

# Practical classroom strategies: Balancing reader will and skill

## 1. Balancing time spent on activities for reading will and skill

Given the pressure on schools to meet SATs benchmarks, it can be tempting to focus on reading proficiency at the expense of reading for pleasure. Mapping out the time spent in your timetable (see question 2 in the Self Review above) can be a useful way of visualising the proportion of time you spend on each of 'will' and 'skill'. You could even itemise the different types of activities under each category to see exactly how much time you spend on each activity type. Then plan forwards.

## 2. Protecting time for reading for pleasure

To maximise the time your class spends on reading for pleasure, you can ensure that some reading activities such as reading aloud, independent reading and informal Book Talk are directed towards engagement and response rather than being attached to another activity that is aimed at reading proficiency or writing. This might make it easier to stop reading proficiency from encroaching on time for reading for pleasure. For ideas take a look at the examples on the Reading for Pleasure [Pedagogy](#) section of this site.

## 3. Reading for pleasure for 'struggling' (boy) readers

It might seem particularly difficult to protect reading for pleasure time for 'struggling' readers or those with less reading experience, especially when they are taken out of class for interventions. But allowing such readers to take part in whole class reading for pleasure activities offers significant support, helping to position them as members of the classroom community of readers.

## 4. Identifying barriers to reading for pleasure

If you are finding it difficult to fit in as much reading for pleasure as you would like to, it might help to identify some of the things that get in the way. This might include children falling behind in reaching proficiency related targets, not having support from management, not feeling confident about the pedagogies for reading for pleasure, not knowing enough children's literature. You could then begin to devise ways of tackling these barriers

## 5. Be a Reading Teacher – share your pleasure in reading

Reading Teachers are teachers who read and readers who teach – authentic role models who are passionate and socially interactive about their reading. For more ideas on how to be a Reading Teacher see the ideas and activities [here](#).

## 6. Be a Reading Teacher – share your reading lessons

We've all read challenging texts where we find it hard initially to comprehend. Be authentic and bring such a text (news article/journal/book) into the class to share with the children. Explain the strategies you used. For more ideas on how to be a Reading Teacher see the ideas and activities [here](#).

**7. Will and skill displays**

Create displays which recognise reading as involving skills, affective engagements and reading behaviours. The will, the skill and the behaviour. It is not enough to profile reading as skill alone.