

Reading at WoodLinks



What is Reading?

Reading is the process of decoding and making meaning from texts.



Our Commitment

Reading has the power to change lives. It plays an essential role in learning, securing a job and being an active and engaged member of society (DoE, 2023). It is for that reason that at WoodLinks we say *“if you can read, you will succeed.”*

At WoodLinks State School we are committed to every student realising their reading potential. We achieve this through teaching reading across all learning areas and subjects in the Australian Curriculum, using evidence-informed approaches.

Our Core Beliefs

At WoodLinks State School, we believe

- Reading comprehension is the goal. It is the product of word reading and language comprehension.
- **Systematic synthetic phonics** is the most effective way to teach children to read and spell words.
- **Language comprehension** should be taught through shared and dialogic reading.
- **Explicit vocabulary** instruction enhances learning outcomes for all students.

Prep to Year 2

In Prep to Year 2, students are taught word reading and spelling with **systematic synthetic phonics**. Language comprehension is taught through **shared and dialogic reading** (reading aloud and discussing) of authentic **curriculum texts**.

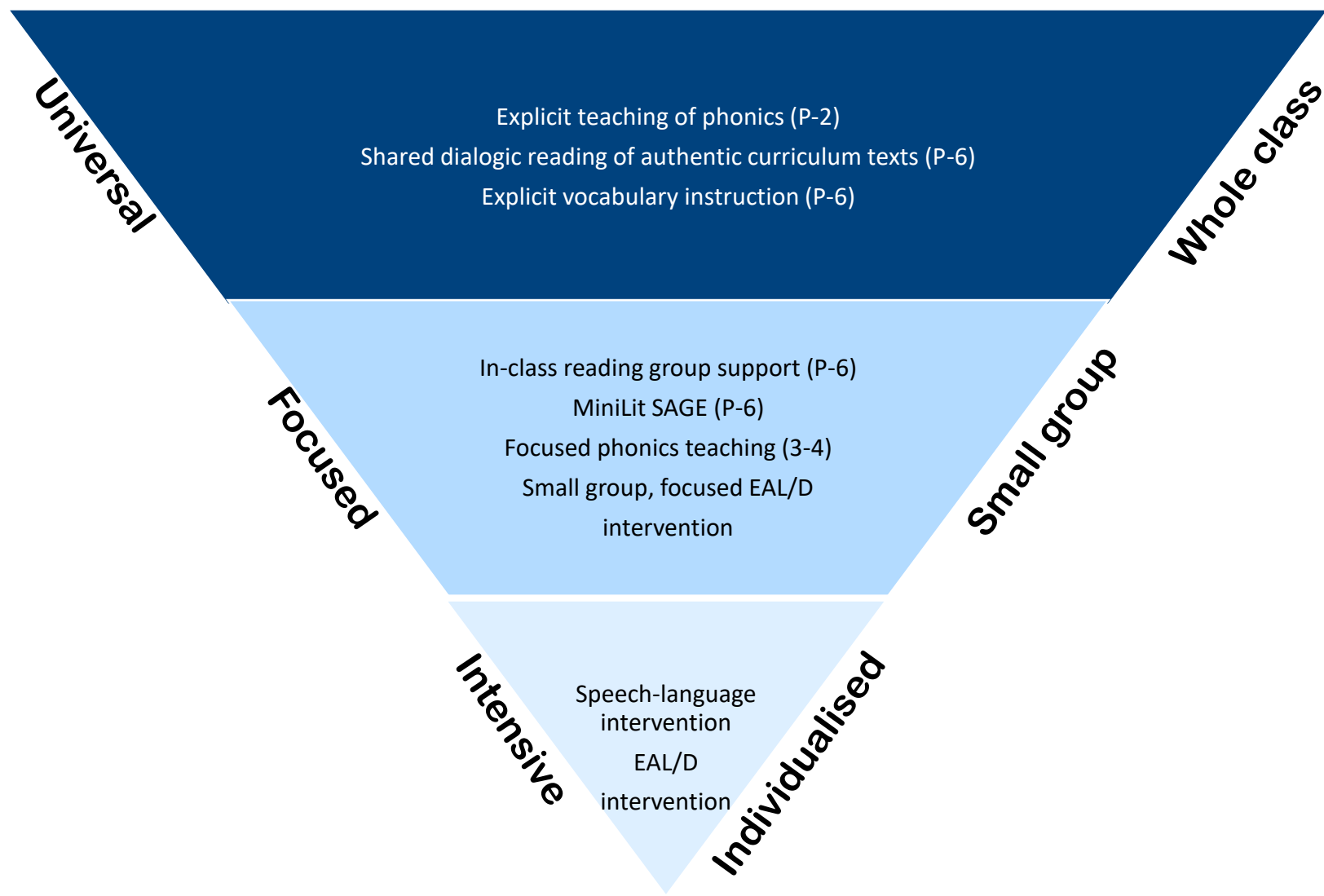


Years 3 to 6

Students build on their reading foundations as they are taught to **read and understand** more complex **multisyllabic words** (longer words with more than one syllable) and **build language comprehension** by engaging in **shared and dialogic reading** (reading aloud and discussing) of authentic **curriculum texts**.



A Multi-Tiered System of Support



Evidence-Informed Instructional Approaches

Evidence-informed instructional approaches that explicitly teach aspects of word reading and language comprehension include:

- **Systematic synthetic phonics** — to teach word reading
- **Shared and dialogic reading** — to teach aspects of language comprehension.
- **Explicit vocabulary instruction** — to teach aspects of word reading and language comprehension

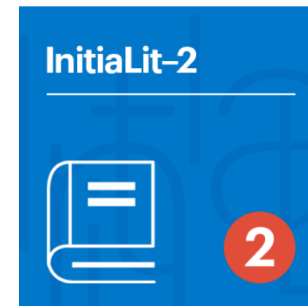
Theory: Systematic Synthetic Phonics

Phonics is the understanding of the **relationship between individual speech sounds** (phonemes) and the **written** letters (graphemes) that represent them.

Systematic synthetic phonics is an instructional approach where students are **taught grapheme-phoneme correspondences** in an **explicit, planned and sequenced** way. Students blend sounds to read words (decode) and segment words into individual sounds to spell words (encode).

Systematic Synthetic Phonics in P-2

At WoodLinks State School, teachers in Prep-Year 2 **explicitly teach phonics using InitialLit**, an evidence-informed whole-class literacy program. This involves whole-class teaching and small-group instruction four-times per week. Small group instruction occurs with the support of a teacher aide. It includes activities to consolidate teaching, word building and reading.



Systematic Synthetic Phonics in 3-4

Students in Year 3-4 who have been identified as requiring focused teaching to develop or consolidate phonic knowledge and decoding skills are supported during *Focused Phonics Teaching* groups.

This involves small-group instruction four-times per week by class teachers and trained teacher aides. Lessons include explicit instruction in systematic synthetic phonics for reading and spelling, letter formation and connected text reading.

Intervention: MiniLit Sage

Identified students who require intensive support to develop decoding skills engage in MiniLit Sage, a Tier 2 small group reading intervention program which provides explicit instruction in phonemic awareness, systematic synthetic phonics for reading and spelling, letter formation and connected text reading. MiniLit Sage lessons are delivered four-times per week for 45 minutes per lesson. The program is delivered by a learning support teacher (STLaN) and trained teacher aides.

Theory: Shared and Dialogic Reading

Shared and dialogic reading is an approach to teaching language comprehension that includes planned and explicit exploration of rich, varied texts. Teachers use prompts or strategies to systematically build student's language skills in specific areas. Purposeful questions are planned to facilitate discussion and encourage students to deepen and clarify their understanding of complex texts.

Theory: Shared and Dialogic Reading

During shared and dialogic reading, the teacher and student are active participants in constructing a dialogue, or conversation, about the text. This dialogue might focus on text structure, such as characters or settings; it may focus on experiences the student has had that are similar to those in the text; it may focus on specific vocabulary; aspects of print; or concepts that are new to the student. Interactivity is a key feature of shared and dialogic reading. The teacher intentionally and carefully structures interactions to purposefully challenge, extend and scaffold students' skills to support and accelerate learning.

Shared Reading at WoodLinks SS

At WoodLinks State School, teachers in years 3-6 explicitly teach aspects of language comprehension through shared and dialogic reading of authentic curriculum texts.

Whole-class lessons are delivered by the classroom teacher four-times per week and are supported by trained teacher aides.

Theory: Vocabulary and Reading

Vocabulary refers to the words that we know and use when we are communicating. Research in reading comprehension shows that the ability to learn and use vocabulary is key to improved and sustained reading comprehension.

Theory: Explicit Vocabulary Instruction

Vocabulary can be learned in two ways — incidentally or through explicit instruction. Incidental learning of words occurs through everyday interactions with oral and written language; including conversations, shared texts and independent reading. However, this type of vocabulary learning alone is not sufficient to improve reading comprehension, particularly for more complex learning-area-specific texts. Explicit instruction of vocabulary is a high-impact strategy that increases reading comprehension and enhances learning outcomes for all students.

Explicit Vocabulary Instruction at WoodLinks SS

At WoodLinks State School, teachers identify key vocabulary that is critical for learning and explicitly teach it using the WoodLinks explicit vocabulary instructional routine.

Explicit Vocabulary Instruction at WoodLinks

Select	Select Tier 2 words within authentic curriculum texts to explicitly teach	
Step 1:	I do	Pronunciation: say syllables and show the word Meaning: provide a student friendly definition including actions where appropriate Contextualise: the word within the text Expose: students to the word within various sentences.
Step 2:	We do	Check for understanding activities including: Detect: target words in 'examples versus non-examples' using choral responses with target word and action Think-pair-share: create a sentence with the target word
Step 3:	You do	Connect word to self: students actively use the word in speech or writing Act it out: connect the word to an action Picture sort: 'examples versus non-examples'
Follow up or forget!	Word relationships: word clines, synonyms, antonyms Graphic organisers: Frayer model, venn diagram Morphology / grammar: word matrix, word sums Syntax activities: sentence construction, sentence combination, sentence completion	



“Reading has the power to change lives. It plays an essential role in learning, securing a job and being an active and engaged member of society. Reading provides us with information, knowledge, and makes us aware of people and places beyond our immediate circles. Learning foundational reading skills supports wellbeing and can translate to a love of reading and literature. As so much of our world rapidly changes around us, learning to read remains one of the most essential outcomes of schooling.”