



Pearson

# Rapid – a key part of growing reading confidence



School name:  Orchard Primary School, Wishaw

Number of pupils:  220

Region:  North Lanarkshire

School type:  Primary and Nursery, Language and Communication Unit

Area type:  Town

Pupil Equity Funding %  30%

## Key points to take away

- Rapid books look **age-appropriate while offering stage-appropriate text**; the combination of fiction and non-fiction within each book offers choice.
- Rapid Reading **works well for Active Learning**, and is a good fit with the North Lanarkshire Active Literacy strategy.
- Rapid Reading can be used to **help children keep up as well as catch up** with their reading to ensure they don't fall too far behind.

## Background

Orchard Primary is one of North Lanarkshire's newest primary schools, with around 220 children. They have been open for one academic year (2016-17), and are just starting their second year. The school has a mixed catchment, including some areas of extreme deprivation, and other areas which are the opposite. In addition, they run a specialist Language and Communication Centre for pupils with identified autism who come from various primary schools and nurseries. Orchard's pupil equity funding (PEF) is being used in part to fund two specialised teachers to deliver a targeted equity curriculum alongside a broader equity curriculum.

*“Rapid works with the North Lanarkshire Active Literacy strategy – so it fits right in with our approach to the curriculum.”*

## Age-appropriate, accessible and effective

Head Teacher, Jill Woodward brought Rapid to Orchard when it opened in 2016 having used it in her last two schools where she experienced what a powerful tool it can be for supporting struggling learners. The school has invested in all of the Rapid materials, including the online Rapid Reading collection.



Orchard Primary School

One of the things Jill likes most about Rapid is that it allows her to teach children who are reading below the expected standard for their age with age-appropriate books, rather than the typical banded books for infants. Rapid allows these children to read books which look age appropriate while still having stage-appropriate material. Jill also likes the fact that Rapid is a good fit for the North Lanarkshire Active Literacy approach; she can use the Rapid texts as 'mini-novels' for children who can't access

Harry Potter or other mainstream novels, for example. This allows her to use the same teaching strategies with students who are behind and the rest of the class, helping them to catch up.

## Using Rapid for early intervention

Another key benefit of Rapid from Jill's point of view is the simple yet effective approach that allows staff to feel confident in delivering it, offering a concrete framework and valid alternative when mainstream approaches aren't working. Jill has evolved her use of Rapid over time, initially using the programme only with children in P4-7 who were showing signs of a significant reading delay, but now she uses it in P3 and even P2, as soon as children look as though they are not making expected progress through the standard banded books.

Children likely to benefit from a Rapid intervention are identified through the ongoing planning and tracking dialogue between Jill and her staff members. Each of the identified children then undergo a baseline assessment to ensure they start at the Rapid Reading level appropriate to them, and so that progress can be tracked for evaluation purposes. Rapid interventions are used frequently, as a 'quick strike' to help children who have been identified as needing a little support to keep up – as well as catch up. This ensures that no child falls too far behind. Once children have made sufficient progress they are moved back onto the mainstream scheme.

*“ Children in the centre experience spikes and troughs in progress. It really helps to be able to hand them a book which they find much more engaging for their level, and the incorporation of facts and non-fiction are of great benefit to these children. ”*

## Building confidence for really struggling readers

In addition to being used in school, Rapid is also used in the school's Language and Communication centre, where it is having a really positive impact in terms of increased engagement and progress even with previously non-readers. Rapid books offer an alternative, shorter read, while the format – fiction and non-fiction all in one book – gives variety and manageable chunks of text.



*Jill Woodward, Head Teacher*

Jill reports huge gains in reading confidence among these children: "I'm seeing children who are able to re-engage with other reading approaches and schemes when they come off Rapid. They are far more confident and feel good about their reading." In her previous school, Jill recalls the success story of two brothers, one in P3 and one in P5, both struggling with reading. The younger boy was keen but hadn't managed to develop the skills or confidence to read beyond a P1 level, whereas the older boy had become very disengaged and hated reading. Using Rapid Reading, supported by teachers and the North Lanarkshire Active Literacy strategy, both boys soon progressed through the literacy bands – and both came out the other side as confident, happy readers.

## The future

Orchard is excited by the potential of the Rapid online reading resources, and plans to start providing access in after school clubs and at home, so children have more independence in their reading and can develop their comprehension and decoding skills. There are also plans to provide access and spaces for parents to use Rapid with their children, to encourage parental involvement and family learning.

*Find out more*

See more case studies at

[www.pearsonprimary.co.uk/impact](http://www.pearsonprimary.co.uk/impact).