

The implementation of a literacy intervention 'Station Teaching' in Junior classes – From Theory to Practice

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Researchmeet INTO
November 2017

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR YOUR CLASSROOM



TRAINING
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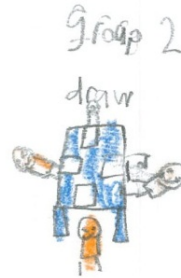
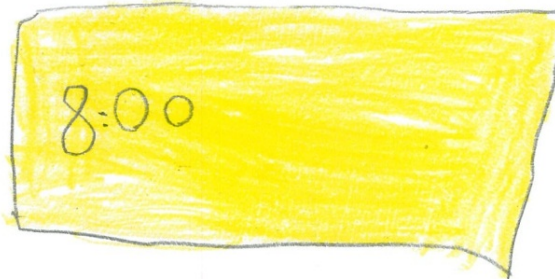
West Cork
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Ionad Oideachais Iarthar Chorcaí

Station Teaching

Jp7

Station teaching



Literacy

- Literacy includes the capacity to read, understand and critically appreciate various forms of communication including spoken language, printed text, broadcast media and digital media (National Strategy, DES, 2011, p. 8)
- If you only knew about literacy from being in this classroom what would you think it was for? (Comber, in Hall, 2003)

Reading

- Reading is a skill we use every day. Whether a road sign, or a novel, at the supermarket or the library, reading is an integral part of our lives. It is not merely a functional tool to meet the demands of society, but a mechanism by which we can acquire knowledge and new ideas, gaining a greater understanding of the world around us. It opens the door to a feast of imagination and creativity which provides enjoyment to reader and author alike (Elborn, UKLA, 2-15, p. 4)

Essentials for Reading

- Language is at the core of reading
- Reading and literacy are essential language skills

Essentials for Reading:

- Access to books
- Oral language experiences
- Reading at home
- Motivation

Skills & strategies essential for effective literacy teaching in early years

- Developing concepts about print
- Phonological awareness – Sound Linkage
- Phonics (for reading/spelling) – Jolly Phonics
- Vocabulary
- Fluency (Dropping 1/2 levels to aid this)
- Comprehension
- Writing (composition) (Kennedy, Dunphy, Dwyer, Hayes, McPhillips, Marsh, O'Connor & Shiel, 2012, p. 15)
- Attitude/Motivation
- Wide variety of texts

Effective teachers of literacy

- Sound subject knowledge in schools
- Use consistent approaches throughout the school
- Have quality resources and be well organised
- Effective use of rigorous assessments
- Daily reading sessions based on assessed needs
- Story time; Reading to children; Literacy rich environments; High level of parental involvement
- Has to be a broad and rich reading curriculum which engages teachers and children and which promotes a positive reading ethos throughout the school (Elborn, 2015, p. 5)

What is Station Teaching?

- Station Teaching is a literacy intervention that teachers in Ireland are now implementing.
- Station Teaching occurs when a class is divided into four or five small groups of pupils and they receive intensive tuition at four or five different Stations. Members of the Special Education team in a school, in collaboration with the class teacher, work in the classroom at the different Stations providing a range of literacy activities, for example: New Reading, Familiar Reading, Phonics and Writing activities. In some schools the intervention lasts for six to eight weeks per year, in other schools the intervention continues all year – it all depends on availability of staff.

Pupil's drawing of ST



Research

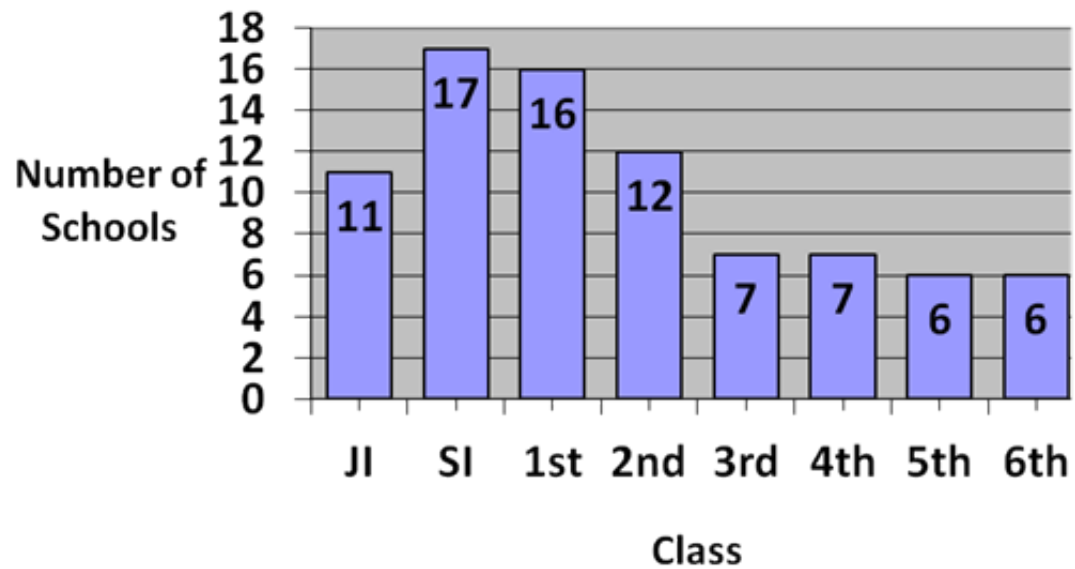
- Mixed methods
- Questionnaire – 115 teachers in 21 schools

Case Study

- Observations weekly – 44 pupils – Last term of Junior Infants, right through all of Senior Infants. Pupil drawings. Pre and Post intervention tests. Video recordings
- Focus group and individual interviews – pupils, parents, teachers

Results

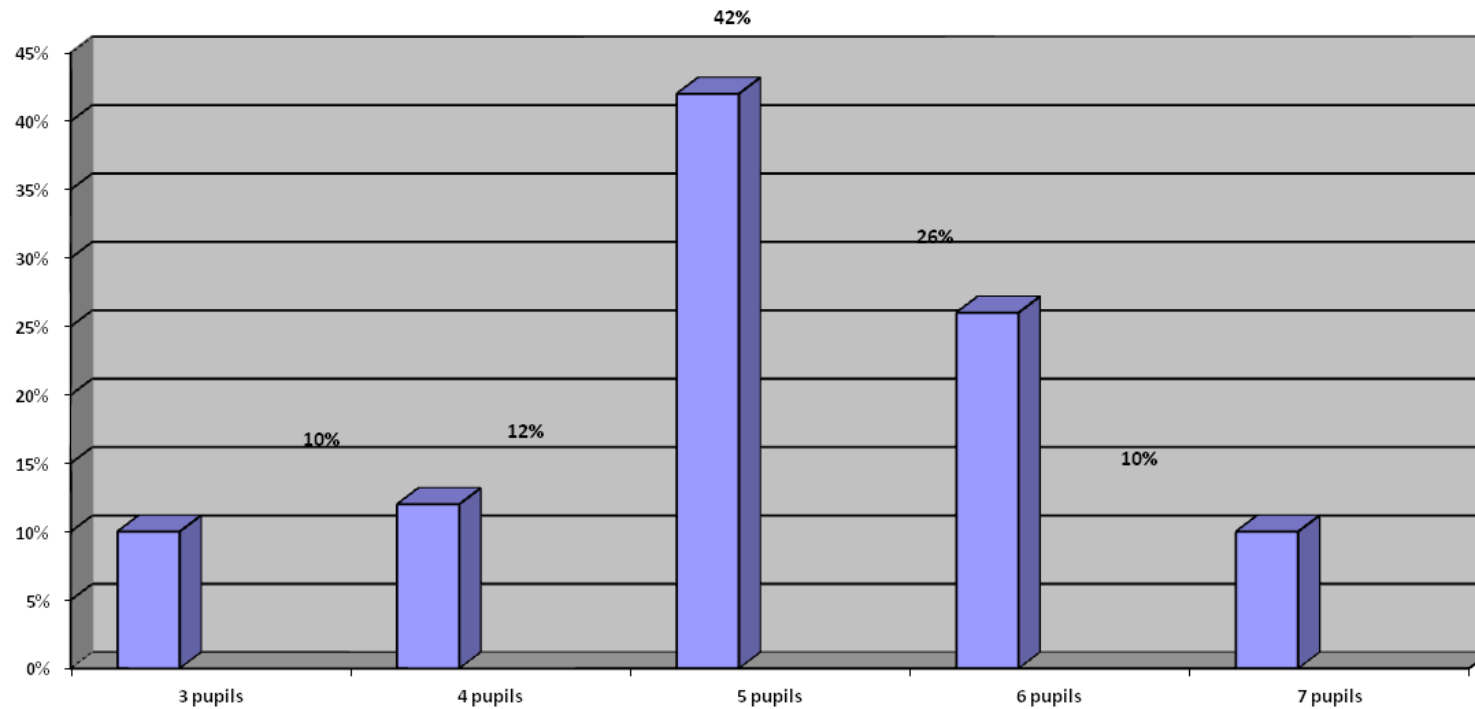
Schools Providing Station Teaching
Intervention (by class)



Length of time schools use the intervention in each class

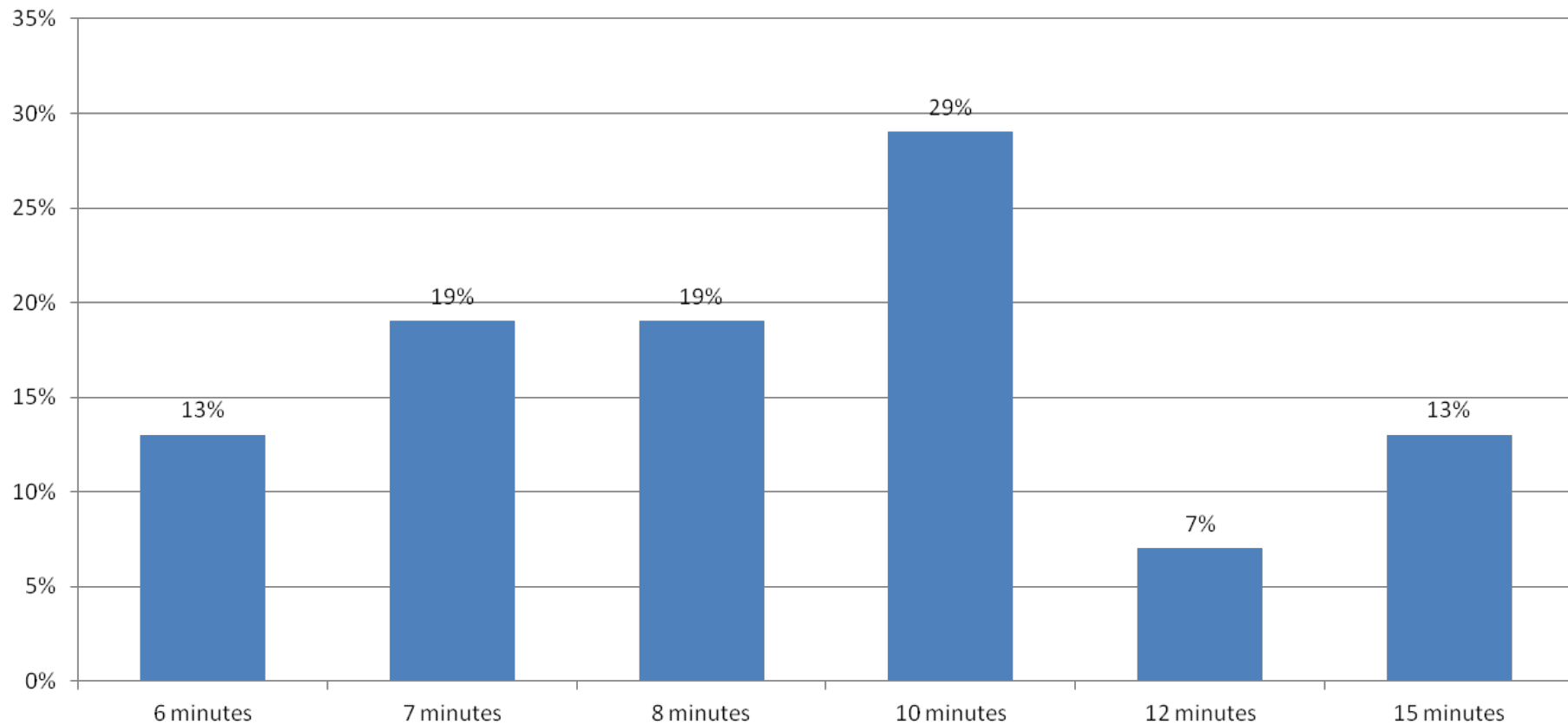
N. of weeks per class	4/8 Weeks	1 term	2 Terms	All year
	N. of schools	N. of schools	N. of schools	N. of schools
Jun. Infants	6			3
Sen. Infants	7	2	2	6
First Class	10		2	3
Second Class	8			4
Third Class	5	1		3
Fourth Class	4			3
Fifth Class	4			3
Sixth Class	4			4

Percentage of schools reporting numbers of pupils in groups for ST



Amount of time schools allocate to each Station in ST Class

Amount of time schools allocate to each Station in a Station Teaching class



Curricular focus of ST

Classes	New reading	Familiar reading	Phonics	Writing	Word work/ vocab	Listening	Comp rehension	Other	Totals N. of teachers
Jnr. Infs	5	5	5	4	3	2	1	2	27
Sen. Infs	12	12	10	12	6	2	1	4	59
1 st Class	13	13	11	14	6	4	2	5	68
2 nd Class	9	9	8	11	5	2	3	1	48
3 rd Class	5	5	1	5	4	1	5	2	28
4 th Class	4	4	1	4	3	1	3	2	22
5 th Class	3	3	1	3	2	1	4	3	20
6 th Class	2	3	-	3	1	1	3	3	16

New Reading Station	Resources
<p>Teacher instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T introduces book – shows cover, covers the title – asks the pupils for predictions about title/book/story • Pre teach new words using flashcards and small white board • Pointers out – ps point to words as t reads • T + Ps read title page – author and illustrator • Quick look at each picture on pages • Each pupil reads one page each • Discussion on story/words if have time • Encourage ps to look for smaller words/rhyming words • Point out exclamation, question and speech marks • Play fast fingers to point out a word given by teacher – give word clues eg point out a word beginning with wh, or a word containing a smaller word <p>Familiar Reading</p> <p>Teacher instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T shows cover of book from previous day – discusses title/picture, elicit an alternative title • Whole group/individual reading of story – develop fluency • Connections – other stories with similar theme • T questions ps on the book's content using more higher order thinking questions – elicit more from the ps in relation to contents of book • Focus on comprehension • Ps retell/summarise the story • Games – Fast Fingers: find sound of the week/capital letters etc – T focuses on digraphs, rhyming words, sight words occurring within the text • Vocabulary work - T reads sentence and omits a word. T covers a word, ps to provide an alternative word for T 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple copies of levelled readers (PM+) in plastic folder – one copy of book for each pupil • T record sheet • Ps plastic folders to store new book for homework <p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple copies of levelled readers (PM+) in plastic folder - one copy of book for each child • T record sheet
<p>Word Work/Phonics</p> <p>Teacher instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T introduces new sound of the week using flashcard/Ipod (Jolly Phonics app), Sound Linkage (eg. oo/sh/ch sounds) • Practise the song/action to accompany the new sound • Ps listen to the song • Air writing/writing with fingers on table of new sound • T elicits words from the ps that contain the sound, shows other flashcards of words containing sound for ps to read • Ps watch formation of letter on Ipod 	<p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound Linkage • Ipad – Jolly Phonics app • Flashcards • Phonic worksheets • Magnetic letters and whiteboards • Elkonin boxes • Counters • Mini Whiteboards, markers, cloths • Bingo cards • Dice

Outline of Stations: New Book

- The purpose of this Station is to allow children daily practice in attempting to read new material. The children learn to use strategic activities to read new texts. The teacher prepares the children for success by giving them the plot of the story and introducing them to any new or unusual words or phrases. As the children are reading the new text the teacher directs them to the most effective strategy to use at any given time. This strategy might be a prompt to meaning (e.g. Where were the children going?), to visual information (e.g. Cover the 'ing' or 'can you see a bit you know') or to structure (e.g. predict how the phrase might end) (PDST, 2011, pp 7-8).

Familiar reading

- The purpose of this Station is to promote enjoyment, fluency, comprehension and speed. Children read the same story in round robin. Teachers do not interrupt the reading. As the children are reading teachers should note what is going well and one or two things they want to draw the group's attention to e.g. a good self-correction or something that didn't sound right, look right or make sense or a good visual analysis.

Word work/Phonics

- The purpose of this Station is to show children how words work so that they can make a fast visual analysis of their reading. Magnetic letters are used to show children how words are composed of letters and sometimes have 'bits that look the same and sound the same'. This is based on words that they know and are in the reading
- Can also be Phonological awareness and or Phonics Station

Writing

- The purpose of this Station is that the children will learn how they can write their own messages by hearing and recording sounds in words, using analogy and learning unusual words (by 'look, cover, write, check'). Children compose a sentence and have-a-go at writing it. The teacher helps them problem solve by showing them how to hear and record sounds in words (using sound boxes) or by using analogy (If I can spell "tack" I can spell "cracking"). On the practice page the children can try out words and every day they must learn one or two words or practise one or two words that they already know
- Sand trays/mini whiteboards/handwriting copies
- Importance of teacher modelling

Components of effective literacy instruction: (1) Phonological awareness

- Phonological awareness can be divided into 3 levels - syllabic awareness (syllabic blending, segmentation and isolation), onset and rime (cat – 'c'=onset, 'at'= rime) and phonemic awareness (awareness that spoken language consists of sequence of phonemes – single unit of sound)
- Time spent on word play, nursery rhymes, riddles, story books

(2)Sequence for teaching Phonics

- The ability to say the sounds of the letters
- Sound out and read consonant vowel consonant (CVC) words
- Sound out and read 4 letter words with initial and final blends (short vowel sounds)
- Ability to understand and read magic e words
- Ability to understand and read vowel digraphs
- Ability to segment and read multisyllabic words (PDST, 2013)

(3)Vocabulary and Fluency

- 4 types of vocabulary – listening, speaking, reading and writing vocabulary
- In the early years the primary source is oral language experience – use of jokes, poems, riddles, Small words in big words, compound words, multiple meanings, vocabulary development to encourage deep processing, word wall, word of the week
- 3 components of reading fluency: word recognition, automaticity and appropriate rhythm and intonation of speech
- Phonological awareness, letter knowledge and alphabetic principles facilitate fluency
- Important link between fluency and comprehension

(4)Comprehension

- The ultimate objective of reading is comprehension or the reconstruction of meaning
- Explicitly taught
- Divide instruction into pre-reading during reading and post reading
- Building Bridges of Understanding (Courtney and Gleeson)
- Strategies: prediction, visualisation, making connections, questioning, inferring,

Resources teachers use in ST

Classes	Jun Inf	Sen Inf	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth
N. of Teachers	81	82	82	82	45	39	32	25
	% of trs.	% of trs.	% of trs.	% of trs.	% of trs.	% of trs.	% of trs.	% of trs.
Levelled readers	22	24	23	29	33	30	29	29
Novels			3	3	9	27	25	28
Jolly Phonics/ Jolly Grammar	11	12	13	16	11	3	3	4
Mini whiteboards and markers	15	16	15	14	19	10	9	8
Handwriting copies/books laminated pages	15	19	18	20	16	18	25	19
Sand trays and sandpaper letters	8	3	1					
Listening activity book/ Oral language	6	4	5	5	7	5	3	4
Phonics games/sheets	2	4	2	1				
Magnetic letters	10	10	9	4				
Smart Pals/ Elkonin boxes	3	4	4	3				
Rhyming, Tricky words/flashcards	7	2	5	4				
Punctuation booklets/ First								

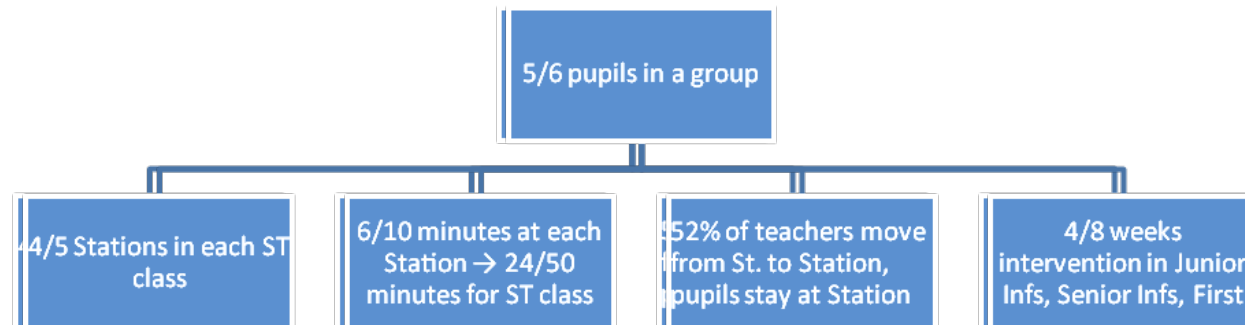
Assessment Approaches for selection of pupils for groups in ST

Assessment Approaches for selection of groups	% of teachers who use this method
(a) Teacher observation	100
(b) Standardised tests e.g. Belfield, MIST, Micra T, Drumcondra Tests	76
(a) Teacher made tests	57
(a) Running record on pupil's reading level	52
	19
(b) Checklist or rating scale	14
	10
(c) Checklist on Concepts about print	
(d) Other	
	N = 115

Overall summary of criteria Class Teachers use to judge success of ST

Criteria	1 st choice	2 nd choice	3 rd choice	4 th choice	5 th choice	6 th choice
n = 54 CT	% of CT	% of CT	% of CT	% of CT	% of CT	% of CT
Enhanced decoding skills	42	6	14	16	12	13
Enhanced engagement with books	24	30	19	12	9	6
Enhanced comprehension skills	16	27	17	15	12	9
Enhanced motivation for literacy activities	9	9	21	26	20	18
Enhanced letter knowledge	8	15	15	9	30	21
Progress in their writing	1	13	14	22	17	34

Summary of organisation of ST in classes



Starting Station Teaching: Junior Infants

- Last term
- Test individually Concepts About Print – how to hold a book, left to right and top to bottom orientation, return sweep, title, author, illustrator, understanding letter/word, one to one matching, punctuation, capital and lower-case letters, blurb, table of contents, index, glossary, parentheses, bold print and italics (RAI, 2014) *** see next slide
- Test letter names and letter sounds
- Group your children in your class (4 groups x 5/6 pupils)
- Explain different Stations, rules about quiet voices, timer
- Organise staffing and resources

Concepts of Print Checklist

Examples of assessment questions. Give the student a book and ask the following questions - Can you show me:

- a letter? a word? a sentence?
- the end of a sentence (punctuation mark)?
- the front of the book?
- the back of the book?
- where I should start reading the story?
- a space?
- how I should hold the book?
- the title of the book?
- how many words are in this sentence?

Starting Station Teaching: Senior Infants

- Teacher Observation
- Test pupils – do a running record on pupils if possible to ascertain level of reading. Administer other tests such as TEST2r or MIST. Book bands for Guided Reading (UK RR)
- Trinity Early Screening Test in Reading and Writing (TEST2r) – two parts; part one class teacher administers – rapid screener test (5 sub tests – letter knowledge, rhyme recognition oddity, phonetic spelling, copying, rapid automatized naming); LS teacher administers part 2 to pupils who do not perform well in part one
- Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST) – class teacher – 5 sub tests: listening skills, letter/sounds identification, written vocabulary, three phoneme words, dictation (Term 2 in Senior Infants)

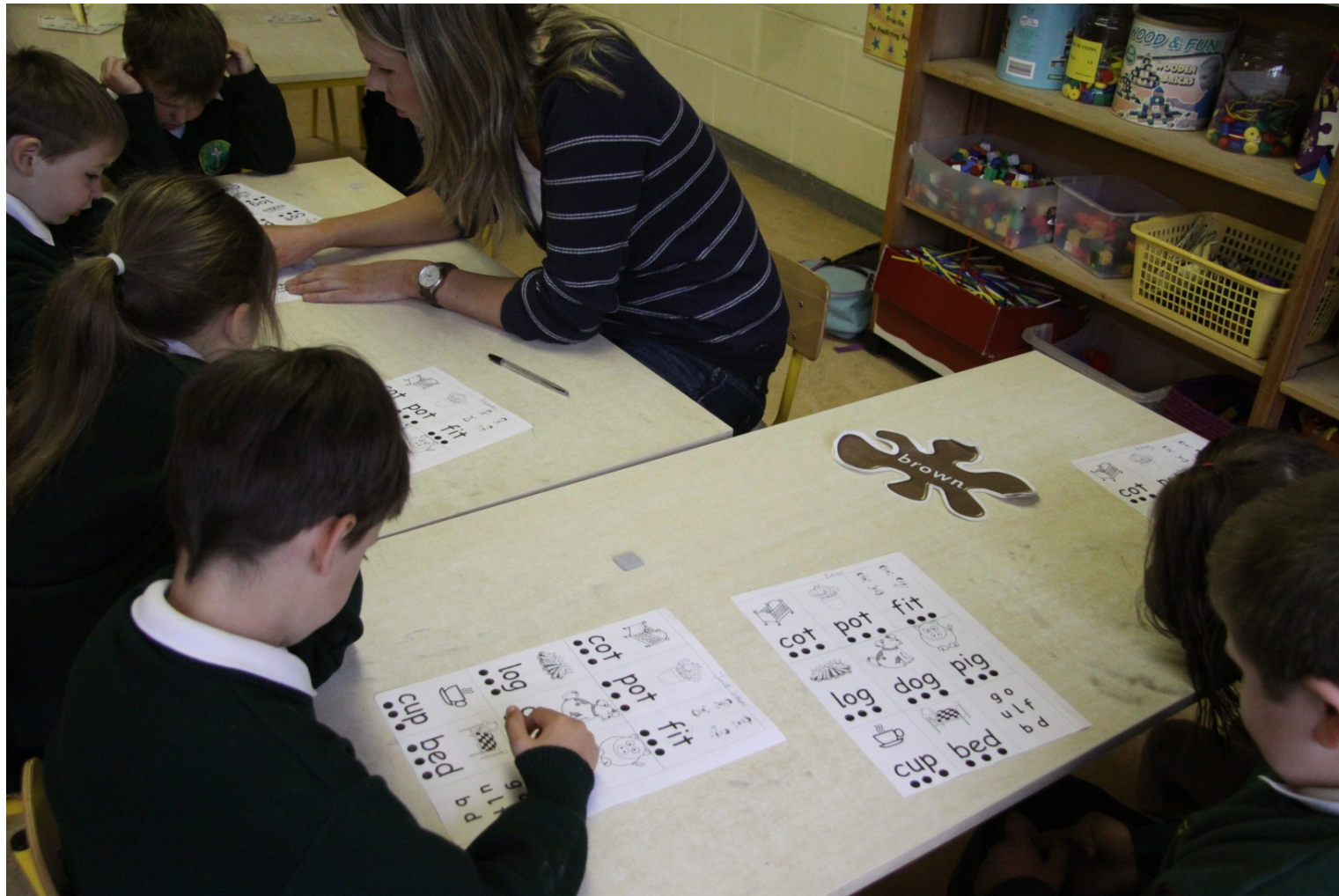
Starting Station Teaching: First Class

- Children are grouped according to ability based on a number of criteria including:
- Teacher Observation
- Check any tests completed in Senior Infants: TEST2r or MIST
- Check end of year reports from Senior Infants
- Administer standardised tests: MICRAT or Drumcondra English Test in September
- Do a running record on each child to ascertain reading level
- Informal phonics assessment in September
- Liaise with Support teacher/Previous class teacher
- The dynamics of the children involved e.g. some strong characters may not work well together in a group

Setting up ST

- Divide class into 4/5 groups of 5/6 pupils in each group
- Class teacher to lead ST in their class
- Arrange team meeting of all teachers involved in ST- teacher planning – record keeping template
- Decide timetabling e.g Mon. to Thurs. 10.00 – 10.40/Timer
- Organise resources – which levelled readers/multiple copies/folders
- Visit another school to see ST in action
- One teacher to take responsibility for one Station – have pack of resources ready, have record sheet for each Station
- Teachers to rotate on a monthly/weekly basis
- Have substitute available to replace absent teacher on occasion

Phonics Station



Writing Station



Reading Station



Levelled readers



Resources required for ST

- Levelled readers: PM+ books/Big Cat books/Flying Start books/Red Rocket books/Sails/Novels
- Sand trays/sandpaper letters/Threading boards/Theraputty
- Mini whiteboards and markers
- Magnetic letters and boards
- Phonics games/sheets/activities – google games and prepare (Jolly Phonics), Elkonin boxes
- Handwriting copies/books/sheets/Smart Pals

Work work/Phonics Station record

	Phonics Sound:
Monday _____	<p>Sound Linkage:</p> <p>The children engage with the new sound, practise the song and look at flashcards with CVCs/CVCCs with the new sound.</p> <p>Resources: Ipad, f/cards,</p>
Tuesday _____	<p>Sound Linkage:</p> <p>The children use magnetic boards & letters to make words using the new sound. Elkonin boxes. Words differentiated depending on group ability.</p> <p>Resources: magnetic boards, magnetic letters, Elkonin boxes, counters,</p>
Wednesday _____	<p>Sound Linkage:</p> <p>Use of magnetic boards and letters, Elkonin boxes. Roll and Read game with the sound.</p> <p>Resources: magnetic boards, magnetic letters, Elkonin boxes, counters, dice, roll and read game, WB markers</p>
Thursday _____	<p>Sound Linkage:</p> <p>Revision of sound, short dictated sentences using the sound and HFWs.</p> <p>Sent:</p> <p>Resources: small WBs, WB markers,</p>

Writing Station Record

Monday _____	Writing Using the writing booklet to develop writing, sentence: Resources: writing booklet., pencil, eraser.
Tuesday _____	Listening Comprehension: Developing the children's listening skills through the use of listening comprehensions Resources: pencils, crayons, Prim-Ed listening skills book, Auditory Discrimination Exercises
Wednesday _____	Using the writing booklet to develop writing, sentence: Resources: writing booklet., pencil, eraser.
Thursday _____	Fine Motor Skills: Developing their fine motor skills through different manipulatives and exercises.
Reflections/ Suggestions	

New/Familiar Reading Record – PM+ books - Focus

Group 1	Day	Book Level	Observation s
	Monday		
	Tuesday		
	Wednesday		
	Thursday		

Aspects of Literacy catered for in ST

- Reading both new books and familiar books
- Reading aloud
- Word work, decoding skills
- Phonics – games, blending, tricky words, rhymes
- Handwriting, Free writing and creative writing
- Oral language development
- Concepts about print
- Developing fluency
- Comprehension strategies

Aspects of Literacy which may be neglected or limited in ST

- Time is limited
- Comprehension – time too short
- Teachers prepare writing activity beforehand
- Teachers would love to have a longer period in the year for ST (not just one block)
- Oral language – time issues
- May not suit some pupils with SEN – difficulty changing task (pupil may take own chair; don't use loud timer; starting at preferred station)

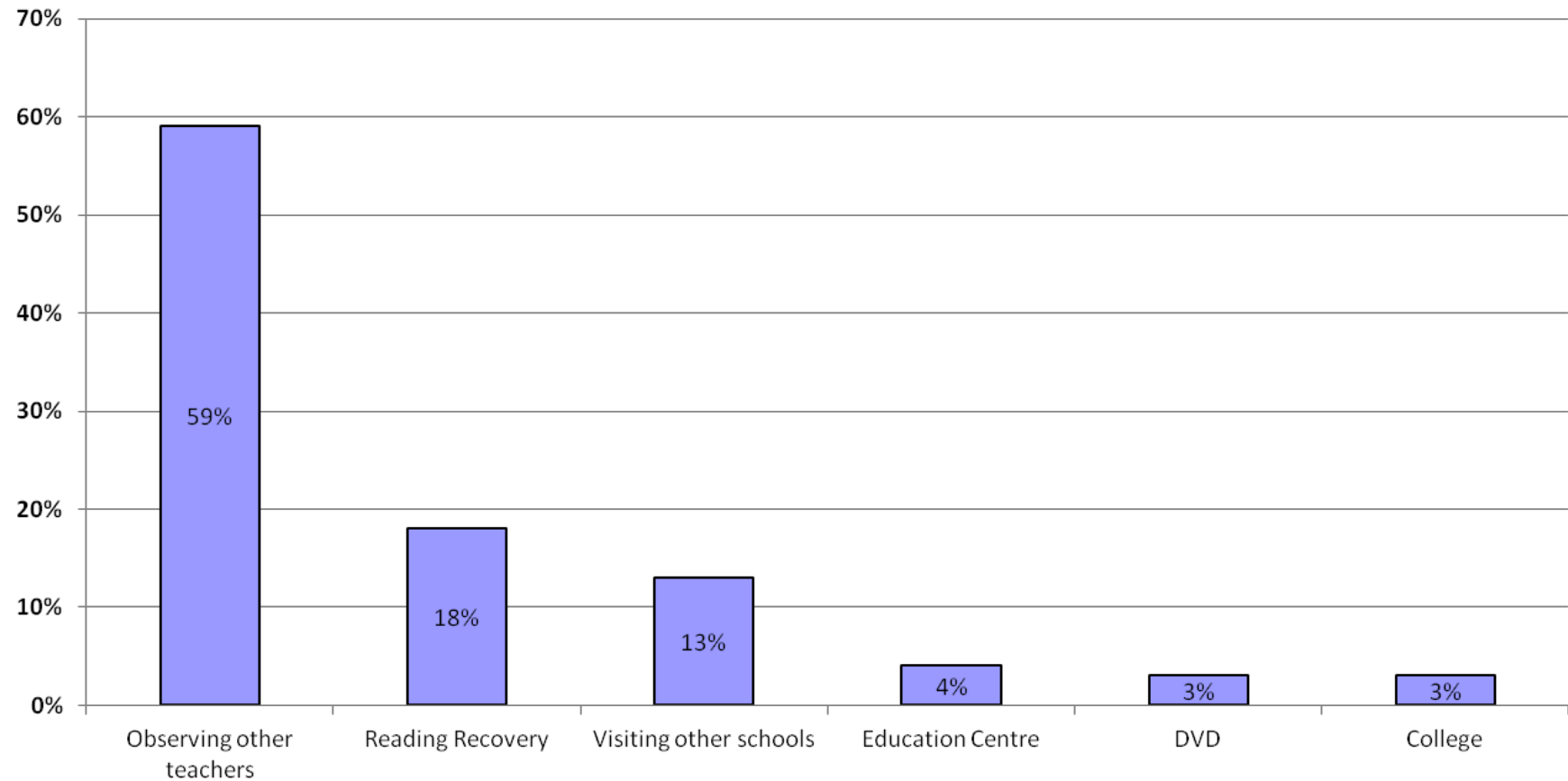
Positive findings

- All teachers agreed that: Pupils' learning is extended during ST; ST provides an opportunity to praise pupils for their achievements; Staff collaboration is vital for ST to succeed
- Pupils enjoy different activities, working in small groups + different teachers, they enjoy the attention, getting a new book, work is differentiated for them
- Teachers – enjoy working together as a team, useful for assessing pupils' progress, promotes fluency and confidence, has improved literacy instruction in schools

How ST can be improved

- Longer block of ST needed in classes each year
- More time, more staff, more resources needed
- Children should be grouped according to ability, graded and individual instruction should be provided
- Training should be available for teachers for ST
- Planning and organisation are vital
- Difficulty setting up LLO/ST

CPD for teachers on ST



Summary of combined outcomes from survey and case study

- ST occurs mainly in Senior Infants, First and Second classes
- Four groups with 4/5 pupils in each group
- Stations: New Reading; Familiar Reading; Phonics; Writing
- Resources: Levelled readers/Novels; Jolly Phonics; Mini whiteboards and markers; Handwriting copies/Laminated sheets; Magnetic letters; Sand trays and sandpaper letters
- Teachers use Teacher observation and Standardised tests as assessment approaches to select groups
- To judge success of ST, teachers choose: enhanced engagement with books and enhanced decoding skills
- ST covers all aspects of literacy but oral language, writing and comprehension strategies need to be addressed at a different time also
- ST facilitates small group work and teachers can notice pupils who are struggling and praise pupils for their achievement; pupils are motivated to learn
- Pupils' learning is extended in all Stations but extension activities need to be addressed in the Writing Station; pupils engage in meaningful tasks during ST; ST provides opportunities for social skills training
- Teachers and parents felt that pupils' literacy skills had improved with ST – this was backed up by post test results in Junior Infants but the MIST results in Senior Infants did not reflect this
- Teachers and pupils all enjoyed participating in ST
- Staff collaboration is vital for ST to succeed. Teachers mainly learned how to do ST from other teachers. Planning and organisation are essential to setting up ST
- Teachers requested a longer block each year for ST; they would like more staff and resources, they also called for training to be available for teachers for ST

Parents' comments

- They all agreed that their children enjoyed ST. They were all very complimentary about ST as indicated by these comments:
- Can see the results. It's unbelievable, ST has been a great success - A is doing intense reading
- B is really into it – happy out to sit and read books at home. At bedtime I have to sit and read every second word – she wants to be in charge
- C – he writes a book and reads it to his sister going to bed – he reads it then – it's his thing – he's very proud
- D – writes and draws pictures – he is brilliant – so happy – he takes a book at bed time to read – going to bed and loves it – he really enjoys it – anything he sees on telly – he sees a couple of words and reads – he is tuned in to everything
- E – would know it's on (ST) – 4 teachers – he doesn't tell that much – you do not hear much from the boys – but it's fine he says – define what fine meant! (Focus group 19/06/14)

Pupils' comments on reading

- Cos' if you're doing study, when you're in an older school we need to read instructions and for important exams – lots of words you have to read them
- Because we need to learn some other things
- Because it helps us – our brain to work
- So when we're older we can write and we won't have to learn, going over to peoples' house if we don't have time we can write letters, or thank you cards – My Mom did those for my baby sister
- So then if you're a chemist or something you can read things, it's good to read, you'll know a lot of stuff
- Because you have to discover new words, when you discover new words you can make them up into your own sentences cos' when you make them up, you can make bigger words and stuff like – discover, containers and stuff (Pupil interviews: 13/06/14; 16/06/14)

Pupils' comments on writing

- So then if you're writing a letter you could write it and post it, if you were doing a text you can write it
- Because if we get, when we're grown up – you have to get everything right and you get a card and you have to send it to the right person and the right message
- Because when you get old, it's like when you want to do, when your child goes to school and you have to give them some letters – you must put your address on them
- Cos you can learn new words and get your writing better. Tonight we'll have a homework book and we'll do handwriting. When we're done our handwriting we go on to sentences in our book – we get 3 sentences to do – words you make a sentence with that book like – My Dad put oil in the car / I saw a big bird / My house is very very big like a hotel.
- So we'll be able to go into First Class and do joined up writing
- Cos we need to do writing. I think writing is the most important thing you do – draw pictures – we might be writing loads of things in the big school
- Cos it helps our brain – that's the same as the other question (Pupil interviews: 13/06/14; 16/06/14)

Teachers feel ST is beneficial and promotes teamwork and an interest in literacy

- Great sense of teachers working together and supporting each other to create a positive and progressive learning environment
- ST facilitates small group work, children get individual attention
- Pupils reading at own level and pace
- A variety of tasks in a short space of time
- ST builds confidence and fluency
- Writing helps children to express themselves
- Promotes a love of books and print rich environment
- Go for it!!!!

And finally....

