

Reading Recovery: Direct Instruction

Staffordshire County Council's Recovery Plan has been devised in the context of COVID-19. This plan incorporates a number of projects across SCC services including the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) to support educational settings in the aftermath of emergency restrictions. The EPS has devised materials in a number of areas with the aim of providing educational settings with support that can be accessed immediately in the new academic year, without the need to refer into the service directly.

This leaflet aims to provide parents and teaching staff information on how to introduce a direct instruction teaching approach to accelerate reading progress.

What is Direct Instruction?

'Direct Instruction is a model for teaching that emphasizes well-developed and carefully planned lessons designed around small learning increments and clearly defined and prescribed teaching tasks. It is based on the theory that clear instruction and eliminating misinterpretations can greatly improve and accelerate learning' (NIFDI).

In its purest form, Direct Instruction is a series of scripted lessons that have been carefully researched and devised.

In schools, one of the aspects of Direct Instruction that can be used easily and simply is the teaching method that is shown to be the most effective, especially with learners with special educational needs. This direct instruction teaching method, is a simple three-part sequence known as MODEL – LEAD – TEST.

Model – Lead - Test

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|--------------|---|---|
| MODEL | - | Teacher demonstrates skill eg “my turn” or “I say” |
| LEAD | - | Teacher guides with pupil eg “together” or “we say” |
| TEST | - | Teacher requires pupil to perform skill independently eg “your turn” or “you say” |

What can you use Direct Instruction for?

In schools, the direct instruction teaching method of Model-Lead-Test can be used to help teach many different concepts and to reinforce learning. However, for teaching reading to children with special educational needs, it is particularly effective in teaching the following:

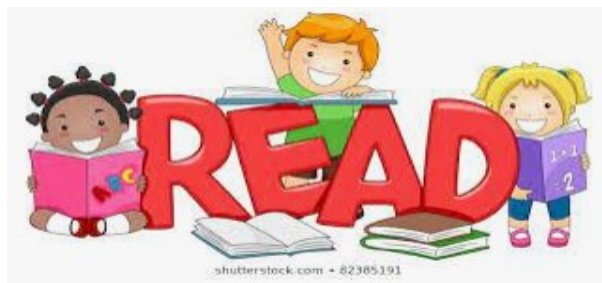
- Phonological skills i.e. hearing sounds in words - putting sounds together to make words and segmenting words into individual sounds.
- Reading common sight words
- Blending individual sounds together to make words
- Blending letter combinations together to make words

There are videos available from the Educational Psychology Service that show how to use direct instruction to teach these skills and there is a training package available that you could share with your teaching staff. The EPS also has the majority of Direct Instruction Curriculum Materials in Reading, Spelling, Language and Mathematics, which includes the clearly scripted lessons referenced earlier.

Please contact your link Educational Psychologist for more details.

Further reading

There is more information available on the NIFDI website (www.nifdi.org) and Shephard Barbash's book 'Clear Teaching' is available free online (<https://www.nifdi.org/resources/free-downloads/suggested-reading/clear-teaching-by-shepard-barbash/909-clear-teaching-by-shepard-barbash/file.html>).



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