



The FivePlus Classroom

TEACHER INFORMATION

Ideally, schools that are using *FivePlus* will have the teachers participate in the training so that they are fully aware of the content. When that is not possible it is suggested that teachers read through the *FivePlus* manual and observe the lesson videos at literacyinnovators.co.nz and then they will be in a better position to support the Learning Assistant.



1 One of the common problems with early struggling readers is that they become inactive at a difficult/unknown word or they resort to guessing. Neither is useful for their reading development.

FivePlus lessons have a component that shows the students how to **recognise sub-word features that they already know** and then **how to use that knowledge**. Unknown phonological items are **taught as the need arises** during the lessons with one item taught each day.

The Learning Assistant is able to spend more time with the student on specific 'word work' than is possible for the classroom teacher to do during a group guided reading lesson. This intensive work reveals in **fine detail** where the student is being successful and where the difficulties are.

2 The books that are used are the same texts that are used in the classroom. The books are used only as **an authentic context for a source of unknown words** and the meaning is not attended to in *FivePlus*. As lessons are highly scaffolded, the student is able to work with **texts that are at a higher level** than those used during the guided reading lesson with the teacher. This allows for more unknown words to be selected from fewer pages. The books selected may be books that will be used for future guided reading. For example, a student may be reading at Level 8 during guided reading but at Level 11 during *FivePlus*. In time, the student will be using that Level 11 book during guided reading.

3 Good communication between the Learning Assistant and Teacher is essential so that they can share knowledge of the child's progress. Because the lessons are one to one, the Learning Assistant may well pick up subtleties that are not evident during the classroom instruction. As the lessons progress, we expect the student to be displaying skills and knowledge during guided reading that have been taught in the *FivePlus* lessons. It is a common feature of struggling students that they do not transfer the skills and knowledge from one situation or site to another. The conversations the Learning Assistant has with the Teacher will reveal the extent of the transfer. When it is not happening, the Learning Assistant and Teacher can show the student how to make that transfer.

4 For students to participate successfully in *FivePlus* lessons, they need to have working knowledge of many of the single letter sounds and ideally a few digraphs. The *FivePlus* manual has a standardised test for assessing letter/sound knowledge and students need to be correct in at least 22 of the 35 items. If the letter sounds are not known well enough then an intensive phonics intervention is needed before commencing *FivePlus*.