



Advice for FRED Reading Coaches

Before you meet your learner

- Read the introduction to Turning Pages and always read the relevant coaching pages before you meet your learner.
- Make sure you can say the sounds of the letters confidently and correctly yourself.

The first meeting – things to find out

- Should your learner be wearing glasses to read? Would s/he benefit from using a coloured overlay? If in doubt, try it.
- Does your learner have a hearing impairment? It may affect which side s/he prefers you to sit.
- What are the learner's motivations for wishing to improve his/her reading?
- Ask about hobbies, interests and the type of texts your learner would like to read.

Every Session

- Always turn up on time to meet your learner.
- Use the first few minutes of each session finding out how your learner is feeling, and then recap on the last session.
- Ask questions. Actively listen to the answers. Stop talking so that your learner can speak.
- Allow the learner to have ownership of his/her copy of Turning Pages.
- Encourage independence in your learner. This means don't do things for your learners that they are capable of doing for themselves such as opening the book at the right page.
- Try to sit at right angles to your learner so that you have a clear view of the pages without invading personal space.
- Make sure you have privacy and safety.
- Recognise overload in your learner and encourage him/her to recognise it too. If your learner is struggling, sit back and have a chat for a couple of minutes or change activity.

Remember

- Some sounds will be impossible for your learner to get to grips with if English is not the first language or if s/he has a strong regional accent.
- Your learner will have 'good days' and 'bad days'.
- Realise that every learner is different.
- Don't get despondent if you think your learner is making slow progress. Progress is relative.
- Aim for no more than 30 - 45 minutes each session. Refrain from giving 'homework' especially during the early sessions. Two sessions a week is the minimum to aim for.
- It is OK to go back and revisit completed pages if your learner needs to.
- A piece of paper or a ruler should be used to avoid visual overload.
- Check that your learner understands the words s/he is reading. If a word is new, put it in a sentence to show how it is used. Find a picture to illustrate if appropriate.
- It is sometimes useful to check that your learner can hear the new sounds by reading them out and asking him/her to tick the word they hear.
- Take a break from looking at the page by making up and speaking sentences using the words on the page.
- Use a pencil to underline difficult words then once they have been learned the lines can be rubbed out.
- The book is a working tool so use colour to highlight or write notes if it helps. Allow your learner to customise it if s/he wishes.

Always

- Encourage at all times but make sure your feedback is specific and appropriate. Your learner will soon get tired of you telling him/her that everything is always 'fantastic!'
- Encourage your learner to apply his/her new reading skills as soon as they feel confident.
- Try to finish each session on a positive note. It is a good idea to end on something that your learner finds easy if the session has been hard going.
- Always contact the coach coordinator if you are not sure of anything.
- Enjoy your coaching and have fun with it.
- Remember you are not a counsellor. Do not encourage your learner to confide in you and know where to refer your learner for help if s/he needs it.