

# A whole-school approach to teaching reading



## A whole-school approach to teaching reading

Reading is fundamental to learning in all subjects, therefore every teacher is a teacher of reading. This tool is intended as an additional resource. It can prompt professional dialogue to help schools draw a clear picture of their teaching of reading. It may stimulate actions to improve reading practice across the school.

Improving learning outcomes, with an emphasis on reading, is one of the targeted priorities for all students in the [DETE Strategic Plan 2015–19](#). We know that lifting educational performance requires additional effort and new and effective strategies. The [Every student succeeding – State Schools Strategy 2016–2020](#) is the department’s plan to lift the performance of each state school student, teacher and principal. It identifies the following key areas of action:

- collaborative empowerment
- successful learners
- teaching quality
- principal leadership and performance
- school performance
- regional support
- local decision making.

For each element principals are required to make decisions about which actions will have the most impact on student learning.

A whole-school approach to teaching reading supports principals and schools to improve student reading. This resource incorporates:

- a whole-school approach to teaching reading
- assessment and data
- planning and pedagogy
- capability building
- feedback.

The resource provides a starting point for working with school teams to reflect on the school’s approach to reading, and to identify areas to target so that every student can become a successful reader.



## A whole-school approach to teaching reading



Effective reading instruction is demonstrated through:			
<b>P–12</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing attention to oral language development.</li> <li>• Use of high quality literature.</li> <li>• Use of a range of texts including written, spoken, visual or multimodal in print and digital/online forms – in all learning areas/subjects.</li> <li>• Authentic literacy experiences that are both task oriented and for enjoyment.</li> <li>• Frequent ongoing monitoring of student progress in reading and oral language to ensure appropriate and timely interventions.</li> <li>• Use of ongoing monitoring and a variety of quality assessment techniques to inform instruction.</li> <li>• Use of student data to determine the next steps for reading instruction, differentiation, and to ensure appropriate and timely interventions.</li> <li>• Evidence of links made to writing.</li> <li>• Balance of instruction: modelled, shared, guided and independent reading.</li> </ul>		
<b>In years P–2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systematic, explicit and targeted instruction – in the context of meaningful, challenging language work – in concepts of print, phonological awareness, phonic knowledge, word and text knowledge, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.</li> <li>• Ongoing monitoring and formalised diagnostic assessment (for example, Early Start, PM Benchmark) of micro skills that underpin reading (that is, concepts of print, phonological awareness, word and text knowledge, phonic knowledge, and comprehension).</li> </ul>		
<b>In years 3–4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing targeted instruction in phonic knowledge, word and text knowledge, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension for students whose data indicates the need.</li> <li>• Increasing emphasis on independent reading, while maintaining modelled, shared, and guided reading for new and more complex text types and/or new subject matter.</li> <li>• Gradual shift from learning to read to reading to learn, with increasing focus on reading in learning areas other than English, including explicit attention to vocabulary and texts, and connecting ideas within and across texts.</li> </ul>		
<b>In years 5–6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing emphasis on independent reading, while maintaining shared, modelled and guided reading for new and more complex text types and/or new subject matter.</li> <li>• Emphasis on reading to learn, with increasing focus on reading in learning areas other than English, including explicit attention to vocabulary, sentence structure and texts, and connecting ideas within and across texts.</li> </ul>		
<b>In years 7–10</b>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>English</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on independent reading, while maintaining modelled, shared, and guided reading for new and more complex text types, or parts of texts.</li> <li>• Explicit attention to the increasingly complex nature of vocabulary, and sentence and text structure, and connecting ideas within and across texts.</li> </ul> </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Other learning areas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit instruction for new vocabulary and texts that comprise core literacy in the particular learning area/subject.</li> <li>• Explicit instruction embedded in teaching the content and processes of the learning area/subject.</li> <li>• Monitoring, assessment and feedback to students regarding the reading component of the learning area/subject.</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>English</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on independent reading, while maintaining modelled, shared, and guided reading for new and more complex text types, or parts of texts.</li> <li>• Explicit attention to the increasingly complex nature of vocabulary, and sentence and text structure, and connecting ideas within and across texts.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Other learning areas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit instruction for new vocabulary and texts that comprise core literacy in the particular learning area/subject.</li> <li>• Explicit instruction embedded in teaching the content and processes of the learning area/subject.</li> <li>• Monitoring, assessment and feedback to students regarding the reading component of the learning area/subject.</li> </ul>
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## Prompts for professional conversations

ARD to principal, principal to leadership team, deputy principal to HOD/HOC/literacy leader

- How have you built a culture that values reading and expects all students to be successful readers?
- What shared understandings and signature strategies guide the teaching of reading across this school?
- How is the leadership team building the capacity of staff to effectively teach reading across the school?
- How do you monitor the teaching of agreed signature practices for reading in classrooms?
- What information and data informs your allocation of funds?
- How have parents and the community been provided with ongoing information regarding reading?

**Leadership team member to teacher, teacher to teacher (across sectors/faculties)**

- How are you implementing our approach to teaching reading?
- Do you feel supported to implement our agreed approach?
- How does the learning area and student cohort influence what you do? Can you provide examples?
- What challenges and success stories have you had?
- How are you working with your colleagues to strengthen reading instruction across the school?
- How are you engaging with parents to support their child's reading? For example, updates on student progress/goals, specific strategies to support reading, especially in all learning areas?



## A whole-school approach to teaching reading

### Whole-school

A whole-school approach for the teaching of reading links to the school's pedagogical framework and demonstrates:

- that all students can be successful readers
- an explicit improvement agenda that informs high quality teaching practice by all teachers in the teaching of reading
- data-based targets and timelines
- a wide range of evidence-based teaching practices that suit the particular needs of students and the demands of the curriculum
- the value of reading both for lifelong learning and for enjoyment
- the explicit link between reading and writing.

Behaviour	Artefacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High expectations for learning to read and reading to learn, and clear valuing of reading for enjoyment are evident in school ethos.</li> <li>• The agreed approach to teaching reading throughout the school is based on an understanding that improvements in student learning are dependent on ongoing improvements in pedagogy.</li> <li>• Teaching of reading is embedded across the curriculum. Contexts are authentic, socially and culturally appropriate and engaging.</li> <li>• Agreed signature practices for teaching reading which draw on a range of research-based reading practices are understood and demonstrated by all staff. Consistent metalanguage is used.</li> <li>• Teachers know their students. They are aware of individual characteristics, developmental abilities and cultural background.</li> <li>• Teachers create positive environments that promote reading excellence and develop the 'complete reader' that is, maximise reading skills and attitude, interest, motivation and confidence to try a challenge.</li> <li>• Students select texts to read for pleasure. Teachers model reading for pleasure.</li> <li>• Budget allocations to support reading instruction respond to needs identified in data (qualitative and quantitative), for example, targeted professional development, additional support staff, and age appropriate and high quality curriculum-based reading materials.</li> <li>• Parents are encouraged to see themselves as a vital, continuing part of their child's reading journey. The school's ongoing engagement with the community includes provision of information about the teaching of reading.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school pedagogical framework identifies evidence-based agreed signature practices for highly effective teaching of reading across the school in all learning area and subjects.</li> <li>• Teacher's planning and delivery of reading lessons across the curriculum and classroom environments display agreed signature practices for the effective teaching of reading.</li> <li>• A rich literacy environment is evident in:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– school newsletter and website items on the teaching of reading</li> <li>– messages around the school</li> <li>– parent talks</li> <li>– well-resourced library and class libraries with high quality texts for a wide range of ability levels that reflect students' interests, curriculum-related topics and diverse cultures</li> <li>– class sets of quality texts including authentic reading material</li> <li>– attractive, comfortable areas around the school that support and encourage reading</li> <li>– participation in literary events, for example Book Week, National Literacy and Numeracy Week, Premier's Reading Challenge.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Budget allocations support effective teaching of reading and are informed by collaborative processes.</li> <li>• A range of active, two-way communication channels with parents to support their child's reading.</li> </ul>

## Prompts for professional conversations

ARD to principal, principal to leadership team, deputy principal to HOD/HOC/literacy leader

- What assessment and monitoring tools are being used to inform teaching and learning?
- What reading data are you collecting, and what processes are in place for:
  - on-going collection, and
  - analysis of this data?
- What is the data telling you about the effectiveness of the teaching of reading?
  - Are the majority of students making sufficient progress year to year or juncture to juncture?
  - Are low performing students improving?
  - Have some average students moved into higher bands/stanines?
  - Are your high achieving students performing consistently?
  - What are your good news stories/bad news stories?
- What are the reading-related targets for this year across the school?
- What processes are used for moderation?

Leadership team member to teacher, teacher to teacher (across sectors/faculties)

- What reading data are you collecting? How often?
- What processes do you and your colleagues use to analyse it?
- What is the reading data telling you about your class? Individual students?
  - Does this align with your observations and class assessments? Any surprises?
  - Are there any students in above average bands/stanines?
  - Are there any students requiring additional support?
- What are the targets for reading in your class and how did you establish these?
- What opportunities and/or challenges have there been this year in relation to working with reading data? Opportunities to improve your practice? Challenges you've encountered working with the data?



## A whole-school approach to teaching reading

### Assessment and data

The school gives high priority to school-wide analysis and discussion of systematically collected data on student achievement. Teachers analyse student data regularly to inform improvement to guide teaching and prompt early intervention for improvement.

Behaviour	Artefacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment practices are collaborative – involving and valuing input from a range of sources including parents, students and other colleagues.</li> <li>• Collection and storage of data is systematic and comprehensive.</li> <li>• A repertoire of <a href="#">tools and methods for monitoring and collecting data</a> about reading development is used. A balance of observations, conversation and focused analysis of student work/test results is collected on a continuing basis from a range of authentic contexts.</li> <li>• Comprehensive monitoring using observations is ongoing – both recorded and unrecorded.</li> <li>• Systematic, <a href="#">collaborative processes</a> are in place to interrogate the evidence of student learning, identify groups for additional support, raise questions, share expertise and develop innovations.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Data is analysed</a> to clarify its meaning and possible implications – identifying strengths and needs, patterns and/or discrepancies – to plan further learning experiences.</li> <li>• Data is triangulated to monitor performance and inform practice.</li> <li>• Responsibility for classroom, school and system data collection and analysis is shared with teachers.</li> <li>• Reading-related targets are developed to inform teaching and learning. Targets and timelines are established and actively pursued.</li> <li>• Conversations are focused on student learning and professional responsibility for student progress.</li> <li>• Moderation of teacher judgments about student reading occurs within and across year levels/learning areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of reading data sources including:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– observation (formal/informal), checklists</li> <li>– journal entries (reading response/reflective/dialogue)</li> <li>– work samples across learning areas, for example, text annotations – students annotate their thinking</li> <li>– tests, <a href="#">diagnostic assessments</a></li> <li>– <a href="#">Early Start</a> materials</li> <li>– <a href="#">Miscue analysis/running records</a></li> <li>– conferences/interviews</li> <li>– think alouds</li> <li>– surveys/questionnaires</li> <li>– self-assessments.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Reading data (school and system) documented in OneSchool.</li> <li>• Data visualisation tools (for example, class maps for class-level data/data walls for school-wide data) to enable effective interrogation by data-literate teachers.</li> <li>• Reading-related targets across the school.</li> <li>• Assessment schedule developed collaboratively.</li> <li>• Moderation schedules.</li> <li>• Targets/timelines for the class and students and monitoring of these is documented.</li> </ul>

## Prompts for professional conversations

ARD to principal, principal to leadership team, deputy principal to HOD/HOC/literacy leader

- How do you ensure that all teachers have a deep and thorough knowledge of the Australian Curriculum, including General Capabilities: Literacy?
- How do you support teachers to plan the teaching of reading? What are your observations? Is there a need for upskilling?
- How do you ensure that differentiation is undertaken in every classroom?
  - How is it reflected in teacher planning?
  - How is it reflected in student work?
- How are teachers making explicit links between reading and writing to enhance student reading comprehension?
- What process have you put in place to ensure that the StLaN, other support staff and parent/community volunteers are used effectively to support classroom teachers and students?

Leadership team member to teacher, teacher to teacher (across sectors/faculties)

- How do you include teaching of reading in your planning?
- How are you teaching reading in your class? Tell me more about this, for example, how you came to select these approaches/strategies, how you're teaching them, your successes and/or challenges.
- How do you use the range of data to inform your teaching of reading?
- What differentiation strategies do you use to provide additional support or extension? Can you elaborate with a couple of specific student examples?
- How do you ensure links between reading and writing are made explicit within and across the learning area/subjects?
- How do you decide when additional support may be required for students?
- How do you work with your teacher aide and StLaN? Do you work with any other support staff?



## A whole-school approach to teaching reading

### Planning and pedagogy

The school has a shared view of reading and reading instruction, as well as a commitment to the reading improvement agenda for all students and this is evident in school curriculum and assessment plans. Teachers use high quality evidence-based teaching practices focused on success for every student. They differentiate experiences that address the unique needs of students, to further develop reading and writing across the curriculum in a safe, supportive and challenging environment.

Behaviour	Artefacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intellectually challenging literacy-rich environments are established that are inclusive of all children.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Planning</a> aligns to the Australian Curriculum and whole-school approach to reading.</li> <li>• Planning is collaborative, with year level/sector teams sharing ideas, tasks and resources.</li> <li>• Thorough knowledge and understanding of the agreed approach to teaching reading is demonstrated.</li> <li>• A range of meaningful, authentic listening, speaking, reading and writing opportunities are integrated in units of work for each subject.</li> <li>• Reading instruction is integrated across <a href="#">oral language, vocabulary, grammar, decoding, reading fluency, comprehension</a> and literacies of new technologies for all learners.</li> <li>• Explicit connections are continually made between reading and writing – while they are taught separately, their reciprocal links need to be noted and emphasised.</li> <li>• <a href="#">A balance of explicit teaching with guided and independent</a> student activity is provided and effectively managed through the gradual release of responsibility. Both modelled and guided practice assist students to apply, monitor and adjust reading strategies across all curriculum areas.</li> <li>• Reading requirements of the learning areas/subjects and year levels taught are identified and explicitly taught.</li> <li>• A range of texts including quality literature and texts related to learning areas/subjects are used effectively.</li> <li>• Student risk-taking is encouraged and multiple possibilities in responses are accepted.</li> <li>• Students work collaboratively with others, in a variety of groupings that have been informed by data and reflect learning goals.</li> <li>• Timely, targeted interventions, based on student data, including additional support and/or extension, are delivered.</li> <li>• School-based staff, for example STLaN and teacher aides, are used effectively, that is, the most skilled staff work with highest-need students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Curriculum plans (whole-school, year level and class)</a> that address the reading demands of the Australian Curriculum/learning area/subject and the <a href="#">General Capability: literacy</a>, as well as student development in reading.</li> <li>• Classroom plans reflect agreed signature practices and differentiation to meet all students' needs.</li> <li>• A process enabling teachers to plan with year level/sector colleagues.</li> <li>• Established classroom routines and behaviours for reading.</li> <li>• Lesson intent displayed and articulated by teacher and students.</li> <li>• Flexible student groupings based on evidence.</li> <li>• Appropriate technology to support all students.</li> <li>• Students' reflection/dialogue journals that help them explore their thinking about their reading.</li> <li>• Support for student independence, for example posters/charts identifying steps and strategies, learning logs.</li> <li>• Variety of texts including digital/moving images for a wide range of ability levels reflecting students' interests, curriculum topics and diverse cultures.</li> <li>• Student work samples show evidence of agreed practices for teaching reading.</li> <li>• Targeted use of human resources (teacher aides, STLaN) to promote progress in reading by every student.</li> </ul>

## Prompts for professional conversations

ARD to principal, principal to leadership team, deputy principal to HOD/HOC/literacy leader

- How does the school build the capacity of teachers and support staff to effectively teach reading? Can you expand on your key strategies?
- How is the developing performance process used to progress teacher development in the teaching of reading?
- How do you utilise the reading expertise of:
  - teachers – how many take on an active leadership role?
  - the leadership team – what is the level of expertise?
- How is coaching and feedback provided to staff for continued improvement of their skills?
- What are your observations of the teaching of reading across the school:
  - success stories, areas to improve?

**Leadership team member to teacher, teacher to teacher (across sectors/faculties)**

- How are you building your capability as a teacher of reading?
  - What are your strengths as a teacher of reading?
  - What challenges are you currently encountering?
  - What is your current professional learning focus around teaching reading?
  - What are your future plans around this?
- How can you be supported to further enhance your ability to teach reading effectively?
- How have you linked your professional development and developing performance capability with the teaching of reading?
- How do you work with your HOD/HOC to build your teaching repertoire in reading instruction?
- How do you know these strategies are working?



## A whole-school approach to teaching reading

### Capacity building

The school operates as an effective professional learning community with a culture of continuous professional improvement through classroom-based learning, mentoring and coaching arrangements. There is an expectation that all teachers will be committed to the continuous improvement of their own teaching and will be focused on developing the necessary knowledge and skills to improve reading for all students.

Behaviour	Artefacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional learning occurs as an ongoing, iterative and contextualised process.</li> <li>• The school ethos values an ongoing cycle of reflective practice and life-long learning. Principal and other curriculum leaders lead and model effective practice for teaching reading.</li> <li>• The school climate is supportive with high levels of trust between staff.</li> <li>• Regular meetings at year level (or stage of schooling) enable teachers to collaboratively analyse student data and examine student work to inform their future teaching.</li> <li>• Opportunities are created for teachers to work together and learn from each other's best practices.</li> <li>• Peer observation, feedback, differentiated coaching, and targeted learning communities are used to improve teaching practice.</li> <li>• Teachers are willing to try new strategies, reflect and reconcile with validated research.</li> <li>• Teachers are involved in coaching and feedback practices directly related to the agreed school practices.</li> <li>• Teacher professional learning needs are identified by each teacher and member of the leadership team.</li> <li>• Individual staff development plans inform and are informed by the school's professional learning plan, and guide ongoing differentiated professional development.</li> <li>• Performance review processes include a focus on effective reading instruction and use of data to inform teaching, for example, classroom observations with feedback, walk throughs, audits of teaching and assessment plans.</li> <li>• Teacher aides and classroom volunteers receive effective support and clear guidelines on the agreed school practices for the teaching of reading.</li> <li>• The school accesses any available regional support (literacy coach, PEACs) to respond to specific identified professional development needs.</li> <li>• Teachers are involved in external networks focused on reading instruction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australian Professional Standards for teachers guide capability development.</li> <li>• A professional development plan and associated budget supports professional learning for all staff in the teaching of reading including the use of data.</li> <li>• Teacher professional learning plans align to the whole school approach to teaching reading.</li> <li>• Teacher professional learning plans target development of teacher capacity in the teaching of reading and the effective use of data, for example through:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– whole school professional development – regular and ongoing</li> <li>– induction program</li> <li>– year level or small group professional development (for example, learning cafes, web conferencing, professional learning communities)</li> <li>– mentor/coaching (one-on-one) focused on student needs and teacher learning</li> <li>– demonstration lessons</li> <li>– collaborative planning</li> <li>– the <a href="#">How to Teach Reading module</a>.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Procedures to identify, develop and deploy reading 'experts.'</li> <li>• A wide range of professional resources, for example, professional library, professional association memberships.</li> <li>• Processes enabling teachers to visit colleagues' classrooms to share/learn.</li> <li>• Artefacts that support professional conversation, for example, data walls, lesson feedback templates for observers.</li> </ul>



### Prompts for professional conversations

ARD to principal, principal to leadership team, deputy principal to HOD/HOC/literacy leader

- How does the leadership team share feedback with teachers about the teaching of reading?
- Are you able to provide all teachers with feedback? How is this structured?
- How is feedback provided to students about their reading performance and the ways they can improve their reading?
- Are these processes effective? Explain further.
- How are teacher and student success stories around reading celebrated?
- Do all students have reading goals? How are these established, monitored and reviewed?
- Do parents play a role in the design of student learning goals and the feedback cycle? Can you provide some examples?

Leadership team member to teacher, teacher to teacher (across sectors/faculties)

- What opportunities do you have to receive feedback on your teaching of reading?
- Can you elaborate on some past feedback and how it influenced or informed your teaching?
- How do you provide feedback to your students about their reading? Can you elaborate with a few examples to support the development of student reading goals?
- Do your students have reading goals? Can you elaborate on how these are established, monitored and reviewed?
- Do you include parents in this process? How is this managed?
- Do your students provide you with feedback or reflections on their reading progress? Can you elaborate with an example of this?



## A whole-school approach to teaching reading

### Feedback

The school provides professional [feedback](#) to support teachers to understand their practice and lift the quality of instruction. Teachers provide [on-going targeted feedback](#) to support student understanding of achievement and inform individual reading learning goals.

Behaviour	Artefacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timely, constructive feedback and support is provided to teachers following coaching sessions or observations.</li> <li>• Supportive feedback is provided to teacher aides from class teachers.</li> <li>• Regular, scheduled feedback is provided to students which includes specific advice to progress reading.</li> <li>• Ongoing explicit feedback from teachers is timely, specific, positive and corrective, to scaffold student learning and improvement.</li> <li>• Opportunities for student reflection through think alouds is followed by explicit feedback from teacher.</li> <li>• Monitoring and tracking of individual student learning goals by teachers is evident.</li> <li>• Learning goals, steps to achieve these and progress can be articulated by students.</li> <li>• Time is provided for student self-assessment and goal-setting that is recorded in a reflective journal/learning log.</li> <li>• Clear, timely, reliable communication informs parents about their children’s progress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole-school protocols for observation and feedback for teachers.</li> <li>• Ongoing verbal and written feedback provided to teachers, by school leadership team, on their practices around the teaching of reading.</li> <li>• Specific feedback, both verbal and written, is provided to students regularly.</li> <li>• Written feedback on student assessment provides clear advice and supports students working towards their learning goals for reading.</li> <li>• Student work annotated with teacher feedback (objective, factual comments) about the effective use of strategies.</li> <li>• Established process/processes enabling teachers to engage in feedback sessions.</li> <li>• Coaching feedback notes.</li> <li>• Student reflection on reading success and feedback received (reflective journals, workbooks, and learning targets).</li> <li>• Procedures for conducting student conferences, one-to-one, with teacher.</li> <li>• A range of active two-way communication channels with parents to share student reading goals/progress.</li> <li>• Collation of student reading goals for teacher monitoring and tracking.</li> </ul>

