

## **A Guide for Classroom – Stage 5**

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 5**

At Stage 5 children are emerging as readers. They have acquired a good sight vocabulary of just over 100 words, they have phonological skills to help decode new words, and the ability to glean information from the clues provided by the story and the illustrations to make meaning of the text. Stage 5 continues to build and refine these skills.

### **Magic Key stories**

The stories start to move away from familiar situations and settings, into worlds of fantasy. The magic key, found at Stage 4, is used to transport the characters out of a 'real-life' incidents into a related adventure e.g. fun on the bouncy castle leads into Castle adventure and the rescue of the king and queen. These stories have proved to be exceptionally popular with children, and often provide the starting point for their own story writing.

Six of the Stage 5 Storybooks are numbered and should be read in order as they are graded in difficulty and have a narrative link.

There are no Extended Stories at Stage 5, but teachers/parents should continue to talk about the story with the children before asking them to read the story for themselves. Use the Big Books and the guided responses in the Extended Stories Photocopy Masters to encourage discussion, to introduce the key words and context words, and to relate pictures to text.

### **Playscripts**

Six Stage 5 Storybooks are available as Playscripts for group or individual reading. The Playscripts introduce the conventions of drama, and develop speaking, listening, and reading skills in a fun and motivating way.

### **Language activities**

It is important to continue to support children's reading with the Context Cards, including those from earlier stages. Word games used in the earlier stage can easily be adapted for Stage 5.

### **Workbooks 5a and 5b**

The six sections relate to Storybooks 1-6 and should be worked through in the same order. The activities within each section gradually become more difficult.

## **Using Woodpeckers Introductory Workbook E**

Phonics skills are extended, teaching children how an initial consonant can be removed and another put in its place to make a different word e.g. Dad ♦ mad, sad. The Teacher's Guide offers guidance for introducing this new substitution skill, together with activities and word list.

The first Woodpeckers anthology, The sun ship, should be introduced at Stage 5, together with the accompanying Woodpeckers Workbook 1. The Teacher's Guide provides full guidance on using the Woodpeckers branch resources.

## **Phonological skills**

Reading and listening to Catkins and More Catkins Poetry (Stage 5-6) develops children's awareness of letter and word sounds. Rhyme and Analogy Story Rhymes and support materials practise rhyming skills.

## **Monitoring progress**

Stage 5 uses cloze procedure as the basis for assessment. The Teacher's Guide provides photocopiable sheets showing a shortened version of six of the Storybooks, with a word missing from each sentence. Ask the child to select one of the two options given for each missing word. All new key words from Stage 5 are included in the assessment sheets.

## ***The National Literacy Strategy Framework at Stage 5.***

*Year 1 term 3 teaching objectives are broadly met by the stories and activities at Stage 5. In particular children are taught to:*

- *increase the range of words they recognise on sight*
- *increase their personal vocabulary*
- *investigate verbs with -ed and -ing endings*
- *read with expression appropriate to the grammar*
- *continue to use a variety of clues to read and check unfamiliar words*
- *use titles and cover pages to predict the content of a story*
- *to compare and contrast stories with a variety of settings.*

*Phonological skills continue to be developed through the Woodpeckers workbooks, Rhyme and Analogy resources and Catkins poetry. Non-fiction texts are explored through Fact Finders Units A, B and C.*

## **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.