

Meeting the Reading Needs of Trainee Primary School Teachers of English

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This article describes aspects of a research project into meeting the reading needs of trainee primary school teachers of English in ESL/EFL contexts. A brief background to the research is given, then issues related to identifying trainees' difficulties with reading are described. The significance of classroom processes is then outlined, and the article ends with a description of the modelling approach taken in a manual for college tutors.

THE PROJECT BACKGROUND

The research project grew out of inservice teacher education work at the Overseas Education Unit, University of Leeds. We work annually with English tutors and teachers from possibly thirty different countries. These educationalists frequently identify reading in English as a problem for their trainees and also, often, for themselves.

We were fortunate to gain a three-year grant from the Overseas Development Administration, and the full cooperation of the Ministries of Education of Tanzania and Malawi. We used these countries as our research-base because of a long association with them both; Tanzania represented an EFL situation, and Malawi an ESL. The grant enabled us to employ a research assistant, Joanna Mingham, and to make in-country visits to a sample of five training colleges in Tanzania and three in Malawi. The trainees studied were those who entered College after four years of secondary schooling, or its equivalent in correspondence courses. About 400 trainees were involved.

We aimed to identify the reading needs of the trainees, and to elaborate the situational constraints under which any attempt to develop the requisite reading skills had to operate. We then wanted to test our conclusions by creating a Manual usable by college tutors of English to help develop the reading skills of their trainees.

In 1983, the first year of the project, we composed and administered reading tests to trainees in the eight sample colleges. We created our own tests in an attempt to devise instruments which would tap the process of reading comprehension rather than its product alone. We also observed classes, and held discussions with tutors. We then analysed the results and, in the second year, wrote trial materials for the

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Manual. These we pretrianled in the Unit, as we wanted the involvement of educationalists at Leeds. We then trialled the materials in the sample colleges. The final year of the project was spent in rewriting the materials, and in printing and distributing the Manual.

TRAINEES' READING SKILLS

Much recent work on reading comprehension has pointed to the value of 'text-strategic skills' such as working out word meaning, or predicting content (e.g. Hamps-Lyons 1985, Mohammed and Swales 1984). Our initial hypothesis, based on understandings gained in work at Leeds, was that the trainees would have weakly developed text-strategic skills. We needed, however, means of identifying which skills caused problems, and therefore we needed tests which concentrated on the reading processes trainees used. We also wanted to compare test results with understandings gained from classroom observation and discussions with tutors and teachers.

We considered using introspective commentaries or miscue analyses, but felt we had to reject these as a main tool because of the practical difficulties of using them on a large, geographically diverse scale. Published tests of the reading process are not widely available, and creating them involved many difficult theoretical and practical problems (see Johnson 1983). We do not feel we managed to solve all of these in our tests, but feel we managed to gain sufficiently meaningful results to have a principled base for our decisions about trainees' needs. We found we needed a battery of tests emphasising different strategies and aspects of discourse.

In brief, the main emphases were these:

First Set

Test A: Context guessing, lexical cohesion

B: Following functional clues, meaning markers

C: Scanning, format features

D: Following organisational features, schema, meaning markers

E: Guided note-taking, clues to main and subsidiary points

F: Utilizing collocations, lexical cohesion

G: Interpreting a dictionary, word formation

H: Inferencing between modes, visual-verbal links

Second Set

I: Scanning, format features

J: Inferencing, questioning, schema

K¹: Following organisational features, sequence

K²–K⁴: Utilizing synonyms, collocations, repetitions, lexical cohesion

L¹: Guided note-taking, clues to main and subsidiary points

L²: Following functional clues, meaning markers

L³: Utilizing collocations, lexical cohesion

We attempted to make the tests useful for the trainees by giving them purposeful tasks on passages taken from ELT teacher-training texts. Sources were clearly stated, to encourage the use of any predictive skills the trainees might have. However, one corollary of our attempt to make the tests mirror tasks that trainees might reasonably perform, was that the test formats did not always fit the trainees' perceptions of 'reading comprehension' (see below). We therefore decided to re-test, using more familiar formats, to try to avoid any skewing of results. *Test J*, below, illustrates one of the tests from the second set. It was designed to see if the trainees could use questioning and inferencing skills. It uses a text on a familiar topic, and the text itself provides many glosses and collocational clues to concepts used. The main testing format requires the familiar 'give a title' and 'make a choice from given items', but these are used to encourage a simple form of trainee questioning and inferencing. Question 5 was included to give us an indication of the kinds of meanings the trainees were bringing to the text, and we were not concerned with the grammaticality of the written responses.

(Test J)

This passage is taken from a book for teacher-trainees called *The English Teacher's Handbook* by R. V. White, Harrap 1982.

Imagine you are checking how well you understand the passage. One way is to ask yourself what the passage is about. Read the passage, then try to give it a title that shows what it is about.

It has long been customary to think of language teaching in terms of the so-called four skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing. The method of language teaching called 'audiolingualism' regarded speech as primary. In it a great deal of emphasis was placed on speaking practice, with reading and writing being introduced later, largely to reinforce language which had already been practised through speech. However, investigations into the characteristics of spoken and written language have shown that speaking is not just a poor or simplified form of writing, and that writing is not just an attempt to put spoken language on paper. Consequently, we no longer treat one skill as a reflection of another. Each skill tends to be treated in its own right. The amount of time given to each skill will depend on the needs and

wants of the learner as listed in the syllabus. There is little sense, for instance, in spending hours practising the spoken language if all the students need to learn is to read English.

As variety is also important in the language classroom, all four skills will have their place. Even the student who only needs to read English will benefit from some practice in listening, speaking and writing. Some people, moreover, do seem to be better at learning by listening and speaking while others are better at learning by reading and writing. So, using all four skills is important in order to give all students a chance to use their abilities as best they can.

Finally, integration of skills is a feature of current practice. This means that any one lesson may exercise all four skills, for instance with information that is provided in a listening comprehension exercise being used for spoken or written practice later in the same lesson. Similarly, reading comprehension may provide the basis for spoken discussion which will recycle information obtained in the reading phase of the lesson.

College Year

I The title is

II Another way to improve your understanding is to ask and answer questions as you go along. We have written the passage again here. Read it again, and try to answer these questions as you read.

It has long been customary to think of language teaching in terms of the so-called four skills: listening speaking, reading and writing.

1. Question: Does this mean we still think in terms of teaching the four skills now?

Tick: Yes or No or Can't tell

The method of language teaching called 'audiolingualism' regarded speech as primary. In it a great deal of emphasis was placed on speaking practice, with reading and writing being introduced later, largely to reinforce language which had already been practised through speech. However, investigations into the characteristics of spoken and written language have shown that speaking is not just a poor or simplified form of writing, and that writing is not just an attempt to put spoken language on paper. Consequently, we no longer treat one skill as a reflection of another.

2. Question: Does all this mean that each skill is different?

Tick: Yes or No or Can't tell

Each skill tends to be treated in its own right. The amount of time given to each skill will depend on the needs and wants of the learner as listed in the syllabus. There is little sense, for instance, in spending hours practising the spoken language if all the students need to learn is to read English.

3. Question: Does this mean you should spend no time practising spoken English if your students only need to read English?

Tick: Spend no time or Spend a little time
or Spend a lot of time

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4. Question: What is the writer's *main* reason for supporting the use of all four skills in teaching?

Tick: They give variety Practice gives benefit
Different people learn through different skills

Finally, integration of skills is a feature of current practice. This means that any one lesson may exercise all four skills, for instance with information that is provided in a listening comprehension exercise being used for spoken or written practice later in the same lesson. Similarly, reading comprehension may provide the basis for spoken discussion which will recycle information obtained in the reading phase of the lesson.

5. Question: Describe, from your experience, a lesson in which all four skills were used.

Write your example here:

.....
.....
.....

III Perhaps you now understand the passage better, and want to change the title you gave it before. Write your new title here (or the same one again if you think it is good).

The title is

TEST RESULTS AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION

The interesting aspect of the overall results is that though trainees in Malawi consistently scored 20% to 30% higher than those in Tanzania, similar tests appear at similar points in the ranking of results. Differences in overall scores could be expected because of the differing sociolinguistic situations of the two countries. In Malawi, English is an official language, used for all educational and governmental purposes. In Tanzania English is a foreign language, met in practice largely in English lessons alone. (English is meant to be the medium of instruction at secondary level in Tanzania, but this is decreasingly the case in practice.) The fact, however, that in both countries the test ranking is similar, suggests that the same aspects of reading cause problems to trainees, regardless of background familiarity with English. An idea of the ranking is given in Tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1: Tests A — H, Percentage Answers Correct

Tanzania					
College	1	2	3	4	5
70%					
60%					
50%			G		
40%			D	D	DG
30%	D	DG		G	
20%	G	CB	CHBE	CB	CHB
10%	CBH	HEF	F	H	EAH
0%	AEF	A	A	EFA	
Malawi					
College	1	2	3		
70%	G	G			
60%			G		
50%	AE	AE			
40%	CBH	CB	BC		
30%	DF	DH	ADEH		
20%		F	F		
10%					
0%					

Table 2: Tests I — L, Percentage Answers Correct

Tanzania

College	1	2	5
70%			
60%			
50%			K ¹ J
40%	J K ¹	J L ³	L ¹ K ² to ⁴ L ³
30%	L ³ K ² to ⁴	K ¹ L ¹ K ² to ⁴	L ²
20%	L ¹ L ² I	L ² I	I
10%			
0%			

Malawi

College	1
70%	L ¹ K ¹
60%	J K ² to ⁴
50%	
40%	L ³ L ²
30%	I
20%	
10%	
0%	

We obviously questioned whether or not this parallelism was a result of our test instruments, but feel it unlikely to have obtained over the two sets of tests if they had not been tapping problems which the trainees had. Also, we matched the test results against the results of classroom observation (see below), discussion with tutors and teachers, and trials with educationalists at Leeds. Our decisions on the trainees' needs are perhaps best summarized by reproducing the *Contents* page of the Manual. These are the skills on which we concentrate:

Section A Working out the Meaning of New Words

- Unit A1 : Using the Help already in the Passage
 Passage: Context Passage: Experience
- Unit A2 : Using Repetitions
 Passage: Working out Meaning
 Tasks and Passage: Using Repetitions
- Unit A3 : Using our Experience of Life
 Passage: Using our Experience
- Unit A4 : Using Word-Formation (Part 1)
 Passage and Tasks: Affixes

Unit A5 : Using Using Word-Formation (Part 2)

Passage and Tasks: Using Knowledge of Word-Formation

Extension A: Working out Word-Meaning

Passage and Tasks: Getting Interested in the Passage

Section B Reasoning as We Read

Unit B1 : Predicting Topics

Tasks and Passages: Making Predictions

Unit B2 : Using Layout

Passage: Dictionary Advertisement

Tasks and Passage: Utilising Non-Text Information

Unit B3 : Asking Questions as we Read

Passage: Aims of a Reading Programme

Extension B: Reasoning as We Read

Section C Following the Writer's Ideas

Unit C1 : Using Meaning-Markers (Part 1)

Tasks and Passage: Seeing what the Writer is Doing

Unit C2 : Using Meaning-Markers (Part 2)

Tasks and Passage: More Ways of Seeing what the Writer is Doing

Unit C3 : Seeing how Points are Organised (Part 1)

Tasks and Passage: A Typical Form of Organisation

Unit C4 : Seeing how Points are Organised (Part 2)

Tasks and Passage: Teaching the Use of Meaning-Markers

Extension C: Following the Writer's Ideas

Tasks and Passage: Some Questions for Teachers of Reading

Tasks and Passage: Classroom Procedures for Teachers of Reading

Section D Changing our Approach to Fit our Purpose in Reading

Unit D1 : Scanning to Find Particular Pieces of Information

Tasks and Passage: Timetable for Forms 3A, 3B, 3C

Tasks and Passage: Contents

Unit D2 : Scanning for Answers to Specific Questions

Tasks and Passage: The Technique of Scanning

Unit D3 : Skimming to Get an Idea of what a Passage Contains

Tasks and Passage: Skimming (1)

Tasks and Passage: Skimming (2)

Unit D4 : Note Making

Tasks and Passage: Faulty Reading Habits

Extension D Using Different Approaches

Tasks and Passage: Changing our Reading Style

Tasks and Passage: Teaching Pupils how to Guess the Meaning of Words

READING AND CLASSROOM PROCESSES

Before illustrating our approach to these skills, I should like to discuss some of the very interesting issues which arose from our classroom observations, examination of syllabuses and textbooks, and discussions with trained teachers and tutors.

We found that the trainees' experience of reading at primary and secondary school levels is largely that of word-by-word study of text, in which "sounding" the word is the main focus. By this we mean that the trainees' experience is largely based on hearing and saying the 'reading' text. The most common pattern for a comprehension lesson is that the teacher first reads the text aloud, then calls on learners to read parts of the same text, aloud. Questions are gone over orally, then in writing. The teacher usually concentrates on explaining vocabulary, either before or after the readings. Syllabuses in use in the two countries advocate this approach, and it is widespread in many other parts of the world too. It is partly a legacy of 1960s and 70s structural fashions in ELT. The result for the learners is that they get very little chance to work out meaning for themselves, or to read for an interpretive purpose. Learners also conclude they must know every word before they can read. The pervasive nature of the "sounding" approach helps to explain the parallel difficulties of trainees from two different sociolinguistic backgrounds.

However, we found we could not leave the explanation of trainee difficulty there. We became very aware of the problems for teachers and tutors of operating in a second (or third or fourth) language. Highly skilled uses of language are required in class management. Task-setting, fielding learner answers and giving feedback, for example, are specific and task-related uses of language with which few teachers get help. As Coleman (1985) suggests, teachers' guides rarely model how such things should be done. Teachers tend to fear being put in a position of uncertainty, largely because many have very little confidence in their own English. We found that this was so even amongst those who seemed to us to have a near-native-like command of English. At classroom level, this lack of confidence may manifest itself in authoritarianism, as this prevents unpredicted questioning. Alternatively, teachers and tutors may resort to lectures or monologues, which they can prepare beforehand. Another result is a very close sticking to a tried teaching approach,

such as the “sounding” one described above. We are not criticising those with whom we worked. We are seeking to point out the very great challenges of teaching through a second language, and to come to an understanding of ways of meeting those challenges

A MANUAL FOR TUTORS

Our project brief was to produce a Manual which tutors could use to help their trainees. We realised that the majority of tutors would not have had much access to the view of reading which we felt would help the trainees. It seemed to us that to concentrate merely on trainee material would be unlikely to be much use. Our classroom research has convinced us that ways of implementing textbook material are not self-evident in the material (see also Paulston 1984). A detailed guide book can help, but instructions such as ‘Ask the learners. . .’, ‘Discuss X’, or ‘Get the learners into groups’, etc., stop being helpful at exactly the point of worry for many tutors and teachers — that is at *how* to do these things in English. Busy tutors, too, may have little time for detailed reading before teaching. (It is relevant also that, in many countries, education has expanded so rapidly that the proportion of teachers and tutors with long years of classroom experience has decreased in relation to overall numbers.)

We therefore decided that our Manual should model the classroom process itself through providing a model of *what* to say at all stages of the lesson (see B1 below). By concentrating on the tutor’s language, we could provide the tutor with the *application* of ideas on reading, as well as with the ideas themselves. Some readers might feel that this approach to tutors is unnecessarily prescriptive, particularly when “self-definition” is the current watchword in training for attitude change. We would agree with the vital importance of self-definition, but do not feel there is only one route towards it. A tutor or teacher of English in many third world contexts has needs akin to those recognised in occupational ESP. Modelling specific purpose language has a quarter century history (see Swales 1985) but its logic has not been applied to language teachers. By giving a model, we can give the tutor an insight into a way of managing classroom interaction in the target language. As Ellis (1984) suggests: ‘Approaches, methods and techniques reduce to ways of communicating, of interacting and transacting social and propositional information.’

Skills of managing classroom interaction could therefore be seen as more fundamentally important than any ELT ‘method’ per se. (If this is so, it helps to explain why some learners with some teachers have learnt even under currently unfashionable methods.)

A tutor-language model, then, can give tutors a baseline against which to measure what they say, and the confidence needed to try something new. That tutors need this is perhaps reflected in the fact that no non-native-speaking tutor has said the

approach is too restrictive. Many have said it gives them a clear idea of what to do, and they can use it or change it at will. In trials, this was, in fact, what happened. Often, too, tutors said they were learning skills which they themselves had not possessed. They were not passive, but actively involved in interpreting the material themselves.

Let us take *Unit B1* — reproduced as an Appendix to this Article — from the section *Reasoning as we Read* as an example of the approach taken. It is, of course, not the only Unit in which reasoning skills are tackled (see the list of *Contents*.) The extract begins after the tutor has introduced the topic of prediction, and elicited trainees' predictions on the basis of a passage heading. (Readers might be interested in working out for themselves exactly what is modelled in the extract.) The material which the trainees get is placed immediately after the end of the tutor's material. In the classroom situation, the trainees' material comes in a separate book, though the tutor also has a copy in the Manual. The marginal symbols in the tutor's material are a simple visual warning of what is coming. T = tutor speaks; P = passage needed here; BB = blackboard used here.

Amongst other features, we hope the Unit provides a model of:

- Task-setting
- Questioning
- Re-phrasing answers
- Grouping
- Praising
- Indicating an expectation of trainee success
- Organising reporting-back
- Organising trainee-trainee participation
- Summarizing learning points
- Keeping silent

Tutors' accomplishment of these language-based teaching tasks also counts as their methodology, for it is largely in tutors' language that their methodology inheres. Having the model can, therefore, aid demystification of current approaches to reading, and we hope increase tutors' ability to choose their adaptations with understanding.

It may, finally, be interesting if we comment on why we used reading passages *about* reading as textual material for the trainees. Teacher education always has to grapple with a tripartite situation: that of tutor, trainee and pupil. The trainees'

interests are not only in improving their own skills, but in teaching others. They therefore need an articulated awareness of what reading involves (as, of course, do the tutors). As Krashen (1981) suggests, 'narrow reading' has the advantage of building up a reader's conceptual and collocational fields, and so helps to deepen understanding of a particular area. The texts provide a means of learning in themselves, and complement the trainees' tasks and the tutor's words. They therefore provide another learning route which may be easier for some trainees. We also hoped that providing passages on reading and teaching reading might help to compensate for a dearth of suitable material in the colleges. Finally, writing the materials as a training text provided an authenticity of purpose, topic and audience which we felt important and necessary.

CONCLUSION

The Manuals are now in use, and we are beginning the process of evaluation and follow-up. Many flaws and problems will doubtless arise, but we hope that analysis of them will further refine our understandings of reading and classroom processes.

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APPENDIX

(Extract from Trainees' Book)

SECTION B – Skill: Reasoning as we Read

Unit 1: PREDICTING TOPICS

Tasks and passage: MAKING PREDICTIONS

To practise your skills of predicting, please do the following tasks:

1. Notice how the heading and repetitions of 'predict' in the first two paragraphs help to give us a clear idea of the topic. How many times does 'predict' (any form) come in the first two paragraphs?
2. Look at the reference to the book from which the passage *Making Predictions* is taken. The reference is printed at the end of the passage.
 - a) Identify the author, the title, the publisher and the date of publication.

Write your answer like this:

The author:

The title of the book:

The publisher of the book:

The date of the book:

- b) Say who you think the book was written for, and give two topics you would expect to find in it, besides *Making predictions*.

Write your answer like this:

Written for:

Topic 1:

Topic 2:

Now read the passage

Making Predictions

line 1 *Imagine you have to go on a long bus journey. It probably does not worry you very much, because you have made bus journeys before, and know the kind of thing to expect. However, imagine now that you have to go on a long plane journey. If you have not yet been on* para i

5 *an aeroplane, you may feel much less sure of what will happen. You may not know exactly what to expect, or how you will cope. It is clear that if we can predict what will happen, it is easier to understand what is going on, and to know what to do.*

10 *In ordinary life, we frequently make predictions about things that will happen. If you hear on the radio that two local football teams will have a match, you immediately use your knowledge of the relative skills of the teams to predict which team will win. You may be wrong, but even a wrong prediction helps you understand better. You will have had more interest in the game and more understanding of it because you predicted.* para ii

15 *In reading, we need to use the same ordinary skills of predicting, because when we have an idea of what a writer may talk about, we can understand his words much more easily. You may feel that it is impossible to predict what a passage will be about before we read it.* para iii

20 *Well, it isn't impossible, we do it all the time. All we need is the heading, and perhaps the first line or two. If you pick up a passage, and it begins:*

'Once upon a time'

25 *you know that you are going to read a story. Immediately you expect a hero or heroine, a bad character who causes trouble, various difficulties and problems, and, probably, a happy ending. So, you know almost the whole outline of the story before you read. Similarly, if the passage begins:*

'In this article, we discuss ways of motivating children to read'

30 *you know you will **not** read a story. You will read an academic piece about a teaching problem. That, also, prepares you to understand the passage.*

35 *Predictions are based on our experience of what texts typically are like. The more stories we read, the more awareness of typical story-patterns we have. We can then use that awareness to understand new stories. So, it really is true that the more we read – of all kinds of texts – the better we get at reading. From a small beginning, a tree with many branches can grow.* para iv

40 *Of course, we make our predictions on the basis of clues we find in or around the text. The most obvious clues are the title, the author and the type of publication we are reading. If you see the title **Murder in the Night**, written by an author who writes thrillers, and* para v

published in a bright paper-backed edition, you can be sure you are
 45 *looking at a detective or spy story. The date of publication will help
 you know whether it is a new book or from earlier years. So, we can
 always use the title, author, publisher and date to get an idea of the
 type of text we are going to read.*

Often though, we have to read a passage taken out of a book. para vi
 50 *Unfortunately, sometimes no reference is given, so valuable clues
 are lost. Sometimes we do not even have a heading. However, we
 can still find some clues. The secret is to look at the first couple of
 paragraphs and look for words which are repeated. The repeated
 words usually give us an idea of the topic, because writers usually
 55 repeat their topic word, or synonyms of it.*

However, it isn't enough just to look at the heading and topic para vii
*words. We must get our minds working on them. A good way of
 getting our minds working is to make up a question about the topic,
 and look for the answer when we read the passage. Here is an*
 60 *example. Suppose we are going to read a passage with the heading*
Affixes. *What kind of question is sensible? Well, if the word is new
 to us, we can ask:*

'What are affixes?'

If we already know what affixes are, we might ask:

65 *'Does the author give any ideas about
 affixes which I can use in teaching?'*

*If, however, we are reading the passage because we have a special
 interest in affixes, we might ask:*

'How does the author describe adjective suffixes?'

70 *Does she give any I didn't know before?'*

*In other words, we make up a question that suits our own interest
 and needs. There is no 'ideal' question, it all depends on us. Any
 relevant question will help us get our minds into a better position to
 interpret the text effectively.*

75 *So, in conclusion, it is always worth spending a few seconds before para viii*
*we read in checking the kind of text we are reading, and what it is
 about. We then get on better with reading because we have a rough
 idea of what to expect. In this respect, reading is very similar to
 making a bus journey.*

3. You made up a question before you began reading the passage. Now, write down your question and the answer you found when you read the passage.

Write your answer like this:

Heading: *Making predictions*

My question:

My answer:

4. Now look at this reference to a book. We have seen some passages from this book on our reading course.

Nuttall, Christine 1982 *Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Language*
Heinemann Educational Books Limited.

Identify the author, title, publisher and date.

Write your answer like this:

The author:

The title of the book:

The publisher of the book:

The date of publication:

5. Imagine that you are given a passage with the heading *Using contextual clues*. You are told it was written for teachers of English.

Think about what to expect in the passage, and make up a question that you hope the passage will answer.

Write your answer like this:

Heading: *Using contextual clues*

We expect:

Our question:

SECTION B Skill: Reasoning as we Read

Unit 1: PREDICTING TOPICS

Authors to the Tutor

Aim That the trainees will be able to think in advance about the topic of what they read, and so prepare their minds to understand.

Reason Human beings can cope with most situations better if they know what to expect. Predicting helps us to know what to expect in the texts we read, and it also helps us to remember words relevant to the topic we will meet. The burden of understanding is therefore lessened, and we can read more effectively.

Preparation for teaching You will need to read the unit and the passage before teaching.

As you read, notice when to tell the trainees to read the passage, how to set their tasks, when to write on the blackboard, and when to get the trainees into pairs and fours. Think of something to do and somewhere to sit while the trainees are working on the passage.

Be ready to accept any answer which shows understanding. You do not usually need to get all the responses printed here. They are only a guide to what the trainees might say.

This unit takes a *single* lesson.

Tutor to Trainees

T Today, we're going to learn how to *think in advance* about the topic we are reading.

Thinking about the topic *before* we read is very useful. It helps us to get our minds working and helps us to concentrate. Also, if we think about the topic, we're using relevant *words*. So, the vocabulary isn't so strange we read it?

But, how do we think in advance? How do we predict the topic before we read it? Well, let me show you how.

BB

Write up: *How to predict the topic*

T *Tutor to Trainees*

First, it's a good idea to look at the *heading* a passage has. In a minute, we'll read a passage with this heading:

BB

Write up: *Making predictions*

It was written by Jennifer Jarvis and comes from a book for teachers of reading. So, we know it was written for language teachers, and it deals with making predictions when reading. Well, I guess that it may talk about how to predict.

Have you any other ideas? What do you predict you will find in the passage? It doesn't matter if you're wrong — just make a guess.

Trainee response

- the usefulness of making predictions
- how to teach pupils to predict
- making predictions about textbook passages

Tutor to Trainees

T Good. Yes, most of those predictions seem possible. Maybe there will be ideas for teaching pupils to predict, or something about why predictions are useful. Now, we've taken the first step in predicting. We've looked at the heading, and asked 'What will it be about?'

Here's the next step. We get ourselves interested. We ask ourselves, 'What do I want to know about this topic?' Here, we ask 'What do I want to know about making predictions?' Now, what *would* you like to know? Say what you would like to know about the topic of the passage.

Trainee response

- How do I make predictions?
- Why should I make predictions?
- What use are predictions?
- Are there some good teaching ideas for me?

Accept responses of this kind.
You do not need them all.
Different wording is acceptable.

Tutor to Trainees

T Good, that's it. You can ask anything that interests you. 'How do I predict?' or 'Why should I predict?' are good questions. It doesn't matter *what* your question is as long as you want to find the answer.

Now, you can read the passage and look for the answer to your question. We don't always *find* the answer, but the fact that we are *looking* for an answer helps us understand the passage.

Please get into pairs, to help each other.

You work with him/her.

This row move to there.

You turn round and face them.

You make a three, etc.

Use these instructions as necessary

Tutor to Trainees

T
P Here are the books. Please turn to page 25 and make sure you've got the tasks and passage with the heading *Making Predictions*. It's page 25.

Now, do the tasks, and read the passage.

Look for an answer to your question as you read.

Do the tasks together, and discuss your answers.

Allow up to 20 minutes for the trainees to work. Go on if they seem ready. Do not read the passage aloud and do not explain new words. Say nothing while they work unless someone asks you a question.

T *Tutor to Trainees*

Now, let's exchange what you found.

Will you please get into fours.

You two work with them.

You face them.

These pairs work together.

You will have to be a six, etc.

Use these instructions as necessary

Tutor to Trainees

T Now, compare your answers together and discuss what you've got.

Allow up to 5 minutes for the trainees to discuss.
While they work, write up the answers to Tasks 1, 2, and 4 (see below).
(Task 3 is best discussed last of all.)

BB

Write up: *Answers*

1. 5
2. a) Author: Jarvis, J
Title: *Ideas for teachers of reading*
Publisher: University of Leeds
Date: 1985
- b) Written for: Teachers, trainee teachers, tutors
Topic 1: Teaching word-formation
Topic 2: How to read in different ways
4. Author: Nuttall, Christine
Title: *Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Language*
Publisher: Heinemann Educational Books
Limited
Date: 1982

(different topics are acceptable for 2b)

(Unit 1 Tutor's Notes continue)