SECTION 1: TEACHING READING

What is Reading?

When you pick up a book, open a web-link or read a set of instructions, what is it that directs what you are doing? You will have had a purpose in mind that shapes how you read and what you do – you might want to settle down and read your new novel, or to check what time your flight is, or you might need to set up your new tablet computer. Sometimes reading will be for pleasure, sometimes for work or to glean information; each of these purposes requires you to read, but in a subtly different way.

In this Teaching and Assessment Guide, we define reading as a process by which the reader gains meaning from the printed word[1]. Reading is a complex act, whatever the purpose: it requires the reader to control many aspects – the ability to match letters to their corresponding sound (grapheme/phoneme correspondence); to blend sounds together to make words; to look for known parts in longer, multisyllabic words; to read sentences, understanding how word order, punctuation and vocabulary choice all serve to convey the author's intention; to know how texts are constructed and to understand their purpose and meaning.

This complex task of reading starts with looking[2]. Beginner readers need to learn how print works. They have to attend to those black squiggles on a white page, to know that they track one-to-one accurately across a line of text from left-to-right in English, to begin to notice letters and words they know, and to understand that what they say has to match what they can see on the page. As children learn more about the alphabetic code, they begin to break the words they can see into separate phonemes, blending them together to read the word. They begin to recognise recurring parts of words such as 'ing' and 'ed' and they link what they already know to the new words they encounter. As more and more words become automatically recognised, reading becomes faster and more fluent. The child starts to sound like a reader.

Young readers seek to make meaning from their very earliest encounters with print. Often the very first word they read is their name. Books for beginner readers provide strong language structures and make good use of illustrations to support meaning. Vocabulary matches the child's oral language. Fiction books have a strong sense of story. Non-fiction books have genuine information to convey. Most importantly, books for young readers are engaging, motivating and above all pleasurable for young children learning to read.

Classrooms provide many different opportunities for the young reader to engage in reading for purpose and pleasure. Teachers read and share stories and rhymes with their children. They provide opportunities for children to read and share books with friends, or quietly by themselves. They make available a wealth of reading material, including access to the Internet and the use of information technology. Teachers demonstrate how reading 'works' in shared reading sessions; perhaps showing how to locate information in a book about animals, or looking at how the author made the story more exciting by using some really interesting words. All teaching of reading requires good quality books, whether the teaching context be modelled, shared, guided or independent reading. This Teaching and Assessment Guide focuses specifically on the use of quality texts in guided reading.

Guided reading operates alongside shared and independent reading in the classroom. The teaching practice of guided reading is underpinned by the work of theorists such as Vygotsky and Bruner. These theories hold that learning is socially constructed through engagement with others. Teachers target their teaching at just the right point in their children's learning, enabling them to do something they would have been unable to do alone. Teachers provide opportunities for children to rehearse this new learning in a supportive, collaborative setting, and expect the children to take on this new learning independently: 'what a child can do with assistance today she will be able to do by herself tomorrow'[3].

[1] Bodman, S. and Franklin, G. (2014). *Which Book and Why: Using Book Bands and book levels for guided reading in Key Stage 1.* London: IOE Press

[2] Clay, M. M. (2005). *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals – Part 2: Teaching Procedures.* Auckland, N.Z.: Heinemann

[3] Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). *Mind in Society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

What is Guided Reading?

Guided reading is a teaching methodology; a way of organising teaching and assessment. It has specific goals. The teacher aims to support the children in reading text for themselves, putting into practice all the aspects of word and letter learning and reading strategies that have been taught previously. To do this, the teacher organises the class into small groups. Each group is carefully matched to a band through assessment. The teacher has a specific learning objective for the group and carefully choses a different book for each; one that helps her guide the learning and thinking of the children in that group. The book offers some challenge to the young readers and, by using awareness of the children's knowledge and experience, careful preparation of the text and the process of literacy acquisition, the teacher offers the right level of support to enable all the children to read the text independently. Active participation at each child's own level of attainment is the aim of guided reading.

A guided reading lesson has some key features:

- Small groups, usually between 4 to 8
- Similar level of attainment in the group
- A copy of the text for each child and the teacher
- A new text in each guided reading lesson
- Reading strategies are applied, reinforced and extended
- The text can be accessed easily (at or above 90% accuracy)
- The children read independently whilst the teacher works with each individual child in turn (as opposed to reading aloud around the group)
- Teacher interactions focus on prompts and praise to support
- From the earliest colour bands, each child is required to think about problem-solving strategies
- It follows a guided learning structure, as follows.

The Guided Reading Teaching Sequence

The guided reading teaching sequence creates:

- an opportunity for the teacher to teach reading strategies explicitly at a text level appropriate to each child.
- an effective and efficient way to provide instruction within a structure which enables the teacher to respond to the range of ability in a class.
- the opportunity for independent reading practice on the right levels of text for each child.
- a context to use and reinforce letters, words and strategies being taught as part of a classroom reading programme, resulting in systematic teaching.
- a focus on reading comprehension.

The table on page 10 gives an overview of the generic teaching sequence for guided reading. All guided reading lessons follow this structure, whether the children are well advanced in the process of learning to read or just beginning to learn. The emphasis and content of part of the sequence will be shaped to support the learner, whatever their current competences.

The essential elements of a guided reading lesson[4]

Before reading	**Book introduction**	**Lesson focus:** The teacher shares her learning objectives for the session with the children. **Orientation:** The teacher reads the title and gives a very brief overview of the text, particularly drawing attention to the type of text, clarifying the teaching objectives and building expectation. **Preparation:** Briefly, the teacher will 'debug' the book, alerting children's attention to any new features or challenges. Inexperienced readers will need more detailed introductions than competent readers. It is important to leave a certain amount of challenge. Children are encouraged to ask questions and make comments about the text. The aim is for each child to be able to read the text independently.
	Strategy check	The 'strategy check' prepares the children for independent reading and to provide opportunities to rehearse and practise the appropriate reading strategies they will need to employ to meet the challenges in the text. The teacher will prompt children to articulate what they will do if they become stuck whilst reading. This is about how they will attempt to solve their problem for themselves. Over time, and linked to the focus for teaching, teachers select different skills to focus on during the strategy check. One focus may last for a number of lessons.
During reading	**Independent reading**	Each child then reads independently. This is not a 'round robin' activity, with children taking turns to read while others listen. Maximum time is given to each child reading independently – the book introduction will have prepared him to meet the challenges this book has for him. The teacher listens in to first one child, then the next, monitoring and supporting where necessary. The teacher may have a rationale for which child she goes to first or leaves until last. The teacher's role in guided reading is to prompt a child to use print information, together with prior knowledge, and related to the teaching focus. Prompts and confirmation of useful responses provide a feedback mechanism for the child to realise their own success and keep track of their own progress in reading. This is also a time for the teacher to consider her assessment of each child's reading ability. Is the text at the right level for this child? Is there a suitable level of challenge?
After reading	**Return to text**	After this independent first reading, the teacher works with the whole group to reinforce the lesson focus. She will take children back to specific parts of the text to reinforce successful word reading or problem-solving or to reinforce an aspect that the children still found challenging. They are asked to share their successes and justify their responses. They may frame questions for each other arising from the text.
	Independent activity	An independent task may follow the reading. Teachers design activities that focus explicitly on the reasons for choosing that text: the learning objective. Reading independently from texts well within the child's current reading ability can also be used as an activity after a guided reading lesson. If resources allow, books that have been read will be placed in a 'book basket' or 'book box'. There will be one such collection for each reading group. These can be re-read independently following subsequent guided reading lessons, they can form the basis of free choice activities or be read to classmates or other adults at other times of the day.

[4] Bodman, S. and Franklin, G. (2014). *Which Book and Why: Using Book Bands and book levels for guided reading in Key Stage 1*. London: IOE Press, pp25-26.

Guided Reading Record Sheet

Class: Group:

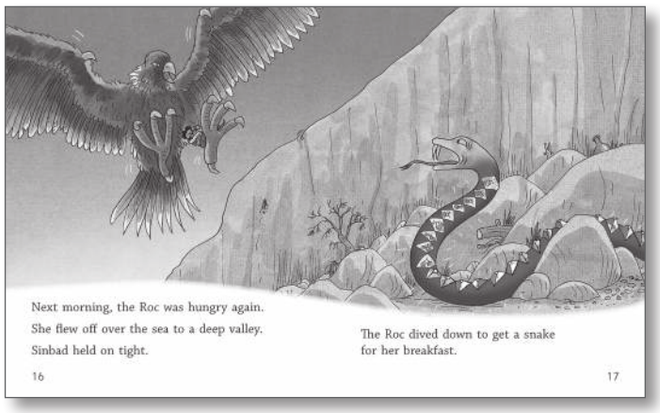
Names: …… …… …… …… …… ……	Date: Text: Band:
Key Learning Goals for the lesson:	
Learning Objective and Success Criteria	
Planning notes/Key questions/Comments	

Child	Notes and observations

Reading Fiction Books

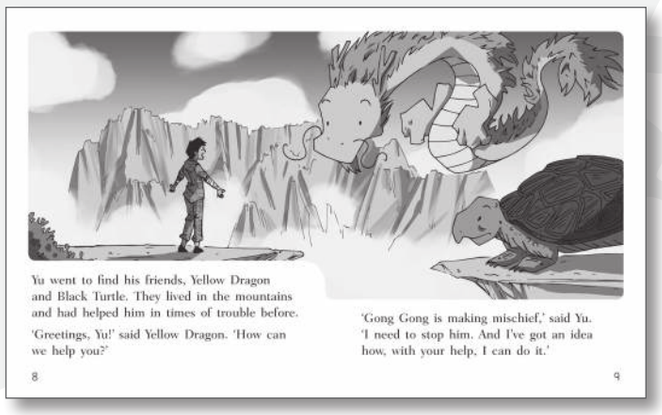
Fiction is all about story-telling. As readers, we choose stories that excite, intrigue, puzzle or frighten us. We look for stories that reaffirm our own lives or take us to lives we can only imagine. Haven[5] described stories as 'the primary roadmap for understanding, making sense of, remembering and planning our lives'.

What makes a story? It has been said that there are just a small number of basic story themes, and these have been around since humans first began to tell stories: monsters and villains are overcome; the poor become rich through good fortune or wrong-doing; quests are made to seek to do something or to right a wrong; voyages to unknown worlds are undertaken and the adventurer returns to tell the tale. Stories can be funny or tragic, or a mixture of both.



Sinbad and the Giant Roc, Turquoise band

Fiction writers rework or revise these themes to continue to tell new stories. They intermingle the themes – a quest may have elements of comedy; a monster story might have a rags-to-riches ending. Writers take those basic plots and situations and, by reinventing them, they make it their own.



Yu and the Giant Flood, Gold band

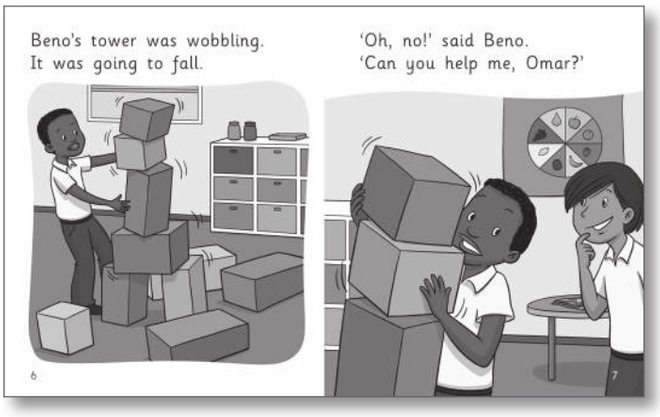
Young children encounter fiction from the earliest age. Long before they can talk, babies and toddlers listen to stories read to them. They demand to hear their favourite books over and over again. From these experiences, they begin to gain a sense of story, implicitly picking up on those story themes. Through hearing stories, they discover how stories work – even the simplest stories employ a structure that moves from a clear beginning to a resolved end. They learn that there are good characters and bad, and begin to empathise with those who are lost or need help. They discover magical lands and faraway places, and look at their everyday world through the eyes of the story teller. The literature-rich school classroom builds upon the story experiences children bring with them from home when they start school.

Jamila Finds a Friend, Pink A band

When writing a book, an author always has the potential reader in mind. A book written to be shared by a parent or carer with a young child sitting on her lap will be a very different sort of book to that which an older reader would chose to read on their own in bed at night. The writer's purpose and audience dictates the style, scope, vocabulary and even the length of the text. The fiction books in *Cambridge Reading Adventures* have been written specifically to be used in a small group guided reading context, led by a teacher, to support the teaching of reading.

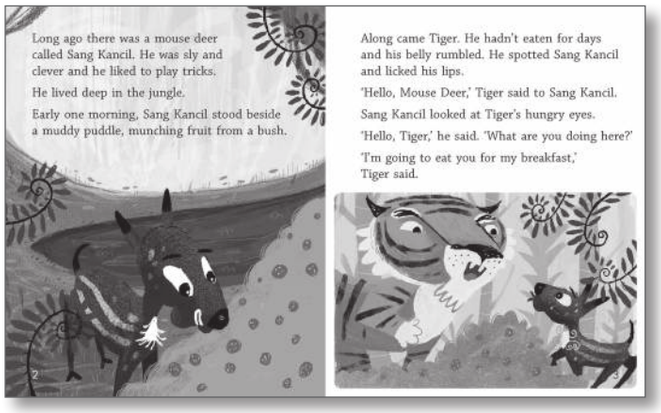
[5] Page 3, Haven, K. (2007). *Story Proof: The Science Behind the Startling Power of Story.* Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited.

Reading is, first and foremost, about making meaning. Books for guided reading are designed to support the development of comprehension from the very beginning. The earliest books are short. They have simple language structures that mirror the natural pattern of spoken English. They are illustrated clearly to match the written message, the subject matter is appropriate to children's experiences, and care is taken to choose words and phrases that are within the young reader's own conceptual understanding. Words are phonically decodable or high-frequency, with nouns and verbs supported strongly by the grammar and meaning.



Omar can Help, Red band

As reading progresses, stories require more inferential links to be made. Inference is crucial to reading comprehension. Readers have to move beyond the literal meaning of the actual words on the page, to read 'between the lines' to fully comprehend the author's intention. Kintsch and Rawson[6] describe this as the reader forming a mental or 'situation' model of the story. Readers, they argue, use their prior knowledge, their understanding of the subject and of how stories work, to fill in the gaps. Fiction books in *Cambridge Reading Adventures* have strong story structures to support comprehension. Themes build upon children's own experiences by placing new characters in familiar events, or through traditional retellings of tales from around the world. As books become longer, stories are often sustained over two or more events, or over time. Language structures become more complex, with the meaning sometimes implied by the word order or the author's choice of vocabulary.



Sang Kancil and the Tiger, Turquoise band

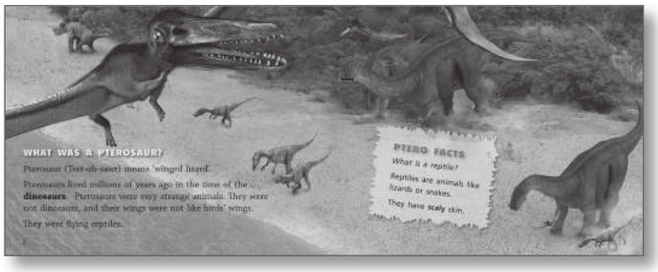
The teaching notes at the back of each book offer guidance to teachers for teaching inference-making in story. Many of the follow-up suggestions provide activities designed to support developing comprehension. This Teaching and Assessment Guide describes each story in detail, and explains the teaching opportunities featured in each individual text as children progress through the banded gradient of challenge (see page 28).

[6] Kintsch, W., & Rawson, K. A. (2005). Comprehension. In M. J. Snowling & C. Hulme (Eds.), *The Science of Reading: A Handbook* (pp. 209-226). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Reading Non-fiction Books

If we stopped and thought about the reading we have done over the last 24 hours, a large proportion of that reading is likely to have been non-fiction: consulting a recipe book to check the amount of sugar needed; following a set of instructions to load a new computer programme; searching the Internet for the best deals on flights to our chosen holiday location. Non-fiction reading forms an integral part of our daily lives.

Efficient readers modify the way they read according the nature of the text[7]. They will have a purpose when reading it - to answer a question or to find out more information. Reading non-fiction for a purpose is crucial – the reader has to be able to ask 'what do I want to get from this book, and why?'. That is not meant to imply that non-fiction is not pleasurable. A young child who loves dinosaurs will be motivated to read a book about prehistoric animals simply because of that interest. Likewise, reading a good story can lead the reader to want explore the real-life setting or events that provided the stimulus for the plot. However, there are clear differences between story books and books predominantly written for information, and they need to be taught differently.

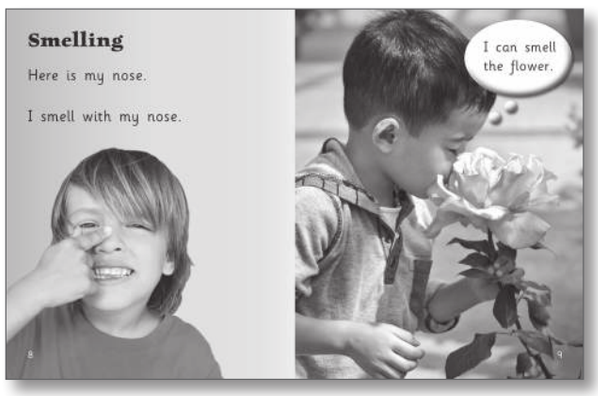


Pterosaur!, Purple band

Whilst not a definitive list, it is generally agreed that there are six main non-fiction purposes or 'genre' types[8]:

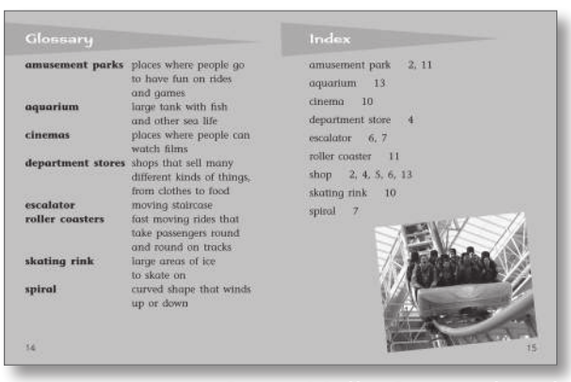
- to recount or retell an event
- to report or describe something
- to instruct or to describe a procedure
- to explain how things work or how they came to be
- to discuss a particular issue, acknowledging different points of view
- to persuade the reader towards a particular position upheld by the writer.

Non-fiction authors, when writing for an experienced audience, rarely delineate so clearly: a book about a farm, for example, might include elements of instruction on how to care for animals mixed with aspects of persuasion about the benefits of organic farming. Non-fiction books written specifically for young children learning to read will present one type of genre very clearly, following the structural organisation and language features that support that purpose for reading. (See the table on page 15.)



Our Senses, Red band

Early non-fiction texts in *Cambridge Reading Adventures* focus predominantly on recounts, reports and instructions. Children's own personal experiences and familiar settings support their comprehension. As reading progresses, texts in the scheme begin to include the other more complex genres, and will move into subject matter less familiar to the reader. Non-fiction features, such as glossaries, indexes, facts boxes, maps and diagrams are gradually introduced throughout, beginning with labels and captions. As each new feature is introduced, teachers need to demonstrate how these are used to support reading for meaning and purpose.



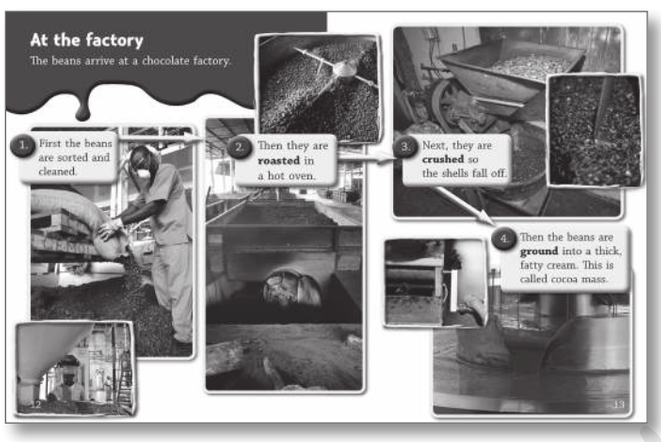
Super Malls, Orange band

[7] Wray, D. and Lewis, M. (1997). *Extending Literacy: Children Reading and Writing Non-fiction*. London, UK: Routledge.

[8] Bodman, S. and Franklin, G. (2014). *Which Book and Why Using Book Bands and Book Levels for Guided Reading in Key Stage 1.* London: IOE Press.

Purpose	Structural organisation	Language features
Recount	• A sequence of events written in chronological order	• Written in the first (I/we) or third (he/she/they) person • Past tense verbs to indicate the event being retold has already occurred • The sequence of events is indicated by temporal connectives (first, next, later).
Report	• Commonly non-chronological: the sequence is determined by the component parts.	• Written in the present tense • Addresses the subject generically – not about specific things or people.
Instruction	• Chronologically sequenced steps, sometimes numbered. • May include diagrams	• Uses imperative verbs • Addresses the general reader • May include language of sequence (first, then, after that)
Explanation	• Steps organised in a logical sequence to explain or describe the process • Often use diagrams and cycles	• Written in the present tense • Temporal and causal connectives (because, in order to) used
Discussion	• Presents differing points of view • Draws a conclusion based on the argument presented.	• Written in the present tense • Connectives link the points being made (however, therefore). • Addresses the reader more generally
Persuasion	• Clear statement of the concern to be addressed • Logically sequence leading to a conclusion	• Written in the present tense • Use of powerful, often emotive language to put over the point of view

When using *Cambridge Reading Adventures* non-fiction books in guided reading, teachers select books according to the purpose for reading. They make links with the children's personal experiences and with the classroom curriculum. Good book choice is crucial to support the particular non-fiction reading skill teachers want to teach during the guided reading lesson. The teaching notes at the back of each book offer support for teaching non-fiction reading effectively. Guidance is provided to help teachers decide on the appropriate book choice to meet the needs of their group. Many of the follow-up suggestions provide activities designed to develop non-fiction reading skills.



How Chocolate is Made, Turquoise band

Introduction to Book Banding

Effective teaching in guided reading needs to offer materials with the right amount of challenge. That doesn't mean finding books with the same letters, words or sentences in, but books that allow the young reader to use what he knows to solve problems encountered in a text. He does this by using the letters and words he does know as anchors to keep hold of the meaning, whilst working out the unknown letters and words for himself. 'Bands' of books are 'collections' or 'groups' of books. Each band shares the text characteristics (for example, phonic complexity of words, grammatical challenges, layout of text on the page, role of the illustrations) and offers the same level of challenge. The stories, the types of text and the sentence structures within each book are very different. Banding offers support for both the teacher and the child, offering consistency of expectation but a range of language and meaning contexts in which to reinforce active reading and problem-solving. It is a way of analysing the amount of challenge in books for guided reading.

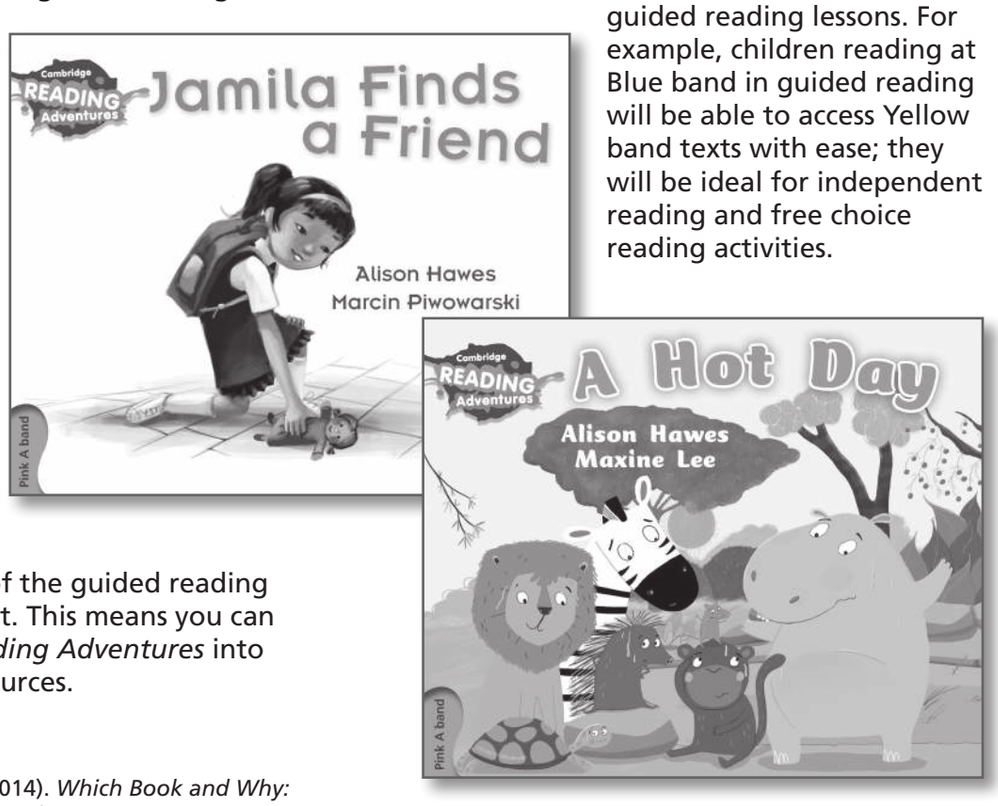
Book Banding is also a way of organising books for guided reading. Each band is given a colour and has a clear set of learning and teaching objectives associated with it. Teachers can organise their book collections for guided reading by colour and use that system to monitor and assess progression in reading. Banding has been used successfully for this purpose in the majority of schools in the UK. *Cambridge Reading Adventures* has been banded using the UCL Institute of Education banding system[9], which bands all of the guided reading materials currently in print. This means you can integrate *Cambridge Reading Adventures* into your existing banded resources.

Using bands to group children

Colour bands allow the teacher to be guided by the needs of the child when choosing a book. First, you identify the band at which the child can read with a rate of accuracy between 90 and 94%. Then, you look closely at the assessment record of the child's reading to determine the skills and knowledge that the child needs to learn next. (The section on how to assess reading is on page 80). Then, you choose a text that presents opportunities for learning that link back to the child's needs identified through assessment. By finding the instructional level for each individual child, you can gather together a small group of children working at the same band and work with them in a guided reading context.

Using bands to extend reading mileage

When you know which book band the groups of children in your class are working at, you will be able to select books at the same band with confidence, knowing that they are the right level for each group. Having the choice of lots of books within the child's reading competence will mean that you now choose books for children to read for pleasure in independent reading times. You can do this by selecting stories and texts that are the band below the one you are using for guided reading lessons. For example, children reading at Blue band in guided reading will be able to access Yellow band texts with ease; they will be ideal for independent reading and free choice reading activities.



Selection of Pink A books

[9] Bodman, S. and Franklin, G. (2014). *Which Book and Why: Using Book Bands and book levels for guided reading in Key Stage 1*. London: IOE Press

Using bands to support children learning in an additional language

Learning to read in an additional language presents particular challenges. *Cambridge Reading Adventures* supports second language learning in a number of ways:

- Texts provide a good model of English to support the second language learner to hear, practise, and then predict and use in their own reading and writing
- Challenges are carefully phased in order to ensure success and comprehension throughout all reading lessons
- Vocabulary is supported by clear illustrations in both fiction and non-fiction texts
- Introduction of words that need to be decoded is carefully considered to ensure progression in word reading skills
- Links to the wider curriculum are made so that vocabulary and language structures encountered in reading can be reinforced in other subject study
- Guidance for the teacher ensures that language and reading comprehension are at the heart of every guided reading lesson.

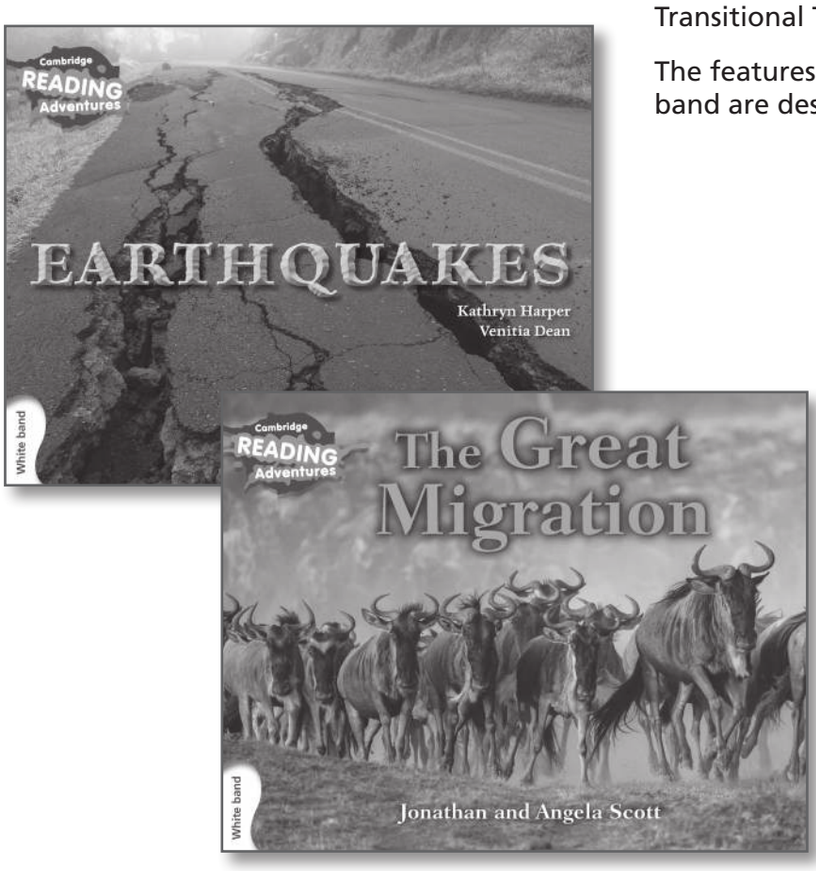
Banding Progression

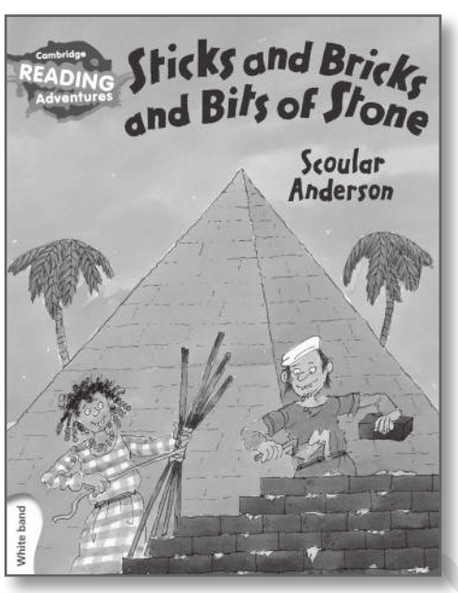
Band	Colour
1A	Pink A
1B	Pink B
2	Red
3	Yellow
4	Blue
5	Green
6	Orange
7	Turquoise
8	Purple
9	Gold
10	White

Bands are arranged into colour groups that support the reader for the very earliest stages of learning to read (Pink band A and B) to becoming an independent reader (White band and beyond).

Bands 5 to 10 are presented here in the Transitional Teaching and Assessment Guide.

The features and characteristics of texts at each band are described in the next section.





A selection of White band books