

THRASS Reader Leader PROJECT:

for Classes or Groups of Older Learners (including parents)

A THRASS Reader Leader is an **older learner** (such as a 9- or 10-year-old child in a primary school), who can **perform the actions and wording** for each of the 8 phases in the Skills Drill (see S-80 The English Keywords Book, pages 6-7) and is also **able to read the 120 keywords and their questions** (see S-80 book, pages 8-45).

Suggestions for introducing and implementing the project:

Download the THRASS Teaching Grids from [FREE DOWNLOADS](#). Consider the two grids and then decide on the time that is likely to be needed to teach a class (or group of children or parents) of Reader Leaders (Leaders), using the “**THRASS FastTrack**” option, so that they can perform the actions and wording for each of the 8 phases in the Skills Drill and speak clearly to read the 120 keywords and their questions (that is, focusing on the first two columns of the teaching grids, the SPEAKING, LISTENING AND READING SKILLS and the PHONICS SKILLS). Assuming that the Leaders can already read the questions almost word-for-word, much of this training period will be on the Phonics Skills to practise the actions and wording for each of the 8 phases (unless the Leaders are already able to perform the skills).

Although the Leaders will not actually be teaching the actions and wording in the skills drill because the **main focus of the project is reading**, they will very much need to know the skills, so that they can help their learners to correct their reading errors, through making reference to the **sound-boxes, keyspellings and catch-alls** on the English Phonics Chart and to **the syllables, rhymes and sounds in words**. However, if their learners are unable to read a word, **they may tell them what it says** or, alternatively, encourage them to guess the pronunciation by using:

- clues from the pictures (**pictures**);
- their knowledge of the world and how it works (**context**);
- their knowledge about the structure of phrases and sentences (**grammar**);
- from what they have learned from listening and speaking to others (adults and children); and
- the spellings and sounds in the keywords and words they can already read - and spell, through naming and forming the letters in these words (**phonics**).

At the start of the training period, provide each Leader with an S-80 Book and S-79 English Phonics Chart A4 (or the smaller S-95 English Phonics Chart A5) and work your way through the skills drill, keywords and questions (**based on the advice in the book and teaching grids**). Do this at a relatively quick pace, until your Leaders are (reasonably) competent with the skills, keywords and questions, that is, they are able to **chorus** the wording and questions clearly without hesitation, while being accurate in their pointing.

Decide if your Leaders are going to help out on a **daily or weekly basis** to teach a class of younger learners. The project could be ‘front-loaded’ and run at the very start of a new school year, so as to give extra help to a particular group of young learners when it is most needed. Decide on the number of minutes of teaching time for each lesson. Put your Leaders in pairs (Reader Leader partners) and allocate them two of the younger learners to make a ‘THRASS Team’ of four. Provide each younger learner with:

- (a) the S-80 book (the main resource);
- (b) the S-79 English Phonics Chart (the quick reference index); and
- (c) the S-81 Keyspelling Overwrite Chart (for tracing over the letters).

You should also give them each a soft pencil or dry-wipe pen.

In each classroom (or hall), display the S-91 English Phonics Chart A0 (large) or S-90 A1 (medium) and both sides of the S-82 Raps and Keyspellings Wallcharts A1 (medium). The ‘Raps Side’ can be used as a sort-of ‘**Rap Corner**’ resource, where the learners can practise and revise the raps, and gain experience

of 'teaching' others what they have learned. A **dry-wipe pen** can be used on the 'Keyspellings Side' to explain and/or **reinforce the spellings and sounds in particular words, syllables and rhymes**, and to write catch-alls (non-keyspellings) near or on the appropriate asterisk.

Provide a good space for each team, so that they can work comfortably and quietly together. Ideally, each learner should be at a desk, with the Leaders sitting on chairs alongside or opposite and **in a good position to help**. During the first lessons encourage the Leaders to teach their learners to perform the 9 Consonant Keyword Raps and the 9 Vowel Keyword Raps, using the large blue/red keywords under the picture, with and without clapping. Afterwards, **leave it to the Leaders** to decide how to teach their learners to read and re-read the keywords and questions (with or without actions).

Put the two Teaching Grids up on a wall for reference purposes for the Leaders, you and other staff to access. Advise your leaders to revise some of the skills already taught, if they have any spare time during the lessons. **Remind them that, to learn and revise the skills, it is a good idea for their learners to use a soft pencil or dry-wipe pen to trace over the letters on the encapsulated deskcharts and a larger dry-wipe pen for the wallcharts.** Mention too, that they can request single instead of double raps to revise the keywords, and can use the black keywords in the bottom right-hand corner of each rap page.

Move around to get a feel of how things are going, **so that you can help to improve individual performances** (of Leaders and learners) and give praise to particular individuals and/or pairs (again, Leaders or learners). Stop the class, if anything needs improving. When the class has stopped and you have everyone's attention, take the opportunity to give reminders, praise the whole 'class' or draw attention to exemplary performances by individuals or pairs (such as speaking clearly or pointing with accuracy throughout the task). Encourage the Leaders to praise their learners, if they have performed well and to tell them what they did well. **Share any good practices or ideas**, by Leaders or learners that will be of benefit to others.

Changing partners and teams can also be fun, as this allows your Leaders and learners **to meet with, learn from and help others within the class**. Ask the Leaders to stand, while the learners stay seated, and to find a new partner, and then to find a pair of learners that neither of them has taught, so as to make a new 'THRASS Team' of four.

And for a fun way to recall the 44 sounds and 120 keyspellings, your Leaders and learners might, at some time during the project, like to try the **THRASS SING-A-LONG software**. This could be towards the end of the project, although given the catchy nature of the sound songs and the focus on reading, it could be towards the end of each and every lesson. Leaders can use the **on-screen index to access the sound songs and learners can read the words** (including in LARGE text format). The text is highlighted (in ORANGE) in time with the vocal or instrumental soundtracks.

If the project is successful for all concerned (Leaders and learners), **you may wish to extend it to include work on the Skills Drill**, teaching the learners before ticking, shading or dating the squares on Skills Drill Class Checklist (available from FREE DOWNLOADS) or to work on the HANDWRITING AND SPELLING SKILLS (in the third column of the teaching grid). You might also think it a good idea to **change the age groups of the Leaders and/or learners**, depending on the success of the project and the likely impact of a similar project on the new groups, bearing in mind that, if the project has been really successful, next year the learners could, perhaps, be the Leaders.

Some of the FREE DOWNLOADS from www.englishphonicschart.com

- (1) THRASS Teaching Grids
- (2) THRASS Four Thoughts POSTER
- (3) THRASS Building Blocks POSTER