



Department for Curriculum Management

LETTER CIRCULAR

Information X **Date:** 08 May 2006
Action Required X **Ref:** DCM 40/ 2005
To: All State Primary Schools **Tel:** 21248691
Fax: 21248691
From: Bernadette Gerada,
Education Officer,
Teachers' Documentation Centre **E-mail:** bernadette.gerada@gov.mt

Subject: ENGLISH READING SCHEMES

The Curriculum Department would like to thank you for taking part in the review for the selection of Readers for the Primary Sector.

Hereunder is a list of reading schemes which, along with the attached guidelines, should help you choose the most suitable scheme for your school. Preparations are underway to provide funds for the purchase of books during the next scholastic year.

- OXFORD READING TREE (including TREETOPS) (OUP)
- OXFORD LITERACY WEB (OUP)
- LITERACY LINKS PLUS (Kingscourt/McGraw-Hill)
- LITERACY LAND including:
STORY STREET, STREET WISE, GENRE RANGE, INFO TRAIL (Pearson Education)
- STORYWORLDS (Heinemann)
- LIGHTHOUSE (Ginn)
- PM PLUS (Nelson)
- RIGBY STAR QUEST ((Rigby)
- RIGBY STAR (Rigby)
- RIGBY NAVIGATOR (Rigby)

The above schemes, which are not listed in any order of preference, are all suitable for teaching the different reading strategies that children need to acquire in order to become independent readers.

The following two Reading Schemes are to be particularly noted, in that they are Special Needs Reading Schemes:

- RAINBOW READING (Kingscourt/McGraw-Hill)
- WILDCATS (Kingscourt/McGraw-Hill)

Raymond J. Camilleri
Director, Curriculum Management

Guidelines for choosing the suitable Reading Scheme for your school

It is worth contacting local agents of the schemes for a demonstration of how the schemes work and for evaluation packs.

Provided hereunder are short descriptions of each scheme accompanied by website addresses which you may visit for more information.

- **Oxford Reading Tree** (including **Treetops**) (OUP)

<http://www.oup.co.uk/oxed/primary/ort/chart/>

This is a reading scheme made up of exciting stories based on characters and situations that children can relate to. It is divided into stages. In the early stages there is a close relationship between text and pictures and this makes it very suitable for non-native speakers who are learning English.

The books are graded and come in colour coded stages. Each stage may include as many as 36 stories. The tree chart helps to explain how each stage goes on to the next.

The scheme includes support material like Teacher's Books, Teacher's notes, Take home cards and guided reading cards. There are also Workbooks and Activity sheets. Story tapes and CDRoms are also included as well as an online website.

The scheme (core reading) together with *Tree Tops* is suitable for pupils from year 1 to year 6. It also caters for different levels of ability.

- **Oxford Literacy Web** (OUP)

<http://www.oup.co.uk/oxed/primary/olw/>

Oxford Literacy Web provides a range of non-fiction and fiction materials that can be used from Year 1 to Year 6. All the material can be used by whole class shared reading, group work or independent work.

The content in Anthologies and Non-Fiction addresses different genres that are then thematically linked. Thus there are stories by significant children's writers (Anne Fine, R.L. Stevenson...), poems, play scripts, fables, myths, and legends.

The scheme also provides opportunities for movement, drama and language based activities. It is suitable for children from Year 1 to Year 6.

- **Literacy Links Plus** (Kingscourt/McGraw-Hill)

<http://mcgraw-hill.co.uk/kingscourt/reviewcentre/core.html>

Literacy Links Plus is a graded reading programme with 16 different levels. The first 12 levels are grouped into three categories: emergent, early and fluent. Books are colour coded on the back cover according to the different categories. The scheme is suitable for Year 1 – Year 6.

The scheme is designed for guided reading and it is systematically structured: before reading, while reading and after reading sessions.

Teachers' Support Material and Resources include the following:

- *An online website* with downloadable teachers' notes for Books Levels 1-16.
- *'Talking Points'* teachers' books (Levels 1-12) are designed to build on the children's background knowledge and help children to predict what the book might be about.
- *Reading Records* – Blackline Master and Teacher's Guide which are designed to help the teacher acquire a precise and detailed picture of individual children's reading behaviour. Reading records are provided for 16 titles in each Module – 64 titles per level. It offers a wide range for selecting text suitable for assessment for a particular child.
- *'Questioning the Text'* (Fluent category levels 9 – 12) is a resource for after reading session – which helps to develop children's thinking skills and English language skills.
- *Teachers' Guides, Guided Reading Notes* and *Activities* are also available.

- **Literacy Land** including:

Story Street, Street Wise, Genre Range, Info Trail (Pearson Education)

<http://www.literacyland.co.uk/>

Literacy Land is a reading scheme made up of four main components: *Story Street*, *Streetwise*, *Genre Range* and *Info Trail*. The scheme includes a wide range of texts: stories, information books, letters, poetry, plays, comics and traditional tales. It is a scheme that combines phonics and word recognition.

Literacy Land as a scheme is very structured. Pupils can move on from *Story Street* and *Streetwise* to *Genre Range* and *Info Trail*.

The scheme includes support material in all its four components. These include Teaching Notes and Activity Sheets, CD Roms, a website, a Literacy CO-ordinators Handbook and a Teaching Support Video. There are Big Books for many of the titles in the scheme.

- **Storyworlds** (Heinemann)

<http://www.myprimary.co.uk/programmedetails.aspx?pid=18programme=Storyworlds>

Storyworlds is a balanced reading programme which provides children with opportunities to learn from a variety of teaching approaches: reading to and with pupils in Shared Reading and supporting children's independent learning in Guided Reading. It includes Big Books and teaching cards for shared reading; small books and teaching cards for guided reading; a Teaching Guide for different stages: Stages 1 – 3, Stages 4 – 6, Stages 7 - 9. It is suitable for children in year 1 to year 6.

- **Lighthouse** (Ginn)

<http://www.myprimary.co.uk/default.aspx> then go to Quick links and choose Lighthouse.

Lighthouse is a reading scheme which is levelled to ensure that children progress as smoothly as possible as they learn to read. It is suitable for children from year 1 to year 6.

The *Lighthouse* books have been specially written to make it easier to teach children the basic reading strategies they need to become fluent readers and they can be used in guided reading as well as individual reading, reading with parents at home. It has a programme organizer for each level and teacher's notes.

- **PM Plus** (Nelson)

<http://primary.thomsonlearning.com.au/> then go to Literacy and click on PM Library Plus.

The books in this reading scheme build on a store of known words. Children are meant to acquire a number of high-frequency words or sight words as they move along from one level to the other. The story-books make use of colourful and meaningful illustrations to support and help meaning. The non-fiction books make use of colourful real-life photographs. At the back of the non-fiction books there are a set of questions to test understanding as well as a glossary of difficult words.

The content of the books is suitable for the proper age groups, enhances gender equality and lends itself to thematic teaching and learning.

- **Rigby** including: **Rigby Star Quest**, **Rigby Star** and **Rigby Navigator**

Rigby Star Quest (Rigby)

<http://www.myprimary.co.uk/programmedetails.aspx?pid=24> - click on Structure and then on Rigby Star Non fiction

Star Quest has been designed for guided reading lessons with an emphasis on non-fiction. It offers 22 non-fiction guided reading books for Year 1 to Year 3 / Year 4 (5 to 7 / 8 year olds). It is structured to provide gradual progression for young readers. Each book has a teaching version and planning and assessment guide with follow-up reading and writing activities. *Star Quest* can be used alongside *Rigby Star* which is based on fiction.

Rigby Star (Rigby)

<http://www.myprimary.co.uk/default.aspx> - go to Quick links and choose Rigby Star.

Rigby Star is a reading programme designed to support guided reading. It offers 100 guided reading books for Key Stage 1, that is Year 1 – Year 4, structured in 11 colour-banded levels supported by teacher's notes, easy to use planning and assessment guide, follow-up reading and writing activities.

Rigby Star covers a range of genres including realistic, fantasy, humorous, rhyming stories, traditional tales and plays.

Rigby Navigator (Rigby)

<http://www.myprimary.co.uk/default.aspx> - go to Quick links and choose Navigator.

Rigby Navigator is a programme designed for guided reading. It provides a compact series of fiction and non-fiction books for 8 – 11 year olds.

Rigby Navigator non-fiction has three books at each level of the programme. Each book is presented in a lively magazine style format containing a selection of thematically linked, tailor-made articles. It has a Teaching Guide which exploits the link between reading and writing. Each book contains an ICT section.

Special Needs Reading Schemes

- **Rainbow Reading** (Kingscourt/McGraw-Hill)

<http://mcgraw-hill.co.uk/kingscourt/literacy.htm> then click on Rainbow Reading.

Rainbow Reading Programme is an audiotape–facilitated reading programme. Students practise reading books at their instructional reading level, with the support of an audiotape.

Rainbow Reading Programme has been designed to meet the needs of older struggling or reluctant readers. It complements existing classroom and special reading programmes. It is suitable for pupils who are 7+ to 12 + year old.

- **Wildcats** (Kingscourt/McGraw-Hill)

<http://mcgraw-hill.co.uk/kingscourt/literacy.htm> then click on Wildcats.

Wildcats is a programme for guided reading lessons for students who require differentiated instruction because they are making slower than expected progress. These may be students with English as an additional language (second / foreign language) who are experiencing difficulty with literacy learning.

Wildcats has guided-reading lesson plans; it gives systematic skills instruction: decoding, comprehension and recording skills are introduced systematically.