had a little sheep” does not necessarily have problems with the letter “I” or even the letters l-a-m-b.

4. Print knowledge is also used by children even when they are not actually taught to do so. Some children develop their own rough rules for using the letter clues in words without any help from the teacher. But these ways may be inefficient and misleading. Meanwhile other children seem to be able to work out a set of implicit internalised “rules” which work very well in helping them to approximate the spoken forms that match the printed forms of words.

5. There are some aspects of learning to read which children have to work out for themselves. They represent knowledge which we cannot tell a child directly, yet which children can learn if given enough opportunities to match up printed words with the spoken forms of words. In a real sense children can learn to read by reading. And if they are unable to read words for themselves then they can use some other surrogate source of data such as a tape cassette, an adult to read along with them or a “talking” computer.

Final points: all reading is interactive, but ...

We can conclude then that all reading is interactive. Print and meaning are both important. If we read a story without understanding it we are not reading. And if we understand a story which is read to us yet not be able to read the words by ourselves then we are still not reading. The question is — where do print and meaning interact?

The answer is elusive. When we look at studies of early reading where children have taught themselves to read it seems that they start off as “top-down” readers. They devote a lot of mental energy to the task of working out the words, relying on memory for the story as well as picture and context clues to figure out the squiggles on the page. But they probably finish as “bottom-up” or “cipher” readers. By doing this they probably have more mental energy to devote to thinking about the story as well as reacting to its message. With appropriate instruction this is a way to reading which children can take. There may be other ways but this one gives them a chance to help themselves. And it should produce readers who can fluently deal with any print you put in front of them.

References
(Note: only selected authors and writings are given to illustrate the theories. Check references from the Stanovich article to trace others theories.)
These data were collected by E. Marilyn Sterling as part of a course requirement.
Smith, F. The role of prediction in reading. Elementary English 1975 52, 305-311.
Clay, M. Ibid.
Smith, F. Reading without nonsense Ibid p 102.
Smith, F. Reading without nonsense Ibid p 122.
32. Smith, F. Reading without nonsense Ibid p. 135.
34. Pearson, P. D. Some practical applications of psycholinguistic research. In Samuels, S. J. (Ed.) What research has to say about reading instruction, Newark Del.: International Reading Association 1976.
37. Clay, M. Reading. Ibid.

Suggestions for Further Reading
Smith, F. Reading without Nonsense. New York: Teachers College Press, 1979. (Also published as Reading by Cambridge University Press, 1980.) For a more technical yet interesting analysis see Frank Smith’s Understanding Reading 3rd edition. New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston 1982. Frank Smith argues that learning to read could be a much easier task for children if they tried to make sense of what they read. He puts the case for the use of prediction in learning to read. He feels that the role of print in learning to read has been rated too highly by teachers and that the role of prediction has been rated too low. His most important argument may be this — ‘children cannot be taught to read’. You may not agree with what he says but he is a strong advocate of the top-down view.


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children have to confront print and learn the complex rules for mapping print to speech. The process of reading is too complicated to be learned just by using simple rules like "when two vowels go walking the first does the talking". Instead children have to learn a complex cipher for mapping print to an abstract phonemic code in their heads. This is where they disagree with Smith. But they agree that children have to teach themselves to read. They also agree that children need data. They need to read the print for themselves or have someone read it to them in order to solve the reading puzzle.

Pearson, P. D. and Kamil, M. Theory and practice in the teaching of reading. New York Education Quarterly, 1979, 10(2), 9–16. It is worth keeping in mind with this article that Pearson and Kamil are describing extreme misinterpretations of the top-down and bottom-up theories as they occur in the classroom. They imply that some teachers have instructional theories which encourage children to avoid or ignore the print on the page while others teach reading as if the meaning in the text is not important.

Do your own Classroom Research: Children's Reading Theories

Are you interested in the reading "theories" of high and low progress readers in your classroom? Then you should do this activity. You will need to prepare a special audio-tape cassette. It will contain some simulated oral reading errors. The tape can be made by asking a fluent reader to read a short story onto the tape a number of times, but each time reading a special version of the story which you have prepared where there are some deliberate mistakes. Each version represents a type of misreading you have heard before in the classroom. For example, you could use a short extract from the "ghost story" (see page 18, and the examples of each misreading on page 39).

GHOST STORY

Look! Here comes a man in a taxi.
"He'll do" said the ghost.
The taxi stops and the man jumps out.
"Boo" said the ghost.

There are at least five types of misreadings which could occur and you could simulate each of these. For example —

Target word in story — "ghost"
Type A — "gost" (focus on print but is not pronounced correctly)
Type B — omission then "gober" (focus on two letters and the meaning)
Type C — "monster" (focus on memory for the story and the context)
Type D — "goat" (focus on print but does not make sense)
Type E — "moon" (using picture clues)

The next step is to select a high and a low progress pupil from your own class. It will help a lot if they are talkative and will feel comfortable about talking with you. Make sure you interview each child separately for this task. On each occasion say that you are doing a special task and that you would like some help — that you have a tape recording of some other pupils reading a short story and that you would like an opinion on their reading. Say that you will also require them to do some oral reading for you. Get each pupil's permission before you go ahead.

Then play the first of the tape-recorded readings using the audio-tape cassette. After the pupil has heard the first reading ask the following questions depending on whether you asked a boy or a girl to do the simulated readings for you.

1. What do you think of this girl's/boy's reading?
2. How do you think she/he worked out that word ghost?
3. What would you have done?
4. Do you think she/he understands the story?
5. Would you say she/he is a good reader?

After the child has listened to a misreading, ask the five questions. Repeat this procedure for each of the five misreadings. After you have gone through all the misreadings ask the child to tell you who was the best reader on the tape cassette and why. Tape record this session so you can write down exactly what each child said. Record the responses on separate result sheets (see attached example at end of this section).

Then do an analysis of each child’s “theory” of reading based on what they said and on their choice of the best reader. Also compare the theories of the high and low progress reader. Are they different? In what ways? Why? It would be interesting to know what you found, especially since the children’s ideas may reflect their understanding of what reading is all about. In conducting your analysis you could also refer to other material or observations you have on their everyday reading behaviours — for example you could ask each child to read a short extract so you can look at their theories in action as they read text at a high level of accuracy (making only about 5 errors in 100 words).

Appendix — Sample result sheet for the “ghost” story.

Reader = Low progress/High progress (circle appropriate label)

Type A
Look!
Here comes a man in a taxi.
“He’ll do” said the goat.
The taxi stops and the man jumps out.
“Boo” said the goat.

Child’s responses to questions —
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Type B
Look! Here comes a man in a taxi.
“He’ll do” said the __________
The taxi stops and the man jumps out.
“Boo” said the goblin.

Child’s responses to questions —
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Type C
Look!
Here comes a man in a taxi.
“He’ll do” said the monster.
The taxi stops and the man jumps out.
“Boo” said the monster.

Child’s responses to questions —
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Type D
Look!
Here comes a man in a taxi.
“He’ll do” said the goat.
The taxi stops and the man jumps out.
“Boo” said the goat.

Child’s responses to questions —
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
Type E
Look!
Here comes a man in a taxi.
“He'll do” said the moon.
The taxi stops and the man jumps out.
“Boo” said the moon.

Child’s responses to questions —
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.