

Literacy Circles

Developing Reciprocal Reading

Highland Literacy



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www.highlandliteracy.com



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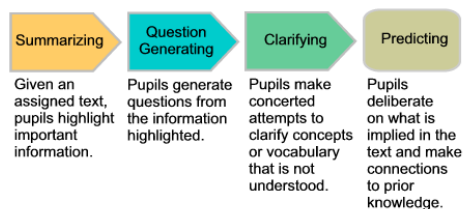
What is Reciprocal Reading?

Reciprocal reading is a well-researched method used to develop learners' reading skills, promote higher order thinking, develop listening and talking, and ensure access to the curriculum for all learners. Studies have also demonstrated that learners transfer their learning into other contexts. Reciprocal reading is just one in a number of strategies which can be used when learners are reading and analysing texts. Its aims are to:

- ♦ improve reading comprehension through the use of four reading strategies: **predicting, questioning, clarifying and summarising**
- ♦ scaffold the four strategies by modelling, guiding and applying the strategies while reading
- ♦ enable pupils to reflect on their reading and develop higher order thinking skills
- ♦ use the social nature of learning to improve reading comprehension
- ♦ be one strategy in promoting literacy across learning in all sectors

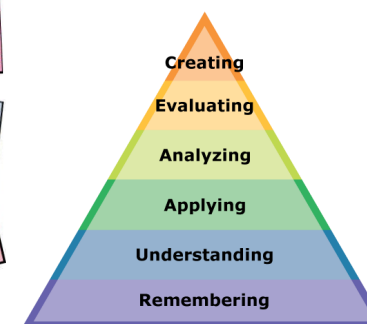
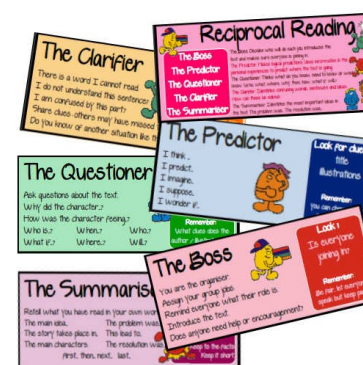
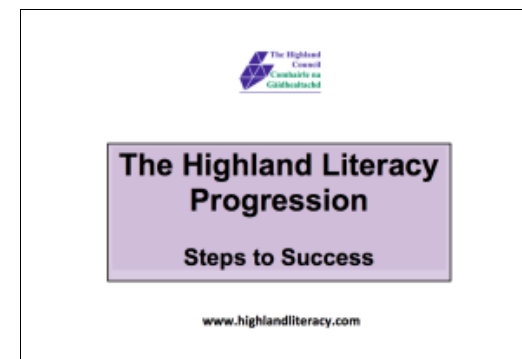
[Education Scotland: Reciprocal Reading guidance](#)

Reciprocal Teaching Strategy



The reciprocal reading approach has commonly been developed under the umbrella of Literature Circles [[Aberdeen Literature Circles](#) and [Orkney Literature Circles](#)].

The following resources are available to support the delivery of reading through a Literacy Circle approach:





3) Used in conjunction with your current reading structure

Recommended for middle/upper primary

Learners will continue to work within the reading structure that you have set up in your classroom. On occasions - for example when studying non-fiction texts, poetry or plays - you may wish to use a Literacy Circle approach in the classroom.

Providing learners with various topics, learners will then opt in to the topic that most interests them. Groups can be established based on this principle. It is important that learners are able to access the chosen text, either independently or with peer or adult support. Alternatively, practitioners may wish to organise groups based on where they feel learners will be exposed to a broad range of opinions and ideas.

The layout of a Literacy Circle session delivered using this structure may use the following format:

Introduction 5—10 minutes	Share learning intentions, success criteria and reflect on roles and skills
Reading 15—20 minutes	Individual/ paired/ group reading on a section of the text
Analysis 15—20 minutes	Analysis of the text - including questioning
Plenary 5—10 minutes	Summarise learning and set targets for the next session

When completing a text, providing opportunities for learners to showcase their learning by presenting—with the appropriate visual aids—to the rest of the class will enhance their listening and talking skills. It is important that these skills are also modelled and clear learning intentions and success criteria are agreed at the beginning.



What are Literacy Circles?

Literature Circles is an approach which provides opportunities for challenge and enjoyment, personalisation and choice, relevance and coherence.

[Education Scotland - Principles for Curriculum Design](#)

To encompass the wider definition of a text [[Education Scotland: Literacy and English Principles and Practice Paper](#)], we have created a model known, for the purpose of this document, as Literacy Circles. Through using this structure, learners will develop the three Literacy and English Significant Aspects of Learning: Listening and Talking, Reading and Writing.

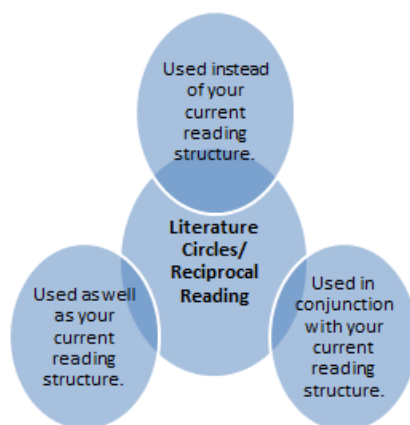
A Literacy Circle approach requires developing roles and higher order thinking skills with children.

Roles may include . . .	Thinking Skills may include . . .
<ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ The Leader♦ The Predictor♦ The Clarifier♦ The Summariser♦ The Questioner <p>Definitions of each of these roles can be found within the: Education Scotland - Reciprocal Reading Guidelines</p> <p>Some suggested printable role cards can be found on: Literacy Solutions Website – Role Cards Fresher Schools - Reciprocal Reading</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ Remembering♦ Understanding♦ Applying♦ Analysing♦ Evaluating♦ Creating <p>Definitions for each of these skills can be found within: Education Scotland: Building the Curriculum 4 pg. 8</p>

Structuring Literacy Circles

The methodology behind forming reading groups, as identified in the original Highland Literacy Project guidelines, will continue to feature in many Highland classrooms.

Literature Circles may take one of three approaches in your classroom:



1) Used instead of your current reading structure

This will require you to restructure your 'reading week'.

2) Used as well as your current structure

You will continue to use the structure you are familiar with, but add an additional Literacy Circle Session once a week.

3) Used in conjunction with your current reading structure

You may decide to teach the suggested strategies using a whole-class approach, or with particular individuals/groups.

SCENARIO C — P4 - 7

You are a P4-7 class teacher. You have six children that require support who you have placed in one group. They are given a choice of text from three texts at their reading ability. The other learners have a choice of three texts and are organised in mixed ability groupings. Leading the group who require support, the other three groups work independently using the Literacy Circle structure.

SCENARIO D — S2

You have a class of S2 pupils and you want your learners to engage with a range of research evidence under a given topic. Giving learners free choice of text, group are then established. Learners work in role to analyse texts, developing higher order skills.

The layout of a Literacy Circle session delivered using this structure may use the following format:

Introduction 5—10 minutes	Share learning intentions, success criteria and reflect on roles and skills
Reading 15—20 minutes	Individual/ paired/ group reading on a section of the text
Analysis 15—20 minutes	Analysis of the text - including questioning
Plenary 5—10 minutes	Summarise learning and set targets for the next session

When developing this degree of independence, use your professional judgement as to the amount of text you're expecting learners to read. You may set this yourself, or allow learners to make reasonable Judgements, being given a certain amount of lessons to complete.

Providing opportunities for groups to present to the class when they have finished a text will strengthen listening and talking skills.



2) Used as well as your current structure

Recommended for primary/secondary

Learners will continue to work within the reading structure that you have set up in your classroom. In addition to this, learners will have a dedicated session to Literacy Circles each week.

It is presumed that prior to introducing Literacy Circles you will have spent some time [4—6 lessons] analysing texts as a whole class whilst modelling the roles to learners, allowing them to develop these in small groups alongside higher order thinking skills.

Group formation will depend on the dynamics of the group of learners you are working with. For that reason, it is down to your professional judgement as to the way groups are structured, and choice is embedded. Four suggested scenarios are as follows:

Scenario A — P1

You are a P1 class teacher. Allowing learners free choice from a collection of picture texts, groups are established. Within groups, pairs are created to allow learners to describe what is happening i.e. tell the story. Learners then share their opinions with a group of four. You monitor discussions and facilitate with questions.

Scenario B — P2/3

You are a P2/3 class teacher that has a group of learners who would benefit from challenging comprehension through the autonomy of a Literacy Circle. You stream your groups academically, allowing learners the choice of text [from given options]. You allow your extension group to progress independently [with appropriate monitoring]. The other learners in the class work as two groups, strengthening the roles and higher order skills over a series of lessons which you lead.



Group Formation

It is recommended that Literacy Circles are formed in one of two ways:

1. Ability grouping, similar to HLP, chosen by the teacher.

In this scenario you would be hoping to provide learners with an element of choice of text wherever possible.

E.g. A choice of three different texts voted on by the group

2) Mixed-ability grouping, organised by choice of text

In this scenario learners will be given a choice of texts to 'opt-in' to. Literacy Circles are then structured based on the shared interest of the text. To ensure progression in reading fluency, this is not recommended when using Literacy Circles instead of your current structure.

Developing Thinking

The Literacy Circle approach provides children with an autonomous structure that promotes the development of Thinking Skills.

When introducing the roles and higher order thinking skills, learners will benefit from whole-class introduction to these skills and roles. The teacher can use a format, similar to a [Reading for Information](#) or [Writer's Craft](#) lesson, which allows learners to explore a text's literary techniques and use questioning to promote higher order thinking.

Professional learning resources within the Literacy Toolkit can introduce you to [Developing Thinking Skills](#) and [Reading Between The Lines](#).

1) Used instead of your current reading structure

Recommended for middle/upper primary

Using ability grouping, similar to that of HLP, learners will be organised into a maximum of three groups.

Depending on the dynamics of your class, you may feel it appropriate to have four groups. This will mean being creative with your support i.e. seeing two groups on one session.

Learners who require support or challenge should continue to receive an individual learning pathway alongside the Literacy Circle model, whilst taking part in the textual analysis and discussion within the Literacy Circle closest to their ability.

The teacher should aim to provide a choice of three different texts. It is important that learners are given a balance of fiction, non-fiction and media texts to explore that are targeted at the appropriate level.

The wider definition of a text can be found in:

[Education Scotland: Literacy and English Principles and Practice Paper](#)

This model of a Literacy Circle follows a five day approach, providing opportunities for teachers to interact with learners through whole class, group and individual lessons.

Any additional support, in the form of a PSA, should be used to support and challenge individuals or targeted groups. Literacy Circles aim to develop independence in learners.

It is presumed that prior to forming your Literacy Circles you will have spent some time [2—3 weeks] introducing the roles and thinking skills through whole-class texts. Individual Reading for Enjoyment should continue to feature in addition to Literacy Circles.

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Day 1 1 hour	WHOLE CLASS LESSON Using a chosen text the teacher should model the different thinking skills and roles, promoting questioning, higher order thinking and analysis of language techniques used by the author of the text.		
Day 2 1 hour	Learners reading independently a given section of the text—using designated roles.	Learners to complete a task related to the text— independent/ pair/ group.	Class Teacher teaches a guided reading session— comprehension and language techniques.
Day 3 1 hour	Class Teacher teaches a guided reading session— comprehension and language techniques.	Learners reading independently a given section of the text—using designated roles.	Learners to complete a task related to the text— independent/ pair/ group.
Day 4 1 hour	Learners to complete a task related to the text— independent/ pair/ group.	Class Teacher teaches a guided reading session— comprehension and language techniques.	Learners reading independently a given section of the text—using designated roles.
Day 5 1 hour	Teacher - Individual learning conferences and assessment of reading. Learners - 3 x 20 minute sessions below.		
	Finding new vocabulary and meanings with a peer.	Independent ly reading a text of the learner's choice.	Peer spelling games with new vocabulary from text.