



# DM Easyread 6-11 Facilitator Manual

How to get the fastest results for struggling learners, using the latest literacy technology.

## Welcome to the DM Easyread family!

Learning to read is the most important thing a child will ever master. And yet one in five children still cannot read properly by the age of 11. It is our absolute duty to do everything we can to make that process go well for struggling or beginner learners.

The good news is that DM Easyread 6-11 makes progress pretty much as easy as it can be. But it still takes work. And as a facilitator you have a critical role to play in your learner's development as an assistant to the child and an observer for us. So please read all our instructions carefully and make sure that every facilitator does the online training course available in the 'Training' link within your account.

## GETTING STARTED —

### How to log in

You can log into to your account from our website [dm-ed.com](https://dm-ed.com). All the lessons are delivered online so you need a working Internet connection.

### One lesson per day

The system only delivers one lesson per day, and they are only 10-15 minutes long. We have found this improves the absorption of the information and the speed of learning. Doing more reduces the rate of progress of the child.

If you are unable to log on, the next lesson will just wait for you until you do.

### One hour closedown after lesson

Once you log in to the lesson, you must do it immediately. If you do not, then the lesson will lock you out for an hour. If this happens, we may be able to reset it for you if you call our support team during working hours.

Once a child has logged on and done a lesson, the system closes down for an hour to force a break. After the break, the child can do the lesson again or log in to access the extra games.

### Technical glitches

On the help page you will find some advice on how to fix glitches. They are usually caused by corruption of a page on download. So you need to delete the browsing history of the Internet browser you are using and then log back in. We strongly recommend using Chrome as your default browser for the lessons.

## COURSE STRUCTURE —

### The 3 reading phases

DM Easyread 6-11 is split into 3 phases:

- **PHASE 1: Lessons 1-14 Foundation Course**  
Teaches the Trainertext decoding process and introduces all our Trainertext characters. Everyone does the foundation, no matter their age! The lessons are designed to feel basic and easy, both to build confidence and make sure the characters are well understood before we start using them to practice decoding. If a child has done some reading before, it's helpful to explain why it feels easy and that it will get more challenging after Lesson 14.
- **PHASE 2: Decoding Development**  
Builds a foundation of confidence in decoding and blending ability - no sight reading or guessing allowed! Books on the first three library shelves in the Reading Zone lead learners through a progression of difficulty over time. Fluency is also emphasized through the phrase re-read process in each story section. This re-read section is crucial for good reading development, so do not skip it. Learners are moved up a bookshelf level when they meet certain targets (lessons

completed, words per minute, error rate, etc.). Books are ordered by difficulty level on each shelf, with easier books to the left and more challenging books to the right.

- **PHASE 3: Comprehension, and Spelling Development**

In this phase – the top bookshelf level - there is more text to read each day, at a higher vocabulary level. We also introduce comprehension questions and new spelling games to augment reading practice. Learners read for a fixed amount of time each day rather than a fixed number of pages, so it is more flexible based on the learner's ability and age.

- The final codeword comes on Lesson 223. After that point you can continue at a discounted price, or stop.

## **Gamification**

We use games a lot, particularly over the first 14 days. Some involve racing against the clock. There are good reasons for this. But there are a couple of things to note.

First, a child who has not used a mouse much can find some of them difficult. You may need to help a little if this is the case. It is fine to act as a team with you operating the mouse and the child giving you commands.

Second, some children can get upset if they do not win first time. PLEASE explain to them that it is fine not to win first time – it wouldn't be a very good game if they conquered it perfectly on day one!

## **Prizes and codewords**

We use prizes to reward progress. When the child finds a codeword at the end of a lesson, simply input that codeword into the codeword button on the lesson login page. Schools do not need to do this as prizes do not get sent out to school subscription accounts.

We find that children have often developed some negative emotions towards reading. The codeword rewards usually have a miraculous impact on a child's psychology and we have found them very powerful. Feel free to supplement our rewards with your own prizes for certain milestones, if the learner is struggling at a certain point in the lessons.

## **COACHING YOUR LEARNER —**

### **The “6 Golden Rules”**

#### **1. Regular daily lessons, but never more than 15 minutes**

Regular short lessons are essential. If you are not finished, just stop and come back to it later or the next day. Most of the lessons should be around 10 minutes long. Use a kitchen timer to check how long you have to go if necessary to keep child motivation up. If the child has ADHD you can feel free stop after 5-7 minutes if they are losing focus.

#### **2. Help as much as necessary**

It is normal to let children “learn lessons” by working through something themselves without support. However, we would like you to reverse that so that if anything the child is pushing you away! Work through the lessons as a team. If a lesson is too difficult at first, it is essential to help the child through it. It is then best to take a break overnight and you can come back to the same lesson the next day if there is lots to finish. Please assure the child it is quite common and normal to find some aspects of the lessons hard, and that you are there to help them through it! If you have any worries about the child losing motivation, just get in touch and we will send an encouraging personal message to them.

#### **3. Decode, decode, decode**

If the child sight-reads or guesses 50% of the words on the program, then you can expect to see only 50% the progress that you would do otherwise. It is essential to use the lessons the right way to maximize progress. Everything in DM Easyread 6-11 is about building up your child's decoding ability through short daily practice sessions. We are re-engineering the way the child processes text, so there is quite a bit of work to be done to achieve that. Over the first few weeks you should see the child's sight-reading and guessing steadily declining and decoding becoming the default approach. If that does not happen please ask us for help with it.

#### **4. Phrase reread**

The child should be rereading each phrase shown after decoding the individual words in Phase 2 books. This is essential for fluency development and can also be quite encouraging for the child when they hear themselves reading it well – so be sure to lavish them with praise for a job well done

#### **5. Decoding the letters, not just the characters**

Be sure the child is trying to read the text and using the characters to help, not just reading the characters. If words like 'fought' seem as easy as words like 'pig', then they may be overrelying on those characters. It is rare that a child ignores the letters completely, but you do want to make sure they are using the characters as a helpful tool, rather than a complete reading strategy.

#### **6. Resolve eye-tracking issues**

It is essential to fix any eye-tracking issue that has been detected by our system. If you have received and completed the finger circles exercise, it is good to keep doing 2-3 ten second iterations per day to keep those muscles strong. If the finger exercises have not worked, we need to get a specialist vision therapist, behavioural or development optometrist involved.



## THE LEARNING RHYTHM —

### Short and daily

You will see that we limit the amount of material a child can do each day. This is because 15 minutes is the maximum length of time a child's brain can work at peak intensity. It is then best to take a 24-hour break and sleep on it, in order to consolidate the learning.

It is essential to develop a good daily routine. If you leave several days between lessons, it will make it much harder for the child to progress and develop forward momentum. The psychology of the whole process is critical and we cannot emphasise too much how important this regular lesson habit is.

### At least 4 lessons per week

If you can't manage at least 4 lessons per week, we do not recommend continuing because we will set the child up for failure. It is essential that the new foundation we are building is secure.

### Home access for school accounts

Schools can feel free to pass the Lesson Access Zone login information on to each child's parents to use at home on the weekends or during breaks. Just be sure to have a different password for the Admin Zone so that only school facilitators have access to that area of the account.

## WHAT RESULTS TO EXPECT —

### Reading as a skill

All DM Education programs teach reading entirely through good daily practice. There are no phonics rules to learn (those rules fail 50% of the time anyway). The child does

5-10 minutes of decoding each day, with the help of the Trainertext characters, in order to become an experienced decoder.

Through decoding practice, we will be building a mapping of the letter-to-sound relationships used in the English language. The child will be exposed to many thousands of words throughout the course, and over time will acquire the skill needed to cope with the English language's irregularities.

### **Expect slower reading at first**

We find that most children actually read more slowly when they first start using DM Easyread. That is an excellent sign, because it means that they are working at decoding the words rather than trying to remember them by sight. It is important to support that by filling in the sounds of any words that he/she is struggling to decode – especially in the outside reading when the Trainertext is not available.

For the same reason, some children initially may seem to go slightly backwards on a reading age assessment, because these tests usually use speed as an indicator. This is not a cause for concern. Over time reading speed will boost back up alongside fluency and confidence.

### **Reading improvements at Lesson 90**

Our lessons will actually be developing new neuron connections within each child's brain, connecting letter patterns to their corresponding sounds. That is the aim of the program and so there is some hard work to be done to achieve it.

Once those new pathways have been developed, you will find that the child starts using those decoding skill for normal text outside of the course as well. There is a lag between the two, but certainly after around 90 lessons you will see this transfer starting to happen. Most children are with us for 5-7 months of lessons, though you can cancel at any time if you feel you have reached the aim.



### **Reading breakthrough is the aim**

Our aim is to get every child to the point where reading is becoming easy. We may not make a bookworm out of every learner, but we want to get them to the point where reading no longer holds them back from whatever they want to do.

Of course it may take more than 6-8 months for the child to fully catch up with peers who have been reading confidently for the past 2-3 years. But once a child has the skills and is gaining confidence, that will start to happen more quickly.

### **Spelling improvements at Lesson 150**

The daily decoding practice will then also allow each child to develop confidence with his or her spelling over the coming months. Good spelling uses the same mapping of letter patterns and sounds. However, we do not expect to see spelling progress until around Lesson 150. We start introducing targeted spelling games around Lesson 100.

## **COMMON ISSUES —**

### **Blending difficulties**

Some children have particular difficulty blending sounds into words. So you will find that they can tell you what the sounds are in the word, but cannot then create the word from them by blending.

If you are noticing that, get in touch with us over the messaging system and we will send the child a special exercise to do.

### **Eye-tracking difficulties**

Some children have a muscular weakness in the eyes that causes them to lose their place often, skip words, or struggle with a page of text but cope fine with single words. If you are seeing any of those patterns, please get in touch and we will send some tracking and convergence exercises for you to do with them.

### Guessing difficulties

The majority of children we work with have a habit of sight-reading words visually and guessing the ones they don't know. This is the habit that we are trying to disable. However, some children do cling to it because it feels easier and quicker than decoding words, when they first try to decode. It's normal for it to take a couple of weeks before guessing dramatically decreases.

In Phases 2 and 3, if you see a child guessing or making mistakes with small words beyond just once or twice per lesson, you must contact us to say so. We will then send a message to help move the child away from it.

If a child ever gets a word substantially wrong, that is a sure indication of guessing going on. PLEASE don't ignore it. Stop them and ask them to decode that word using the Trainertext characters. Then ask them to re-read the phrase with that word in it.

### Payment issues

If you need to make a change to your payment account, just send us a message through the system and we will forward you a link where you can update your card details securely.

## GENERAL RESOURCES

### Phonemic "I spy"

Do you know the game "I Spy"? You spot an object everyone can see, and say "I spy with my little eye something beginning with the letter A". Everyone then has to guess what you have seen.

You can try playing a phonics-based version of I Spy with your learner. In conventional I Spy, you give out the first letter of the name of the object. But in our version of I Spy we change it to the first sound of the word.

For instance, if you had spotted a fork, instead of saying "I spy with my little eye something beginning with F," you would say "I spy with my little eye something beginning with fffffff."

That will exercise the child's "phonetic ear".

### **Printing out the images**

You can get a printout of all the Trainertext images, in the help zone of your account

The most useful version is the "card set". Cut the images onto individual cards and then split them into two piles; "known images" and "not sure images". Keep working on the not sure images before each lesson until they are all known well.

You will also find a number of other resources there, including the option to repeat some of the key lessons.

### **We are here to help**

We are here to help at every stage. Never hesitate to make contact if you have a question. Use the messaging system on our website or book in an appointment for us to call you via the Contact Us page appointment booking system within your account. We love to help get things right for each individual learner.