

Reading Remotely

CELT Teachers' guide to keeping pupils reading

CLOSING THE GAP
EXCELLENCE THROUGH EQUITY

LEARNING TOGETHER
CORNWALL EDUCATION LEARNING TRUST



Foreword

“Nothing matters more than words.”

This is how Geoff Barton (General Secretary, ASCL) understands the challenge of addressing social mobility.

As educators, we understand the significance and huge importance of developing vocabulary - both in our classrooms and the wider school community. The complexities of a bigger, more knowledge-rich curriculum at all phases means that now, more than ever, we must find ways to enrich the vocabularies of all our children - but especially the disadvantaged - if we are to raise their attainment and aspirations.

This Reading Guide has been developed as part of the Literacy, Vocabulary & Oracy workstrand of CELT's *Closing the Gap: Excellence through Equity* school improvement strategy. It is our attempt to share what we know, drawing on the research and practice already embedded in our schools.



Marc Cooper

Research and Development Lead
Cornwall Education Learning Trust

“By closing the vocabulary gaps for children in our classrooms with their peers, we can offer them the vital academic tools for school success, alongside the capability to communicate with confidence in the world beyond the school gates.”

- Alex Quigley (Huntingdon Research School)

Reading is key. The more we access words, the greater the variety of text and the more we acquire a rich and deep vocabulary. We will close the gap between our ‘word poor’ and ‘word rich’ pupils by providing access to words and offering them a range of opportunities to engage with stories, facts and fiction.

We have a plethora of expertise within our schools already. We understand how we develop spoken language and how we build academic and disciplinary vocabulary.

Perhaps our education system is broken. But we do possess the tools and ideas that will make the difference. Working together we can find the cracks - for “that’s how the light gets in” as Ernest Hemingway put it – and fix them, drawing on our collective efficacy in delivering programmes that have an impact in our schools on the lives of children and young people.

Every CELT teacher is acutely aware of the significant impact school closures are having on pupils' progress in reading.

Furthermore, pupils' ability to access all curriculum areas has been affected by stalled progress in reading, resulting in large gaps in knowledge and limited progress for many.

Without action, the gap between those who choose to read at home and those who do not, will continue to grow during school closure - particularly for the most disadvantaged pupils in our schools.

There has been some research shared by the National Literacy Trust which highlights this and, in particular, raises concern around the growing gender gap in reading since schools closed in March 2020.

This concerning picture is against a backdrop of underachievement in disadvantaged pupils' reading and across wider curriculum areas prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

There are many ways in which CELT schools are already addressing this critical issue. This guide sets out to support schools in their focus for reviewing and strengthening their remote reading provision and offers a bank of links to resources and literature that may be of use.

We recognise that each school within the trust has its own individual context and suggestions and resources within this guide should be considered with this in mind.

Key ingredients of a remote reading offer



Early Reading

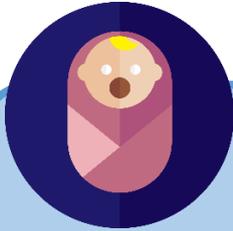


Motivation & Engagement



Access & Support

Summary of Recommendations



Early Reading

- **Quality texts** are matched to stage not age to give pupils the greatest chance of success when learning to read remotely.
- Teacher **input and feedback** is **personalised** to the child.
- **Small group, live intervention** is taught by highly skilled early reading teachers and in addition to daily phonics.



Motivation & Engagement

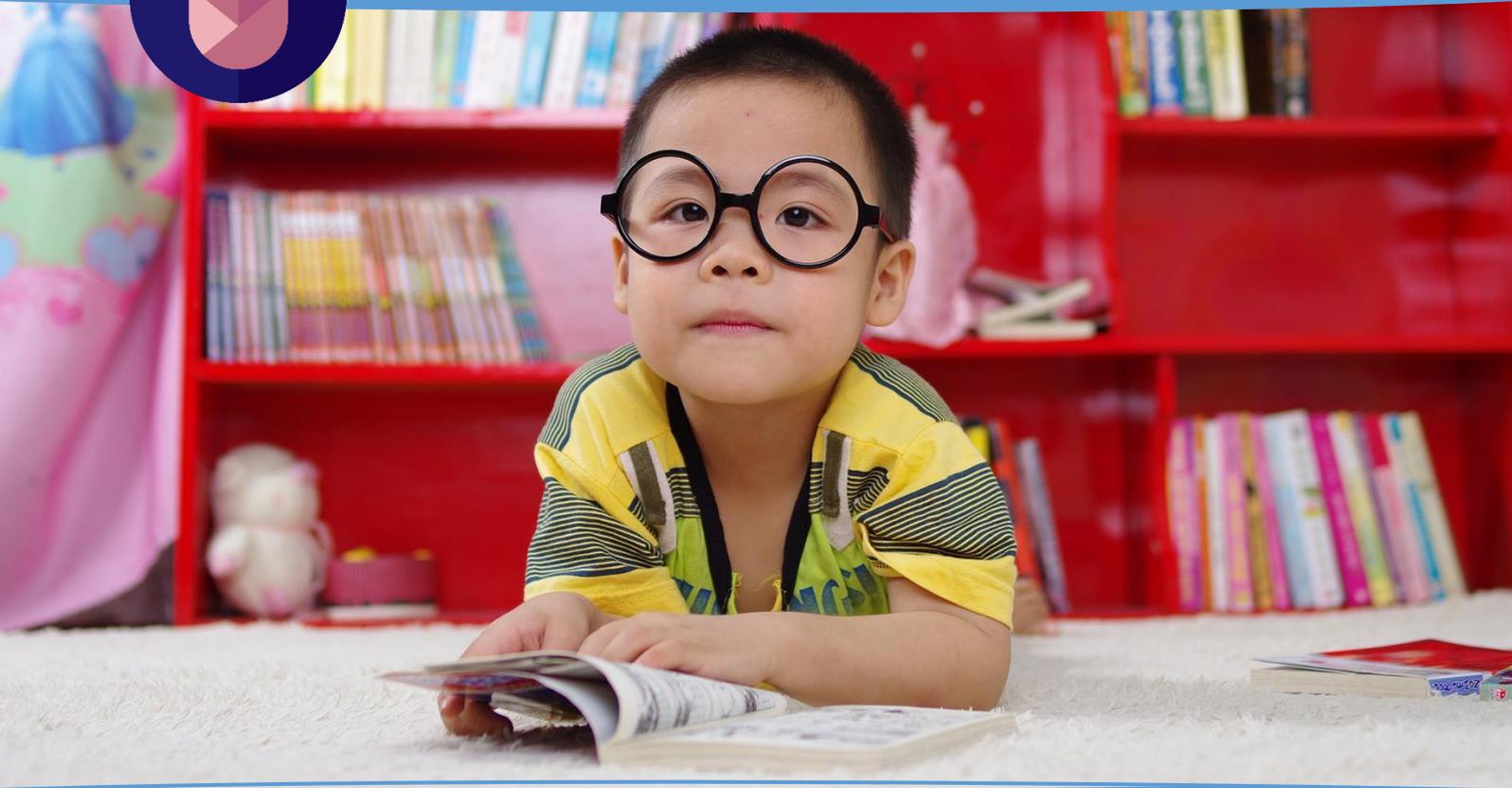
- The **whole school community is committed** to promoting and facilitating the remote reading offer.
- Reading is **shared and modelled** across the curriculum, so that pupils continue to benefit from positive reading role models.
- Engagement and progress in reading is **tracked** through access to online journals and trackers and is **rewarded** through competitions and challenges.



Access & Support

- All pupils are able to access texts that are **appropriate to their reading age and interests**.
- Across the curriculum, **shared and guided reading opportunities** mean that pupils share and follow texts that are read to them, as well as read independently.
- Across the curriculum, the **reading process is modelled** for pupils so that they learn how to access and respond to a range of texts.
- Remote **reading interventions** form part of an online learning programme.
- **Families** are encouraged to be involved in reading with their children and are provided with guidance in supporting their child's reading.

Early Reading



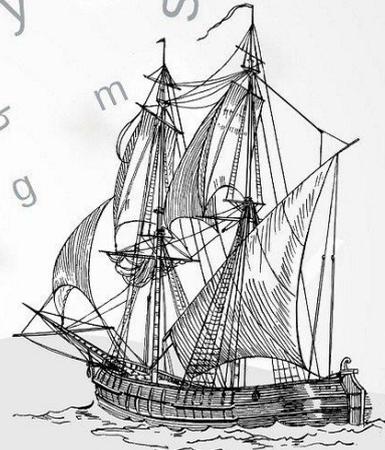
Though ensuring reading continues for all learners is important, it is our early readers that we must prioritise.

This includes early readers beyond EYFS and Key Stage 1. Pupils in Key Stage 2 and 3 still working as an 'early reader' should be included in this target group. On average nationally, these pupils can be identified as our 'bottom 20%' – our critical mass.

These pupils will benefit from small group live intervention lessons taught by a highly skilled early reading teacher who can give more personalised input and instant feedback.

Quality texts matched to each pupils' stage not age will provide them with the greatest chance of continued success when learning to read remotely. These sessions should take place daily and individual/small group intervention offered in addition to daily phonics lessons where possible.

Motivation & Engagement



There are many reasons why a growing proportion of pupils do not choose to sit and enjoy a good book.

We know that a significant number of our secondary students lose their interest in reading for pleasure and this can also become an issue at key stage two. Motivation to want to read is essential and schools will need to take a multi-faceted approach to this in order to win round as many reluctant readers as possible. Reading competitions and challenges as well as access to an online reading journal or tracker are all ways in which pupils can be motivated to want to read more. Many CELT schools use platforms such as Accelerated Reader.

Online logins to such resources should continue during school closure and pupil engagement in reading tracked by teachers accordingly.

Off-line alternatives can be just as effective. Consider rewards for regular reading at home which can be celebrated as a family at home and as a class/school community too.

We know that it takes an entire school community to get the reading culture right within a school. With this in mind it is important to consider how the entire school (and wider) community can be included in your remote reading offer.

Each subject lead should be clear as to how quality reading is facilitated through their subject remotely; offering shared reading with small groups, whole classes and year groups followed by relevant tasks, reviews and quizzes. This is an important way in which we can draw our children and young people together so that reading becomes associated with a sense of belonging to the school community which is important at a time when our most disadvantaged could feel isolated.

Access & Support



Though some students will choose to continue reading for pleasure remotely, all students require teachers to support and guide them regardless of reading age or ability.

High quality texts can be difficult for our disadvantaged students to access. Furthermore, use of accessible texts appropriate to reading age is important to consider. Where schools have access to online reading assessment tracking such as Accelerated Reader, students can identify an appropriate text choice and progress systematically when reading for pleasure. Schools should take advantage of the many online resources available including those on offer through local library services eg. *Borrowbox*, click and collect etc.

Accessing reading for learning, we know, takes many forms across the breadth of the curriculum and so consideration should be given to texts chosen in each curriculum area and necessary guidance and support given e.g. modelling (live/pre-recorded) the reading process; explaining how to access and respond to a range of different texts; developing key skills such as retrieving key information.

Pre-recorded readings of texts by staff accompanied by the text for students to follow gives students the chance to pause and listen again. Reading aloud to an adult is incredibly beneficial, particularly for our underachieving readers. Schools should consider deploying support staff to provide additional remote intervention eg. TA support sessions, coaching sessions, opportunities to read aloud to an adult; all of which can form part of their online learning timetable.

Guides for parents in how to support their child's reading at home such as the EEF's *Reading with TRUST* guides and Ruth Miskin's online video guides should be utilised.

Finally, whilst we recognise the importance of teaching reading, we must not underestimate the power of being read to. Children of every age enjoy sitting back, cuddling up and relaxing whilst listening to a good book. Not only does this promote a love of reading, but over time, children and young people will associate reading with comfort, enjoyment, relaxation and well-being – something that is more important now than ever before.

Case Study: Primary School

Keeping Children Reading, Mount Charles School

We know that reading forms the foundations of all learning and, at Mount Charles, it is reading that is the beating heart of the curriculum.

Half termly topics provide the theme for our reading, writing and wider curriculum subjects and this is drawn together by a key text linked to the topic.

During periods of school and bubble closure, we have continued to keep all remote learning closely aligned to our intended curriculum plans. We ensure that key texts continue to be shared at home through audio recordings by members of staff. We send hard copy texts home for pupils to use during pre-recorded reading lessons taught by the teacher.

Being read to remains a fundamental aspect of our reading offer and is something we spend time and funds on resourcing well. In addition to daily reading lessons through a high-quality topic themed text, pupils have access to hard copy CGP comprehension workbooks which can be completed independently and offline.

Our early readers have been set daily high-quality phonics lessons taught by Read, Write Inc. lead practitioners. Each child is signposted to the specific sequence of lessons appropriate to their stage, not age.

We quickly realised that we needed to continue keeping abreast of pupils' progress remotely, with a particular focus on the progress of our disadvantaged pupils. Subsequently, remote small group intervention sessions were implemented each day led by one of our own reading teachers. We have worked hard to track progress and engagement in our remote learning offer, paying special attention to early reading. The team has a shared understanding of the need to ensure these children keep up, not catch up. This has been a key focus for us since school closures in March 2020.

Though we have many strategies in place to encourage reading for pleasure including rewards, celebration assemblies, 'shout outs', audio books read by school staff and access to online ebooks, we know that keeping our children reading is more likely to be accomplished well through daily structured reading lessons and daily targeted intervention.

Impact

To date, we have seen significant increased daily engagement from pupils working remotely (now 80%+) in comparison to the 2020 school closure. Furthermore, progress continues for all learners particularly our early readers who are progressing steadily through their intended phonics curriculum.



Case Study: Secondary School

Sharing Reading, Brannel School

Many students, and especially disadvantaged students, will struggle to read independently during remote learning, not only because they lack access to reading materials but also because it may be difficult to find an appropriate space and time to do so.

We also know that there is great power in students being read to; it is key to language development when students are missing out on teacher-led language. Therefore, at Brannel, we have tried to find ways to engage and support students in reading for pleasure as well as in their reading across the curriculum.

Through our *Sharing Reading* programme, we have aimed to both support motivation and engagement and to support the reading process.

All students have access to a range of shared reading experiences throughout the week, including:

- short story readings with their year group during Brannel Challenge;
- dedicated reading lessons in English; and
- shared reading of non-fiction texts to support the learning across the curriculum.

As far as possible, we ensure that students are able to see the text, as well as hear it read aloud to them, so that we not only bring the text alive, but can also model a range of skills such as: intonation; reading to the punctuation; skimming and scanning skills; and retrieving information.

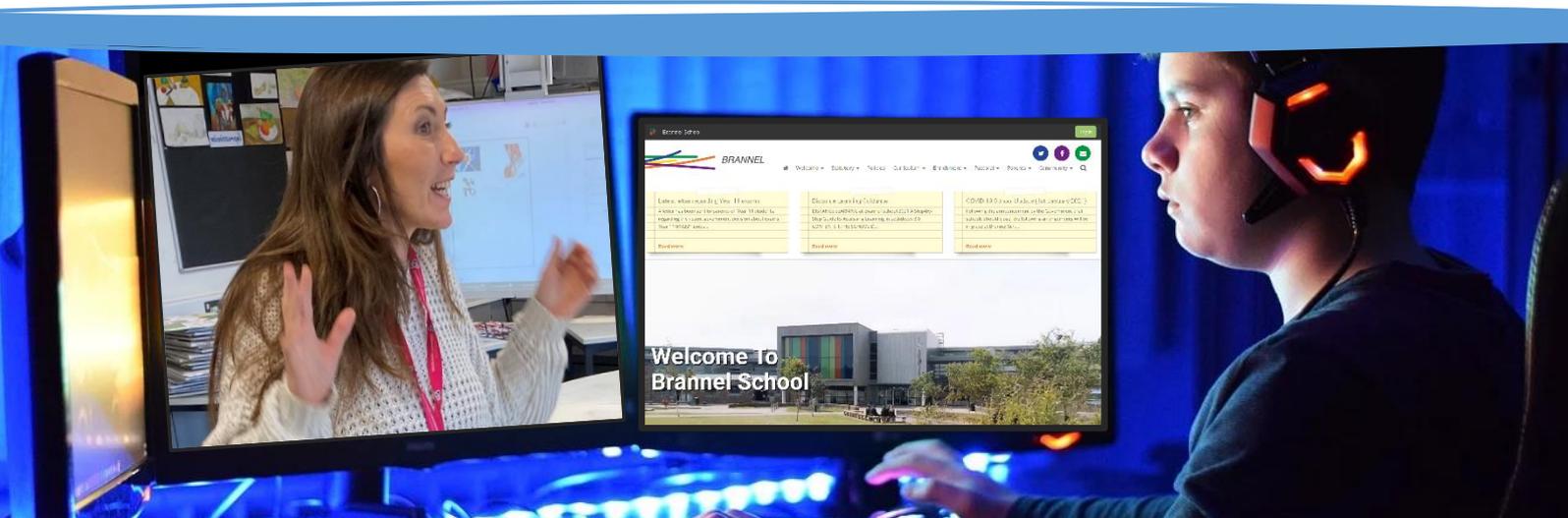
Sometimes, the readings will be pre-recorded so that students can pause and replay the reading as they need to, particularly where the reading is linked to a written task.

Alternatively, staff read the text with the students, live in the lesson, so that they can encourage metacognitive discussion about the reading process and how to access texts in different ways for different purposes.

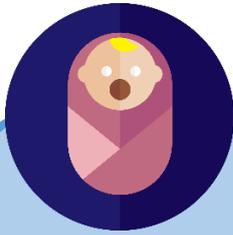
By taking this approach, we know that all students have access to shared reading experiences that they may not otherwise have.

Impact

Early indications suggest that the students are enjoying the opportunity to share stories and reading experiences with their peers, despite the physical distance. In addition, compared to the lockdown of 2020, engagement in remote learning has significantly improved across the curriculum.



Links to Resources



Early Reading

- Ruth Miskin Home Reading
<https://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/find-out-more/parents/>
- Read, Write Inc. Youtube channel (Ruth Miskin)
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCo7fbLgY2oA_cFClg9GdxtQ
- Phonics Play
<https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/>



Motivation & Engagement

- Reading for pleasure website
<https://researchrichpedagogies.org/research/reading-for-pleasure>
- Charity committed to getting children reading. Support for children, parents and teachers
<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/>
- Online book clubs eg. BBC Bitesize book club Year 1 – Year 6
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zf8djhv>
- Class, year group, whole school competitions
<https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/category/competitions-for-children/>
- Reading challenges for pupils, staff and parents – in school and trust-wide
<https://summerreadingchallenge.org.uk/schools/>



Access & Support

- Cornwall library services including 'Borrowbox' and audio resources
<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/libraries/your-library-online/ebooks-eaudiobooks-and-emagazines/borrowbox-ebooks-and-eaudiobooks/>
- Oak National Academy - Virtual Library
<https://library.thenational.academy/>
- EEF: Reading with TRUST guides
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/covid-19-resources/support-resources-for-schools/>
- Ruth Miskin – films for parents and carers
<https://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/find-out-more/parents/>
- Epic – online reading resources helpful for teachers and parents
<https://www.getepic.com/>
- Home schooling book guides and recommended reads
<https://www.booksfortopics.com/homebooks>
- Myon – ensuring children keep reading (including during school closures)
<https://www.myon.co.uk/login/>
- Accelerated Reader – Research proven reading practice
<https://www.renaissance.com/products/accelerated-reader/>
- Read theory - free personalised reading comprehension software with access to texts
<https://readtheory.org/>
- Recordings of authors read-aloud stories online with activities
<https://www.weareteachers.com/virtual-author-activities/>
- Online free comprehensions using blue planet
<https://fatherreading.wordpress.com/tag/sir-david-attenborough/>
- 'Loom' for recording and sharing texts (also possible through Microsoft powerpoint)
<https://www.loom.com/my-videos>



Additional links to resources and reading

- National Literacy Trust
<https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/children-and-young-peoples-reading-in-2020-before-and-during-the-covid-19-lockdown/>
- EEF – Rapid Evidence Assessment: Distance Learning
[https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Covid-19 Resources/Remote learning evidence review/Rapid Evidence Assessment summary.pdf](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Covid-19%20Resources/Remote%20learning%20evidence%20review/Rapid%20Evidence%20Assessment%20summary.pdf)
- BERA – Reading during lockdown: Supporting vulnerable learners
<https://www.bera.ac.uk/blog/reading-during-lockdown-supporting-vulnerable-learners>
- International Literacy Association: Reading During Adolescence: Why Adolescents Choose (or Do Not Choose) Books
<https://ila.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/jaal.1065>

**The more that you read,
the more things you will know.
The more that you learn,
the more places you'll go.**

Dr. Seuss



Meet the Team

Strategic Leads supporting the planning and delivery of the Literacy, Vocabulary & Oracy workstrand of CELT's *Closing the Gap: Excellence through Equity* programme:

Alana McGovern

Assistant Headteacher, Mount Charles School, St. Austell



Alana is passionate about ensuring no child or young person is defined by their social context and that every child has a right to a high-quality education, giving them every possible chance to be ambitious for their future and what they might become.

In her AHT role, Alana facilitates many areas of school improvement including the quality of teaching

and learning with particular focus on closing the gap for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. She works with colleagues within Cornwall Education Learning Trust to support the implementation of trust-wide evidence-based strategies.

In her spare time, Alana enjoys coastal walks with her family, following *Strictly Come Dancing* and getting lost in a good book.

Laura Hocking

Assistant Headteacher, Brannel School, St. Austell

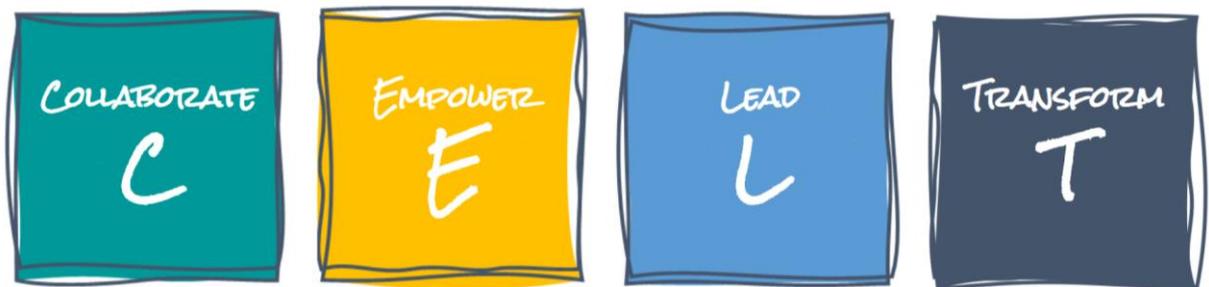


Laura is deeply committed to creating schools where all students can thrive. She believes that equity is not about treating all children the same, it is about ensuring that each child receives what he or she individually needs to develop their full potential and succeed in life.

In 2018, Laura completed her NPQSL and Post Graduate Diploma with a focus on raising the

attainment of disadvantaged boys. In her AHT role, Laura is an SLE for Pupil Premium. She leads on raising the attainment of disadvantaged students, with a focus on high quality teaching and learning for all, and on literacy across the curriculum.

When she is not lost in a book, Laura enjoys the freedom and headspace she gets from running outdoors in Cornwall's inspirational wild spaces.



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