

Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	2
Before Class	
Prepare Yourself	2
Prepare your Materials	4
In Class	
Prepare your Students	5
Setup the Activity	6
Run the Activity	7
Feedback	9
After Class	
Evaluation	10

Icons



Important! Be Careful!



A good idea, but optional



Poison! Don't do this!



Model



Monitor



Activity Guide: Phonics Reading Challenge

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Activity Guide

Phonics Reading Challenge

Introduction

Reading Challenge is run **during** a **Team Coaching** session to assess students' reading and pronunciation skills. The teacher challenges groups of students of the same level (with the same **Team English** number) to read **target word activity cards** from the current unit.

Reading Challenge is very efficient for several reasons:

- While the teacher is challenging one group of students, the team coaches continue to drill the rest of their team-mates, so students are kept on task
- Team coaches get instant feedback on their coaching, as their team-mates are challenged and the scores are displayed
- The weakest students get the most coaching time before they are challenged.

Reading Challenge is also helpful in assessing your students' progress. Use data from **Reading Challenges** to help you make decisions about how fast to progress through the course, which activities to prioritise in upcoming units, and which team coaches need the most mentoring.

Reading Challenge is rarely completed in a single lesson. Since **Team Coaching** is so important, and used so often, generally only 4, 8 or 12 students need be challenged in any one lesson. Every time **Team Coaching** is used, challenge one or more groups of students until you have worked through the entire class. Then begin again.

There are two forms of **Reading Challenge** – **phonics** and vocabulary. This Activity Guide covers the **phonics** version, which is used while students are still learning the basic **grapheme-phoneme** correspondences and how to **blend** them into syllables. A separate Activity Guide is provided for **Vocabulary Reading Challenge**, which is used when students are able to apply **phonics** to learning regular vocabulary.

Before Class

Prepare Yourself


①

Decide which **target words** you will use in this lesson.

The Activity Resource for each **Phonics Unit** contains 3 or 4 levels of **target words**, ranging from “Easy” to “Very Difficult”.

You may allow students to choose from any level, or restrict them to one or more levels.

②

 Practice reading each of the **target words** that you will use in this lesson.

Make sure you can pronounce each word clearly yourself, especially if it contains, non-Thai **phonemes**, **voiced** finals and/or **consonant clusters**.

③

Now, think about what to listen for in each word when assessing your students' reading and pronunciation.

Think about likely problems such as **voiced** finals and **consonant clusters**.



Activity Guide

Phonics Reading Challenge

Before Class

Prepare Yourself

4

Divide teams into 3-4 levels according to ability.

For example:

Team Members	Level
#1 - #2	1
#3 - #4	2
#5 - #10	3
#11 - #12	4

5

Scoring:

Make sure you are familiar with how to score.

Firstly, award 1 point per correct **phoneme**.

6

Scoring:

Secondly, score **blending** using the following criteria:

- 3 points if no help required
- 2 points for minimal help
- 1 point for a lot of help
- 0 points if you have to use Thai equivalents

7

Scoring:

Thirdly, multiply that score by the level of difficulty for that word:

- Easy = 1
- Medium = 2
- Difficult = 3
- Very Difficult = 4

8

Scoring:

Finally, multiply that score by the ability level of the student.

All this may seem over-complicated, but it serves two important purposes:

- Motivation for team leaders to mentor their lower level team-mates during the **Team Coaching** session
- Motivation for all students to challenge themselves at an appropriate level.

9

Since **Reading Challenge** operates within a **Team Coaching** session, also prepare yourself for that activity.

See the **Team Coaching** Activity Guide for details.

Maintaining discipline for the students engaged in **Team Coaching** while you are conducting **Reading Challenge** will be difficult at first, especially if students are only used to teacher-centred learning. Prepare yourself for balancing your focus between the two activities.



Activity Guide

Phonics Reading Challenge

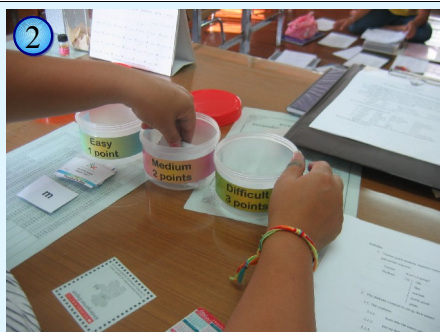
Before Class

Prepare your Materials



Prepare the **target word activity cards** for this unit.

! The **Phonics Units** contain 5 sets of cards for each unit – 1 set for each team and 1 “Teacher’s Set”. For **Reading Challenge**, you only need the Teacher’s Set.



If you plan to allow your students a choice of difficulty level, separate the cards, and place them in containers.

See the **Materials Preparation** Activity Guide for preparing the containers.



Fill out a **Reading Challenge** Score-sheet with the names of each student in the class.

You will keep this sheet for decision-making purposes later, and also to remind you of where you left off in the previous **Reading Challenge** session.

4

Check the materials you will need for **Reading Challenge**:

- ☒ **Target word activity cards**
- ☒ Containers
- ☒ **Reading Challenge** Score-sheet

5

Check the materials you will need for **Team Coaching (Phonics Drilling)**:

- ☒ One set of Half-size **flashcards** of **graphemes** per team

6

Check the rest of your equipment for this lesson:

- ☒ Uniforms
- ☒ Scoreboard Headers
- ☒ Score-sheets
- ☒ **Flashcards** etc. (depending on other activities for this lesson)


Put everything together in your **Team English** basket.

My notes



Activity Guide

Phonics Reading Challenge

In Class	Prepare your Students	
<p>①</p> <p>Set the scene: tell the students that you are going to challenge their reading skills.</p> <p>You will probably not be able to work with every student today, but you will set aside some time in each phonics lesson until everyone has had a turn.</p>	<p>②</p> <p>Show the students how you will calculate the score for each student.</p>	<p>③</p> <p>Copy the level table you prepared onto the board.</p> <p>Tell students about the levels you have decided for scoring, and that if the lowest level students score well, they could add a lot of points to their teams' totals!</p>
<p>④</p> <p>Explain to your students the criteria you will use to decide how many points they receive for blending.</p>	<p>⑤</p> <p> Optionally: Use Phonics Drilling to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● revise graphemes/phonemes from previous lessons ● introduce new graphemes/phonemes for this lesson ● blend phonemes together into syllables 	<p><u><i>My notes</i></u></p>



Activity Guide




Phonics Reading Challenge

In Class	Setup the Activity	
<p>1</p> <p>Show teams what equipment they will need for Team Coaching (Phonics Drilling):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One set of half-size flashcards of graphemes 	<p>2</p> <p>Draw a diagram on the board of the seating arrangement for Team Coaching for this class.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Have teams compete to set themselves up for Team Coaching, sitting in the correct seating arrangement, with their equipment ready.</p> <p>Award 4 points to the quickest team, 3 points to the second team, and so on.</p>
<p>4</p> <p>Start Team Coaching.</p> <p> Monitor and assist for 5-10 minutes, until you feel that the students are working well.</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Before you leave them, to set up for Reading Challenge, remind the coaches of the points that teams could earn if their lower level members get high scores.</p> <p>Also remind all students that you will be awarding teamwork points at the end of the lesson, and you will be watching how the teams behave.</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Set yourself up near the scoreboard so that you can record the scores to promote competition between the teams.</p> <p>Also make sure that you can watch the rest of the students to check that the Team Coaching continues.</p> <p>Set up your Reading Challenge Score-sheet and target word containers in a convenient location.</p>
<p><i><u>My notes</u></i></p>		



Activity Guide

Phonics Reading Challenge

In Class	Run the Activity	
<p>①</p> <p>Start by calling the #1 student from each team to you. Stand them in line ready to be challenged.</p> <p> Remind the rest of the students that they should keep working. The harder they practise, the higher their scores are likely to be.</p>	<p>②</p> <p>Take the first student. Ask them which level they would like to challenge themselves at.</p> <p> If you feel that a student is choosing too high or too low, discuss it with them, but finally respect their decision!</p>	<p>③</p> <p>Take the container for the level they have chosen and shake it to randomise the contents.</p> <p>Let the student take a target word from the container.</p>
<p>④</p> <p>Point to each of the graphemes on the card, and get the student to sound out the phonemes one by one.</p> <p> Remember when pointing, and scoring, to count graphemes – not letters! For example “thing” contains 5 letters but only 3 graphemes – th-i-ng.</p> <p>Write down the score so far in the score-sheet: 1 point per correct phoneme.</p>	<p>⑤</p> <p>If any of the phonemes were incorrect, or if the student didn't attempt them correct them now.</p> <p>It is important, that the student knows all the correct phonemes before they attempt to blend the word.</p>	<p>⑥</p> <p>Now, get the student to blend the phonemes together to make the word.</p> <p>Help them if necessary, but deduct points accordingly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3 points if no help required ● 2 points for minimal help ● 1 point for a lot of help ● 0 points if you had to use Thai equivalents
<p><u>My notes</u></p>		



Activity Guide

Phonics Reading Challenge

In Class	Run the Activity	
<p>⑦</p> <p>Calculate the final score: (((Correct phonemes + blending) x Level of Difficulty) x Level of Student)</p>	<p>⑧</p> <p>Call out the score to the whole class, write it in the score-sheet and write it on the board.</p>	<p>⑨</p> <p>Encourage this student's team to celebrate if it was a good score.</p>
<p>⑩</p> <p>Take the next student and repeat.</p> <p>Keep working through four students at a time until it is time to move on to the next activity for the lesson.</p> <p>If a student is absent, let their team-mate with the next number substitute for them – e.g. if Green #3 is absent, Green #4 substitutes.</p>	<p>⑪</p> <p>From time to time, you may need to interrupt Reading Challenge to keep the rest of the class on task.</p> <p>Useful strategies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reminding them why they are practising ● Shaming them for not being able to control themselves ● Reminding them of the teamwork points you will award at the end of the lesson ● Deducting points from the worst offending teams 	<p>⑫</p> <p>When you finish Reading Challenge, make sure to complete a whole round – e.g. all #5 students. Otherwise, the scores will be skewed for today's lesson.</p> <p>Let the class know that Reading Challenge and Team Coaching are over for this lesson, but that you will continue from where you left off today, next time you run Team Coaching.</p>
<p><u>My notes</u></p>		



Activity Guide


Phonics Reading Challenge

In Class	Feedback	
<div>1</div> <p>Team Coaching and Reading Challenge are often run before other activities, so it is a good idea to remind student about it during the feedback session at the end of the lesson.</p>	<div>2</div> <p>In particular, if you have noticed progress from any of the lower level students, give them strong praise.</p> <p>Also praise the efforts of their coaches. Thank them for helping to develop the English skills of the whole class!</p>	<div>3</div> <p> Don't forget to give feedback on the Team Coaching as well.</p> <p>In general, Team Coaching should be your main criterion when awarding teamwork points.</p> <p>Be particularly harsh (perhaps 0/10 points) for teams that were disruptive and caused you to interrupt the Reading Challenge activity.</p>
<div>4</div> <p>Remind teams that Reading Challenge will continue, so if they want to score well, they would be wise to practice in their free time.</p> <p> Optionally: You may decide to let teams borrow flashcards outside of class time if they wish to practice.</p>	<u><i>My notes</i></u>	



Activity Guide

Phonics Reading Challenge

After Class	Evaluation
<p>1</p>  <p>Sit down and write a few notes about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was good? • What problems you had? • What you should change next time? 	<p>2</p> <p>Look through the Reading Challenge Score-sheet. Look for overall trends in the data. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which graphemes/phonemes cause the most problems? • Are problems mainly from newly introduced graphemes or are students still struggling with old ones? • What proportion of your students can blend CV? CVC? CCVC? CVCC? • What proportion of students can blend without help? With only a little help? <p>3</p> <p>Use the data to make such decisions as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should you spend more or less time on each unit? • Do you need to revise some old graphemes/phonemes? • Are students ready to begin Graded Reading books? • Are students ready for Phonics Dictation? • Should you try Version 2 of Phonics Bingo?
<p><u>My notes</u></p>	