

Paired Reading

a guide for readers and helpers

What's so special about Paired Reading?

- Paired Reading works! Research shows that, on average, students progress more than three times faster in reading skills when they do Paired Reading.
- Paired Reading is a simple enjoyable method. The Reader never struggles for more than a few seconds. It takes the frustration and stress out of reading together.
- In Paired Reading, the *Reader* is in control. The Reader chooses what to read. The Reader decides when they want to read independently.
- The Helper does not do any teaching, especially not any word-building. The Helper supports and encourages the Reader as they practise their skills. (Think of supporting a child as they learn to ride a bike.)
- Paired Reading is not meant to be the same as other kinds of reading practice. It is different from reading primary school "reading books".
- Paired Reading only works if you follow the directions exactly.

Who can benefit from Paired Reading?

- Paired Reading can benefit all children and young people who want to improve their reading skills. It is not just for people with reading difficulties.

Who can be a helper?

- At home: parent, grandparent, uncle, aunt, brother, sister, friend, neighbour....
- At school, another student, volunteer, teaching assistant, teacher, mentor.

HOW TO DO PAIRED READING

Getting ready

- The Reader has a free choice of what to read, even if it seems too hard or too easy: books, magazines, comics.... And it's OK to start something new without finishing the previous book .
- Find somewhere quiet and comfortable, without distractions. Turn off the TV, or go into another room.
- Sit close, so you can both easily share the book.
- Talk together about what you're reading.
- The *Reader* holds the book, and, it can help for the *Reader* to follow the text with a finger. Try this at first, even if you prefer not to point later on.

Start by Reading Together

Start off by reading aloud, exactly together. The Helper has to read each word as soon as the Reader points to it . Don't hang back to wait for the reader, *but....*

- If the Reader misses a word, or if they say an incorrect word, then the Helper waits a moment until the Reader says the word correctly.

The Reader may choose to give the signal to Read by Myself

- The signal can be a nudge, or a tap on the book.
- When the Reader gives the signal, the Helper immediately goes quiet, and the Reader continues to read alone.
- For more difficult books, the Reader may not choose to give the signal. That's OK. You can read together the whole time.

When the Reader is reading by themselves and *gets stuck* on a word...

- Helper... you wait for 5 seconds, then you say the word and let the Reader copy it. *Then both of you carry on reading together.....* until the Reader gives another signal.
- Don't do anything else.

When the Reader is reading by themselves and *makes a mistake*....

- Helper, you immediately say the *correct word* and let the Reader copy it. *Then both of you carry on reading together.....* until the Reader gives another signal.
- Don't do anything else!

Keep showing your appreciation and interest

- Helper: keep giving praise... *Great! Good try! Fantastic!* Show your appreciation when the Reader keeps reading in time with you, reads by themselves, tackles tricky words, reads with expression.
- Talk about what you are reading together. Give your opinions and find out the Reader's opinions. Comment on story and characters. Maybe ask an occasional question.

KEEPING IT GOING

- Do ten minutes five days a week. Make a deal to do it for ten weeks. Don't do more than 15 minutes a day, unless the Reader really insists. Don't try to force the reader to do Paired Reading when they really want to be doing something else.
- Choose a regular daily time, to make it part of the routine, when you're not busy or distracted.
- Keep a simple record of days when you did Paired Reading. The simplest would be to use a calendar and circle the days when you do Paired Reading. A better record would be a notebook with the date and what you read and a positive comment.

Good Luck !