# Silent reading and other common practices: what does the evidence say?

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Discussion of common practice

Examination of common practices

Signpost to useful tools and resources

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How do you currently teach children to read?

Who is responsible for this?

What was the last relevant CPD your school did?

Reading for pleasure is a good thing, but not necessarily the most efficient use of school time

Unlikely to benefit children who are not already fluent readers

Text selection is crucial

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**Student self-selection of reading materials**: Teachers should guide students to choose good texts to read during silent reading time. The books should be of interest, should draw from a variety of genre and topics, and should be at an appropriate level — not too easy, not too hard. This is particularly important for struggling readers who often select books they cannot read.

**Student engagement and time on task during silent reading time**: Teachers should keep a pulse on students during DEAR time. Emphasize that DEAR time is reading practice time. It's not indoor recess, but rather it has an important purpose: to provide time to practice reading skills. Read the full chapter for a good description of "gossips, wanderers, and squirrels." See if you have any of those in your classroom!

**Accountability**: Related to the above, accountability of what has been read may help build reading stamina and proficiency. Several methods of accountability are suggested, including logs, reader response, and anecdotal records. This seems like a highly personal decision, and for it to really work, would have to be something easy and quick.

**Interactions among teachers and students**: It's important to foster teacher-student and student-student conversations about books. Rather than using your DEAR time to read yourself, engage your students in conversations about what they're reading.

Children take it in turns to read

What is the intended impact?

How effective do you think this is?

**Key finding:** the quality of the existing evidence focused specifically on written marking is very low.

Little evidence about long-term outcomes

Studies often small

Very few studies

Research often focused on HE or TEFL

A marked improvement?

A review of the evidence on written marking

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Feedback



Figure 1. Examples of different forms of feedback.

**What role do the following play in your feedback policy?**
- Verbal feedback
- Self-assessment
- Peer-assessment
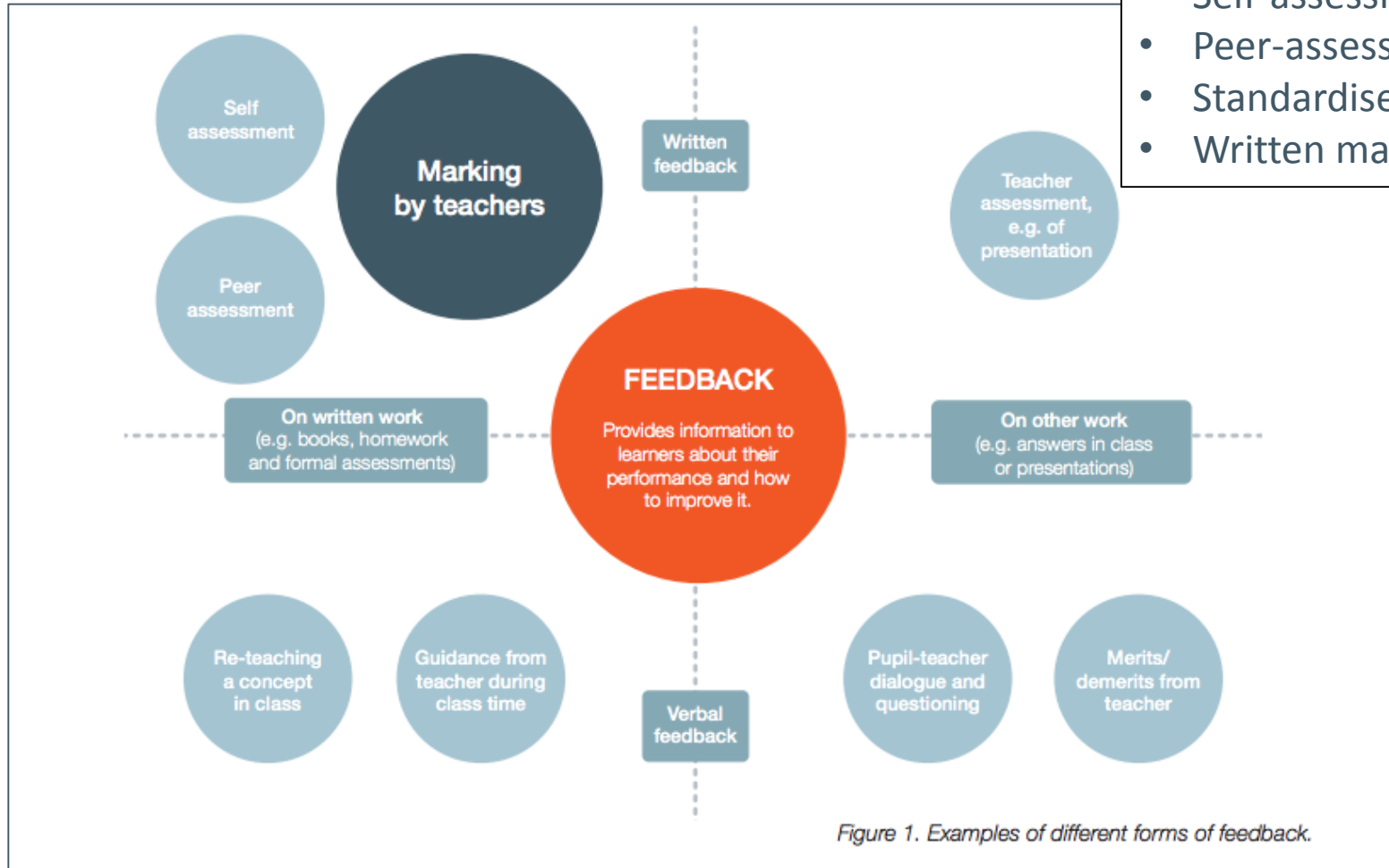- Standardised tests
- Written marking

- Pupils are unlikely to benefit from marking unless some time is set aside to enable pupils to consider and respond to marking.
- Careless mistakes should be marked differently to errors resulting from misunderstanding:
- Errors - May be best addressed by providing hints or questions which lead pupils to underlying principles;
- Mistakes - Marking the mistake as incorrect, without giving the right answer.
- Awarding grades for every piece of work may reduce the impact of marking.

*A mantra might be that schools should mark less in terms of the number of pieces of work marked, but mark better.*

Fla⚡h
Marking
Logical Aspirational Student Help)

- Teachers give skills-based feedback rather than grades in KS4 English.
- Skills have been translated into short codes that teachers use when marking work.
- These codes are also used in lessons to teach the skills and by students to make peer- and self-marking faster, focused and more useful.
- Teachers track strengths and weaknesses across their classes, which helps them to tailor lessons towards the skills that students are finding difficult.
- This project is being led by Meols Cop High School, who developed the approach.

@FLASHmarking

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Overall, very limited evidence about the impact of marking

Is marking for literacy making a difference?

What are the alternatives?

## FOUNDATIONS FOR GOOD IMPLEMENTATION

**1** Treat implementation as a process, not an event; plan and execute it in stages.

- Allow enough time for effective implementation, particularly in the preparation stage; prioritise appropriately.

**2** Create a leadership environment and school climate that is conducive to good implementation.

- Set the stage for implementation through school policies, routines, and practices.
- Identify and cultivate leaders of implementation throughout the school.
- Build leadership capacity through implementation teams.

### EXPLORE

**3** Define the problem you want to solve and identify appropriate programmes or practices to implement.

- Specify a tight area of focus for improvement that is amenable to change.
- Determine a programme of activity based on existing evidence of what has – and hasn't – worked before.
- Examine the fit and feasibility of possible interventions to the school context.
- Make an adoption decision.

### PREPARE

**4** Create a clear implementation plan, judge the readiness of the school to deliver that plan, then prepare staff and resources.

- Develop a clear, logical, and well-specified implementation plan:

  a. Specify the active ingredients of the intervention clearly: know where to be 'tight' and where to be 'loose'.

  b. Develop a targeted, yet multi-stranded, package of implementation strategies.

  c. Define clear implementation outcomes and monitor them using robust and pragmatic measures.

- Thoroughly assess the degree to which the school is ready to implement the innovation.

- Once ready to implement an intervention, practically prepare for its use:

  a. Create a shared understanding of the implementation process and provide appropriate support and incentives.

  b. Introduce new skills, knowledge, and strategies with explicit up-front training.

  c. Prepare the implementation infrastructure.

### DELIVER

**5** Support staff, monitor progress, solve problems, and adapt strategies as the approach is used for the first time.

- Adopt a flexible and motivating leadership approach during the initial attempts at implementation.
- Reinforce initial training with follow-on coaching within the school.
- Use highly skilled coaches.
- Complement expert coaching and mentoring with structured peer-to-peer collaboration.
- Use implementation data to actively tailor and improve the approach.
- Make thoughtful adaptations only when the active ingredients are securely understood and implemented.

### SUSTAIN

**6** Plan for sustaining and scaling an intervention from the outset and continuously acknowledge and nurture its use.

- Plan for sustaining and scaling an innovation from the outset.
- Treat scale-up as a new implementation process.
- Ensure the implementation data remains fit for purpose.
- Continuously acknowledge, support, and reward good implementation practices.

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