Reading Pairs

Start a Peer Tutoring Project in your school

Teacher's Manual and Resource Pack

Aideen Cassidy

Junior
Certificate
School
Programme

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Photographs
The photographs are of the peer tutoring project in Jobstown Community
College, Tallaght. To the fore we see two students when they were third year
Junior Certificate School Programme students, Ciara Myles and Kathleen
Harcourt. They became the expert tutors in the college and were at this stage
involved in training others.

Also featured is a 1st year class who are engaged in a *same age peer tutoring
project* where 1st years work with each other. They read during break time and
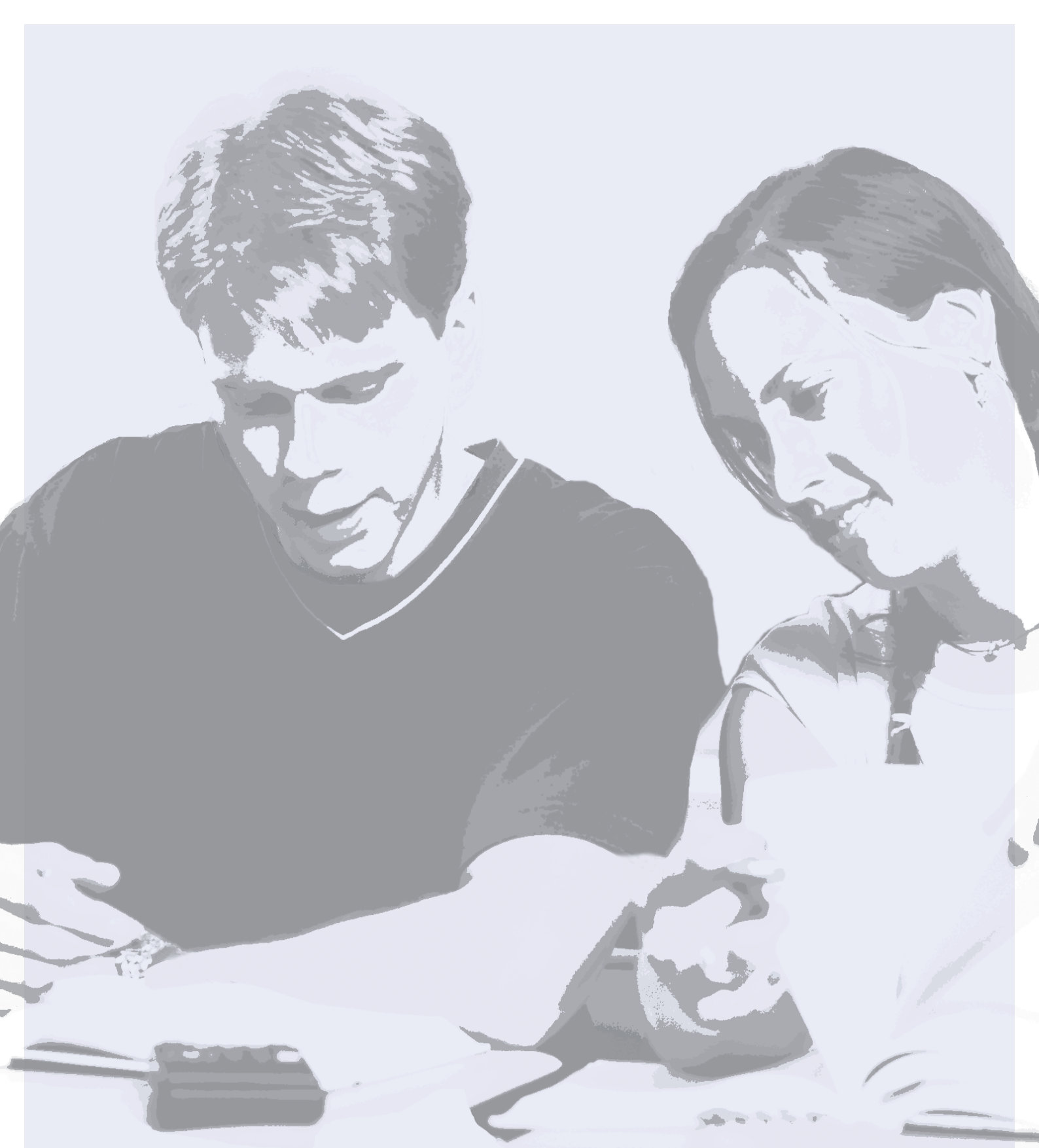during English class.

The tutoring role in the college has extended to a mentoring role with tutors
involved in after school clubs and sporting events.

Contents

Introduction

Introduction

Do you have enough personnel available to offer a direct service to all the students who need reading support?

Peer Tutoring might help

There is a wealth of resources available to us in our schools that we could all tap into. Professionals internationally have come to see that there will never be enough qualified personnel available to offer direct service to all those who need it. The result has been a surge in interest in non-professional involvement and for many schools that meant the students themselves.

Learning is not always the result of direct professional teaching. Schools have increasingly sought to involve parents in the educational development of their children and have explored the use of peer and other non-professional tutors.

Of all the techniques of non-professional tutoring, the simple and structured approach of paired reading has gained widespread acceptance and is now in use throughout the western world.

Have you ever considered the massive resource your fifth year, Transition year and leaving certificate applied students are?

These students are only waiting to be asked. Their enthusiasm, their eagerness to help, their youth, all contribute to the amount they have to offer.

There will never be enough qualified personnel available to provide a one-to-one service to students, but fifth year and Transition year students can be trained to help younger students in such areas as paired reading, cued spelling as well as JCSP Paired Maths, creative writing and handwriting. Once fifth years are trained they are matched with younger students (who volunteer to become involved) and initially they read together each day for fifteen minutes outside of class time, in what is called paired reading. The tutee's ability can range from total nonreaders to those who enjoy reading.

The benefits to the tutee are enormous. International research has shown that a pupil's reading age can increase by up to seven years (seven times the normal rate) after a term's involvement in a paired reading project. Research within the Junior Certificate School Programme has also found such improvement with the positive impact being felt on both sides of this relationship. In addition, their confidence improves. Students see the tutor as a facilitator of learning. They enjoy being involved with the seniors in the school. Many begin to read for pleasure outside of school, which is the real mark of success.

The fifth year students also benefit. Indeed, the JCSP research on the impact of peer tutoring on the tutor's reading also indicates great improvement in their reading ability. While thoroughly enjoying the status of being "tutors", they themselves develop a more positive attitude to reading and an awareness of spelling patterns. They generally commit themselves wholeheartedly to the programme. Once trained, they tend to do most of the work.

Nevertheless, it does take teachers' time, between training, canvassing first years, matching tutors with tutees, generally supervising, record keeping and evaluating. However, the returns on that time are really great when one thinks of the improvements all round and the shift to co-operative spirit between students in the school.

What is Paired Reading?

Before we go any further, a definition of paired reading is probably in order to make sure we all know what we're talking about:

...paired reading is where both read together simultaneously. Both read the words out loud together. Tutors make their speed as fast or as slow as the readers and as the reader makes a mistake the tutor just tells them what the word is. The reader must never struggle or break up the word or sound it out. This gets away from disjointed tedious reading where understanding is affected by the slow pace and the concentration on individual words.

The whole emphasis here is on reading for pleasure where the tutee is praised regularly.

Using this manual

O.K. If that is clear we better explain the approach we've adopted in this manual and resource pack. We know you are a hard working teacher - run off your feet most likely! We also know how difficult it is to get a new project off the ground. This project is well worth the effort. It's an idea whose time has definitely come. So we've made this a hands-on manual with practical step by step advice and resource forms, record sheets and letters wherever possible to save you valuable time. We've also included a description of a Peer Tutoring project run over several years in a Community College. It involved fifth year and Transition year students with Junior Cycle students. The training programme and the training materials are included as well as a description of the nuts and bolts of setting up and running the project. This approach may give you a flavour of the kind of things that crop up in the real school situation. We hope the manual provides you with a few ideas and gets you up and running on your own project. It's certainly worth a shot...

JCSP

Paired Reading

Get Involved Get Reading

Step 1
Plan the Project

Plan the Project

There is a planning sheet called 'Planning a Paired Reading Cross Age Peer Tutoring Project - 17 Questions to ask yourself' in Appendix 2 which should get you started.

School are constantly re-assessing the use of time available to support students-individual withdrawals/group withdrawal/team teaching/supporting & resourcing teachers dealing with parents /devising programmes etc. In this context, paired reading should be investigated.

Principal

It can be very useful to put a proposal together in the initial planning stages that can be put to the Principal - it is important to get the go-ahead from management and convince them of the project's potential value before beginning (see appendix 2). In the early stages it is so important to get management support to get the project off to a successful start.

Resources

Everyone Reads
A JCSP Training Video/DVD for Paired Reading Tutors

Everyone Reads is a training video/DVD for reading tutors involved in paired reading. The JCSP Literacy Strategy promotes a school wide approach to literacy development. Part of the strategy are short-term interventions. This video/DVD describes the background to paired reading in a JCSP school (Coláiste Chathail Naofa, Dungarvin, Co.Waterford) and goes on to outline the training programme for using paired reading in three different contexts:

• Senior cycle students are trained as reading tutors and are involved in paired reading with junior cycle students

• JCSP students are trained as reading tutors and involved in paired reading with primary school pupils and

• Parents are trained as reading tutors with their children.

The video/DVD also highlights how the profile of reading can be raised at home through parental participation in paired reading programmes with the support of the Home School Community Liaison Co-ordinator.

This video/DVD outlines:

• Benefits of paired reading

• Training for Reading Tutors

• How not to pair read

• Paired reading: the Method

• Awards and celebrations

• Organising Peer Tutoring Programme between JCSP second year students and primary school pupils and

• Parents Involvement in paired reading.

This video/DVD *Everyone Reads* is available from the JCSP support service.

If you are planning a cross age peer tutoring project between your senior students and the JCSP students recruit the tutors from L.C.A, Transition year and fifth year. It is probably best to only work with those who volunteer rather than with a whole class group. The last thing you need is a few clowns who will ruin your training programme.

It is a useful idea to see the training programme as something that they can include on their C.V. Each successful participant should get a certificate of satisfactory completing the training course. Such certificates are available from the JCSP support service.

Some schools use the programme as part of their Gáisce President's award scheme. There are different roles available within a Peer Tutoring Project, that the trained tutors could apply for once they are trained. These roles include:

• Tutor

• Library assistant

• Attendance supervisor

• Refreshment supervisor

• Celebration organiser

• Record keeper

• Substitute tutors etc.

Most teachers find that they do end up with plenty of volunteers. If you can negotiate it, it really helps to have the training during class time as all the tutoring usually takes place outside of class time. This can be a really great selling point. To begin with, it is no harm to state that although everyone who volunteers will be trained it does not automatically allow them take up a particular role in the project. All roles have to be applied for and possibly interviewed for.
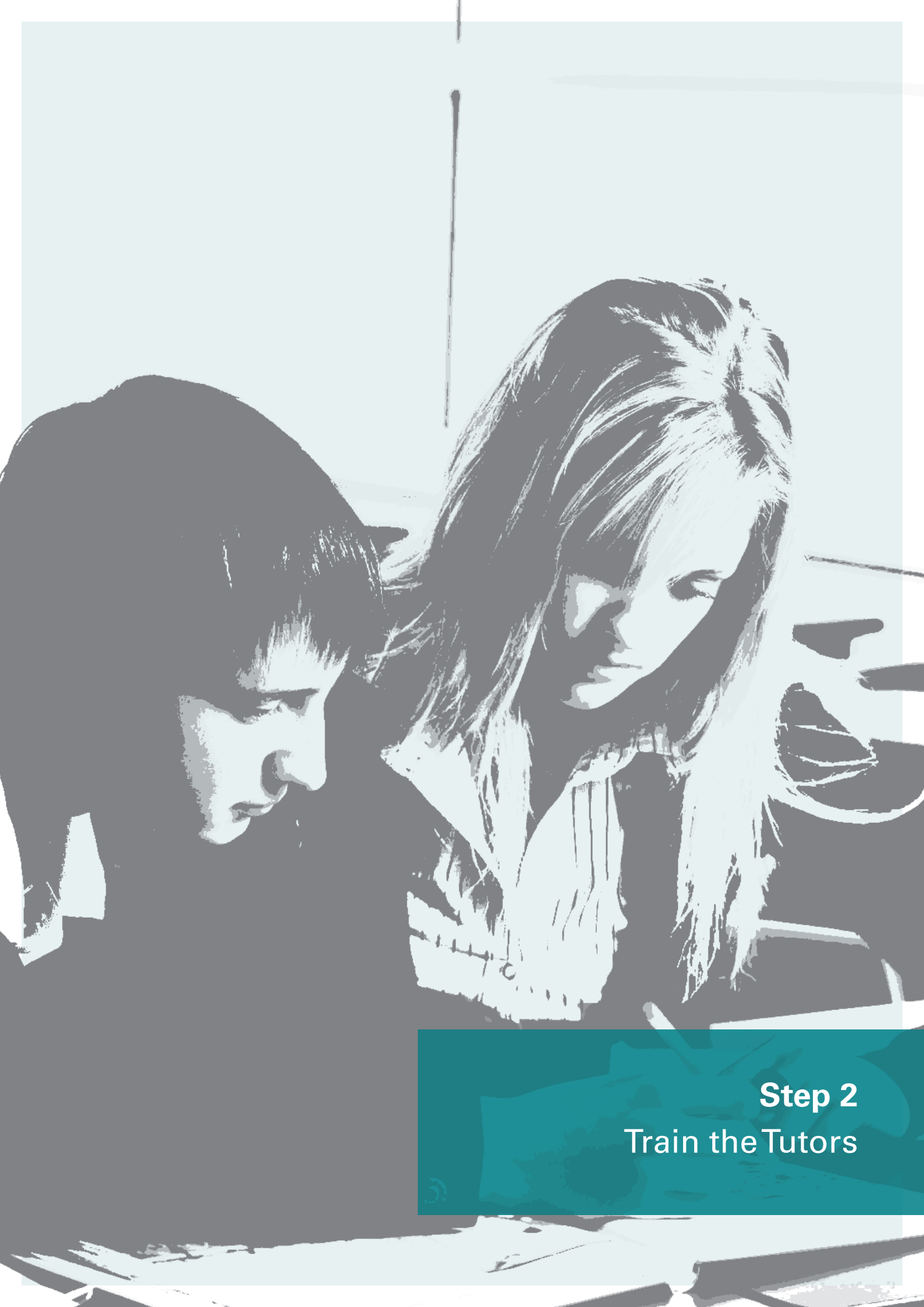
Step 2
Train the Tutors

Train the Tutors

If you get this part right you'll be up and running. Here is an outline of how to organise a training session with tutors. You will find a leaflet called "Paired Reading - How You can help others enjoy reading - Guidelines for Tutors" in Appendix 3 which you can give out to tutors. The key points are:

- **Live demonstration by two teachers:** How not to do it /how to do it/Video/DVD of how to do it

- **JCSP Video/DVD** *Everyone Reads*

- **Guidelines for tutors** - step by step instructions.

- **Value of paired reading**

- **Record keeping/recording attendance**

- **Selection of reading material**

- **Commitment and confidentiality**

- **The first meeting with tutee**

- **Choice of role and contract**

The whole training programme should involve high participation and reflection on the part of the student. Training can take the form of live demonstrations, modeling, talks, summary guidelines, handouts, and practice in pairs, small groups etc. Confidentiality and commitment need to be emphasised throughout. It is important to ensure that tutors commit themselves to meeting their tutee at the agreed times each week day for the whole first session. They should be asked to consider very carefully what is involved before deciding to go ahead. The idea of destroying a younger student's confidence by their dropping out mid session needs to be discussed. The tutors need to make a commitment to the agreed period of time.

Training Programme

- **Live demonstration** of peer tutoring by two teachers.

How not to do it
Portray the supposed student bored, restless, slouching, reluctant to begin reading. Have radio on, student slouches, begin a rather boring book, go straight to reading. Give no help apart from the advice to break up the words and to hurry up. Give out about the slowness and the lack of care. The student writhes in the pain of it all and begs to go out. The session finishes with an argument and everyone breathing a sigh of relief. This modeling can be very effectively done by two teachers. Check out the clip of the video/DVD *Everyone Reads* to see how this is done.

How to do it properly

Demonstrate all the steps of how to do the paired reading properly. Show video/DVD on how to do it.

- **Guidelines for Tutors**
  Go step by step through `the guidelines for paired reading'. You can choose between three different flyers:

- **Guidelines for Tutors**
  Appendix 3

- **Paired Reading Training for Senior Tutors**
  Appendix 4

- **Try it out**
  Pair up tutors and allow them time to practice on each other followed by discussion.

The value of paired reading
Discuss the value of paired reading. Provide insights from research findings and explain what a reading age is and how it can be

improved. Bear in mind that some of your tutors will, hopefully, be students who were formerly JCSP students and may have had some help in improving their reading (hopefully, as these are the most committed to really doing the job properly). Discuss how reading ages could be significantly improved over short sessions and give examples from international research.

Discuss how the tutors can give confidence to tutees and how paired reading itself does. Discuss how important confidence is in the context of reading.

Record Keeping/Recording Attendance

Discuss the importance of record keeping and go through the system for recording progress (see appendix 10 Record Keeping Forms). Discuss how the efficient use of the short time available is crucial to the success of the project. Give samples of the records and go through them. The importance of records in the case of absences should be stressed so that another tutor can take over effectively.

The attendance sheet - when the numbers grow it is necessary to have a tutor in charge of this in order to keep track of attendance and intervene early if there are any problems (appendix 9).

Selection of reading materials

This aspect of the training should not be neglected as the success of the project can depend on the tutor having an understanding of how and why to choose certain reading materials. The level of the material can be a little beyond what students would usually choose as they have support - choose for interest first - but not too far beyond so that the tutors don't make it too hard on themselves! It needs to be emphasised that it does not need to be fiction as some tutors may think that it has to be fiction. Let them know

that boys prefer non fiction and of course girls like a change sometimes, though they do tend to prefer fiction. Magazines etc. could be used but take great care to check the content. 'Mizz', 'Kiss', 'Now' and 'Sneak' have suitable content for the girls while boys enjoy reading the car, tractor and fishing magazines as well as 'Match', 'Buy & Sell' and 'Autotrader'. It may be necessary to limit the number of comics but, there again, it's great to see them reading at all. Remember to have plenty of non fiction available, especially for boys. Check out the JCSP publication Time to Read which outlines the most popular reads for JCSP students.

Discuss how the tutor can help the tutees choose materials considering that the tutee may rarely, if ever, have enjoyed reading or choosing a book. Indeed very few tutors are usually avid readers either!

The tutor needs to discuss interests with the tutee - tell them what they like to read. Check through a few of the available books. Read the blurb on the back - look over the book - check out what it might be about - read a little of the book to the tutee to get the flavour of what the book is about. Encourage a lot of talk before any decision. Discuss how important it is that the tutee experiences finishing a book pretty soon into the project. Many of the kids will never have finished a book - especially a book they read for pleasure. They should always be encouraged to try, if at all possible, to finish the books - this is why the initial choice is so important. It may involve the tutor reading a lot of the book to the tutee, even summarising sections to skip over them, so be it, if it takes that for the tutee to gain confidence. A sense of completion must be built up for the tutee. To that end a good selection of short novels should be available.

Encourage your tutors to do all in their power to make the experience enjoyable. Engage

together with the text - slag the characters! Talk about the book.

Commitment and Confidentiality

This needs to be emphasised as an essential component throughout. The students have to commit themselves to this project every day for the first block of time. They should be assured, however, that at the end of the initial session they could leave, change their role or take a break. They should be asked to consider very carefully what was involved before deciding to go ahead. The idea of destroying a younger student's confidence by dropping out should be discussed, "how it would feel to stand in their shoes", so to speak. They could be asked to imagine themselves being in first year and exposing their poor reading to an older student who subsequently left the project - it would be difficult to convince that student that it was for other reasons that their tutor left. Tutors have to commit themselves for an agreed period of time.

Confidentiality should be laboured throughout the training. Again the sensitivity of the project and the vulnerability of the tutees should be discussed at length. No putting down of any description could be tolerated. Often youngsters slag each other because they can't think of anything else to say or they're embarrassed. This should be discussed, and the effect that even friendly slagging could have on the tutees. One needs to be always conscious of the possible damage a tutor could do without proper training and guidance which is just as important as being well chosen to act as a tutor in the first place.

How the tutors would handle it if the tutees slagged them outside school should also be discussed. Carefree matching of the students is extremely important. The list of tutees could be distributed and the tutors asked to tell in private, if they have a particular difficulty with any potential tutee (neighbours etc.).

First Meeting with Tutee

How to deal with the first meeting is an aspect which needs a lot of preparatory work because if you are dealing with a good few tutors you won't have time to sit with each couple for long when you introduce them to each other. The tutors have to be trained to take over immediately. Discuss the introductions and how they will feel. Consider how the tutee will feel. But the tutors too will feel very awkward if they do not have a very concrete plan as to what to say and what to do. This needs to be rehearsed. In situations like this it's a good idea to have a very particular job to do. It could be useful to advice tutors to go straight to picking a book and let the books become the focus rather than the embarrassment. This aspect needs to be discussed at length.

Choice of Role and Contract

As the training programme comes to a close, it is worth while asking the participants to consider a role other than becoming a tutor in the project: positions such as library assistants, administrators for record keeping and attendance, and substitute tutors. Just to note that it may be worth considering keeping one of your best tutors to co-ordinate the substitution, as filling in for someone who is absent can be quite a difficult job.

They should be urged not to get involved at all if they were not going to do so in a very responsible and mature way. However, they should be assured that they would still receive a certificate of participation in the training programme.

Role of tutor outside of reading

They should be trained to quietly control the situation - to be the "boss" - reduce the chat, reduce the giddiness, settle the student to task, encourage the student. Some of the tutees may try to talk for the whole session especially as they get to know their tutors. Discuss this with the tutors and how best they can

overcome it without cramping the chat altogether. A balance is called for. Some focused chat and some reading. Additionally, it should be made clear from the outset that being allowed to be a tutor is a privilege and that your decision is final - they should be informed if they qualify as a tutor at the end of the training - they should not be automatically selected as tutors just because they participated in the training.

Tutor Assignments

These involve the tutors reflecting on each aspect of the training. The first four assignments below are easily handled: the teacher just reads out a question or two and asks the tutors to write down answers in note form. The last assignment takes the form of two questionnaires which are provided in appendix 7 and 8 (Evaluation Sheets for Tutors).

Assignment 1
- Outline the role of the tutor in peer tutoring

- Outline the value of peer tutoring to the tutor

Assignment 2
- What constitutes good practice in paired reading

Assignment 3
- Outline the value of peer tutoring for the tutee

Assignment 4
- Outline your reasons for becoming a tutor

Assignment 5
- Two Evaluations in the appendix.

- They must submit each assignment if they are to receive a certificate, which makes the whole process more credible in their minds.

- Emphasis should be put on brevity. Responses are to be short - in note form. The aim is not to add to their workload or to require essay type responses but to get the students to reflect on the process. It would also give the opportunity to check if there is an aspect of the process which a prospective tutor was unsure about.

- Here are some examples on the next page of student responses. They say it better than I can.

In paired reading you need to have patience, so as the tutee doesn't feel inadequate because they keep making mistakes.

• You need to be able to praise your tutee when he/she makes a good attempt etc.

• Concentration, you need to be able to know whats going on in the book instead of concentrating just on the words

• Commitment, your tutee needs to know you won't just leave because he/she isn't doing brilliantly.

• Interest: you have to show an interest in the book the tutee chooses and not to slag their choice, and be able to discuss their choice.

• Have to be organised, keep track of what page you finish on etc so tutee doesn't have to keep reading things again because you can't remember etc

• Talk to tutee, Not to talk to them like they're babies, and not to patronise them, make them feel comfortable and confident.

• Not to be Dominant, Give the tutee a chance to read alone without you interfering unless they get stuck, as this will make them more self-confident.

• Finish every book you start, this will give the tutee a sence of accomplishment and achievement.

Lise

Assignment 1:
The Role of the tutor in peer tutoring is
• to build up the self-confidence of the tutee.
• to help improve the tutee's reading
• to show up and let them know that you are interested in helping them
• to keep a record of their progress.
• to give them plenty of encouragement

The value of peer tutoring to the tutor is
• gives more encouragement to read more
• being more responsible for the tutee.
• gives the tutor more self-confidence.

Assignment 2:
• It helps us as tutors with our reading too.
• builds up the confidence and self-belief that we are getting somewhere with this reading.
• It gives you a sense of responsibilies

Assignment 3:
Value of peer tutoring for the tutee:
• improves the tutee's reading ability.
• being able to read aloud
• a goal that they achieved by taking an interest in improving their reading.

Sandra

What constitutes good practice in peer reading?

▲ The tutor should talk to the tutee before starting any work so both, themselves, and the tutee feel at ease.

▲ They tutor should discuss with the tutee likes and dislikes re books.

▲ The tutee should choose which book they would like to read so the book will be of interest to them.

▲ The tutor should also show interest and enthusiasm as the tutee may also feel obliged to be bored. Tutor should make the lesson interesting.

▲ When reading with the student make sure reading at the tutee's speed.

▲ If the tutee's done well tell them, praise them for doing so.

▲ If the tutee makes a mistake the tutor should interrupt positively and supply them with the correct word. The tutee should never be made struggle. a tutor should

▲ If a tutee is slow at reading ∧ be patient and make sure they never criticise the tutee.

▲ At the end of each session the tutor should ask the tutee their opinion on the lesson. And take them into consideration for in the next lesson.

the session pleasantly

S. Birch

Lorraine

Peer tutoring to the Tutee.

Outline the value of peer tutoring to the tutee.

The value of peer-tutoring to the tutee would be the satisfaction they would get out of being able to read that bit better when or whatever.

They would also be getting to know an older person and feel more confident around older people in the school. They would maybe find such as hidden interests that they might have out as to read newspapers. They able would be able to read those books. They at home where they might not have been tutoring before they came to peer tutoring to read.

They they will find out the value for themselves of reading maybe the idea the extra bit older they would. They would have alone the value not be able to read. It good as they should be able to read they would take them feeling grateful that they had done the course.

Maybe if the tutee was a bit of a messer it would help them to settle down and read books instead of commitment if it would give, then a sense of out they were able to commit themselves to something so long. It would also help them to start and finish a book instead of never finishing a book.

Step 3

Getting Up and Running

Getting Up and Running

While the Tutors are being trained there are a number of jobs to be done in order to recruit the junior students into the project.

Contacting Parents

A letter should be sent to parents explaining the programme and seeking their approval for their child's involvement.

Selecting Target Group of Tutees

You have to consider who the project will be focused on - are you clear as to which students you wish to make most impact on? It could be decided to open the project to all first year class groups - involving a cross section of students will enhance the status of the project. All first years would benefit from time out to read. That would, more than likely, be too big a number to handle, however, so decide on how many you are going to take in and create a waiting list - always good to be in a club people want to join!

Canvassing First Years

All first year classes could be told exactly what the project was. They should also be given a letter for their parents which briefly describes the project. These letters have to be returned signed and before a certain date to be in with a chance of a place on the project. A sense of urgency could be built up with talk of "limited places", "deadlines", "waiting list" etc. - first in first served…

One has to be sensitive of poor readers who would be a little frightened by the possibility of exposure in front of better readers, but it is also more acceptable because of other classes involved. It may, however, only be necessary to help the readers you are trying to target with their applications.

A selection of students ensures a good mix and a waiting list creates a good impression. You should consider including some good readers to come and read quietly on their own. This helps to create a calm atmosphere.

Matching

Tutees should have some input as to the choice of tutors - be conscious of close neighbours and of the fact that boys rarely like to be tutored by girls - although there might be plenty of exceptions to this. The tutees should, like the tutors, be shown a list of the tutors and asked to come to the organisers privately if they had a particular problem.

Once the tutees apply they should be asked some questions:

- Name

- Class

- Age

- Did you sign the application form?

- Why do you want to join peer tutoring?

- If you get a place would you like a male or female tutee?

- What kind of books do you like?

- Would you come every day?

At the first meeting these questions should read out as the students jott down the answers. Once tutees are awarded their place tutors should be introduced to their tutee. The rehearsals pay off here. Tutors take over the situation from there. Obviously, a weather eye has to be kept on them and the organisers have to intervene with some couples if things are very quiet.

Books are chosen. They then have a practice session as the tutors teach the tutees how to read as a pair. The practice session should be checked as the organiser listens to how well they synchronise their reading. Each couple should be settled in and chatted to.

With time being so short, efficiency is essential - room open…books out…straight to task. Here the training of the tutor pays off as they ensure that everything runs smoothly. One or two tutees may need to be replaced, however! They may not settle despite all your attempts and could disturb the atmosphere. The fact that a waiting list exists keeps everyone on their toes. When they have the full attention of a very interested person it usually works to settle them down. A lovely atmosphere usually develops created largely by the tutors.

Other teachers should be asked to help on a rota basis which really helps.

Time of sessions

A 15 minute morning break can prove to be ideal with everything to do with the project confined to that time.

This can work extremely well - out of the cold into a cosy atmosphere. After a while, giving up morning break will simply not be an issue. They like having somewhere to go and, once established, the positive reputation of the project spreads.

Organisation

You may need a number of rooms - 3 rooms as well as a central room for storing books and co-ordinating the programme. A proper library trolley for the books is ideal. There should be a box for each room where the books being actively read can be put at the end of each session. Books should not be borrowed except if arranged beforehand. A tutor should be put in charge of bringing the appropriate box to its room and returning it to the trolley at the end.

If a tutee is ready to pick a new book they are asked to wait until everyone is settled. Then they can go to the trolley and spend time choosing.

Record Keeping

At the end of the session the couple complete the record sheet (Appendix 10) noting the page number they finished on (important if a substitute tutor has to sit in or indeed just to get them started quickly at the beginning of the next session).

Substitute Tutors

Two or three tutors should be available to slot in if a tutor is absent. These need particularly good social skills to put different tutees at their ease. Some tutees will happily read alone if their tutor is absent.

Absent Tutees

This is more of a problem on the tutees side. Sometimes the tutor will have to hunt them down in the yard - finishing their smoke in some hideaway usually. Others simply have a poor attendance in school anyway.

Attendance sheets

A tutor is in charge of noting everyone's attendance as it is important to keep a check on it and check out any patterns. A folder for record sheets should be set up.

Reading material

Tutees should be given free choice from the selection of materials chosen with the help of their tutors. Sometimes the tutor may be allowed to choose if they are particularly bored by the books the tutee likes.

Any time the resources allow, the tutees should be asked what they want - more 'Babysitters' Club' usually chime in the girls, 'Goosebumps', 'Point Horrors' and 'Spiral Horrors', from the boys - talk about being stereotypical!

Generally, you need lots of books for plenty of choice, including plenty of quite short novels to generate a sense of progress. 'Barrington Stokes' collection is great for this. It's really surprising the amount of material they can get through.

Some popular choices:
- Roald Dahl - any and all

- Sweet Valley High (by the hundreds!)

- Judy Blume

- Goosebumps series

- Point Horrors (very popular)

- Spiral Horrors

- Barrington Stokes series

Magazines - no harm to put a limit on comics but there again it's great to see them reading. However, you need to keep an eye on the content of the magazines. Books on tape go down really well, too - if the selection is limited it means that a booking system has to be put in place at times. A small number of walkmans should be available. The taped books are a great novelty. Check out *Time for*

Reading, Quinn & Somers (2007), a JCSP production that outlines the most popular books for JCSP students.

Tutors' Meeting

Occasionally a short tutor meeting should be held to check how everything is going - they have great insight into progress, problems and hitches, aspects that need to be fine-tuned or changed.

The project generally takes a week to go on automatic pilot and then it runs very smoothly with the help of helper tutors and teachers.

Efficient use of time is very important so that there's plenty of time for reading. Consider how long you will run the project for, but it is very important, like with all of the JCSP literacy initiatives, to set a closing date and stick to it. This can be hard when things are going very well and the students are really enjoying themselves. However, the impact will be more significant if you stick to your guns and you will find it easier to engage students in another reading initiative if the memory of the last one is good.

Evaluate and Celebrate

At the end of the session a 'final meeting' for evaluation should be held. The students should be free to leave the project or stay on if you intend on having another session. At this stage the tutors really are the project.

Evaluation should now take place.

It could be fruitful to hold a joint meeting with the tutors and tutees in order to evaluate the initiative. Evaluation sheets in appendix 6 & 7 may be useful for this purpose.

Final Stages

- Celebrate the success of the project.

- Award certificates to everyone involved. JCSP certificates are available from the support service.

- Reading awards should be considered for the tutees as well as reading certificates.

- On presentation day the really dedicated tutors should be presented with certificates commending their work.

Evaluation of a Project in an Urban Community College

Evaluation of a Project in an Urban Community College

Success

So looking at the success of the programme, first of all from the tutees point of view.

One can examine the successes from objective and subjective points of view.

Tutees
Objectively

1. The research into improvements in reading ages has shown improvements of two to nine times that of the normal rate of gain in reading ages. That was echoed in many JCSP projects - check out the summary of the research findings on the JCSP website www.jcspliteracy.ie. In one school 12 students were randomly selected for testing. One student who started with a reading age of 7.2 had improved to 10.5 in accuracy in the Neale analysis of reading ability. All tested improved at least by one year and two months.

2. In the evaluation, tutees reported they were generally reading more - backed up by what parents reported. They stayed on task longer. Some tutees developed the practice of borrowing books regularly to read - which continued for years after they had left the project.

3. Students who had never read a novel before read more than ten novels in the course of the year. An achievement they were very proud of.

Subjectively

4. Their attitude to reading changed - they could now appreciate what reading for pleasure meant rather than the frustration involved in endlessly struggling over each syllable. They could now pursue their interests.

5. Their self-confidence improved visibly. The project never became negatively labelled. The profile was very good and it became sought after. They were in no way behind the door about being involved - this was largely due to the positive, committed attitude of the tutors. The younger students enjoyed the individual attention and developed good relationships with tutors. They found it to be a very enjoyable programme.

6. The insight by the tutors into teaching was appreciated. The time invested in discussing the importance of confidentiality paid off. No incidents came to our attention.

They befriended their tutees and others in the group and it created a great atmosphere in the school. Tutors who had experience of reading difficulties themselves proved to be fantastic tutors. They knew what it felt like and were excited that they could have something to contribute and they gave it life. Indeed, some of them were amazed that they were allowed to get involved - they knew the organisers knew the extent of the difficulties that they used to have.

They expressed a more positive attitude to reading and came more aware of spelling patterns.

They injected their own level of humour into the sessions. Overall, they responded to the responsibility magnificently.

Problems
- Arose with absences of tutor/tutee

- Some tutors, as the time went on, became quite frustrated with their tutee's poor attendance

- Tutors would fill in if another tutor was absent. Records were therefore important

- Some tutees were happy to sit, read alone if tutor was absent

- The quality of the partnerships varied

- It would have been great to have access to more books.

Developments

- More parental involvement could be explored

- There is paired reading in primary schools - and the schemes could be linked - through the home school community liaison co-ordinators perhaps

- Bookmarkers as prizes would be very motivating

- A paired maths programme could be explored

- Involvement of more teachers, if possible, would ease supervision.

Tutors

Well, they were simply fantastic. The structure was put in place, they supplied the heart. From the beginning they enjoyed the status of being tutor and could be heard telling fellow students or teachers of their role. They visibly strutted down to the tutor rooms. They took on their role very seriously by and large.

The fact that the majority wished to continue proved the success of the project.

Staff

Staff were hugely supportive with some volunteering for one morning break supervision.

Step 5
The Next Step

The Next Step

There are a number of ways a follow up project could be put in place involving peer tutoring, but perhaps not paired reading. Some alternatives include:

Choices:
- JCSP Paired Maths
- JCSP Spelling Challenge
- Homework
- JCSP Book Review Initiative
- JCSP Readalong

JCSP Paired Maths Initiatives

This can be organised with one tutor for a group of two or three tutees working on an aspect of their Maths programme which they all agreed they were having difficulty with. The group can be usefully centred around a blackboard.

Maths games come into their own during paired maths time.

According to Jerry McCarthy's (2005) *Paired Maths Programme Interim Evaluation Report*, the Paired Maths programme can also involve the use of graded maths resources, age-appropriate experiential maths boardgames and puzzles or teacher-designed workcards and worksheets which are based on selected mathematical themes from the prescribed textbook. The Paired Maths programme can be designed to embrace cooperative learning or can employ a model of top-down tutoring. The duration and frequency of the Paired Maths programme is usually determined by timetabling constraints, the attention spans and interest levels of the participating students, the availability of age-appropriate maths resources and games and the willingness of suitable tutors to participate in the programme. Check out the JCSP Paired Maths Initiative on the website for further details.

JCSP Spelling Challenge
Cued Spelling Strategy
- 'Look, say, cover, write and check' methods are used

- The central idea is to develop cues that will help recall the word

- Choose a limited number of words - not more than 5

- The system is more intensive than paired reading and reportedly more tiring but simple at the same time

- It provides an opportunity to get a one-to-one for an area of the curriculum which is largely neglected

- It is said to improve spelling skills 3-fold in tutor, 2-fold in tutee, as both become aware of spelling patterns

- However, a big time commitment is involved: 30 minutes, 3 times a week.

Homework

They may do this once/twice a week being helped by a tutor.

A JCSP book report and initiative

A book reports competition can also work well.

JCSP Readalong

Here students listen to books on tape. Check out the JCSP Literacy site for details, www.jcspliteracy.ie.

Appendices

Sample letter to the Principal, used as part of the set up process

Lotsofkids Second Level School,
Any Road,
Any Town,
Ireland.

Re-Proposal to set up a peer tutoring programme

Dear Pleasant Principal,
I propose to set up a peer tutoring group within the school.

Peer tutoring is where senior students in the school become learning mentors to JCSP students and others in Junior Cycle. The senior students will first be trained in the Paired Reading techniques.

Most of our present fifth years have shown keen interest in getting involved.

Proposal
Those fifth year students involved would be trained as tutors outside school time.

A small number would then be chosen to tutor individual junior students either at lunch - time or outside school.

All would be supervised in school.

They would be monitored for a six-week period and then the programme would be assessed.

Yours Sincerely,

_____

Your young dedicated teacher

Planning a Cross Age Peer Tutoring Project: 17 Questions to ask yourself

1. **Aim** - What is the aim of the project?

    _____

    _____

2. **Objectives** - What are the objectives of the project?

    _____

    _____

3. **Support** - Who will support? (Colleagues/principal, Outside agencies, Others)

    _____

    _____

4. **Funding** - For what purpose? Who will give it? (Reading materials, Cert Prize, Celebration - Gold)

    _____

    _____

5. **Selecting Tutors** - What criteria for accepting? (Fifth/Transition year, LCA)

    _____

6. **Training of Tutors** - Who? When? Where? How long?
    (Class/outside class time, 4/5 hours, Audio-visual equipment, Training video/DVD)

    _____

    _____

7. **Content of Training** - Go over the 13 steps in the manual

    _____

    _____

8. **Other Roles** - Other roles for tutors (Substitutes/library assistants, Attendance Co-ordinators, Helpers/Supervisors)

    _____

    _____

9. **Matching Tutors/Tutees** - Criteria? (Age/Relationship, Opportunities for practice)

    _____

    _____

10. **Certificates** - Who presents? When? Criteria? (Attend Training, Complete Assignments, Commitment)

    _____

    _____

11. **Reading Material** - Where do you get it? Where do you store it? Level of difficulty?
(Library/bought, Pupils bring home/in school)

_____

_____

12. **Monitoring Sessions** - By teachers, tutor or both?

_____

_____

13. **Links** - Other teachers? Other events?
(Support teachers, Partake in Gáisce Awards, Readathon, Word Millionaire/Reading Challenge)

_____

_____

14. **Assessment and Evaluation** - What tests to use? (Number of book read/interest)

_____

_____

15. **Nuts and Bolts** - Where to have, when to have and for how long?
(Break time/Lunch/After, School 15/20/30 minutes, 3,4,5 times weekly, 6, 8, 10 weeks, Clash with holiday/events?)

_____

_____

16. **Communication** - Parents, staff, Principal? (Letters/Newsletters, Notice board/meetings)

_____

_____

17. **Where to next?**
(Continue/Stop, Reduce Frequency, Start paired maths/spelling challenge, Home work/Book report, Readalong, Reading Challenge, Word Millionaire, Make a book)

_____

_____

Paired Reading - How YOU can help others enjoy READING!

Guidelines for Tutors

25 Tips for Tutors

We can all help other people to learn.

A senior student in school can help a younger pupil with their learning in all kinds of ways.

Here are some tips which should help you to help others to learn faster, understand more and remember better. Use them together with your common sense.

General Teaching Teaching

A. Before you Begin

1. "Little and Often" is most effective - don't overdo it.

2. Check materials are to hand.

3. Be sure YOU understand what you're doing - and why!

4. If you can, find a quiet place, away from distraction.

5. Are you warm/cool enough, is there some fresh air?

6. Are tables, chairs, etc the right size and height, and comfy?

B. Getting Started

7. Explain the purpose of what you're doing.

8. Be interested and enthusiastic.

9. Give simple clear instructions.

10. Make learning fun if at all possible.

11. Involve the learner actively; don't do it all FOR them.

C. Keeping Going

12. Vary your approach without losing track.

13. Talk and ask questions to be sure the learner understands.

14. Be patient.

15. Watch for signs of boredom or losing concentration.

16. Avoid criticising, "telling off" and threats.

D. Praise and Correction

17. Praise success - say "well done" or "good" regularly - as much as every 5 seconds.

18. Put any mistakes right straight away.

19. Check that the learner can do it all by themselves.

E. Extra thinking

20. Encourage the learner to say how THEY would do it.

21. Encourage learner independence, e.g. in choosing the next step.

22. Encourage learner predicting - "what would happen IF……"

F. At the End

23. Sum up at the end of the session - or ask the learner to.

24. Fill in any necessary records.

25. End the session on a positive, pleasant note.

Good Luck!

F.A.Q.'s - Frequently Asked Questions

I know nothing about paired reading, what's the idea behind it?

Suppose you're not as good at reading as you could be. What do you think is the best way to improve? It's paired reading or having someone read with you. If you're trying to read by yourself it can be very hard. You get stuck on words. You give up and never get to read the whole book. With paired reading you do not have to worry about getting stuck. There's always someone there to help you out. So you can get on with the reading and enjoy the story.

But how do you do it?

You're called the tutor and the person you're helping is the tutee. The tutor and the tutee just read out loud (not too loud!) together. It's best if the tutee keeps their finger on the words but if they think this is too babyish then you can point to it occasionally with a pencil. It should be if the tutee gets to a word they don't know then you don't turn into a teacher and ask them to try it, or sound it out or anything like that. If after 5 seconds maximum they still haven't got it you just say it for them. If they get a word wrong you say the right word for them. Get them to repeat the correct word and keep going. The important thing is to keep moving on with the reading.

Does it get boring?

Well, sometimes the tutee might want to read out loud by themselves without you reading out loud along with them. If they feel confident enough to do it by themselves for awhile they can give you a sign to stop reading out loud with them (not 'be quiet!' or a kick on the ankle). Then you stay quite and let them work away. If they get stuck or make a mistake tell them the word, they say it and you start reading with them again. They could feel confident again and give you the sign to stop reading with them.

Is there anything else to it?

There's two more things: encouragement and record keeping. But the most important thing is encouragement. If you can encourage your tutee the chances are that they will succeed. That means when they get a word right or are doing well you say something like 'well done'. Don't nag or fuss if they get a word wrong. Don't make a big deal of it. Focus on what they are doing right. It's also important to talk. Take an interest in the book. Talk about the story, the pictures, the characters. Do it before you start to read, at the end of a page or when you're finishing. Keep it interesting! You can say all the right words but the important thing is that the tutee feels good about being with you, feels you are on their side.

What's this about record keeping?

Record keeping is simple enough. There are different sheets that the teacher will give you. Just fill them in. They will let you and the teacher know how you're doing. It's also very handy. It let's you know where to start the next day. Also, if you are out sick then another tutor can take your place.

Finally, you will find that your own reading starts to improve! And remember you are probably doing one of the most important jobs in the world. Good Luck!

Paired Reading Training for Senior Tutors

Introduction

Being able to read fluently, being able to understand what we read and make few mistakes are required for successful learning and in everyday life. Like all skills, reading can be improved with practice.

Paired Reading is not meant to take the place of school teaching. Rather it provides a framework for the extra practice which thorough learning requires. Reading should be fun and we hope that you and your partner enjoy taking part.

You can use one of two techniques (or a mixture of the two) when reading with your partner:

1. Reading along with your partner

2. Listening and correcting any mistakes.

Whichever technique you use, the following recommendations are the same.

Stick to a regular routine

a. Attend regularly. Try very hard never to miss a session. Remember to have your name ticked off in the Attendance Register. Remind your partner to do the same.

b. Choose an appropriate book from the Paired Reading Room.

Suitable Place

Try to find a place that is comfortable. If you are not comfortable you will not be able to concentrate. Consequently, you will not be able to look carefully and easily at the book together. You will need to sit side by side so you can look at the book together.

Always show your interest

Knowing that you are interested will make your reading partner try his/her hardest. Receiving your undivided attention is very rewarding for them. You can make a significant difference.

Talk

Helpers should show interest in the book the reader has chosen. Talk about the pictures. Talk about what is in the book as you go through it. It is best if you talk at the end of a page or section or you might lose track of the story. Ask what might happen next. Do not do all the talking, let the reader share his/her views.

Ask questions and get involved

Reading well involves understanding as well as fluency. To see if what's just been read has been 'taken in", ask a few questions at the end. Again, praise correct answers, but don't let them feel too disappointed when they're wrong.

Paired Reading Method

Reading along with your tutee

1. The tutor and the tutee both read the words out loud together. Neither must go too fast. Tutors should make their speed as fast or as slow as the readers. The reader must read every word. If the reader struggles and then gets it right, the tutor should show approval. Do not let the reader struggle for more than five seconds.

   If the reader:
   a. struggles too long or
   b. struggles and gets it wrong then the tutor:
      1. just says the word right
      2. makes sure the reader then says it right as well.

Make sure the reader looks at the words. It can help if one of you points to the word you are both reading with a finger or a pen. It is best if the reader will do the pointing.

2. Go at the tutee's pace: read as fast or as slowly as they do and avoid the temptation to take over the lead yourself! If you can, adjust the pace of your reading to be always a fraction of a second behind your tutee's voice. Look at the example below:

    Child: 'The blue train stood behind the e......ngine."
    Student Reader: "The blue train stood behind the engine"

    This may take practice, but it will help you to read at the tutee's pace.

3. Be patient with your reading partner. Don't tell him/her off for making a mistake, just keep on reading and encourage him/her to join in.

4. As your tutee gets more confident lower your voice then drop out altogether, but come back in if he/she makes a mistake.

Reading Alone

After a while your partner may want to read to you. When this happens, you should still sit closely together and follow each word on the page. Try to follow this procedure!

Ask your partner to make a small "sign" - perhaps by knocking on a table or tapping the book - whenever he or she wants to read aloud alone. You should still follow the words on the page. When your partner wants you to join in again, he or she makes the same "sign" and you carry on reading again.

If the reading partner struggles for more than five seconds or struggles and gets it wrong,

the tutor reads the correct word aloud for them. Make sure the reader then repeats it correctly as well. You both go on reading out loud together, until the reader then feels confident enough to read alone and again asks the tutor to be quiet.

New ways of helping

It is often hard for older people to learn new ways than it is for young people! With paired reading the hardest things to get used to are:

1. When the reader gets a word wrong, the tutor just tells the reader what the word says.

2. The reader says it right. You do not make the reader struggle and struggle or "break it up" or "sound it out".

3. When the reader gets words right, the tutor should smile and say "good!" Do not nag and fuss about the words the reader gets wrong.

Praise
- good reading of hard words
- getting all the words in a sentence right
- putting wrong words right before the helper does, that is self-correction.

Listening and not reading at the same time
1. Give help when necessary. Help is needed when a tutee:
   a. is struggling with a word
   b. says a word incorrectly
   c. misses or skips a word
   d. puts in a word that's not printed.

   If your tutee cannot say a word, help him/her by giving the first part, and if that fails then give him/her the whole word. Ask him/her to repeat it before going on.

The same applies to a word which is said wrongly or is skipped or missed. If an extra word is put in, point this out.

2. Don't be a harsh critic. When you need to give help, do so in a friendly way so that the pleasure of reading is not lost. Don't go over and over a mistake.

   From time to time read part of the book to the pupil. This will encourage more expressive reading and will help the reader get through more of the material.

Notes
It is a help for everyone to keep a note each day of what has been read and how you are progressing. Therefore, do keep the record very carefully - it also serves to show your tutee how seriously you are taking the activity. The JCSP Bookmarks are also useful to keep track of the reading from day to day.

Enjoy the reading yourself and remember to take some time out of your own busy schedule for a good read.

GOOD LUCK!

Peer Tutoring Project - Senior Pupil Contract

Name of Senior Pupil: _____

Class _____

Choice of Day and Time (please see box ticked below)

a. Day _____ Time _____

b. Day _____ Time _____

c. Day _____ Time _____

d. Day _____ Time _____

e. Day _____ Time _____

Name of Reading Partner: _____

Class _____

I undertake the above commitment for the period from _____ to _____

_____
Signed (Tutor)

On arrival at the Paired Reading Room, I will record my attendance, work with my reading partner and keep the records.

Peer Tutoring Training Programme - Evaluation Sheet 1

Name: _____ Class: _____

1. Did you enjoy being trained as a tutor? Why/Why not?

   _____

   _____

2. Do you feel prepared to carry out paired reading?

   _____

   _____

3. Is there any aspect of the technique that you would like clarification on?

   _____

   _____

4. Please indicate if you missed any of the sessions.

   _____

   _____

5. If you missed a session are you willing to go to a session after school?

   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

6. Please circle the assignments you have submitted

   I   II   III   IV   V

7. Are you willing to submit late assignments in time for certification?

   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

8. Are you willing to commit yourself to meeting a tutee every day for at least fifteen minutes for a six week programme?

   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

9. If yes, do you feel ready to take on the responsibility of being a tutor and all it entails?

   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

10. Do you agree to keep all matters confidential in the programme?

    ☐ Yes   ☐ No

11. Please tick the role you would now wish to take in the peer tutoring:

    ☐ Take a tutee for paired reading

    ☐ Substitute tutor

    ☐ Library assistant

    ☐ Record Keeper

    ☐ Attendance Co-ordinator

    ☐ No role

Peer Tutoring Training Programme - Evaluation Sheet 2

Name: _____   Name of Tutee: _____

1. Is your tutee reading?

☐ More

☐ About the same

☐ Less

2. What kinds of books is your tutee reading?

☐ The same

☐ A bit different

☐ Different

3. Is your tutee understanding books?

☐ Better

☐ The same

☐ Less

4. Is your tutee's confidence in reading?

☐ Better

☐ The same

☐ Less

5. Does your tutee enjoy reading?

☐ More

☐ The same

☐ Less

6. When reading out loud does your tutee?

☐ Make more mistakes?

☐ The same amount?

☐ Less mistakes?

7. When reading out loud does your tutee?

☐ Keep a steadier flow?

☐ About the same?

☐ Stopping and starting more?

8. What is your tutee's interest in reading?

☐ More interested in true life stories

☐ About the same

☐ Less interested in true life stories

9. What would you like to do now?

☐ Keep tutoring the same as now

☐ Keep tutoring but not as often

☐ Keep tutoring with a different tutee

☐ Get tutored yourself by someone better

☐ Tutor something else like Maths or Spelling

Attendance Record

Name	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	Total
1																					
2																					
3																					
4																					
5																					
6																					
7																					
8																					
9																					
10																					
11																					
12																					
13																					
14																					
15																					
16																					
17																					
18																					
19																					
20																					

Reading Record Sheet

Reading Record Sheet   Date:

Student: Tutor:

Day	Date	Book Chosen	Time	Comments
Mon.				
Tues.				
Wed.				
Thur.				
Fri.				

Teacher's Comment:

Signed: Date:

Reading Record Sheet   Date:

Student: Tutor:

Day	Date	Book Chosen	Time	Comments
Mon.				
Tues.				
Wed.				
Thur.				
Fri.				

Teacher's Comment:

Signed: Date:

Book/Tape Review

Title of the Book/Tape: _____

Author: _____

Publisher: _____

Outline of the plot:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Why would you recommend this book\tape to another reader?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Paired Reading - JCSP Statement

Student: _____   Class: _____

At Junior Certificate level the student can:
participate in a paired reading programme and read with understanding a
range of reading material

Date Commenced: _____   Date Awarded: _____

Learning Targets

This has been demonstrated by your ability to:

1. Read at least 6 books with a tutor ☐ ☐ ☐

2. Attend all the sessions unless absent with good reason ☐ ☐ ☐

3. Read independently during the sessions ☐ ☐ ☐

4. Recount the main points of each book/reading material and
   give a flavour of what it was about ☐ ☐ ☐

5. Account for three reasons you like each book or dislike each book ☐ ☐ ☐

6. Give three reasons why you would/would not be able to recommend
   the books to somebody else ☐ ☐ ☐

7. Understand what an author is and to give the title and author of three of
   the books read ☐ ☐ ☐

8. Understand the work of an illustrator ☐ ☐ ☐

9. Tell what kind of books/reading material you most like and give two reasons ☐ ☐ ☐

10. Choose suitable reading material you would like to read ☐ ☐ ☐

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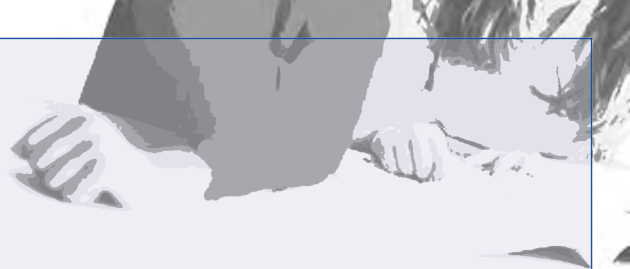
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This is a site which introduces you to paired learning and gives links to other documents which can be downloaded

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Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP)

The Junior Certificate School Programme promotes a school wide approach to literacy development. Part of this strategy are short-term interventions. One such intervention is peer tutoring. Senior cycle students are trained as reading tutors and are involved in paired reading with junior cycle students, and JCSP students are trained as reading tutors and involved in paired reading with primary school pupils. Parents are also trained as Reading Tutors.

Improvement in reading for younger students involved in paired reading is well established. The JCSP literacy research projects have found that the benefits for tutors have also been significant. This resource pack outlines the training programme for paired reading tutors as well as offering some ideas for running a successful paired reading project in your school.

There are some:
• Guidelines on training tutors
• Handouts and leaflets for the tutors
• Record keeping forms
• Planning and evaluation templates for you to copy and use.

A DVD/video 'Everyone Reads' compliments this resource pack on setting up and implementing a JCSP paired reading intervention.

Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP) Support Service

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