

# Paired Reading

## a guide for readers and helpers

### What's so special about Paired Reading?

- Paired Reading works! Research shows that, on average, students progress more than three times faster in reading skills when they do Paired Reading.
- Paired Reading is a simple enjoyable method. The Reader never struggles for more than a few seconds. It takes the frustration and stress out of reading together.
- In Paired Reading, the *Reader* is in control. The Reader chooses what to read. The Reader decides when they want to read independently.
- The Helper does not do any teaching, especially not any word-building. The Helper supports and encourages the Reader as they practise their skills. (Think of supporting a child as they learn to ride a bike.)
- Paired Reading is not meant to be the same as other kinds of reading practice. It is different from reading primary school "reading books".
- Paired Reading only works if you follow the directions exactly.

### Who can benefit from Paired Reading?

- Paired Reading can benefit all children and young people who want to improve their reading skills. It is not just for people with reading difficulties.

### Who can be a helper?

- At home: parent, grandparent, uncle, aunt, brother, sister, friend, neighbour....
- At school, another student, volunteer, teaching assistant, teacher, mentor.

# HOW TO DO PAIRED READING

## Getting ready

- The Reader has a free choice of what to read, even if it seems too hard or too easy: books, magazines, comics.... And it's OK to start something new without finishing the previous book .
- Find somewhere quiet and comfortable, without distractions. Turn off the TV, or go into another room.
- Sit close, so you can both easily share the book.
- Talk together about what you're reading.
- The *Reader* holds the book, and, it can help for the *Reader* to follow the text with a finger. Try this at first, even if you prefer not to point later on.

## Start by Reading Together

Start off by reading aloud, exactly together. The Helper has to read each word as soon as the Reader points to it . Don't hang back to wait for the reader, *but....*

- If the Reader misses a word, or if they say an incorrect word, then the Helper waits a moment until the Reader says the word correctly.

## **The Reader may choose to give the signal to Read by Myself**

- The signal can be a nudge, or a tap on the book.
- When the Reader gives the signal, the Helper immediately goes quiet, and the Reader continues to read alone.
- For more difficult books, the Reader may not choose to give the signal. That's OK. You can read together the whole time.

## **When the Reader is reading by themselves and *gets stuck* on a word...**

- Helper... you wait for 5 seconds, then you say the word and let the Reader copy it. *Then both of you carry on reading together.....* until the Reader gives another signal.
- Don't do anything else.

## **When the Reader is reading by themselves and *makes a mistake....***

- Helper, you immediately say the *correct word* and let the Reader copy it. *Then both of you carry on reading together.....* until the Reader gives another signal.
- Don't do anything else!

## **Keep showing your appreciation and interest**

- Helper: keep giving praise... *Great! Good try! Fantastic!* Show your appreciation when the Reader keeps reading in time with you, reads by themselves, tackles tricky words, reads with expression.
- Talk about what you are reading together. Give your opinions and find out the Reader's opinions. Comment on story and characters. Maybe ask an occasional question.

### **KEEPING IT GOING**

- Do ten minutes five days a week. Make a deal to do it for ten weeks. Don't do more than 15 minutes a day, unless the Reader really insists. Don't try to force the reader to do Paired Reading when they really want to be doing something else.
- Choose a regular daily time, to make it part of the routine, when you're not busy or distracted.
- Keep a simple record of days when you did Paired Reading. The simplest would be to use a calendar and circle the days when you do Paired Reading. A better record would be a notebook with the date and what you read and a positive comment.

*Good Luck !*