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Welcome to **ATTACK!** a two-page occasional publication. Most of **ATTACK!** will be concerned with the holistic curriculum which, if acted on, is a fundamental way to undermine the present undemocratic education system. Don't be discouraged if opportunities to teach holistically are limited, do your best, be a guardian, and act as a witness to this culturally significant and inspiring way of teaching and learning. **ATTACK!** is a partner to <https://networkonnet.wordpress.com>

Attack! 88 A threshold timetable Part 2

Reading continued

If reading is, indeed, a highly valued activity:

Then the freedom to read should have considerable precedence throughout the day

Of course, it is not absolute freedom of choice

But teachers should go out of their way to accommodate that choice.

In a threshold developmental reading programme, children should have considerable choice in the materials they read:

A central reading philosophy will be the 'I can read' developed so beautifully developed by stjcs – a gift

Younger children should choose their *Ready to Read* and supporting reading materials, and have an even wider choice in their independent reading

Older children should always have an independent reading book on hand

And teachers should make it their business to know what it is, and celebrate it when completed

They should challenge children: What book are you reading at the moment?

They should further challenge children by encouraging them to widen the scope of their reading.

There are plenty of other opportunities for choice in reading:

If thematic reading is being taken, children should choose from amongst a list of journals, bulletins, books, articles, and so on

For activities at the end of reading there should always be a choice

Children should never do worksheets, book reviews, written analyses, written-question answering, unless they have chosen to do so.

Children's reading is enriched by having the stimulus of other children's ideas –

As a result there should be:

- Shared reading using enlarged print books or sets of books
- Language experience
- Story reading to children
- Thematic reading
- Drama
- Partner reading
- Interactive reading using computers
- Story reading from tapes
- Song and poetry reading
- Investigative reading (using reference books and other reading material)

- Reading material on display around the room (often associated with partner reading)
- Certain reading activities within context (cloze, alphabet, matching, and construction of sentences)
- Own written language reading.

This variety of reading brings further opportunity for choice:

Children can choose to continue with an activity in preference to a subsequent activity suggested by the teacher

Or choose to do an activity suggested on their initiative.

The concepts of print should occur throughout the reading programme in a contextual way:

There is a tendency for teachers to become overly involved in the 'pathology' of reading

That is, analysing and making moves to correct reading failure

Care should be taken not to allow techniques developed for children with serious reading problems to become techniques for general use in regular reading programmes.

Children with dyslexia (and all children with serious reading difficulties) should be taught reading within the same reading philosophy as all children are taught within, that is holistically, in context, and with meaning:

There should be generous amounts of one-to-one reading (one-to-one provides a magic all of its own) with the same person, and the reading should maintain meaning and interest – compared with some other readers, though, more attention will need to be given to the parts of words

On the understanding that children with dyslexia should be taught holistically, children, if possible, should be taught reading within schools (I know this can be very difficult to maintain given the meagre allocation of special teaching funding, but that would be the ideal).

The greatest challenge in reading is not to teach children to read, it is to get them to enjoy reading:

A major cause of children not enjoying reading is a lack of fluency in reading

And a major cause of a lack of fluency in reading is learning to read in a highly structured, rather than a holistic, naturalistic way

Teachers should focus children on clusters of words and their meanings

Rather than on single words and their insides.

The best way for children to build up letter-sound associations is by participating in a range of holistic, contextual reading language activities.

The best way to achieve a holistic, naturalistic approach to reading is to:

- Build on, and maintain the 'I can read' attitude to reading
- Make reading enjoyable
- Undertake letter-sound association and word study subtly
- Encourage independence in reading
- Allow reading to occur at most parts of the day
- Use a variety of reading materials and experiences: enlarged print, shared books, individual readers, writing of language, reading of own written language, songs, poems, comics, language experience, tape recorders, computers, word processors, and so on
- See language as something that occurs throughout the curriculum and the day
- Make reading a highly valued activity.

That's the threshold timetable so far.

Continued in Part 3

