

A Guide for Classroom – Stage 2

Oxford Reading Tree is the most popular reading programme in the UK, and used in approximately 14,000 primary schools. Its balanced approach, which provides a range of skills and strategies for reading, has proved highly successful at teaching children to read.

Oxford Reading Tree is divided into stages. Stage 1 teaches children important pre-reading skills; Stages 2-5 introduce specific reading skills which are developed as children progress through Stages 6-11. When Stage 11 is reached, children should be fluent and confident at reading stories, information texts, and poetry. For those children that would still benefit from structured readers, TreeTops extends the tree for 711 year olds.

Most children take a year to complete Stages 1-5. Reading at these early stages is taught through a wide range of resources, including storybooks, language activities and games, software, extended stories, workbooks, phonic material, big books, and a flopover book. These components have been specifically devised to develop:

- Oral language skills
 - prediction and sequencing skills
 - the ability to relate text to pictures
 - an understanding of story structure
 - a sight vocabulary
 - phonological awareness

Reading for meaning

Oxford Reading Tree recognizes that young children can understand and remember a simple story before they are able to interpret the individual words and letters used to make up the story. It builds on this ability by using a story-based approach to reading, tackling reading skills in the order meaning → sentences → words/letters.

Every Oxford Reading Tree storybook tells a complete story in natural-sounding language. The teacher prepares the children for reading each storybook by reading a more detailed version of the story (Extended Story), asking the children questions about it, and encouraging their response to the story.

The stories focus on child-centred situations and experiences which are instantly recognizable, e.g. a wobbly tooth, losing a favourite toy. This makes children eager to talk about similar experiences of their own. Talking about the stories is essential for developing oral language skills and enriching vocabulary.

Vocabulary and sentence structure are carefully controlled. 'Key' words are repeated throughout the storybooks and are introduced at each stage to build up a bank of sight vocabulary. 'Context' words, such as 'tomato sauce' and 'cornflakes' are used when needed for the storyline, ensuring that the language remains as natural as possible.

Trialling in schools

Schools throughout the UK are involved in the trialling of all new material before it is published to ensure it achieves its purpose in the classroom.

Parental involvement

Oxford Reading Tree is an ideal reading programme for involving parents - and one that parents enjoy as much as the children.

Stage 2

Key words for Stage 2

Sight vocabulary is learnt through talking about and reading the storybooks, and reinforced through the language activities. By the end of Stage 2, children should recognize the key words both in and out of context. Stage 1 has prepared children for their first storybook with text. Now they are ready to move on to a storybook with pictures and one line of text per illustration. The eighteen Storybooks feature the characters introduced at Stage 1 in settings and situations children will find familiar. The stories can be read in any order, and are accompanied by resources to support and reinforce a broad range of reading skills: prediction, sequencing, word recognition, relating illustrations and text, story structure, and oral language skills. It is important to introduce each storybook in the way described below. Please refer to the introduction in the Extended Stories Photocopy Masters for further guidance.

1. Introduce the story and invite the children to relate it to their own experiences.
2. Tell the Extended Story and talk about the story—try using the Big Book with a group of children.
3. Read the Extended Story again, pointing out the text used in the storybook.
4. Encourage children to re-tell the story in their own words, and talk about the pictures.
5. Use the guided response questions to prompt the text. They are carefully worded so that the child's answer will mirror closely the actual wording of the text. Children use this information when they make their first attempt to read the story by themselves.
6. Use the word games and language activities described in the Teacher's Guide; the word cards and context cards; and Workbooks 2a and 2b to reinforce sight vocabulary.
7. Children may listen to the story again by using the Storytapes and following the text in the storybook.

When do children start to 'read'?

When children retell the story, their words may be close, but not identical, to the actual text used in the storybook. This 'reading' should be welcomed, as they have used the pictures and the text to make a meaning of the story.

When they have heard the story several times, talked about it, and played the word games, children should be encouraged to read the story again. This time they will bring to their reading a knowledge of the story and its language, and word recognition skills.

The key words are frequently repeated throughout Stage 2, with context words added to make the text sound natural. The sentence structure is carefully controlled, so that the pattern becomes familiar.

The sentence, 'Chip wanted the go-kart' is clearly described by the accompanying illustration, providing children with an additional clue to reading the text.

Phonological skills

The Rhyme and Analogy resources continue to develop important rhyming skills.

The Extended Stories introduce the context words e.g. 'cornflakes', 'tomato sauce', ensuring children are already familiar with them when they read the storybook for themselves. It is important that children can read the key words confidently before progressing to Stage 3.

Wrens and More Wrens

It is vital that children have enough reading practice before moving on to the next stage. Most children will benefit from reading some of the storybooks from the Wrens branch. The language is strongly patterned and each sentence is closely linked to the illustration. Wrens enable children to consolidate their reading skills, giving them the confidence to read more stories at Stages 2 and 3.

Reinforcing key words

Talking Stories Software and Stage 2 Video allow children to practise key words both in and out of context, while reinforcing their understanding of the stories.

Talking Stories

Talking Stories present both the text and illustrations on computer screen. Children can select the specific words or sentences they want to hear read aloud, and enjoy the sound effects and animation.

Stage 2 Video

Stage 2 Stories Video includes both the Extended Story and the storybook version. Each story ends with a word quiz to practise key words.

Workbooks 2a and 2b

Workbook 2a provides practice of the important pre-reading skills. Simple word recognition is included towards the end of the workbook. Workbook 2b reinforces vocabulary encountered in the Stage 2 Storybooks.

Monitoring progress

Sequencing Cards Photocopy Masters are provided for the Storybooks at Stage 2. They may be used in three different ways to monitor whether children have understood the sequence of the story, can predict the text and read the words in context, and are able to recognize and read words accurately.

The National Literacy Strategy Framework at Stage 2.

Teaching objectives at this Stage continue to match those for year R. In addition to the skills and knowledge gained during Stage 1, children are taught to:

- *read a wider range of words on sight*
- *use awareness of grammar to read new words*

- *use a variety of cues when reading*
- *expect written text to make sense*
- *re-read a text to provide cues to read unfamiliar words*
- *notice the difference between spoken and written forms*

Phonological skills are developed through the Rhyme and Analogy resources. Non-fiction texts are introduced through the Fact Finders Topic Starters.

Reading success with Oxford Reading Tree

By the end of Year 1, children using the varied resources of the Oxford Reading Tree will have acquired the broad range of skills and knowledge essential to becoming confident and fluent readers. The children share many of the experiences of the characters in the stories and this guarantees involvement right from the beginning. The introduction of the magic key at Stage 5 enables the stories to broaden their range and include fantasy worlds.

The requirements for the National Literacy Strategy Framework for Year R and Year 1 are met by the stories and by activities described in Teacher's Guides 1 and 2. Phonological awareness is extended by the Woodpeckers workbooks, Rhyme and Analogy stories and resources, and the Acorns and Catkins poetry anthologies. Non-fiction skills are developed by the Fact Finders Topic starters and Units A-C.

Branching out from the Storybooks

Many of the Storybooks make an excellent start for cross-curricular activities. Ideas for further activities are provided for each stage in the Teacher's Guide. Other ideas include science topics about water from *The water fight* and *By the stream*; technology projects centred around Biff's aeroplane; mapping skills using the aerial picture on page 27 of the *Flopper Book*, and weighing and measuring from *The toy's party*.

Resources for emergent and fluent readers

Children continue their reading with *Owls* and *More Owls* at Stages 6 and 7 and *Magpies* at Stages 8 and 9. The *Robins* and *Jackdaws* branches provide stories and anthologies for competent readers who need to progress at a faster rate. Teachers should continue to use the relevant *Woodpeckers* anthologies and *Workbooks* to develop phonological skills, alongside the other Oxford Reading Tree Storybooks at Stages 5-11.

Oxford Reading Tree *Treetops*, a series of structured fiction, has been specially written for 7-11 year olds who need the support of carefully controlled language and built-in progression. The *Treetops* take children from Stage 10 to 14 with stories that reflect the interests and humour of older readers. *Playscripts* at Stages 5, 6 and 7 and *Oxford Reading Tree Poetry* for Stages 3-11 develop speaking and listening skills, and phonological awareness, while providing further opportunities for reading. *Oxford Reading Tree Fact Finders* develop non-fiction and referencing skills, providing a firm foundation for work at Key Stage 2.