

# Reading in Religion, Philosophy and Ethics

Strategies to be used by the teacher to support reading in the classroom

**Readers must approach some texts in RS in different ways using specific disciplinary tools**

**Theology:**  
 Readers should be aware that scriptures are sacred to some people, but that there are different ways of understanding revelation.  
 Readers should approach the text with the intention of deducing what it tells adherents of the faith about the nature of God. They should be aware of context, impact on believers and insider and outsider perspectives.

**Philosophy:**  
 A philosophical approach asks readers to engage in mental dialogue with writers and become part of a discussion that may have been going on for thousands of years. Readers should ask insightful questions and be able to critique a range of responses.

**Social sciences:**  
 Readers should be able to identify the impact of religion in society and how this has changed over time. They should be able to extract this information from articles, interviews and reports (eg. the most recent census data).

**Religious Literacy:**  
 Religious literacy includes reading of non-textual sources such as photographs, works of art, religious sites and architecture. In this context, readers need the subject specific language to describe what they see and the knowledge of symbolism to explain the deeper meaning and significance.

**CULTURAL CAPITAL** Cultural capital creates an individual who is knowledgeable about a wide range of culture, is comfortable discussing its value and merits, and has been given a vast array of experiences and access to skill development.

- Gain knowledge and understanding of classical stories from a range of religions and cultures
- Understand references to story, metaphors and terminology that come from religious and philosophical traditions
- Use reading as a way to make connections and understand contemporary world issues



**Extracting meaning from texts**  
 What do readers need to learn how to do in RS?

**Analysis and inference**

- Analysis – close examination of the text in order to work out the deeper meaning
- Inference - interpretation of text and story which goes beyond the literal information given
- Comprehension - decoding and understanding meaning based on the text
- Word level analysis – linguistics, including etymology and morphology
- Selection - use a range of strategies to extract key ideas
- Referencing - quote from a text or paraphrase a longer passage
- Connections - make links across a text, showing an understanding of the narrative

**Distinguish between different literary forms and recognise influence**

- Recognise the literary form – eg. myth, parable, history, letters, poetry, memoir, speech
- Recognise the purpose of a text, e.g. to explain, inform, discuss or persuade.
- Distinguish factual information from opinions and beliefs
- Find and evaluate any supporting information which writers give for their point of view
- Take account of tentative language such as could and might as opposed to must or will
- Recognise and evaluate the impact of emotive language
- Recognise cultural context and influence on writing
- Make inferences or deductions in order to detect influence of a personal or institutional worldview on writing

**Compare the presentation of ideas in related and contrasting texts**

- Make inferences about a writer's worldview
- Understand how ideas, values and emotions can be expressed through the chosen literary form, the audience addressed, the structure and vocabulary choice
- Use appropriate terminology when comparing texts
- Read and analyse a range of texts and then synthesise this information into a well informed comparison

**TEXTS**  
 sacred texts  
 news articles  
 interviews  
 transcripts of speeches  
 blogs  
 websites  
 reports  
 text books  
 fiction  
 poetry and lyrics  
 biographies  
 autobiographies



**DISCIPLINARY LITERACY**

# Supporting reading in Religion, Philosophy and Ethics

Reading is an essential part of success in RE. Teachers should use a range of strategies to support reading and reading fluency in RE lessons.

## Before the lesson

The teacher reads the text, identifying barriers to comprehension to be either addressed or monitored.

## During the lesson

**A** Activate (prior) knowledge and explicitly teach any core vocabulary.

**R** Read the text fluently (teacher, paired, silent, avoid 'popcorn' style) and model thinking.

**C** Use comprehension strategies appropriate to the text and context (summarise, questioning, visualising, connecting background knowledge, monitoring understanding / clarifying – and doing something about it if you don't).



Strategy	Definition	Example
<b>Teacher models fluent reading</b>	Teacher models fluent reading to assist with the comprehension of a text. (This might be the whole text, or just the first part to set the standard and introduce any new vocabulary/central characters in the text). Explanations and questions are interspersed during reading, alongside checking understanding of vocabulary and monitoring comprehension.	Teacher: "Many years ago, a man named Job lived in the land of Uz. He was a truly good person, who respected God and refused to do evil. Job had seven sons and three daughters. He owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred pair of oxen, five hundred donkeys, and a large number of servants. He was the richest person in the East." Explanation: Job (pronounced Jobe – imagine him in a robe) is a fictional character, living in the fictional land of Uz. The book of Job is a fable – it was a story created by the Ancient Israelites to address an important question: 'Why do good people suffer'?
<b>Repeated reading</b>	Repeated reading is used as a way to consolidate comprehension. Re-reading is often guided e.g. a second read to explicitly identify specific aspects of the text.	Teacher: Now we have read the Genesis 1 account of creation, I would like you to re-read it and notice any repeated phrases. What might be the author's intention in repeating these phrases?
<b>Pause, prompt, praise</b>	With this strategy, when the student reads and makes a mistake they are allowed to get to the end of the sentence or paragraph. Here there is a <b>pause</b> so that the student can look back and fix their mistake. If they cannot spot the mistake, for example the word they read incorrectly, the partner or teacher gives a <b>prompt</b> to help them. If the student can't fix the error after one prompt, tell them what the word is. Finally, provide <b>praise</b> for anything done well.	Reader "The name given to people's principle or views on the right and wrong is <b>mortality</b> . A person's mortality might be influenced by their religion, family, friends and the society in which they live. The Teacher/Partner "Can you go back to this word (points) and sound it out? Reader "mor-al-i-ty. Morality" Teacher/Partner "Well done."
<b>Paired reading</b>	Pupils are arranged into pairs and read to one another. This can be in a fashion which alternates, paragraph by paragraph, or page by page.	Teacher: You are now going to read in pairs, using the pause, prompt, praise technique. You will read one paragraph each and the person on the right will begin.
<b>Silent reading</b>	Pupils read individually and independently.	Teacher: "In silence, read the story of 'The Fall' from Genesis 3 and then answer the questions on the analysis square.
<b>Target reading support</b>	When students are completing reading out loud (pairs, groups) or in silence (reading to learn), target and monitor students who typically need more support.	Teacher: <i>During silent reading, stands at the front of the room, scans the room and targets support to struggling readers who show signals of needing support</i> Teacher: <i>During paired reading, circulates the room with a focus on low attaining SAS scores, listens to paired reading and provides support and praise</i>
<b>Provide feedback using the language of fluent reading</b>	When listening to students read out loud or when modelling fluent reading, provide feedback on the four key areas of fluency: expression and volume; phrasing; smoothness; pace.	Teacher reads the first paragraph of the Ramayana Guided reading sheet: "Rama was not aware of being special at all. However, others saw qualities in him that were more than merely human. He was brave and strong and charming. He was a man of integrity. He would never tell a lie; not in any circumstance. He was kind and courteous, wonderfully intelligent and considerate of everyone. He made no distinction between kings and commoners. It was easy to love Rama." Teacher: "Notice how I pronounced the word 'Ramayana' (Ram-I-yan-a). Notice how used the punctuation to guide the pace of my reading and how I used expression and volume to emphasise key points about the character of Rama."
<b>Celebrate reading</b>	As a class teacher, use the Synergy 'Achievement in Subject Reading' to reward excellent reading in your subject.	Teacher: 'The following students will be receiving a Synergy point for really being really committed to their reading habits.....' "Excellent reading like a _____ today..."
<b>Encourage and celebrate reading beyond the classroom</b>	As a class teacher, signpost pupils to further reading using the departmental wider reading list. Display the list in your classroom and make reference to it in lessons. Use synergy to reward pupils for reading from the list. Ask them to provide evidence of their reading by either talking to you about the book or writing a short book review to be displayed.	Teacher: "if you look at the wider reading in RE list, you will find a whole range of great books that will expand or deepen your knowledge of this topic, such as..." "If anyone reads one of the books from our wider reading in RE list, please come and talk to me about it or write me a post-it note review to share with other pupils. This will be rewarded with a synergy point for commitment to reading. It might also contribute towards you 'Best at Broughton' Award.