

What is reading?

Reading is a process of **making meaning** from written and visual texts. This involves two significant processes – **comprehending** the story or ideas; and **decoding** the words and pictures.

Why is this important?

Reading provides opportunities to develop understandings about ourselves, the world around us, and about how language works. It develops our mind and is a fundamental skill that is applied to all other learning areas. Reading a 'text' may include reading picture books, novels, comics, ebooks, TV programs, movies, posters and brochures.

What does the teaching and learning look like?

To help students comprehend texts we use the **QAR** (Question-Answer-Relationships) framework to ask and answer questions. There are four types of questions that require students to use their own knowledge and also information in the text to find the answers.

- **On my own:** Have you read any books like this before? What do you know about this topic?
- **Right there:** What are some of the things the character does? What are the facts about that topic?
- **Think and search:** How does the character feel? Which events are the most important?
- **Author and me:** What is the author's opinion? Why do you think the author wrote this book?

To help students decode words and pictures we use a range of reading strategies (e.g. look at the pictures, get your mouth ready for the sounds, re-read the sentence, look for small words, skip the word, cross-check). For most students the strategies to support the decoding of letters, sounds and words are developed by Year 3. The focus then moves from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn', with an emphasis on comprehending a wide range of texts.

Comprehension is developed by using the QAR framework within a range of reading opportunities including:

- **Modelled and Shared Reading:** where students are exposed to texts that entertain, inform and persuade produced in a variety of forms including picture books, novels, poems, films and brochures. Often these texts are more sophisticated than students might be able to read for themselves, but provide great opportunities for listening to good role models. Students participate in Modelled and Shared Reading each week with their class teachers.
- **Guided Reading:** where students are able to read books matched to their level of reading and comprehension. These texts provide opportunities for developing reading skills as students learn new vocabulary and explore how texts work and represent our world. Students engage in Guided Reading each week as they participate in *Target Teaching (Guided Reading)*.
- **Independent Reading:** where students are able to choose books that match their level of reading, comprehension and/or interest. For some students this might include *Accelerated Reader (AR)*.
- **Home Reading:** where students can practise their reading skills and also build positive attitudes and dispositions. For some students this might include Home Readers (print and/or online) and/or *AR*.

How do we know how our children are progressing?

Teachers use a range of strategies to monitor all aspects of reading comprehension as students develop their reading understandings and skills from Year 3 to Year 6. A range of reading tasks are used to make a judgment about students' reading abilities. Teachers:

- utilise informal and formal checks using QAR questions for both Modelled/Shared Reading texts and Guided Reading texts
- monitor the progress of reading levels (e.g. PM 1 to 30 or Accelerated Reader).

What support can be provided at home?

- Read and discuss a range of texts including books, movies, TV shows, DVD covers, brochures, leaflets, food packages, magazines and newspapers.
- Find everyday opportunities to read e.g. accessing the online TV guide, sending and receiving postcards, discussing an article in a local newspaper.
- Model how much you love reading and read out loud as often as possible (e.g. read from the media article, take turns to read a page each in a favourite novel).
- Encourage your child to set reading goals (e.g. How long do you think it will take us to read that series? Can we read another book by that author? How many books could we read this term?)
- Celebrate the successes!