Birmingham EAL Conference

Reading for Comprehension with English as an Additional Language Learners in Primary Schools

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Aims

- To become aware of the needs of EAL learners when reading
- To ensure that EAL learners develop improved comprehension skills
- To develop a bank of strategies to support improvement in reading for comprehension across the curriculum
- To develop ways to encourage critical reading with EAL Learners

- Substantial differences in vocabulary size amongst children aged seven were reported by Biemiller (2003). Children in the highest quartile had an average estimated vocabulary 7100 root words. In contrast, children from the lowest quartile had an average vocabulary size of 3000 words. They acquired only one word per day compared to the three words per day acquired by children in the top quartile. Biemiller 2003

Vocabulary development

- **Breadth** of vocabulary – the number of words that have some level of meaning for that person

- **Depth** of vocabulary – the richness of knowledge that a person has for the words that they know.

One approach to the teaching of vocabulary – the work of Isabel Beck et al

Two aspects:

- Introduction to vocabulary

- Multiple encounters to promote rich and sustained knowledge

"Reading an unfamiliar word is insufficient - we need multiple encounters with unfamiliar words in order to "learn" a new word" (de Beck)

- direct teaching of vocabulary

- arranging frequent encounters with new words (at least six exposures to new word)

- encouraging pupils' **deep and active processing** of words and meanings in a range of contexts for effective vocabulary development and improved reading comprehension

EAL Learners

New to English

Advanced bilingual learners

- Consolidating English
- Developing English
- Emerging English
- Beginning English
- Beginning (non literate)

What does the word mean?

Plants are living things such

as; trees
     Shrubs
     flowers
     grasses

Plants need water
and sunshine.

Plant

Sentences:

1. We have got plants in the garden.
2. The plant is in the plant pot.
3. The plant is green.

Pictures:

What does the word mean?

Bean is a name used
for large plant seeds.

Edible seeds include:
* Baked Beans
* Kidney Beans
* Bean Sprouts
* Runner Beans
* Green Beans

Bean

Sentences:

1. I like beans on toast.
2. The Jelly beans are tasty.
3. I like the smell of coffee beans.

What does the w...

A Pot is a container used
for many things.

Pots can be made from:
* Metal Pots
* Glass Pots
* Wooden Pots
* Clay Pots

Pictures:

Pot

Sentences:

1. I planted a seed in the plant pot
2. The man made a pot from clay.
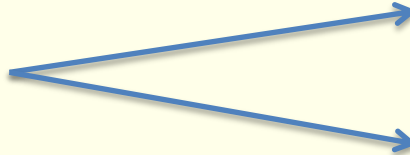3. The yoghurt pot is small.

Therese
O'Sullivan

Increasing Vocabulary

The big picture

Consolidating English
Developing English
Emerging English
Beginning English
Beginning (non literate)

5000 high frequency words → Consolidating English

Academic Word List → Developing English / Emerging English

2000 high frequency words → Emerging English

1000 high frequency words → Emerging English
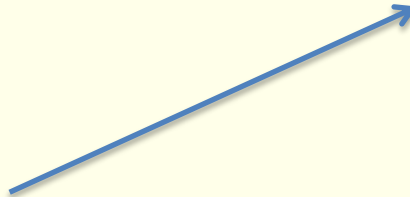
300 high frequency words → Beginning (non literate)

©Manny Vazquez
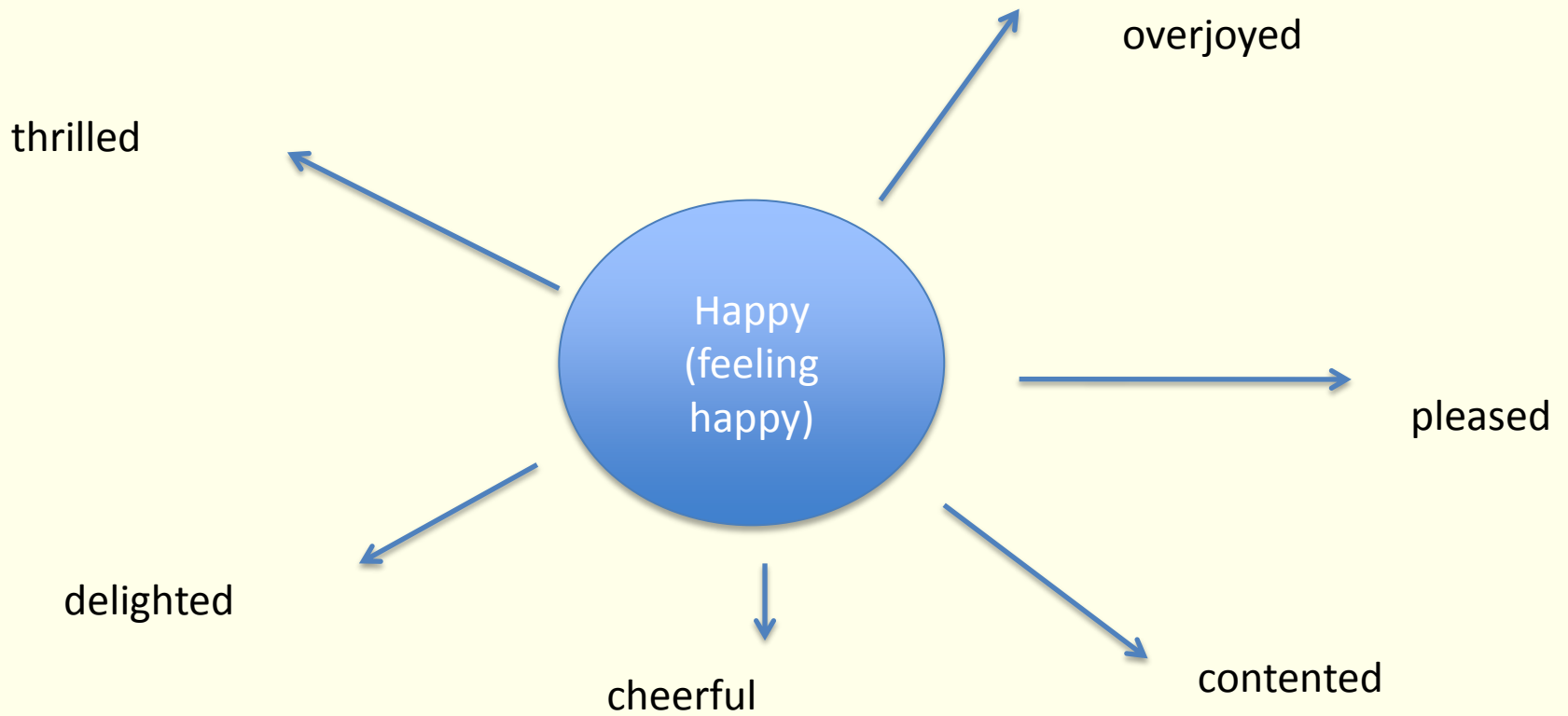
Need development of metaphorical/figurative/idiomatic language

- Synonyms
- Collocations
- Phrasal verbs
- Idiom
- clines

Synonyms

overjoyed

thrilled

Happy
(feeling
happy)

pleased

delighted

cheerful

contented

Collocations

bang on time
dead on time
early 12th century
free time
from dawn till dusk
great deal of time
late 20th century
make time for
next few days
past few weeks
right on time
run out of time

annual turnover
bear in mind
break off negotiations
cease trading
chair a meeting
close a deal
close a meeting
come to the point
dismiss an offer
draw a conclusion
draw your attention to
launch a new product

(www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/collocations-lists.htm)

Phrasal Verbs – add informality to writing

Phrasal verbs combine with adverbs or prepositions to make a completely new meaning

Look forward to (anticipate – not look in front)

Turn up (to arrive at – not to turn up trousers)

Put up with (tolerate)

Gone off (meat)

Very good explanation in "Guided Writing for EAL Learners"

Use of Phrasal Verbs
Phrasal verbs combine with adverbs or prepositions to make a completely new meaning. For example:

Look forward to (anticipate)

Turn up (arrive)

Put up with (tolerate)

Gone off (become rotten)

Split up (separated)

Giving way (collapsing)

Caving in (collapsing)

Put up with (tolerate)

Dropped off (went to sleep)

Give up (finally agree)

Rustle up (prepare quickly)

Hang on (wait)

Blow up (explode, become angry)

Bring up (mention)

Break off (stop talking, stop a relationship)

Pick up (collect)

Look out for (be on guard against, pay attention)

Turn out (arrive)

Pick on (criticise)

Turn up (increase)

Commonly Used Idiom

A hot potato

Speak of an issue which many people are talking about and which is usually disputed

A penny for your thoughts

A way of asking what someone is thinking

Actions speak louder than words

People's intentions can be judged better by what they do than what they say.

Add insult to injury

To further a loss with mockery or indignity; to worsen an unfavorable situation.

An arm and a leg

Very expensive or costly. A large amount of money.

At the drop of a hat

Meaning: without any hesitation; instantly.

Back to the drawing board

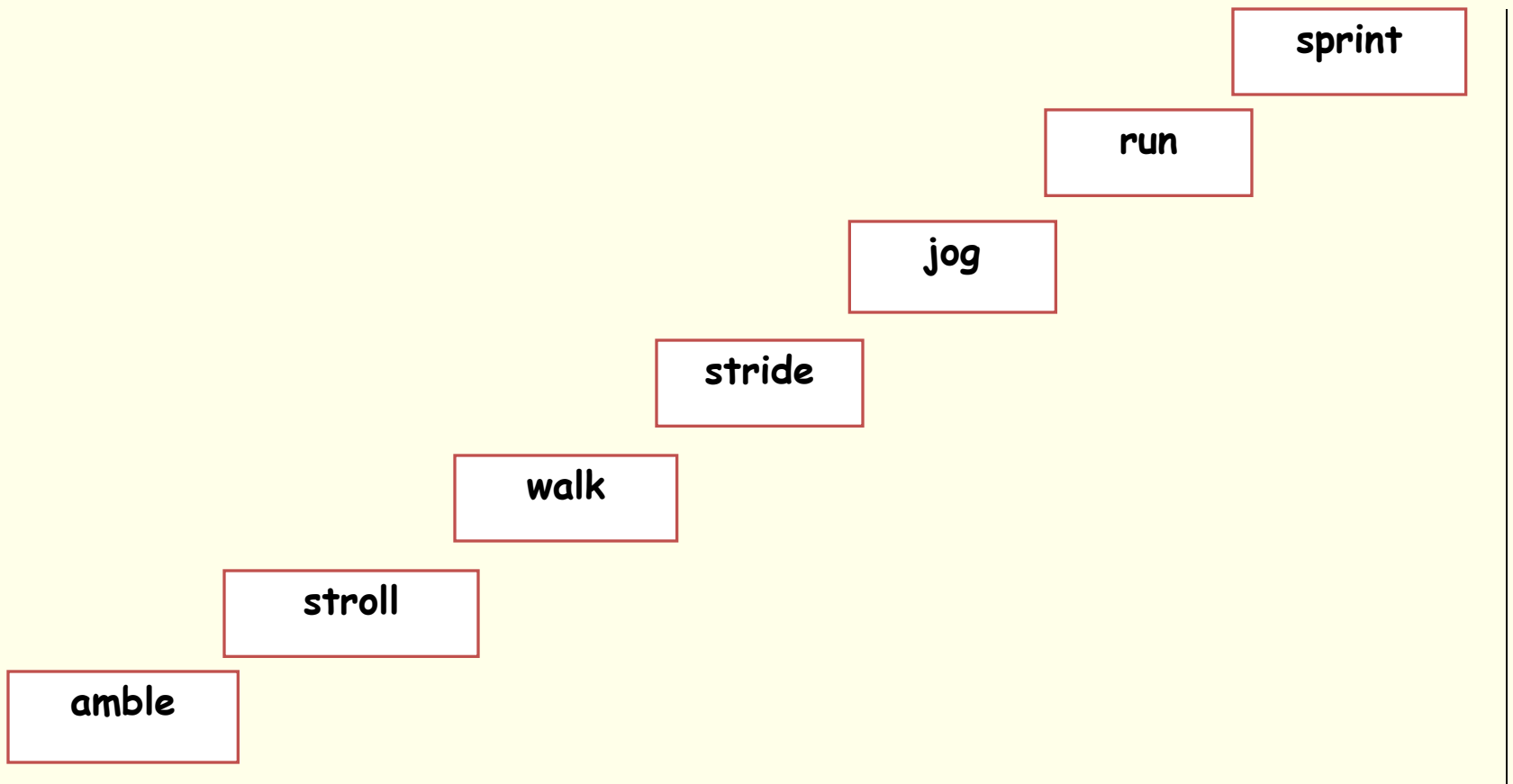When an attempt fails and it's time to start all over.

Ball is in your court

It is up to you to make the next decision or step
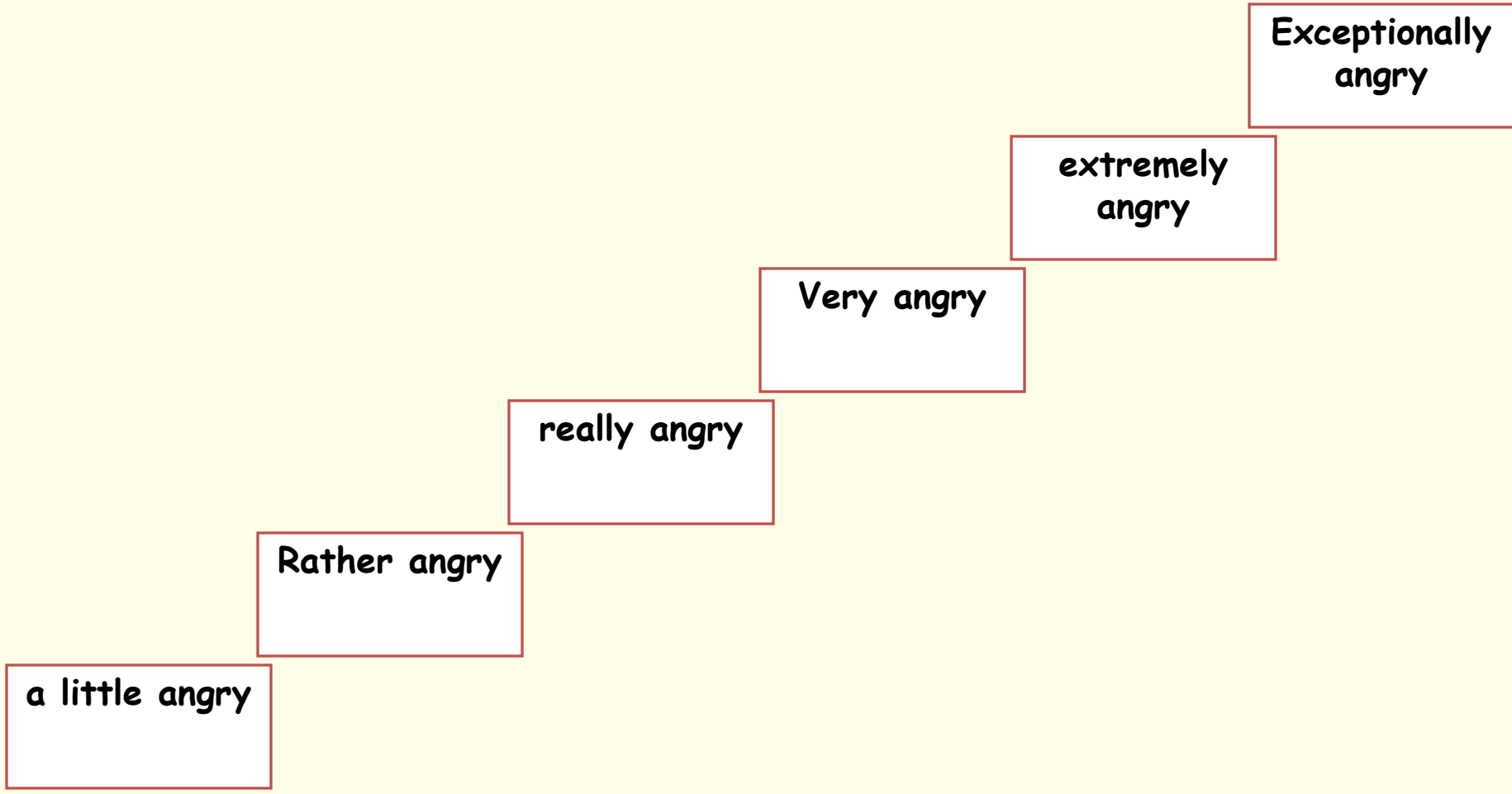
Barking up the wrong tree

Looking in the wrong place. Accusing the wrong person

www.smartwords.org

Clines

sprint

run

jog

stride

walk

stroll

amble

Clines

Exceptionally angry

extremely angry

Very angry

really angry

Rather angry

a little angry

Children will understand what they read if they know the words

What do you know when you know a word?

Receptive Knowledge

- Aural word recognition (spoken form)
- Orthographic word recognition (written)
- Recognising parts (morphology)
- Particular meaning
- Understanding of concept
- Knowing related words
- Identification of correct word use
- Recognition of typical collocations

Productive Knowledge

- Able to say the word (correct pronunciation)
- Able to write the word (with correct spelling)
- Derivation of word from correct word parts
- Production of target word to express meaning
- Production of word in different contexts
- Synonyms
- Commonly occurring words (with target)
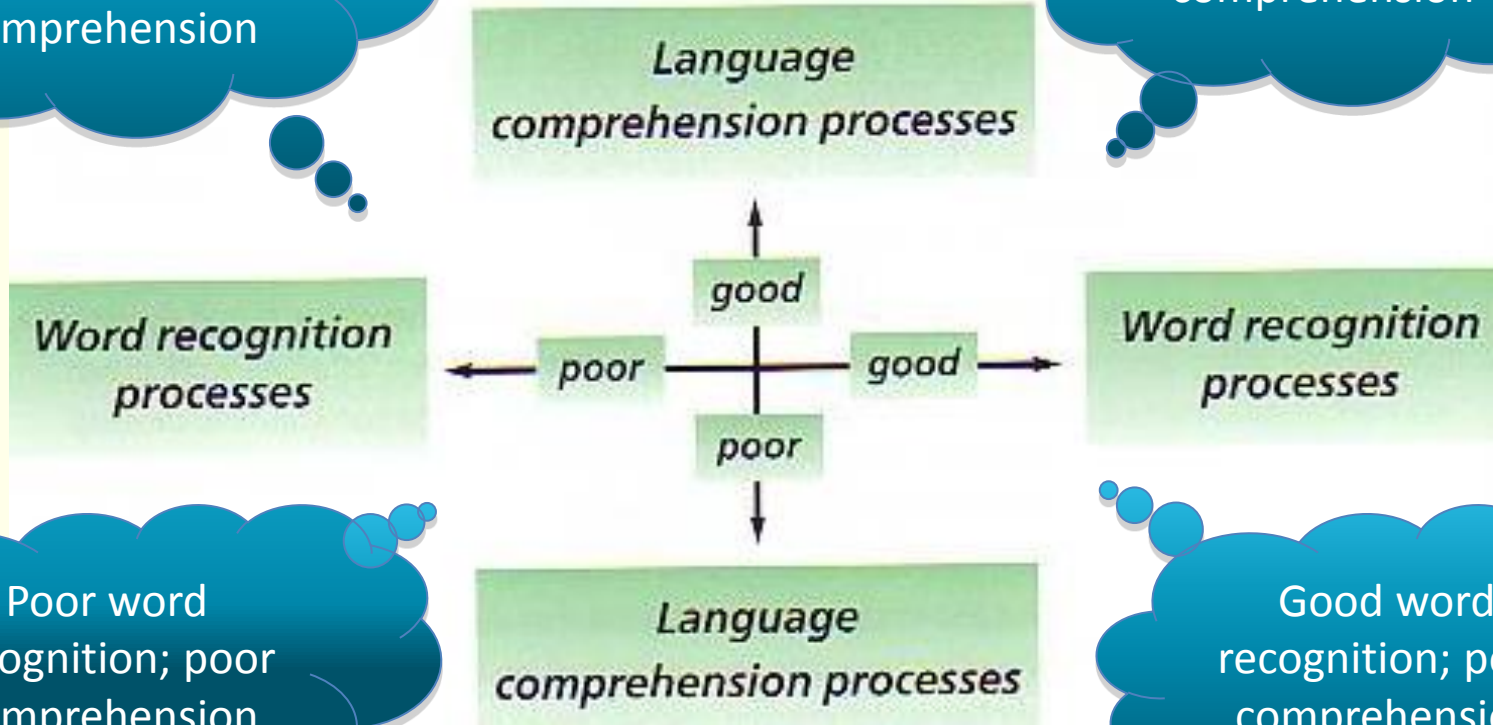- Able to decide whether to use it

"The ability to read is fundamental to learning, and the earlier the child acquires this skill, the greater will be his or her capacity for learning."

Pauline Gibbons 1991

The simple view of reading

Poor word recognition; good comprehension

Good word recognition; good comprehension

Poor word recognition; poor comprehension

Good word recognition; poor comprehension

Language comprehension processes

Word recognition processes

good

poor

good

poor

Word recognition processes

Language comprehension processes

Teaching Reading Comprehension is not...

- Reading the text
- Talking to the children about the text while they listen
- Getting them to sit with a pen or a pencil to answer the comprehension questions
- Going over more and more test papers

Read the following text and answer the questions in full sentences

A krinklejup was parling a tristlebin. A barjam stipped. The barjam grupped 'Minto' to the krinklejup. The krinklejup zisked zoelly.

What was the krinkejup doing?

What stipped?

What did the barjam grup?

How did the krinklejp zisk?

Pauline Gibbons 1991

Y4 child (fluent reader)

"I could work out the answers, but it's not really reading because I just went from here (the questions) to here (the text) –

It didn't go through my head."

What does a fluent reader do?

- Reading is an active process that involves reasoning
- There is interaction between the text and the reader
- Reader uses semantic, syntactic and graphophonic cues ('cueing systems')

Goodman 1967

The semantic system

- The reader needs to share the semantic system of the writer in order to fully understand

- Familiarity with text type is needed – newspaper, narrative …

- The semantic information comes in the content words – nouns, verbs adjectives. The reader needs to know the 'field.' e.g. need to know the meaning of words like rear axel, camshaft, track rod end, re-bore, bleed, charge, top up, drive home, metallic, bald, aerodynamic… to understand a text about motor mechanics.

The syntactic system

- Knowing how the language system works both at sentence level and text level

- At sentence level:"

  – *Mary is a good shringer. She _____every day*.

- Text level: linking sentences and ideas through the use of pronouns, connectives, auxiliary verbs, articles, word endings.

- Word Order is also part of the syntactic system
e.g. the big, black, fierce dog – not the black, fierce, big dog.

The graphophonic system

- The Representation of spoken language through written symbols.
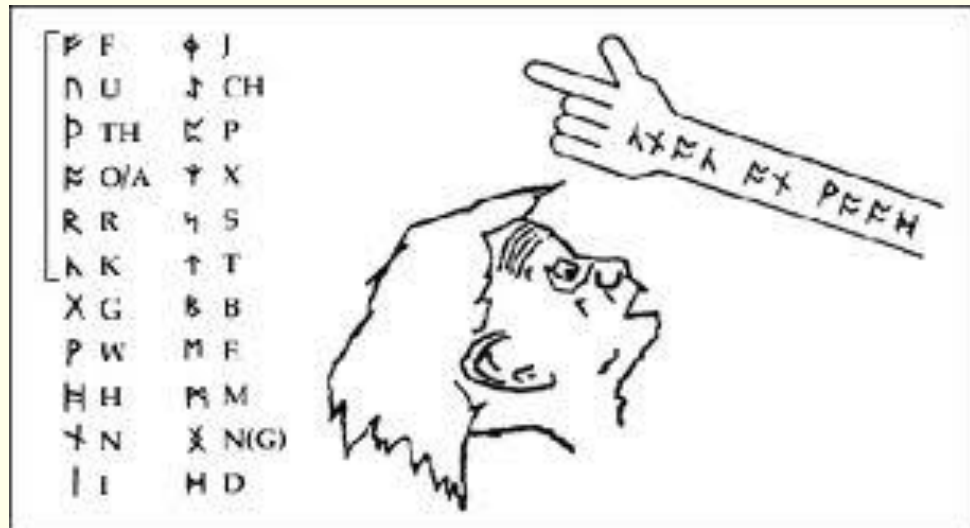
EAL Learners

- EAL learners are "usually developing readers with gaps in their cultural and linguistic knowledge of English."

- A balanced reading program will help children to use all three cueing systems.

- Pauline Gibbons

Where does the process break down for EAL Learners?

Activity

Match the skills with the difficulties that may be faced by EAL learners

Support from the First Language

- Where a child is literate in a first language that literacy should be used

- Must find out if the child can read in another language

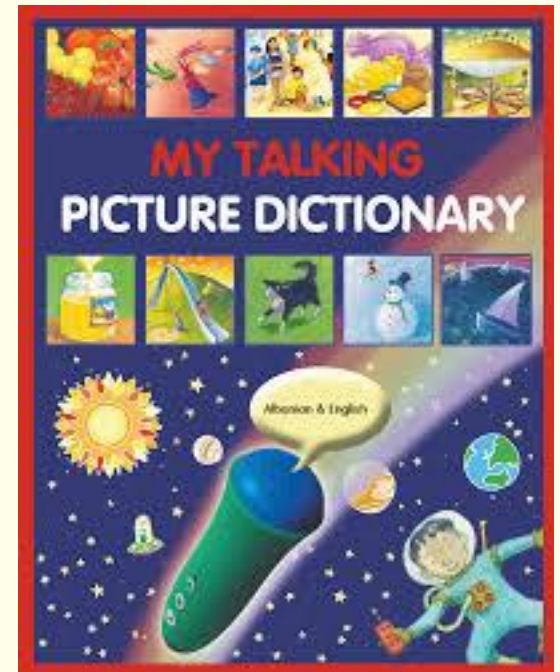- Support from apps that provide spoken first language e.g. Mantra Lingua

Mantra Lingua

Kitaboo Club

Home School Communications from Rochdale
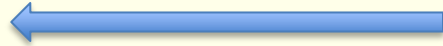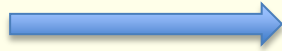
Developing Fluency

- Read the same story many times
- Taped reading
- Shadow reading

Reading for Inference and Deduction

Reading aloud

Drama Techniques

Freeze framing
Improvisation
Hot seating
Mime
Thought tracking

Walking through the text

Illustrations

probing questions

Useful Handouts for Further Reading

- Reading for Inference and Deduction

- Before, During and After Reading

- DARTS (Direct Activities Related to Texts)

The Reading Cycle

- Activities Before Reading

- During Reading

- After Reading

Pre- reading activities

Predict from title

Predict from title page

Order pictures (from two to any number) and make up a story

Picture
Activity

The Importance of Talk

- Talk – of the right quality – promotes the development of children's reasoning, conceptual understanding and reading comprehension.

- Many children do not get a rich enough experience of spoken language outside school for this development to be assured.

- Children do not just need experience of speaking and listening in school, they need to be expressly taught the relevant functional skills, how to use talk to construct arguments, jointly solve problems and comprehend texts

Neil Mercer

Collaborative Talk

- Encourages speaking and listening
- Encourages exploratory talk
- Supports access to the curriculum
- Pupils feel more confident
- Language is used for a specific purpose
- Pupils build on each other's thinking

The lightning spark of thought generated in the solitary mind awakens its likeness in another mind.

Thomas Carlyle

Collaborative Learning - Research

The impact of collaborative approaches on learning is consistently positive ... Approaches which promote talk and interaction between learners tend to result in the best gains.

Education Endowment Foundation

Aim High with EAL Learners

- EAL learners need high challenge, high support lessons
- Challenge them with critical reading

What is critical reading?

- Critical reading involves the analysis of text - in terms of what to look for and how to think about what you find (Influence)

- It encourages us not only to examine what a text says but also how the text portrays the subject matter

- Critical reading cannot be simply taught; it has to be nurtured through dialogue with text and with others around the text, through discursive and exploratory talk

Poems for Thinking by

➢ Listen to and then read the poem by Miroslav Holub 'The Door'

▪ THINK - *What would you like to explore further in this poem?*

▪ PAIR - *What key questions would you set around this poem?*

▪ SHARE - *Suggest one* ultimate question *that could be used for critically analysing the poem?*

Miroslav Holub

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What are the goals of critical reading?
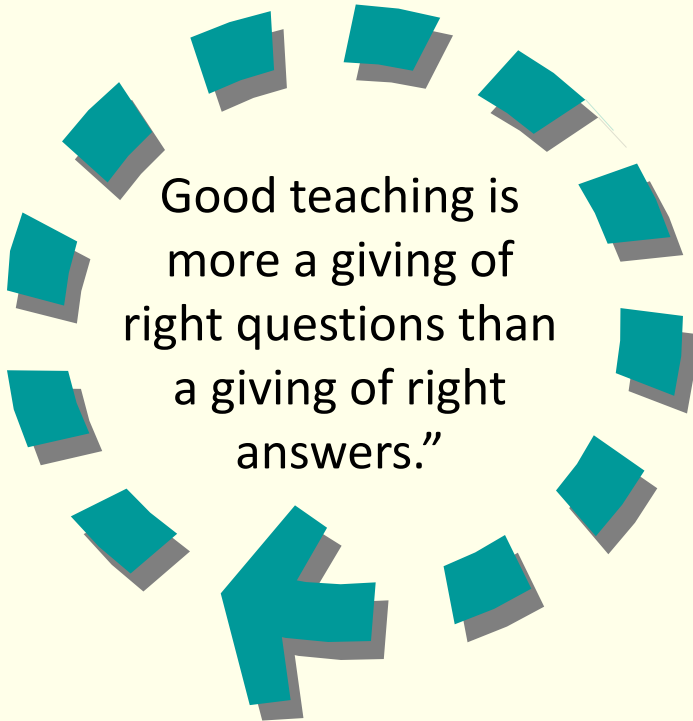
To recognise purpose of text

- ✓ Basis for choices
- ✓ Content
- ✓ Language

To understand tone and persuasive elements of text

- ✓ Classifying the nature of language choices

To recognise Bias

- ✓ Classifying nature of patterns of choice / of content and language

Good teaching is more a giving of right questions than a giving of right answers."

Josef Albers

With thanks to Rena Saggu

The chicken and the egg!
"Learning to read and Reading to learn."

"While increased language competence enhances reading ability, reading certainly increases language competence."

Gibbons, 2002

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