

Advice on differentiating reading tasks in Wings

Normally, children in SfA schools are grouped by reading ability. Each group then reads a text that provides an appropriate level of challenge for every child. The result is that texts are never so difficult that children are unable to interact with them effectively. Nor are the texts so easy that there is little or no challenge. This system ensures that all children make good progress as the challenge is neither too great nor too small.

Unfortunately, there may be times (e.g. when using 'bubbles' due to Covid -19 restrictions) when it isn't possible to form groups so that the text is pitched appropriately for all children. This document provides some advice to help teachers to adjust their teaching in these situations so that all children can make progress.

In these situations, you should:

1. Pitch the text so that it is appropriate for most of the children in the class or group.
2. When forming partnerships, try to pair a stronger reader with a less confident partner, so that there is effective peer teaching. The more able child will help their partner to decode and understand as they take turns to read together. This peer teaching process will benefit both children. Your knowledge of the children's personalities will be important when forming partnerships, but as a rule more able are paired with middle ability and lower ability with middle ability.
3. During discussions about the text, teachers may need to differentiate the pitch of questions so that all children can develop a good understanding of the text. Teachers may need to:
 - Differentiate the questions for the Treasure Hunt or Individual Check questions. Further advice on this is provided in bullet point 6 below.
 - Provide more structured support to access the questions. Peer support may not always be enough to support children who are reading a text that is significantly above their current reading level. In this case, the teacher may need to read the question to the child and discuss the key points. Similar support may be required with challenging skills such as summarising.
 - Expectations around the answers to the questions may also need to vary - length of answer, depth of understanding shown etc. Teachers may need to think through their expectations of a LA/MA/HA response to each question if they don't differentiate the question.
 - It may help initially ask a LA child for their answer to a question. Their answer is likely to be quite basic, but hopefully valid and this ensures that they are included in discussions. More able children can then be asked to add more information, so building an increasingly sophisticated and layered answer to the question. The teacher's skill in paraphrasing and questioning is important in ensuring that all children understand the final, complete answer, including those who may originally have analysed it at a more basic level. This may require some adjustment of Random Reporter.
 - Teachers may need to read with less confident readers to ensure they are supported and that the more able partner is not held back due to weaker decoding or fluency skills.
4. Pre-teaching key vocabulary words for that day's reading may prove to be an effective strategy. This could be in addition to the 10 vocab words taught each week. Alternatively, if an additional adult is available, it might benefit more vulnerable children to spend the 10 minutes spent on vocabulary each day learning simpler vocabulary in the text to increase their understanding.
5. The weekly Individual Check (independent comprehension test) can be used to identify the children for whom the text is too difficult, or too easy, and therefore those who need extra support if they are to progress. The Individual Check should be marked out of 100% (5 questions, each representing 20%) and each child's score should be recorded weekly in their SfA book. The scores can be interpreted using the following guidance:

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- Children who consistently score between 70% and 90% on tests are using a text that is appropriate for their skills, so no differentiation is required. They will complete the standard Individual Check as provided by SfA.
- Children consistently scoring less than 70% on the Individual Check are struggling and differentiation is required. The teacher should adjust the Individual Check questions for this group, so that they are less challenging, enabling children to score 70-90% because the level of challenge is appropriate for them.
- Children consistently scoring above 90% will require a more challenging Individual Check so they can score 70-90% because the level of challenge is appropriate for them.
- The advantage of this system is that the teacher can always use children's scores to ensure that the pitch of the questions is at an appropriate level of difficulty for each child. Quite simply it will be right when children score 70-90%.

Note: children who are reading significantly below age expected levels may need further support.

The following table provides expected age-related starting points for children from Years 1-6, by term.

Age-related Expectations for Roots and Wings:

	START Autumn Term	START Spring Term	START Summer Term
Year 1	Pass Roots Passage 3	Pass Roots Passage 5	Pass Roots Passage 9
Year 2	Wings 1	Wings 2 Phase 1	Wings 2 Phase 2
Year 3	Wings 2 Phase 3	Wings 3 Phase 1	Wings 3 Phase 2
Year 4	Wings 3 Phase 3	Wings 4 Phase 1	Wings 4 Phase 2
Year 5	Wings 4 Phase 3	Wings 5 Phase 1	Wings 5 Phase 2
Year 6	Wings 5 Phase 3	Year 6 programme or First Quest	