

Reading Theatre

According to the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) research, reading theatre is a highly effective method for improving fluency and comprehension skills in primary school students. Reading theatre involves reading texts aloud with expression, tone, and inflection, providing opportunities for all students to develop, or continue to develop, their ability to read with accuracy and fluency, which in turn improves their comprehension skills.

Moreover, reading theatre also enhances communication skills by providing opportunities for students to work collaboratively, share ideas, and engage in active listening. This can help build a positive classroom culture, where students feel valued and supported in their learning.

It is a fun and engaging way for students across all year groups to develop their fluency, comprehension, and communication skills.

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| Step 1: Adult as model | Step 2: Echo reading | Step 3: Text allocation |
| The adult reads the selected passage of the class text aloud as an 'expert model' of fluency whilst pupils follow the text with their own copy. This may be repeated multiple times as necessary. | Children echo back the section read by the adult, emulating their intonation, tone, speed, volume, expression, movement, use of punctuation, etc. | Children work in pairs or triads. Each group may: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. all have the exact same short section of text, or 2. a longer section might be split into short parts, so that each group has a different piece. |
| Step 4: Repeated choral reading | Step 5: Close reading | Step 6: Text marking |
| In their groups, children read their section aloud, echoing the initial reading by the adult. | In their pairs/triads children make a close reading of their section of text and think about meaning, audience, and purpose. This requires children to look closely at the writer's use of language and consider characterisations, etc. | Each child has a copy of the text to annotate in order to inform their performance. This is discussed and agreed as a group. Prompts are provided to direct their reading. |
| Step 7: Practise | Step 8: Perform | Step 9: Reflect |
| Time is provided for groups to rehearse their reading. They may decide to change or add to their performance slightly as a result of their rehearsal. | Each group performs their rehearsed piece. (Adult may record so that children can appraise their own performance). | Children evaluate their own and/or others' performances and give feedback. They may use a reading fluency rubric or the prompts as success criteria to support articulation of evaluations. |