

6

This unit looks at

- how to use reading activities that
 - focus on meaning
 - support pupils as they move from spoken to written language
 - show pupils how to use the printed word as an alternative source of language input.

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Introduction

In previous units we have focused on

- listening as the main source of language
- how speaking activities can be started and developed.

All the activities we have looked at in these chapters could be extended to include reading practice.

Think about how ...

- all children listen from birth and naturally **acquire** speech.
- all children have to learn how to read and write.
- if children's mother tongue is written in roman script, you can use a teaching method that focuses on meaning from the beginning.
- if children have a mother tongue that is not based on roman script, then you will have to spend some time on sounds, letter shape, and word recognition.
- meaning is the most important element in reading just as it is in listening.
- just as listening came before speaking, so reading comes before writing.

Think about

your own teaching situation.

- How old are the children in your class?
- Can they read and write in their mother tongue?
- Do they know the roman script?
- Do they know there are different spellings for similar sounds in English, e.g. *show*, *sugar* – /ʃ/?
- What words might beginners recognize already?

- Look at the list in the box below. What are your three main priorities when teaching your pupils to read in English?

Priorities when teaching reading and writing

- focus on meaning
- word recognition
- making the connection between familiar sounds and written words or phrases
- naming the letters of the alphabet
- predicting the pronunciation of a written word

Look back at the aims for 'listening and doing' activities at the beginning of Unit 2. In the same way as you help children develop listening strategies through suitable activities, you can help them develop reading strategies.

For example, children

- can 'read and do', so give them short written instructions on cards to follow, for example, *Point to the window...*
- can use other clues to understand the written word, such as pictures and sounds
- do not need to understand everything fully, they just need to understand the key words and general meaning.

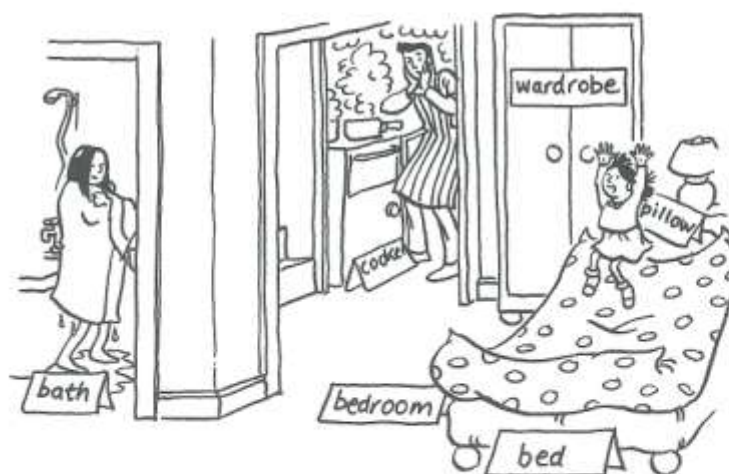
6.1 Beginning reading

You know best about your teaching situation. Do your pupils know how to read in their own language? This is a big step because children have to understand the association between what they hear and what they read.

Do you teach reading in English in the same way as you teach reading in your mother tongue? Learning to read in English is not as difficult if children can read in their own language, even if it is written in a different script. Your teaching situation is the most important factor when deciding how you should teach reading.

There are two main approaches to teaching reading in English.

Look and say



Teachers often use 'look and say' as part of vocabulary teaching. So when children learn to say a new word they learn to read it. You can help children with whole word recognition by using printed material as much as you can in your classroom, e.g. word cards used for labelling and directions. Of course, the new words are learnt in **context**.

This can also be done with phrases. Children use the same recognition skills when they are remembering a word or a short phrase.

In 6.2 we will listen to a teacher using 'look and say' techniques to teach some new words.

Phonics (letters used to make sounds)

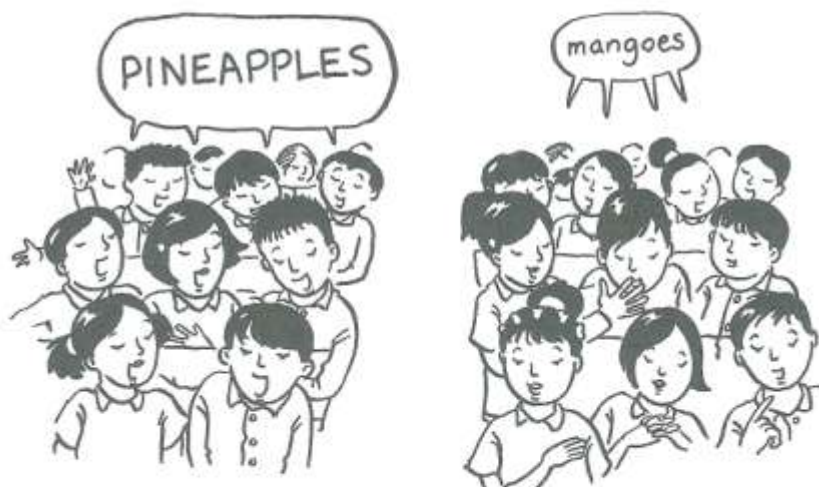


English spelling is difficult. Children need to learn how to recognize sounds and letters. It is better not to teach the names of letters when starting to teach reading, as of course some of the letters of the English alphabet no longer match the actual sounds of the language. When you use phonics, you are teaching children the way the letter sounds, not the name of the letter.

Young learners

- can learn obvious letter patterns that help with sound recognition and help them predict words, for example, *shop, jam*, etc.
- Visual clues make words and phrases easier to remember.
- will not need to know the formal names of the letters until they start to write and spell.

Another way to help children with sounds is to let them play with the sounds as they repeat a word they are reading on a card or in their book, e.g. singing it or saying it loudly or quickly or slowly, or whispering. This playing with words obviously helps pronunciation but it also helps children remember the word.



Many teachers use both 'look and say' and phonics. And you can use both of these with more meaningful material such as story books. (We will look at stories in Units 8 and 9.)

Activities to help children connect sounds with letters

Children whose first language is written in roman script can learn the first letter of their own name and look for their 'special words':

Ana – apple, art.

Let children with non-roman script names pick their favourite thing/colour/animal and use the first letter as their special letter:

panda – pocket – picture.

Play alphabet games:

— memory games – using letter cards



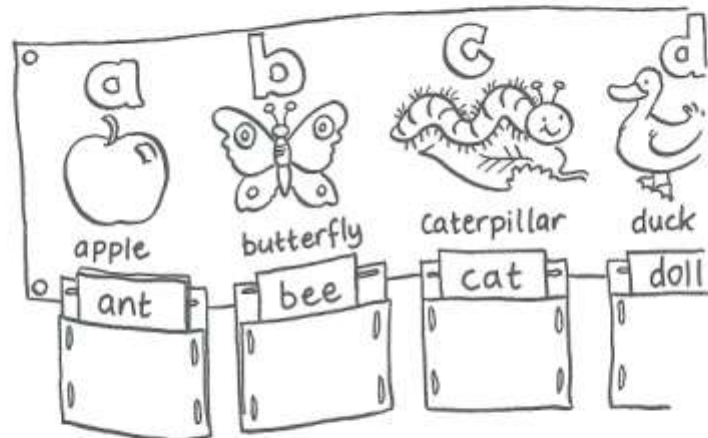
— initial letter games – children recognize and collect the first letters of different words:

What letter does mango begin with?

— feel the letter – children close their eyes and touch cut-out sandpaper letters on a card. *Find the 't' for tiger.*



- Make an alphabet frieze with card spaces underneath for lots of extra words that children can recognize and read.



Activities to help children connect sound recognition with clusters of written letters

- Make children aware of the patterns in
 - final word endings that rhyme in songs and chants
 - games and songs with a focus on beginning sounds
 - displays or games that emphasize a particular sound.
- Help them focus on visual sound patterns, for example, *pl* cluster in *plant – planet – plane*, and the *st* cluster in *star – stamp – story*.
- Talk about these patterns with the children – help them to see how they can use this awareness to guess words.
- Let children point to these patterns/words when you are all reading something together.
- Colour or highlight these patterns on word cards.

You can connect many of these activities with writing and with the activities we are going to look at in Units 8–9 on stories.

LANGUAGE FOCUS 6.1

Letter and word recognition

a 'Look and say' approach

- ☞ To do this exercise, have two or three sets of flashcards with words on them, for example, *animal words*, *colour words*, *sports words*.

Look at the table on the next page. It has some instructions you can use with a 'look and say' approach to reading, for example, *Who can find their favourite food or drink? Pick it up and show us.*

Use the table to make six different instruction patterns. You can adapt them and add to them. Now practise them with someone else.

RECORD Then record them.

Can you find your	name card on the table?	Pick it up and show us ... Can you put it on your desk?
Who can find their	favourite colour among these words? favourite food or drink?	Can you read it out to us? Good – can you tell us what it says? How many other colour words can you read?
Who can find	a word for a colour? the word for 'blue'? the card which says 'blue'? a card with an animal name on?	What other animal words can you read? What does this one say?

b Phonic approach

Do the same with these tables. Add to them, too.

OK – let's see how many letters you can remember. Who can find a letter which says 'h'? Yes – 'h' like for your name, Hiro... or 'h' for happy or hungry. Who is hungry? Anyone? OK, so who can point to the letter for 'h'?

Who can	find	a letter which says ssss	like a ssssnake like in your name, Sam?
Can you	point to	a word beginning with a w sound	as in wolf?
Can anyone	see	a word that starts with a b	like b for banana?
		the letters for a th sound	like you get in three?
		a word that ends with a n sound	like green, man?
		a word that rhymes with cat	like hat, sat?

c Words children already know or half-know from their mother tongue

video	C.D.	hotel	hamburger	football	golf
T.V.	kangaroo	sandwich	elephant		

- Write on the blank cards other words your pupils may be familiar with, and will not have too much trouble reading.

Then use these instructions to plan four different things to ask children to do with these cards.

RECORD Practise and record them, giving an example each time.

Choose	any words for food. any words for drink.	Put all the food words together in a circle/list.
Find	three words for sports.	Draw a picture for three of them.
Read out loud	four words from the song we've just sung.	Match each word to a picture.
Come out and take down	any words from the rhyme we've just said.	Find a picture to go with each word.
Team A come and find		Where are you going to put this word? Beside the ...?
Team B come and take	three words you like best.	Where does this word go? How many are there left?

d What does it say?

In English, when talking about what is written down, we nearly always use the word *say*. In the examples below, decide which word is likely to be **stressed**, then practise saying these questions out loud. Choose five to record, and give a sample answer.

- *What does it say on this card/label?*
- *What does this sign say? IN or OUT?*
- *What does this word say? What's this one?*
- *What does this letter say? What sound does it make?*
- *What do these letters say when they are together?*
- *What sound do these letters make together?*
- *What sound does this word start with (end with)?*
- *What other words start with (end with) that sound?*
- *Look, there's an e on the end, so does it say bite or bit?*

6.2 Speaking to reading – helping sound and word recognition

Look back again at the classroom extracts **4E** (page 49) and **4G** (page 52). Jane, the teacher in that class, was helping her pupils remember and pronounce new vocabulary. In **6A** we hear Jane using 'word reading' as part of vocabulary learning.

Her pupils are learning

- about rhythm and **intonation** as they learn new words
- how to associate meaning and sound with the written word when they read.

Before you listen to the extract, read this summary of the class activities. Jane

- first sticks up pictures of the six words on the board
- then uses a tambourine to beat out the rhythm of the new words
- then says a chant with the children using the new words they are learning.

6A

Using a tambourine for rhythm and syllable work

TEACHER: Good. Now, thank you.

OK, one more thing ... Let's see who can tell me ... Who can tell me this one? Listen.

(The teacher beats twice on the tambourine.)

TEACHER: OK, hands up. Listen. Now listen.

(The teacher beats twice on the tambourine again.)

CHILDREN: Planet ...

TEACHER: Yeah yeah ... plan ... et.

Could be planet, couldn't it? Anything else? ... star?

CHILDREN: No.

TEACHER: Rainbow? Yes?

CHILDREN: Yes.

TEACHER: Yes look ... plan ... et ... rain ... bow ...

(The teacher beats twice on the tambourine.)

TEACHER: Or how about this one then?

(The teacher beats once on the tambourine.)

TEACHER: Moon?

CHILDREN: Yes ... yes.

TEACHER: Star ...

CHILDREN: Yes ... yes.

TEACHER: Yes and it could be sun and it could be cloud. Now I'm going to choose one and you have to guess which word this is ...

(The teacher beats once on the tambourine.)

CHILDREN: Star.

TEACHER: Could be ... What else?

CHILDREN: Moon.

TEACHER: Yes. Now, Laura you come out and choose one. OK.

(Different children take turns to choose a word and give the correct number of beats on the tambourine.)

Jane with seven to eight year olds.



Now listen to 6A. Jane

— focuses the children's attention on the syllabic beat of the words

— elicits the number of syllables in the words they are learning

— lets individual children beat out the syllables of the remaining words

— asks other children to guess the word.

LANGUAGE FOCUS 6.2

Encouraging learner participation

- o-a a Read transcript 6A. Find six different phrases that Jane uses to get the children to do this particular activity. (Note: only the ones that are just for this activity so NOT phrases like *Hands up*. You use that phrase with lots of activities.) Try saying these phrases with a suitable intonation. Mark the words in each phrase that you think carry the main stress.



Listen to 6A on the CD again and repeat these phrases as they are said.

RECORD Finally, record them on to your cassette.

Asking children to guess the word

- o-a b Read these ten phrases out loud. Which one is probably not about guessing or predicting?
- You have to guess which word this is.
 - What do you think this could be?
 - Now what about this one?
 - It starts with *r* so it might be ...
 - It's something that's in her basket, so what might this be?
 - It could be a ...
 - Let's put everything away.
 - Think of the story – so what could this be about?
 - What else could it be?
 - What do you think?

6 B**Matching words to pictures**

TEACHER: Now put everything away.
We're going to do something else.
We're going to do something else.
OK ... sh ... sh ...

TEACHER: Now what do you think this is? Mm ... hm ...

CHILD: Planet ... planet.

TEACHER: OK, then, Irene, come and get it. Let's see where it's going to go. OK, where are you going to put it?
(The pupil puts the word beside the matching picture.)

TEACHER: OK. Beside the picture of the planet. Very good. Now what about this one?
(They go through all the words and each word is put beside the matching picture.)

Jane with seven to eight year olds.

6 C**Recognizing the correct word**

TEACHER: Now do you want to help me?
Em ... this is rainbow?

CHILDREN: No.

TEACHER: Erm ... Moon?

CHILDREN: No.

TEACHER: Erm ... Cloud?

CHILDREN: Yes.

Jane with seven to eight year olds.

6 D**Reading words**

TEACHER: Now let's see if we can do ...
Do you remember the game 'clever parrot'? If it's the same, what should you do?

CHILDREN: Say it.

TEACHER: Say it.

(Some children comment in their mother tongue also.)

TEACHER: OK, now look at the card ...

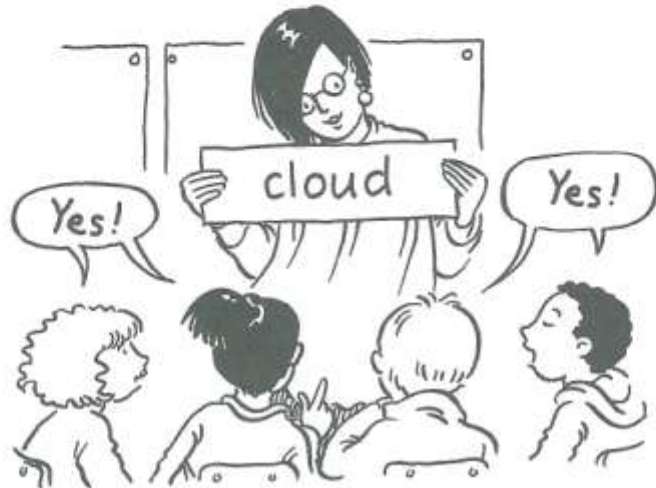
OK? Rainbow, moon, sun, star ...

ALL THE CHILDREN: Star!

Jane with seven to eight year olds.

- 🎧 Listen to 6B. The children are now matching the written word to the picture on the board. Jane asks the children
- to look at the words on cards
 - to put them beside the matching picture on the blackboard.

- 🎧 Now listen to 6C. Jane
- holds the cards in front of her so that the children can see them
 - doesn't look at the cards
 - says one of the words.
- The children have to say if she is right or wrong. Listen to them doing this.



- 🎧 In 6D the pupils are playing a game. The game is called 'clever parrot'. The children have to repeat like a parrot. But they must be clever parrots and only repeat the word on the card. The teacher
- shows a card to the pupils
 - doesn't look at the card
 - repeats all the words.

The children have to

- look and listen carefully
- repeat the word that is on the card when they hear it.



To finish this lesson Jane plays a fast word-reading game.

- She uses the word cards again.
- She turns over a word card very quickly.
- The children only see it for a second.
- They call out the word they read.



You could use some of these activities

- when teaching new vocabulary
- when you want to **revise** or go over vocabulary the children learnt before
- before children read a story or say a rhyme which includes these words.

Summary of the pre-reading activities

The activities we have listened to here show how you can

- focus on new words in context
- teach sound and letter/word recognition at the same time
- get children to match sound and written forms
- repeat constantly to teach pronunciation
- let children have fun while learning to read.

Extension ideas

- Play label games with groups or whole class, e.g. remove all the labels you use in class and get the children to stick them all back on again.
- Play word games
 - use sets of words the children are already familiar with, e.g. fruit, animals, or characters from stories
 - guess what's missing/odd one out/dominoes/snap/bingo.
- Get children to think about and remember words by using a password for the class. Every day someone can choose a new password. During the day you can remind everyone of this word and then make it the password for the next morning.

TEACHING TIPS

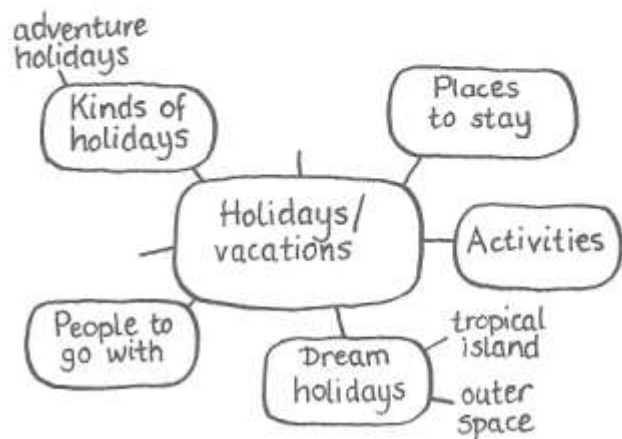
Word recognition

- ✓ Label things in the classroom, even pictures/photos that you use.
- ✓ Keep sets of pictures and new words and phrases children have learnt recently in a special **display** area.
- ✓ Let the children play at being teacher to revise these words and phrases.
- ✓ Hand out wishes cards and praise cards with short phrases that children can bring home and read to their parents, e.g.
Wishes cards Have a nice weekend ... See you Monday.
Praise cards Well done ... Fantastic ... Thank you for a nice meal ...

TOPIC TALK

Holidays/vacations

- 1 With a colleague, complete the following mind map. There are five connected bubbles. You might like to add others. The questions you need to ask have been left out.
 - What five questions would you ask?
 For other mind-map ideas see the Website references on page 142.



- 2 Think about the best holiday/worst vacation you have ever had. Why was it so good/bad? Prepare to tell someone else about it.

RECORD Record yourself talking about this.

6.3 Helping children recognize phrases

Children acquire words and phrases when they listen. As they become familiar with phrases in English they are unconsciously learning about word order. When they start to read and later to write, you can do activities — that consolidate what they have heard and show them the same patterns, written down

— that allow children to slowly become **aware** of word order.

- 🎧 Listen to the teacher in **6E** helping his class with phrase reading from the story *Little Red Riding Hood*. He is using word cards for the things in Red Riding Hood's basket. The children already know the story and have heard the phrases before.

This lesson is based on a story, but you can use reading material from many sources. One of the best sources of early reading material is what the children make up themselves.

Let children make reading cards. They can colour and illustrate them. You can

- write down what the children say
- let the children make the cards slowly
- let everyone in the class make a card
- keep the cards in pockets with the children's names on the outside
- use what the children have written for word/phrase recognition activities.

TEACHING TIPS

- ✓ Make up group chants based on what the children already know and using the phrases the children can read out:

What's in the basket?	Lovely sweet strawberries
What's in the wood?	Small blue flowers
What's in the bed?	The big bad wolf
What's in his mouth?	His big sharp teeth
What's in his tummy?	Not me, not me!!

- ✓ Pick out phrases that you can use for matching games from reading material
- ✓ Use picture cards and cards with labels or short phrases or descriptions. Ask the children to find the picture to match the writing.

Which monster is this? My monster has two heads, four feet, two hands, 6 fingers, and big smiles.



6 E

Building a phrase

TEACHER: OK, everybody, look carefully. Here are all the things in Red Riding Hood's basket. But the words are all mixed up. So we're going to sort them out. OK, right, right who can remember what she had?

CHILDREN: Strawberries.

TEACHER: Strawberries, yes. Strawberries ... good. Who can come out and find the word for strawberries?

CHILDREN: Me, me ...

TEACHER: OK, Leah. OK. Yes, good. And what were the strawberries like? They were lovely ...

CHILDREN: Sweet ... sweet ...

TEACHER: Yes. They were lovely sweet strawberries. So who can find these words?

CHILD: Me.

TEACHER: OK, All. And where do they go? Put them next to the strawberries. Which one goes first? That's right? That's right. Good, let's read that phrase together ...

CHILDREN AND TEACHER: Lovely ... sweet ... strawberries.

TEACHER: lovely sweet strawberries. Mm. Yes.

Brian with eight to nine year olds.

Extension ideas

- Put phrases based on topics/stories that the children know on reading cards. Let them put the cards together in various combinations to make sentences.



- Take suitable phrases out of stories to make substitution games and sequencing games, like this one for Cinderella.

the frog	changed into	a coach
the pumpkin		horses
the mice		a coachman

First group	Second group	Last group of cards
<i>The snake</i>	<i>are buying</i>	<i>a bicycle</i>
<i>The kangaroo</i>	<i>is riding</i>	<i>an aeroplane</i>
		<i>a hamburger</i>

LANGUAGE FOCUS 6.3

Making phrases or sentences

After talking about pictures or reading a story, you can write words or sentence halves on separate cards, like the ones above, and ask children to do one of these activities.

Use your own flashcards and practise two or three sets of instructions for these.

<p>Make phrases using the words on these cards</p> <p>— <i>lovely red strawberries</i> or <i>lovely sweet apples</i>.</p>	<p>They should be true ones.</p> <p>They can be true or false.</p> <p>They can be silly ones.</p>	<p>And then read them to your partner.</p> <p>He/she can say if they are true or not true.</p> <p>Ask him/her if it was quite silly or very silly.</p>
<p>Make sentences using the phrases on your cards</p> <p>— <i>The mice changed into horses</i>.</p>		

🔊 Pronunciation point

Sounds /ɔ:/ and /ɜ:/

Do you remember how these words were pronounced in class extracts in this unit and in earlier units?

- 1 *walk, work, shirt, talk, words*. Put them in two groups according to the vowel sound.
- 2 And what group does the word *sort* go in?

RECORD Either record yourself or work with a partner and say these pairs of words and some more pairs:

walk work ... work work ... work walk ... walk walk ...

Play back your recording or get someone to listen to you and decide if the pairs you have said are the same or different.

6.4 Reading independently – finding information

- When children can read they can use the printed word as an alternative source of English.
- When children can read silently on their own they are developing confidence and independence.
- To check their pronunciation, ask individual pupils to read a little bit out loud for you.
- Children should always have time to look at a written text before reading it aloud.



REMEMBER

- Prediction is an important part of our thinking process. Children need to practise thinking about and guessing what comes next.
- Children can learn to predict what a word means from
 - context,
e.g. *initial sound combined with general meaning*
 - pictures,
e.g. *illustrations in books*
 - what they know about a topic
 - what follows words such as *but, so, because*
 - what they have noticed before.
- When you encourage children to talk about what they have read you show them that their reading is important.

Helping children to be independent readers is also very practical; for example, they can tell other children what they have read.



Listen to the teacher in 6F, Emi, getting a pupil to explain what she has read to her classmates.

6 F

Reading and transferring information

TEACHER: OK, now em ... page ...

OK please open your workbook ...
page twenty-two.

Now, can you read it on your own
and tell me what you have to do?
(*Children reading on their own*)

TEACHER: OK, Ana can you explain what
you have to do in this activity?

(*Ana explains in her mother tongue.*)

TEACHER: Do you all understand?

CHILDREN: Yes.

TEACHER: OK, do it on your own and
when you've finished compare your
work with your partner's. When
you've finished, but not before. OK ...
em ... perhaps five minutes, that's all.

Emi with eleven to twelve year olds.

LANGUAGE FOCUS 6.4

Chunking

Chunking means recognizing what words in a text belong together. This helps children read in meaningful phrases, not word by word.

➡ Read the Teacher's part of 6F out loud, dividing it into short **chunks**.



Listen to it again on the CD and repeat the teacher's part.

Finding the place

Add to or adapt the table below.

RECORD Record yourself giving four sets of instructions from it.

You need your	coursebook	page 13	Read what it says ...
Please open your	activity book	page 22	Can you read it on your own?
Find where we got to last time – in your	workbook	page 30	Can you do what it says?
Find your place in your	reader	middle of page 14	

Extension ideas

Set tasks for children so that they have to read to complete them, e.g. *Read two reading cards and tell everyone what they were about. Read a set of instructions and make something, such as a Lego house.* Encourage children to read something to their parents.

TEACHING TIPS**Encouraging children to develop as readers**

- ✓ Have a reading area in the classroom with good picture books and reading cards with pictures (see Units 8 and 9 on stories).
- ✓ Have reading material written by you and the children.
- ✓ Have simple information cards or books about other countries.
- ✓ If you have audio books (cassettes of stories) in your school, let the children read and listen at the same time.
- ✓ Play games where reading is needed to find out information, such as treasure hunt clues.

Further ideas

- RECORD 1** Choose two short texts from your coursebooks suitable for your pupils and record yourself reading them out loud as you would read them to your pupils. Play them back and listen to see how expressive you are when reading.
- ➔ **2** Look in your coursebooks for reading activities you can try in class. Also check the Teacher's Book to see what it says about these activities. Now plan what you would say in English to set them up in your class. Use some of the extension ideas to teaching tips in this unit.
- RECORD** Then record yourself in class teaching these activities.
- 3** Read Chapter 7 from Brewster, Jean, Gail Ellis, and Denis Girard. 1992. *The Primary English Teacher's Guide*. London: Penguin AND/OR Chapter 7 from Moon, Jayne. 2000. *Children Learning English*. Oxford: Macmillan Heinemann.