

The benefits

Readers are books based on well-known stories which are designed for language learners. They allow learners to read at a level appropriate for them, whether that is A1 or C1. Stories include modern classics, contemporary fictions, short stories and plays. Readers allow learners to read extensively, in contrast to the intensive reading usually done in class. There are questions which help learners to check their comprehension as they read. There is also a wordlist and additional teacher support materials to help teachers create interesting lessons based around readers. Readers come with or without an audio CD.

There are many benefits to students using readers in the English language classroom.

1 Authenticity

Although readers are simplified for different levels of learners, the stories remain authentic as they are based on existing books or films.

2 Skills development

No matter what their level, students can develop all four skills. Students predominantly develop reading skills but they can also develop their listening skills through the use of the audio CD. They can develop speaking and writing skills through classroom or homework tasks and activities.

3 Language input

Students receive language input at a level appropriate to them. They consolidate their existing knowledge of language by seeing it in action. They can also develop their vocabularies by seeing new language. Extra practice materials in the books can help students to notice new vocabulary.

4 Development of autonomy

Students can be encouraged to make decisions about their learning by selecting the book they want to read, deciding when to read it, how often to read it, what kind of vocabulary to note down etc. When reading takes place outside the classroom learners develop independence.

5 Motivation

When readers have the right book, they are motivated to spend time developing their language skills, whether that is in or outside the classroom. Learners can enjoy using their English skills to experience another time and place, or see the world from a different perspective. The sense of accomplishment when finishing a book in English can help to recognise their progress in English, as well as motivate them to continue their studies.

How to exploit Readers

There are many ways that readers can be exploited in class. Here are a few of those ideas:

- Students read and summarise a chapter for another student in the class.
- Students note down useful vocabulary and teach it to another student.
- Students write a social media feed from the perspective of one of the characters in the book.
- Students role play an interview with one of the characters in the book.
- Students make predictions about what will happen as they read.
- Students write the dialogue for and act out the scene from a book.
- Students write a review of the book.
- Students write a comparison of the book and the film.

Selecting Readers

There are benefits and drawbacks to asking a class to read the same book and encouraging students to choose a book for themselves. With the former, the class can participate more easily in activities based on that book as everyone is reading the same thing. The teacher can create wonderful lessons that encourage analysis, discussion and creation based on that book. However, encouraging students to select a book of their choice may result in more motivation to read that book, as not everyone in the class will have the same interests.

Pearson readers can be found at <https://readers.english.com/>. On this page you can find access to the catalogue of books as well as sample teaching resources which accompany readers.

Levels 2–3 books are those appropriate for A2 level learners. *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll is a classic children's book that may be appropriate for the core of the class. *David Copperfield* by Charles Dickens is a Level 3 book which is likely to stretch those learners who are already at a solid A2 level.

