This guide offers English language teachers practical advice on using graded readers both in and out of the classroom. It has been compiled by practising teachers and teacher trainers and draws on the ideas of teachers in a wide range of countries who are teaching in different types of schools and colleges.

The guide describes:
- what graded readers are, and the contribution they make to speedy and enjoyable language learning
- how to use a class reader
- activities which can be used with a class reader
- how to set up a class library
- using graded readers as a basis for communicative activities
- using audio cassettes of graded readers
- activities for holiday reading

The guide also includes the following templates for teachers to photocopy and use with their learners:
- a vocabulary record sheet
- a reading diary
- a lesson plan
- a class library chart
- a book review sheet
- role play cards
- a beautifully illustrated board game, which can be used with any reader

www.penguinreaders.com

Published and distributed by Pearson Education
Teacher's Resource Materials

The following additional free teacher's resource materials are available for use with Penguin Readers:

**Penguin Readers Factsheets**

Penguin Readers Factsheets have been developed for teachers using Penguin Readers with their class. Each Factsheet is based on one Reader, and consists of:
- a summary of the book
- interesting information about the novel and novelist, including a section on the background and themes of the novel
- a selection of lively supplementary activities for use with the reader in class

Factsheets are available for all titles in Penguin Readers at levels 2 to 6.

**Penguin Readers Teacher's Guides**

This is one of six teacher's guides, containing photocopiable material and teacher's notes relating to themes derived from the Readers themselves or from common teaching situations.

- Penguin Readers Teacher's Guide to Using Film and TV
  ISBN 0 582 40008 2
- Penguin Readers Teacher's Guide to Preparing for FCE
  ISBN 0 582 40010 4
- Penguin Readers Teacher's Guide to Developing Listening Skills
  ISBN 0 582 34423 9
  ISBN 0 582 473802
- Penguin Readers Teacher's Guide to Using Bestsellers
  ISBN 0 582 46900 7

NB: Penguin Readers Factsheets are photocopiable.

For a full list of Readers published in the Penguin Readers series please visit [http://plrcatalogue.pearson.com](http://plrcatalogue.pearson.com)

For copies of the Penguin Readers catalogue, please contact your local Pearson Education office or:

**Penguin Longman Publishing**

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UK
Tel: +44 (0) 870 607 3777
Fax: +44 (0) 870 850 0155
Email: elt@pearson.com

[www.penguinreaders.com](http://www.penguinreaders.com)
A1 WHAT IS A GRADED READER?

A graded reader is a book written in simple language which has been controlled to fit precise levels of difficulty. The General Editors have used many resources to develop the guidelines:

- The British National Corpus (BNC) of 100 million words of written and spoken English.
- The 2,000 word Longman Defining Vocabulary (which is used in all Longman Dictionaries).
- The British National Corpus (BNC) of 100 million words of written and spoken English.
- The 2,000 word Longman Defining Vocabulary (which is used in all Longman Dictionaries).

An analysis of vocabulary and grammar taught in modern, widely-used textbooks.

Cardinal numbers (also as pronouns):

- 1st - 31st
- 21st - 30th
- 41st - 49th
- 51st - 59th
- 61st - 69th
- 71st - 79th
- 81st - 89th
- 91st - 99th
- 101st
- 111st
- 121st
- 131st
- 141st
- 151st
- 161st
- 171st
- 181st
- 191st
- 201st

Adjectives:

- Simple adjectives (adjectives and adverbs)
- Compound adjectives
- Phrasal adjectives

Adverbs:

- Simple adverbs (adverbs and adjectives)
- Compound adverbs
- Phrasal adverbs

Pronominals:

- Personal pronouns
- Demonstrative pronouns
- Interrogative pronouns

Conjunctions:

- Simple conjunctions
- Complex conjunctions

Sentences:

- Simple sentence
- Complex sentence
- Compound sentence
- Compound complex sentence

A2 How are readers graded?

Andy Hopkins and Joc Potter, the General Editors of the Penguin Readers series, have produced guidelines for each of the seven grading levels. The guidelines for each grading level are based on the language which a learner at that level is likely to have studied in class or be able to understand from the context and illustrations.

In these ways, learners have an experience of reading which is close to their experience of extensive reading in their mother tongue - without constant reference to a dictionary or the frequent need to re-read certain passages in order to understand them.

A good grading system is based on a good understanding of the language and the learner he or she can understand.

LEARNER TEXT

They are looking for reading books for younger children? Look at Penguin Young Readers at four different language levels and three different formats for different age groups. PENGUIN YOUNG READERS
A2 UNSIMPLIFIED TEXTS AND GRADED READERS

“Nothing is interesting if you can’t understand it.”
Michael Lewis and Jimmie Hill

Learners of English find it difficult to understand unsimplified texts because:
• There are too many unknown words in the text.
• There are grammatical structures which the learner does not understand.
• There are unexplained cultural references.

Teachers who use unsimplified texts with their students in class know the amount of work which needs to be done, the explanations given, the references to monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, before students can gain a reasonable understanding of the text.

Graded readers are primarily designed for private, unsupervised reading by learners. The grading process attempts to reduce the vocabulary, grammatical and cultural difficulty of the text so that the learner can (with a little effort) understand enough of the meaning to enjoy the text.

Penguin Readers. This teaching help includes:
• An introduction to each book providing background and information about the author.
• Activities at the back of each book with Before Reading, While Reading and After Reading activities.
• Free Factsheets about each reader from www.penguinreaders.com which provide further background information about the book and the author, further activities Before Reading, While Reading and After Reading.
• Free Penguin Readers Teacher’s Guides providing different ideas for exploitation.

The Introduction in each book provides the background to the story and author. Activities at the back of each book include Before You Read and After You Read activities for each chapter, sections or group chapters in the book. From the www.penguinreaders.com website, teachers can download a Factsheet about each reader which includes a summary, information about the author, background and themes of the story, and further comprehension and communicative activities.

Penguin Readers Factsheets are ready for you to photocopy and use with your students.

Penguin Readers are high-interest readers. There are shortened and simplified versions of novels, short stories from classical and contemporary literature and the latest films. Good examples are Stranger than Fiction [Penguin Readers Level 2], a collection of strange and bizarre stories from around the world which many people believe are true, and The Book of Heroic Failures [Penguin Readers Level 3], an amusing collection of true stories about unsuccessful attempts to do great things.

Penguin Readers also provide a limited amount of language extension. Because of the grading process, learners should not encounter too many new words or new structures when reading. A learner who is reading a graded reader is not just enjoying a story but also practising both vocabulary and structure.

A3 WHY DO TEACHERS USE PENGUIN READERS?

Teachers choose Penguin Readers because they know they can find a very wide range of novels, short stories, films, biographies, plays, true life stories and non-fiction topics. Teachers appreciate the reliable grading system ranging from Easystarts (200 headwords) to Level 6 (3000 headwords).

Teachers also value all the teaching help they get with Penguin Readers. This includes:

- An introduction to each book providing background and information about the author.
- Activities at the back of each book with Before Reading, While Reading and After Reading activities.
- Free Factsheets about each reader from www.penguinreaders.com which provide further background information about the book and the author, further activities Before Reading, While Reading and After Reading.
- Free Penguin Readers Teacher’s Guides providing different ideas for exploitation.

Graded readers help learners in three ways - firstly by providing language practice, secondly by giving language extension and thirdly (and perhaps most importantly) by giving learners psychological encouragement.

Language practice takes the form of reading and understanding the meaning of known or partially-known language. Each time the learner reads and understands a word, the learner’s knowledge and understanding of that word is reinforced and extended. Each time the learner reads and understands a structure, the learner’s knowledge and understanding of that structure is reinforced and extended. A learner who is reading a graded reader is not just enjoying a story but also practising both vocabulary and structure.

Although most of the readers at lower levels are intended for the young or young-in-heart, there are also books for adults such as Bill Gates’ Business @ The Speed of Thought [Penguin Readers Level 6], Management Gurus [Penguin Readers Level 4] as well as classics of world literature such as Anna Karenina [Penguin Readers Level 6] or The Remains of the Day [Penguin Readers Level 6].

Graded readers today are of such variety and quality that more and more teachers are keen to use them. The question is always how? The purpose of this book is to offer practical advice and suggestions for including reading in language programmes.
Many Penguin Readers are also available on audio cassette or CD. This means they can be used for extensive listening comprehension while relaxing or travelling. It is important to record the reading while reading the text, so they can greatly increase their eye-reading speed without sacrificing comprehension. For more information on increasing eye-reading speed and ideas on use, please refer to the Penguin Readers Teacher's Guide to Developing Listening Skills.

Many experts believe that regular reading of graded texts in a foreign language also benefits the learner's writing. Regular reading adds to the bank of language stored in the learner's memory, giving the learner access to words and phrases which may not have been studied in standard lessons. Whilst reading, the learner is also subconsciously aware of the rhythms and patterns of the language which can also be transferred into written work.

Many foreign language learners lack confidence. They have a very negative image of themselves as successful foreign language learners. They fail to learn because they do not believe that they are capable of learning. Successful understanding of graded readers at a suitable level can give these learners enormous psychological encouragement - a sense of achievement which is independent of new words or structures which they may learn.

B1 INTENSIVE AND EXTENSIVE READING

Intensive reading usually takes place in the classroom and is guided by the teacher. Intensive reading usually involves the use of short, but fairly complex texts. Although the subject matter is usually interesting, the teacher's purpose in using the text is often related to the introduction of new language structures, vocabulary or aspects of discourse.

Extensive reading is the term used in English Language Teaching for the reading of a wide range of books primarily for pleasure. The idea is that learners are motivated to read because they are reading for the same reasons as they would in their own language: to learn more about something they are interested in, to enjoy a good story, to think about the ideas and issues the book raises, to increase their knowledge and awareness. Learners are reading in a completely different way from the intensive reading of the language classroom: when they are looking at the detail of language points and focussing on specific reading skills.

When learners are reading for pleasure they should be as unaware as possible that they are reading in a foreign language. The enormous benefit of extensive reading to learners is that they are acquiring language as they read, through the high level of exposure to the foreign language which they receive. The foreign language becomes increasingly familiar to them - so that they acquire language almost without knowing it.

Teachers often underestimate the learning value of graded reading. Maybe this is because the teacher is not the main focus of attention in graded reading. Or it may be because graded reading does not focus on just one or two language structures.

People say that swimming exercises all the muscles of the body. In the same way, graded reading provides a general language workout for the learners. When its full potential is exploited it is seen to improve not only reading skills but all the other language skills as well.

Dr Stephen Krashen introduced language teachers to the idea of language acquisition. He describes ‘acquisition’ as an unconscious process in which we acquire language by understanding messages. He also introduced the idea of the ‘affective filter’ - a type of barrier which appears to prevent or restrict acquisition in formal teaching situations. He said that the ‘affective filter’ is least active when we ‘forget’ that the message we are receiving is in a foreign language. We are so motivated by the message that the language becomes unimportant. Penguin Readers give learners many opportunities for real language acquisition.

Graded readers have all sorts of practical benefits: they are simple to carry around - learners can read them in class, at home, on a bus or anywhere else they happen to be; reading need not take place in limited and precious class time. Penguin Readers are printed on good quality paper and well bound, so they are suitable for use by scores of learners over several years. Teachers have found that once extensive reading has been introduced to a class or school, it is straightforward to administer. They have also found that learners enjoy the reading and make fast progress.

The overriding aim of extensive reading is to develop learners’ language competence and self-confidence.

B2 SILENT READING OR READING ALOUD?

In English Language Teaching, when we refer to ‘reading’, we are thinking about silent reading for the purpose of comprehension. We are not thinking about ‘reading aloud’ as is done in mother tongue reading classes.

Listening to the teacher reading aloud is very important for the learners’ development of reading skills. Research has demonstrated that, in children, the successful development of reading is determined largely by their early, regular experience of listening to someone else reading aloud.

Reading aloud is ‘reading for performance’. We read aloud so the listener can comprehend. We read silently for our own comprehension. Reading aloud is a very difficult skill - even if we have pre-read and understood the text, the learners should never be asked to read an unknown text aloud in a foreign language. They become anxious and are certain to make mistakes.

Comprehension is often sacrificed because learners concentrate on the pronunciation of words rather than the meaning. Asking learners to read aloud reduces their confidence and makes them slower and less efficient at reading.

Reading aloud also tends to destroy any interest or enjoyment which learners might gain from the stories. Asking a learner to read aloud while the rest of the class listens can give rise to the following problems:

- The learner becomes tense and anxious and feels that he/she is being ‘tested’.
- The learner concentrates on pronunciation rather than meaning.
- The rest of the class hears a slow, flat, expressionless reading and often incorrect pronunciation.
- The rest of the class ‘listen for mistakes’ rather than listening to the story.

You can ask learners to read aloud, but only after they have had a full and complete comprehension of what they are reading. We may do this, but only after the learner has heard a native speaker or the teacher reading the same text aloud. We might do this when preparing a play or short dialogue for performance.

C CHOOSING BOOKS

C1 CHOOSING THE CORRECT READING LEVEL

Learners will benefit from reading books at any level which they can manage and enjoy. If you look at the Grading Guide on page 3 you can see the structures and grammatical elements included at each level. From this you can work out the most suitable level of books for your students. Remember that in any class there will be a range of levels of motivation and ability and so when choosing books, it is a good idea to ‘sandwich’ the level of the class. So if you think your students are approximately at Level 3, then you should also get a few books at Level 2 and some books at Level 4.

Remember that students:

- Usually ‘comprehend’ at a higher level than they can produce language.
- Can comprehend at a higher level if they are very interested in the story.
- Can comprehend at a higher level if they can bring background knowledge of the story or topic (e.g. if they have seen the movie or read the book in translation).

Penguin Readers Teacher’s Guide: Placement Tests is a free resource for helping you to select the correct level of Penguin Readers for your students. Contact your local Penguin Longman Office or visit www.penguinreaders.com

C2 CHOOSING THE BOOKS

Choosing which books to read is tremendously important. Depending on how reading is administered, the level of graded readers should be suitable either for the learner’s individual attainment level or for the level of the class as a whole.

Penguin Readers are carefully and conscientiously graded to meet the requirements of all levels of language competence, and learners can progress from one level to another as gradually or rapidly as they wish.

The content of the reader is of great importance in motivating learners, and here it is often sensitive to involve your classes as much as possible in the process of selection. You might like to give learners a questionnaire in order to find out their reading interests; you can then be sure that the books which are selected will be keenly read.

The Penguin Readers series includes an enormous range of readers to suit all tastes, and the Penguin Readers catalogue is an invaluable tool to help you and your learners make the right choice.

C3 TYPES OF GRADED READERS

Penguin Readers are developed from different sources:

- Classics - from English and world literature.
- Contemporary - from popular literature for teenagers and adults.
- Major Film and TV titles - books developed from film and TV scripts.
- Originals - created specifically for Penguin Readers.

Penguin Readers include books for different interests:

- Adventure
- Animal Stories
- Autobiography and biography
- Business world
- Crime, Mystery and Spy Thrillers
- Cultural and Social Issues
- Ghost Stories, Horror and Spice Chillers
- Humour
- True life stories from the worlds of Fashion, Science, Sport, Movies and Travel
- Plays - Classic and Original plays
- Romance and Historical Novels
- Science Fiction and Fantasy
- Short Stories

C4 USING READERS FOR EXAMINATIONS

Some examinations ask students to read, write and talk about the graded readers they have studied. The Cambridge First Certificate Examination usually selects a Penguin Reader for students to study. In the Test of Interactive English, which is popular in Ireland, students talk and write about any graded readers they have enjoyed.
D USING READERS WITH YOUR STUDENTS

There are different approaches to using readers:

• The Class Reader - one book to be read by all the students in the class in ‘lockstep’ (reading through the book at the same speed).
• ‘Reading Rings’ - groups of students work together while reading the same book.
• Class Library - students borrow books from the library which they read at home.
• Holiday Reading - students maintain the English they learn at school by reading graded readers and doing activities at home during their vacations from school.

If you are teaching young immature students, you will probably want to start by using a single class reader for all the learners in the class. The same would be true if you are teaching a class of older students who have never used graded readers before.

When students are accustomed to using a class reader, you can try ‘reading rings’ with your class. Later, when students are more independent, you can introduce a class reading library.

D1 THE CLASS READER

A class reader is one particular reader chosen for the whole class to read for a certain length of time. We recommend setting a time limit on the use of any one reader. It is not fair on learners to spin out a class reader over a whole school year. It will destroy their interest and motivation for more reading. Instead, set a target of a school term or a few weeks for one book.

Introducing Extensive Reading

The current experience of many teachers of young teenagers is that their students rarely read extensively in their mother tongue. They are ‘reluctant readers’ and need to be encouraged to develop the reading habit. Teachers may have to introduce their students to the experience and procedures of extensive reading.

A popular way of introducing learners to extensive reading is for teachers to read aloud from a graded reader while the learners listen and follow the text in their own copies of the book. This can make the stories easy to understand and very enjoyable. The class know the teacher’s voice. They are not faced with the task of trying to pronounce the words (even silently), and the momentum of the teacher’s reading voice prevents them from stopping each time they see an unknown word. This technique also helps to reinforce the sound of English.

Most teachers present the story as a series of episodes, reading three or four pages (about 5 minutes) at the end of each lesson. This would mean that, for example, Dino’s Day in London (Penguin Readers Easystarts) would be completed in about four lessons.

Introducing a Reader

Always introduce a class reader by talking about the topic of the book, whether it is fiction or non-fiction. Try to draw out from learners what they already know about the subject of the story. Use the cover and illustrations in the text to speculate about the story. With beginners and elementary level learners, it is perfectly reasonable to do some of this in their mother tongue.

The cover of Anne of Green Gables (Penguin Readers Level 2) shows a young girl swinging on a rope. She is in the countryside and she is happy. If we look at the first illustration, we learn that the story is set in Canada. In the other illustrations, we can see from the clothes that the story is not modern. From the introduction to the book, we learn that Anne is an orphan. The story is about Anne growing up at Green Gables.

Performing and Sharing the Story

Teachers usually have good voices and can read with expression, so use your voice to perform the story. Read the text in an expressive, dramatic voice which will capture the students’ interest. Try to alter your voice slightly when reading the spoken words of different characters because this helps to dramatise the story. Pause, when you think it is appropriate, to interact with the students to maintain their interest and comprehension.

If students have their books open while you are reading, encourage them to follow the text as you read. This can help them to increase their eye-reading speed.

Encourage your learners to talk about the book they are reading - their feelings about the story and the characters. Encourage your learners to use words and situations they encounter in the reading book as part of their normal lessons.

After reading one or two books aloud, the teacher may adopt a mixture of different techniques to move the responsibility for individual silent reading to the students.

a) You could read some sections aloud and use the cassette recording in other sections. This can be a very pleasant alternative because it allows the class to hear different voices, and often cassettes have interesting sound effects (see page 23). The teacher can also ask learners to re-read the chapter at home after they have heard it in class.

b) Another technique is to ask learners to read short sections of a story silently in class. This is good preparation for home reading. Some teachers play recordings of appropriate music while their learners are...
READING DIARY

Part 1
Where and when does the story start? Who are the main characters? What kind of story is it? What happens in the first part of the story?

How do you feel about the first part of the story? Is it interesting? Do you like the characters?

Part 2
What happens in the second part of the story? Has the setting changed? Have any characters been introduced? Have some characters become more important or less important? What do you feel about the events which have happened?

How do you feel about this part of the story? Do you still like the characters? Has your opinion about any of the characters changed?

LESSON PLAN

Introducing RUN FOR YOUR LIFE
(Penguin Readers, level 1)
Class level: Late beginner
Materials: Map of Europe, copies of Run For Your Life.
Length of lesson: 50 minutes

Warm-up (5 minutes)
Show the map of Europe to learners and invite them to identify major cities. Focus on Spain and identify major cities. Draw attention to Barcelona. Elicit from learners (in L1 or L2) any knowledge or ideas they have about Barcelona (Olympic Games, Spanish dancing, etc).

Introduction (5 minutes)
Tell learners they are going to read an exciting story which took place in Barcelona. Hand out books and invite learners to look at page 5. Introduce the two main characters, Kim and Dave. Invite learners to speculate on their age, nationality and the location. Explain that Kim and Dave are on a school trip to Spain because they are learning Spanish. Most of the time they visit the city in a bus (see picture on page 6).

Now invite learners to look at the pictures in the book and to speculate on the story. Invite learners to identify the GOOD and BAD people in the story.

Reading the story aloud (10 minutes)
Write the following questions on the board and explain them.
1. How old are Kim and Dave?
2. Where do they come from?
3. What does Dave want to do?

Read pages 1, 2 and 3 aloud to the class. Read in a loud clear voice. Let learners 'follow' in their books. Do not stop for comprehension problems. Tell learners to understand as much as they can. Elicit answers to the questions. (Answers: 1. Seventeen. 2. Liverpool. 3. To look round the old town.)

Reading silently (10 minutes)
Write the following statements on the board and invite learners to say if they are True or False. Learners look back at the text if they cannot think of the answers.
1. Kim and Dave are friends. [True]
2. Kim can understand some Spanish. [True]
3. Kim and Dave have Spanish lessons in the afternoon. [False (morning)]
4. People say the old town is not dangerous. [False]

Then deal with any comprehension problems. Try to demonstrate that learners do not need to understand every word in order to understand the story.

Reading aloud (10 minutes)
 Invite learners to look at the pictures on pages 4, 5 and 6. Ask them to suggest words which might come into the story. Tell them any words they ask about.

Now read the text from pages 4, 5 and 6 aloud whilst learners follow in their books. Ask learners to speculate about what was in the rubbish bin.

Ending the lesson (5 minutes)
Review what has been covered in the lesson: the map, Spain, Barcelona, Kim and Dave, etc. Then invite learners to re-read pages 4, 5 and 6 at home and to read pages 7, 8 and 9 before the next lesson.
# Book Review

- **Your name:**
- **Title of book:**
- **Author:**
- **Level:**
- **Number of pages:**
- **Date started:**
- **Date finished:**

**What kind of book is it? What is it about?**

**Is the book easy or difficult to understand?** Do you like the pictures? Are these helpful? Do you like this book? Why? Which parts/characters do you like best? Do you think the book has a message? What do you think that message is?

**Is this book similar to any other books you have read?** List them below.
c) The story is introduced by the teacher who reads Chapter 1 aloud to the class. The students are told to read Chapter 2 at home. In the next lesson, the teacher discusses the events of Chapter 2, eliciting information and comments from the students. The teacher then reads Chapter 3 aloud and asks the students to read Chapter 4 at home. This procedure is followed until the book is complete.

Exploiting a Class Reader

Students will acquire a lot of language from the text of the book they are reading. We can increase the language benefit and improve the reading experience with activities related to the book. Ideas and materials for exploiting readers can be found:

- In the back of each graded reader.
- In the factsheet for each graded reader which can be downloaded from www.penguinreaders.com.
- On pages 9 to 16 of this Teacher’s Guide.

D2 READING RINGS

Using a class reader is a very good way to introduce the whole class to graded reading. After you have ‘shared’ two or three books with the class, they will be ready to start reading more independently.

‘Reading rings’ are groups of 4-7 students who are all reading the same book. In your class you may have several reading rings, each reading a different book. Reading rings have many advantages over a single class reader.

- Students with different interests can choose the books to read together.
- Students become more independent and learn to ‘manage’ their reading.
- Stronger students can help weaker students.

What happens in a Reading Ring?

A group of girls and boys have just finished reading Chapter 3 of *Anne of Green Gables* [Penguin Readers Level 2]. They have been reading at home and now they are at school in their reading ring. Marco, the best reader in the group, is the leader. He asks the other students about any words or parts of the story they didn’t understand. They talk about the word ‘orphan’ and look for the translation in a bilingual dictionary. They look at their school atlas and find Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Then they work together on exercises 4 and 5 at the back of the book. Esteban helps Lucia with the exercises and Paula and Jorge work together.

When they have finished, they share their answers. Esteban thinks 5e (Mrs Blewett isn’t very kind to her children) is wrong but the others say it is right. They show him the sentence on page 9 ‘Mrs Blewett had a lot of children, but she wasn’t very kind to them.’ The teacher stops to see the group and checks their work. She asks if the students are enjoying the story and says they should read Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 before the next ‘reading ring’ lesson two weeks from now.

Some teachers prefer to use the exercises on the Factsheet which they download from www.penguinreaders.com because these have more frequent activities, and students do not have to read so much text independently between each ‘reading ring’ meeting.

When the students in the *Anne of Green Gables* reading ring finished the book, they talked to the class about it. They talked about their favourite bits in the book and Marco, Paula and Lucia acted out a scene from the story. After this, lots more students in the class wanted to read *Anne of Green Gables* and a new reading ring was started.

Now Marco and Esteban have joined a new reading ring who are reading *Men in Black* [Penguin Readers Level 2]. Lucia and Paula are now in the ring which is reading *Heidi* [Penguin Readers Level 2]. During the school year, each student will read four or five books in different reading rings.

D3 THE CLASS LIBRARY

A class library is quite simply a box or shelf containing a selection of different readers suitable for the age and language competence of a particular class. The idea is that the titles selected should all be different. They need to be attractive to people who happen to be in the same class but who may have very different interests from each other. Some learners will like adventure stories, some romantic stories, some classics, some will want to read about serious issues and some will want the fun of a strip cartoon. The level of all the books should be roughly the same, but as some learners are likely to be more advanced than others, it is a good idea to cater for mixed abilities. Learners should be allowed to see for themselves whether a book is the right level for them.

As the overriding aim is for fluent, competent reading, where overall meaning and enjoyment count for more than individual words, it is important that learners are not discouraged by finding the books too hard or uninteresting.

The same applies to schools wishing to set up a self-access centre, although obviously in this case there would be a far wider range of books. Books must be clearly arranged and labelled according to age and level, so that learners can choose appropriately.

Choosing books for your Class Library

Remember that in any class there will be a range of different interests and levels of competence. Remember also that the learners will all be at a higher level at the end of the year than they were at the beginning. Most teachers find that in any school year the range of books...
in the class, and the titles of the books in the class library. The dates on which a book is borrowed and returned should be recorded by each learner. By glancing at these dates, you can get an idea of how fast your learners are reading.

Note: For a photocopiable Class Library Chart, see the centre section of this guide. This can be enlarged and printed on to an A3 sheet of paper. For large classes or larger libraries, use two charts.

Funding your Class Library
Although a single book is relatively inexpensive, you may not have the money to buy 30 or more books for your class library. A good way to collect suitable books is to ask the students to 'donate' a book to the library. With your local Longman distributor, organise a display of Penguin Readers at the appropriate levels in a local bookshop. Then write to the parents of your learners explaining the importance of graded reading in English invite them to donate one or two books to the library and explain where the books can be selected and purchased. Perhaps you can design a sticker to put inside the book which will say who donated the book, e.g.

This copy of The Count of Monte Cristo was donated to the class library by Valentin Vladimirov, a student at this school in 2004.

The advantage of donated books is that you can be sure they reflect the interests of your students because they have been selected by the students.

Another approach is to ask a local bank or business to sponsor the class Library.

Organisation of the Library
You will need:
1. A selection of books. There should be one and a half times as many books in the library as there are learners in the class. This way you are providing enough choice, while keeping the size of the library easily manageable.
2. A box or shelf to store the books
3. A class library record chart (see page 14)

A class library record chart provides you with a record of which books your students have read from the class library. The chart should list the names of the learners in the class, and the titles of the books in the class library. The dates on which a book is borrowed and returned should be recorded by each learner. By glancing at these dates, you can get an idea of how fast your learners are reading.

It is also a good idea for the learner to indicate by a simple code method whether they enjoyed book a lot, a little or not very much. This might be just a spot made with a coloured pen (red = excellent, green = OK, blue = not good) or an A, B or C.

Note: For a photocopiable Class Library Chart, see the centre section of this guide. This can be enlarged and printed on to an A3 sheet of paper. For large classes or larger libraries, use two charts.

By using a chart like this, the teacher can administer the library successfully and also see at a glance which books have been popular and how each learner is progressing. Learners can readily see what books their friends have chosen and whether they recommend a particular title, and in this way are guided towards popular books. It will also help you when you are purchasing your next selection of books.

If a school has one self-access centre for the whole school, a different chart could be used for each class or level within the school.

Administering the Class Library
When the class library is first introduced the teacher should administrate the library for a month or so. Very quickly, the teacher should train some students to be assistant librarians. After a short time, the students can take over all the day-to-day work of administration.

POSSIBLE RULES FOR THE LIBRARY
• The library is ‘open’ for borrowing or returning books at fixed times every week of the school term. This could be during lesson time, or, if it can be organised during break time or lunch time.
• Borrowers must not write or draw pictures in the library books. They should use bookmarks and not turn down the corner of the page to mark where they finish reading.
• If a borrower damages or loses a book, they must replace the book with another copy of the same title or another book at the same level.
• Students who borrow a book are not obliged to complete the reading of the book but they should return the book to the library as soon as they decide not to complete it.
• Students should read and write a report or complete some activities on SIX different books during the school year. (This may include ‘holiday reading’ see below.)

Monitoring the Students’ Reading
Some teachers worry that their students might be borrowing books from the library but not actually reading them. Teachers can adopt different techniques for monitoring their students’ reading.

Reading Cards
Some teachers have files of ‘reading cards’ - exercises and tasks from the factsheets which they download from www.penguinreaders.com and mount on to cards. As students borrow a book they take the ‘reading card’ for the same book and complete the activities while they are reading.

Book Reviews
Some teachers ask students to prepare a review of the book, (see photocopiable review sheet in centre pages)

Book Spot
Some teachers have a regular ‘book spot’ during their lessons during which they ask students about the books they are reading.

If students are doing activities on reading cards, writing book reviews or presenting books in ‘book spots’, this work should be included in their language portfolio. (see page 24)

Teaching Students to Choose Books
Part of the process of growing up involves learning to make choices. When the teacher is using a class reader, the teacher has usually chosen the book. When students start using a class library, they need to learn how to choose the books they will read. Students need to learn how to find out about a book before they read it.

This copy of The Count of Monte Cristo was donated to the class library by Valentin Vladimirov, a student at this school in 2004.

The long school holidays are a welcome opportunity for teachers to relax, but our students often forget a lot of the English they have learnt during school lessons. If you ask your students to read one or two graded readers during their holidays, they retain more of the English they have learnt.

Teachers should recognise that the school holidays are also a time for the students to relax, so don’t ask them to read books which are too difficult for them. Some students may be able to get help from their parents or other members of the family, but many may not.

Holiday Listening
Most students have a cassette player at home, so the holidays are a good time for holiday listening. The recording might be the same book that the students are reading but it could also be a different book.

E ACTIVITIES

E1 BEFORE YOU READ ACTIVITIES
Before you read activities are designed to introduce the topic and setting of the reader. We often encourage students to speculate on events in the story or ideas in the text. Usually, when we pick up a book, we have some questions in our minds which we hope the book will answer. Before you read activities help to motivate the students and stimulate these questions.

Good reading often means comparing ‘what you know’ with what you read. Before you read activities are partly designed to encourage students to think about ‘what they know’ before they start reading.
E1.1 What do you know about Tom Cruise? Tick the correct statements.
   a) Tom Cruise is American.
   b) He acted in the film *Braveheart*.
   c) He was in the film *Rain Man*.
   d) He has never been married.
   e) He has won an Oscar.

E1.2 Photocopy illustrations from a story book and put them on to cards. Ask students to try to put the cards in sequence and think about the story.

E1.3 Photocopy the illustrations from the book. Cut out the faces of the main characters. Give students a list of the character’s names. Can they match the names to the pictures?

E1.4 Do you remember the film *Rain Man*?
   a) Is it an adventure story or a love story?
   b) Which country is it set in?
   c) What is the film about?
   d) Was it an interesting film?
   e) Do you think you will understand the story in the book?
   f) Do you think you will learn more about the story?

E1.5 Make a list of the chapter titles in the book. Write the titles on the board in any order. Invite the students to think about the sequence of chapters in the story.

E1.6 Look at the cover of the *Road Ahead*. Think about the title.
   a) What is Bill Gates famous for?
   b) Is the book about Bill Gates’ early life?
   c) Is the book about travelling?
   d) Is the book about the future?

E1.7 Look at these words. Which words are used in each book? Which words are used in both books?
- goal  corner  iceberg
- captain  sailor  dinner
- team  ship  win
- crash  passenger  rich

E2.1 While reading activities

While reading activities are mainly concerned with comprehension of the text - not testing comprehension. This would spoil the enjoyment of reading - but confirming comprehension of the story so far. While reading, students are sometimes worried that they have not fully understood the story, or they have forgotten how the plot has developed. While reading activities help the students to feel comfortable as they make progress through the book.

Another type of while reading activity encourages students to examine their emotional reaction to the story, characters or ideas contained in the text. This type of activity is popular when students have reached intermediate level.

E2.2 Interviews.

After students have read the biography of Brad Pitt, students can roleplay an interview with the star, talking about his life and movies. You can also have similar interviews in the form of on-line chat or a series of emails. This can lead to a magazine report of the interview.

E2.3 Texts in graded readers are simplified to your students’ language level. This makes extracts suitable for exploitation such as the many techniques described in *Short and Sweet* by Alan Maley [Penguin]. One favourite involves the reconstruction of a corrupted text, like this version of Chapter 3 ‘The Weather’ from *How To Be An Alien* by George Mikes. [Penguin Readers Level 3]. Which two letters have been removed from the text? Can you write it again putting these letters back?

E2.4 When students have read part of a book, you can reinforce their comprehension by giving them a series of statements and asking them to put the statements in the correct sequence. This example comes from *A Scandal in Bohemia* [Penguin Readers Level 3].

a) An important man comes to visit Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson.
   b) Dr Watson throws a smoke bomb into the room.
   c) Sherlock Holmes steals the photograph.
   d) He tells them about Irene Adler.
   e) Sherlock Holmes starts a fight outside Irene Adler’s house.

E2.5 Packing a suitcase.

After reading a historical story such as *Braveheart*, ask the students to discuss what they would pack in a suitcase if they were going on a two week visit to this setting. If *Braveheart* has invited you, it would be polite to take him a gift. What are you going to take?

E2.6 Correcting the summary.

When students are reading a book, give them a summary of the story so far which contains factual mistakes. As the students correct the mistakes, they will reinforce their comprehension of the story. This example comes from *Peter and the Wolf* [Penguin Young Readers Level 3].

Peter lives in the town with his grandfather. His grandfather tells Peter not to play in the meadow because a lion lives in the forest. Peter goes into the meadow with the duck, the bird and the dog.

The wolf comes out of the house and eats the dog.

E2.7 A reading diary. Students can start to make a reading diary in which they describe the books they read during a year. The diary can contain pictures, summaries of the books, personal reactions, interesting information and vocabulary learnt from the text, author information and so on. This introduces students to the academic practice of reading and note-making.

E2.8 Who says this? Another way to review a story so far is to take lines of spoken language from the different characters and ask who says this? These examples come from Chapter 1 of *Anne of Green Gables* [Penguin Readers Level 2].

a) “We’re getting a little boy from the orphanage in Nova Scotia. He’s coming on the train this afternoon.”
   b) “I’m from the orphanage, Mrs Spencer brought me here.”
   c) “This is a girl, not a boy.”
   d) “I’d like a beautiful white dress. I never had a pretty dress.”
   e) “I don’t want an orphan girl.”

E2.9 Using a map.

In many stories characters move from one location to another. Sometimes we can help students to understand and follow the plot by tracing events on a map. For example, students reading *The Thirty-nine Steps* [Penguin Readers Level 3] know that the story starts in London, moves to Scotland and then returns to London.

E2.10 Family tree.

Many books tell stories about families. Sometimes it can help students to follow the story if they draw a family tree and write in the names of the characters. It is an easy way to remember the relationships between the different people.

E3.1 Horoscopes.

Many books contain references to correspondence. Students can write these letters. How did Hugo Baskerville write to Sherlock Holmes?

E3.2 Mini-books. Younger students can produce mini-books which retell the stories of their favourite books. Later, children can create their own stories as illustrated mini-books. See page 9 of *Penguin Young Readers Teacher’s Guide to Using Stories in Class*.

E3.3 Dramatisation. Many books contain stories and scenes which are highly suitable for dramatisation. Students can adapt the narrative in play form and produce stage performances, or puppet plays.

E3.4 Why I don’t like this book!

Encourage students to talk and write about books, TV programmes and films which they dislike. It is important to give students both the liberty and the language to comment negatively.

E3.5 Who was Mrs Danvers?

In *Rebecca* [Penguin Readers Level 5] Daphne du Maurier describes Mrs Danvers, the strange woman who looked after the first Mrs De Winter.
and now looks after the narrator. If she is Mrs Danvers she must have, or have had a husband. What do you think he was like?

E3.6 Asking questions. In the Penguin Readers Teacher’s Guide to Preparing for ECE, Carolyn Walker suggests a list of questions a reporter might ask.

What is your favourite colour?
What is the worst thing you have ever done?
Who would make your ideal marriage partner?
Who would you like to play you in the film of your life?
Do you have any regrets?
If you could have three wishes, what would they be?
Imagine Dracula, Sherlock Holmes, Eliza Doolittle, Forrest Gump, Macbeth, and David Beckham answering those questions.

E3.7 Make a radio play. Most students have a cassette recorder at home. As a project during a short school holiday, invite your students to make a radio play from their favourite book. They can act the different characters and add exciting music and sound effects. Later they can put the recording in their language portfolio. (See page 24)

MAD WIFE FOUND IN ATTIC
Mr Rochester’s secret
by our correspondent

E3.8 Write a newspaper story. After reading Jane Eyre (Penguin Readers Level 3 and Level 5) students can write newspaper stories which might have appeared in newspapers. For example, how did the local newspaper report the fire at Thornfield which blinded Mr Rochester?

E3.8 Let’s put on a show! Students in your class can learn, practice and perform short sketches or scenes from longer plays. Let them show their plays to other classes in the school. Before you play the game you will also need to get some counters or coins, and a dice or numbered spinner. One learner in the group will be the controller and will keep the question cards, moving each to the bottom of the pile as it is used.

E3.9 Board Games. Board games provide an amusing way for learners to recall key characters, places, events and language from a book they have read in class. A ready-made board game can be found on the centre pages of this guide. This can be photocopied and used with any reader, either after reading part of the book or after reading the whole book.

In order to play the game, you will need to prepare some question cards. Write approximately six questions about characters, six questions about places, six questions about events and six questions about key language.

Each question should be written on a card. The cards could be different colours: blue for characters, red for places, green for events and yellow for language.

Each card should contain instructions to move forward for a correct answer and to move back for an incorrect or zero answer. You might like to grade the questions as follows:

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E3.10 Project work. After your students have read about their favourite star – David Beckham, Leonardo DiCaprio, Michael Jordan, Jennifer Lopez or Ricky Martin, encourage them to collect their favourite pictures from magazines and make a nice display for the classroom. They can write about why they like the star and about important things that have happened in their lives.

E3.11 Time for a snack! What kind of snack do your students like? Think about the characters in the reading books. What sort of snacks would they like to eat? Does King Arthur like bananas? No, he doesn’t because he has never seen a banana! What about Heidi? Does she like Swiss chocolate? And what does Robin Hood eat when he is not fighting?

E3.8 Let’s put on a show! Students in your class can learn, practice and perform short sketches or scenes from longer plays. Let them show their plays to other classes in the school. Before you play the game you will also need to get some counters or coins, and a dice or numbered spinner. One learner in the group will be the controller and will keep the question cards, moving each to the bottom of the pile as it is used.

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The Effect of Simultaneously Reading and Listening to Audiostapes of Expanded and Compressed Spoken Text on the Reading Rate of English as a Second Language Student 2002.
Although readers which are already written in the form of sketches and plays are obviously most suitable for role playing and acting, other stories with plenty of dialogue can be adapted and used for a similar purpose.

**G GRADED READING AS PART OF ASSESSMENT**

**PORTFOLIOS**

In some countries, teachers are adopting the idea of the 'portfolio'. The portfolio is used to keep a record of the work the student has done during the school year. The portfolio is graded and the grade is part of the overall assessment of the student's work during the year.

Graded reading represents an important part of the student's language achievement during the school year and so it is logical that it should be part of the student's portfolio.

If, for example, the student starts the school year reading at Level 2 and finishes the year reading at Level 3 or Level 4, this should be noted and recorded in the portfolio.

**GRADED READERS IN YOUR OWN SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS**

If you believe in the importance of extensive reading of graded readers, why not make graded reading part of your school examinations?

Students see school examinations as a statement of what is important in their lessons. If your students know that in their examination there is going to be a question about graded reading, they will be motivated to read and study more.

You can do this in different ways:

a) You can study one book in detail with all the students in the class and then ask questions about the book. At a simple level, these can be comprehension questions about the book, but it would be better to ask the students to write about their personal response to the book. This can either be a fairly formal 'book review' or it could be an informal letter to a friend telling the friend about the book. (See the Penguin Readers Teacher's Guide to Preparing for FCE for ideas about different kinds of examination questions).

b) An alternative approach, a more general question might appear in the written examination or you can ask students to talk about a book they have read in the oral. In the Test of Interactive English (see below), a pair of students at approximately the same level talk to each other about the books they have read, what they have enjoyed, what they didn’t like, the parts they found difficult and so on.

**GRADED READERS IN FCE**

Each year UCLES prescribes a list of books which students can study as part of their preparation for the FCE [First Certificate in English] Examination.

Students study the text and have the chance to write about it in Paper 2 (Writing Paper).

This has two advantages: firstly, the students are involved in some extensive reading as part of their preparation for the examination and secondly, because the students can go into the examination confident that they can perform well in one of the questions.

**CRITICAL READING**

The FCE examiners want to see evidence of critical reading in the responses written by the candidates. They are not just reproducing facts about events in the book, but articulating a personal response to the text. Critical reading can begin at any level as students talk about events and characters in the very simple books.

Teachers may need to train students to have the 'freedom to feel' about a story they read. They will certainly need some training and help in expressing their feelings in a coherent way.

Students may be learning 'critical reading skills' in their mother tongue literature classes and these skills can be transferred to the English class.

The book reviews which students might prepare after reading a book would be a good opportunity for nurturing these critical reading skills. Once again, these book reviews can form an important part of the student's language portfolio.

For further information and extra activities to use when preparing students for FCE, see Carolyn Walker's Penguin Readers Teacher's Guide to Preparing for FCE.

**GRADED READERS IN THE TEST OF INTERACTIVE ENGLISH**

The Test of Interactive English (TIE) which is recognised by the Irish Government's Department of Education and Science asks candidates to read 'a book in English'. It could be a graded reader, a guidebook, manual or reference book: "What is important is that the book has been chosen by the candidate to reflect their interests and needs." The book forms part of the portfolio which the candidate must bring to the examination.

For more information about the TIE, log on to www.iel.ie/~acels