

# Introduction

## The rationale for *Which Book and Why*

We want all children to love to read! This has to be the ultimate goal of reading instruction in school. As teachers, we have a responsibility to make learning to read a purposeful and pleasurable experience. Learning to read must be manageable and achievable for all of the children we teach.

This book demonstrates how effective guided reading for children aged from four to seven makes this happen. *Which Book and Why* is written for class teachers, intervention and support teachers, literacy subject coordinators and senior management teams, teaching students and university teachers, and it provides rationales for the practice of guided reading and the teaching decisions we make.

*Which Book and Why* aims to:

- support you in delivering effective guided reading for young children in the early stages of learning to read
- explain how guided reading fits with current theoretical understandings of how children learn
- describe how guided reading works in practice
- explain that, while there are features common to all guided reading lessons, there will be differences, which are shaped by your choice of text, your teaching objectives and the needs of your children
- help you choose the right book at the right time based on focused assessments
- provide guidance for school professional development sessions or self-study
- support you to make the best use of the independent learning opportunities for the rest of the class.

Guided reading is one part of a reading curriculum. It is a teaching methodology and it makes some assumptions about how children learn and how they learn to read. These theories shape the way the lessons are structured and organised, and influence the role of the teacher.

Some aspects of a guided reading lesson remain the same, whatever the teaching purpose. These are as follows:

- **Lesson structure**

All guided reading lessons follow a three-section pattern: before reading, during reading and after reading.

- **Group instruction**

All guided reading lessons take place with groups of children.