

## **A Guide for Classroom – Stage 3**

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 3**

Stage 3 builds on the reading skills and sight vocabulary acquired at Stage 2. The amount of text in the storybooks is slightly increased, with 12-16 captions per book. At Stage 3, each double page spread has two captions.

### **Introducing Wilf and Wilma**

Teachers will need to use the Flopover Book to introduce the two new characters, Wilf and Wilma. Stories about them and their family are provided in the Teacher's Guide for Stage 3.

The eighteen Storybooks at Stage 3 continue to feature familiar settings and situations, and may be read in any order. As at Stage 2, it is essential to prepare children for each storybook, using the support material, because talking and asking questions about the stories is still vitally important in reading development. Please refer to the guidelines given on page 8 of this leaflet.

Language activities recommended in the Teacher's Guide for earlier stages may be adapted to the vocabulary of Stage 3. New games for Stage 3 are included in the Teacher's Guide and use the Word Cards, e.g. 'Word Tig' practises making sentences; 'Ouch' reinforces specific words; and 'Lucky Four' establishes the names of the new characters.

Use the Context Cards to teach the key words in and out of context. It is important to continue using the Context Cards for Stage 2, so that these words are constantly recalled.

Workbooks 3a and 3b include activities for word recognition and syntax completion. Children should work on the section of the workbook that relates to the storybook that they are reading, rather than working through cover to cover.

### **Monitoring progress**

Sequencing Cards Photocopy Masters for Stage 3 should be used as in Stage 2

### **Wrens and Sparrows**

The Wrens and Sparrows branches provide extra reading material for children who are not quite ready to progress to a higher stage. Stage 3 Wrens focus on one or two key verbs, the characters' names, and other high frequency

words to consolidate sight vocabulary. The six Sparrows Storybooks at Stage 3 use the key words children have already met, but feature new characters.

### **Phonological skills**

The Rhyme and Analogy resources provide a strong foundation for building phonological skills, which can be developed further at Stage 3 by using the Acorns Poetry anthologies and Woodpecker Workbooks. Acorns Poetry comprises twelve anthologies at Stage 3-4.

The Woodpeckers branch provides further activities on phonic skills, starting at Stage 3 with Woodpeckers Introductory Workbooks A and B focus on single letter sounds of initial consonants.

### **Using Woodpeckers Workbooks A and B**

Activities in the workbooks are based on discriminating between pairs of letters e.g. p and t. The Teacher's Guide provides lists of words which offer good examples of the initial consonant sounds being taught. The teacher should ask the children to listen while he/she reads the words, asking the children to identify the initial consonant. The Teacher's Guide includes activities to support the workbooks. Workbook A focuses on initial consonant sounds p, t, l, n, m, g, c, d, k, and f. Workbook B focuses on initial consonant sounds r, h, w, j, v, y, z, and qu.

### ***The National Literacy Strategy Framework at Stage 3.***

*Year 1 term 1 teaching objectives are broadly met by the stories and activities at Stage 3. In particular children are taught to:*

- *increase the range of words they recognise on sight*
- *increase their personal vocabulary*
- *read with appropriate expression*
- *recognise capital letters and full stops*
- *understand and use the term 'sentence'*
- *apply their word-level skills when reading*
- *read familiar stories independently*

*Phonological skills continue to be developed through the Rhyme and Analogy resources, Woodpeckers Introductory Workbooks, and Acorns poetry. Non-fiction texts are introduced through the Fact Finders Topic Starters and Fact Finders Unit A.*

## **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 *Floper 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.