

## How We Teach Reading

At DJA, we realise that reading is most singularly important because all subjects rely on it.



“If our hopes and expectations for our students stretch far – to the highest levels of accomplishment and learning – then our responsibility includes preparing them to read with rigour, independence, precision and insight in the long run.” Lemov.

“Comprehension skills develop through pupils’ experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a wide range of stories, poems and non-fiction.” National Curriculum for English, 2014.

### Reading lessons

Reading lessons happen daily and they are for a minimum of 30 minutes. All lessons begin with an ‘ERIC Starter’ (Explain, Retrieve, Interpret and Choice) these should take between 5 and 10 minutes and allow children to work on the key skills of reading comprehension straight away. The stimulus for these is varied and can be linked to other work or stand alone. E.g. Movie clip, blurb, picture, poem extract.

The remainder of the lesson is spent using the structure of Retrieval – Vocabulary – Inference. The text is broken down into small chunks and ask questions from those 3 key skills (RVI)

**Retrieval** - Helps children find the information they need to understand a text on a deeper level.

**Vocabulary** - Enables pupils to understand the words used. Vocabulary is taught using the STAR sequence and children revisit these words often.

**Inference** - Once pupils know where to find the information and understand what it means, they will have a much better chance of focussing on inference skills to answer questions that involve interpreting and deducing ideas based on information given.

### Reading for pleasure

In order to develop a love of reading, it is crucial that time is given where children can immerse themselves into books that they enjoy. As well as reading lessons, each day, pupils will take part in reading for pleasure sessions. These happen each afternoon for 30 minutes. Teachers read a class novel to children twice in the week and other sessions are where the teacher listens to children read individually. Hearing their teacher or an adult read, allows children to hear how to use their voice, exposes them to thousands of new words thus increasing vocabulary, can decrease anxiety and be relaxing. Children reading to an adult, develops language, comprehension, word-sound ability and fluency.

### Reading Canon

It is our commitment that all children should be exposed to a broad, balanced selection of texts that will provide them with the ‘cultural capital’ to succeed later in life. We have created the Devonshire Reading Canon: a selection of texts that every child will have read by the time they leave our school. This includes classics, modern bestsellers, and stories that will stay with them for the rest of lives.

## How we Teach Writing

### Aims

At Devonshire, we aspire to teach our children key skills needed to write creatively, accurately and with passion. Children become knowledgeable about the different reasons in which writers are moved to write: **to teach, persuade or influence, entertain, paint with words, reflect and to make a record**. Our aim for writing is for it to be something our children naturally want to do and to view it as natural consequence to a particular experience, hook or outcome.

We want our children to understand the process of writing; they learn to gather ideas, draft, re-fine writing and share the outcome with a clear purpose. At Devonshire, we want writing to be authentic. No writer should ever believe they writing for no real reason, which is the same drive we have for our children. Each unit of writing is linked to a purpose. It could be writing a story to share with another class, producing an anthology of poetry, writing a letter to persuade the community to support a project or linked to a text shared in class.

### Writing lessons

#### Exploration

This is where children are given the opportunity to immerse themselves in the text type. From the starting point of the unit, children will be given direction on the outcome of their writing so they can envisage where their writing is going. They will be given a wide range of texts and alternative media to grasp a greater understanding of the language, structure and purpose. At this stage, children are given as many opportunities as possible to engage with the text type and develop speaking and listening skills. Activities such as role-play, hot-seating and conscience alley support the increased need for oracy and collaboration.

#### Shared write

At this stage, children have developed a firm understanding of the structure and language used in a specific genre and begin to develop this further through a shared write. Grammar skills are taught throughout the crafting of the shared write but each lesson may have a different SPAG focus. Teachers model the writing and editing process with the children and are taken on that journey in preparation for their independent writing. Links are made back to the model text and other resources that have been used in the previous stage to support with ideas and vocabulary. Children will be given opportunities to complete, improve or edit a section of writing that has been worked on as a class or group.

#### Independent write

Time is given heavily to planning and engaging the children with the final outcome for their writing. Allowing children time to discuss their ideas with a buddy or group supports them in the planning process. Teachers emphasise the skills taught throughout the unit so far and continually make links back to the model and shared text, particularly for weaker writers who need that scaffold. Children

are taught how to edit effectively and shown that this is all part of the writing process. Following this, they are given time to write up their work so it can be celebrated and fulfil its purpose, whether it be sending that letter in the post, sharing their stories with another class or producing a book for the book corner.

### **Grammar and punctuation**

Throughout the writing process, grammar is taught and practised within the lesson. There is clear guidance on what grammar to teach within each year group and this is progressive. Once pupils are familiar with a grammatical concept, they should be encouraged to apply and explore this concept in the grammar of their own writing and to note where it is used by others. The content in earlier years should be revisited in subsequent years to consolidate knowledge and build on pupils' understanding.

### **Spelling**

Spelling sessions occur discretely and are in addition to writing lessons using "Spelling Shed" to support this. There are particular GPCs (The links between letters, or combinations of letters - graphemes - and the speech sounds - phonemes - that they represent) that are in root words and simply have to be learnt. Teachers can help pupils to understand relationships between meaning and spelling where these are relevant. Individual spellings are also identified to learn / practise in order to address any misconceptions or inaccuracies.

### **Handwriting**

Handwriting is a skill which must be learnt in order to provide a style which becomes simple to produce and easy to read. At Devonshire, we use "Penpals" which is a handwriting scheme that is fully in line with the national curriculum. The practice books and videos provide specific handwriting practice for specific letter formation, joins and size.