Guided Reading in Year 2: How Small Groups Give Every Child Teacher Time

Key points

- Guided reading is a short lesson where a teacher works with a small group of children who are reading at a similar level, often using a book slightly above what they could read alone.
- A rotation is a timetable that moves groups around the classroom, so that each group gets a turn with the teacher and a turn on other activities, such as reading alone or with a partner.
- Schools organise these groups in different ways, so the details, such as how many groups there are and how often your child meets the teacher, will vary and are best checked with your child's class teacher.
- Teachers usually choose groups by looking at how well children read and understand texts, and groups are regularly reviewed, so children can move to a different group when they are ready.
- The aim is that the teacher's time is used well and that no group is always waiting for its turn, so every child gets a fair share of focused support.
- The Department for Education expects children in Year 2 to keep building their reading skills, including reading aloud with accuracy and understanding what they read, and small-group reading is one of the many ways schools help with this.

Things to try at home

- Take turns reading a page each, and let your child choose the page you read, so reading together feels like a game rather than a test.
- Pause during a story and ask, 'What do you think will happen next?' or 'Why do you think she did that?', and enjoy hearing their ideas.
- On a walk, spot words on signs, shop fronts or packets, and see how many your child can read or guess together.
- Let your child read a favourite book to a grown-up, a sibling or a toy, and ask them to tell you what it was about afterwards.
- Make a shared 'book of the week' list with your child, with each of you adding a title you would like to read together.

Find out more

- GOV.UK: National curriculum in England, English programmes of study (Key Stage 1) - the official description of what children are expected to learn in reading in Year 1 and Year 2.
- GOV.UK: The reading framework - teaching the foundations of literacy (Department for Education) - official guidance on how reading is taught in schools in England.
- Your child's class teacher or the school's reading leader - they can explain how guided reading groups and rotations work in your child's school.