



**Total Words**

By Achieve Psychology For Learning

# Teacher

Information and Ideas



Using Total Words Books, Activities  
and Reading Progress App

# Total Words Reading System

The Total Words reading system has two objectives:

1. To create motivated, confident, competent readers
2. To generate rapid reading progress

Our approach to learning is positive and practice-based. Students read a high number of words each day; with a focus on fluency and accuracy.

Learning is measured by the number of practices required for a skill to be established. Learning is a connection between students and learning opportunities. The function of our reading system is to provide effective learning connections for students.

The system is simple. Total Words delivers learning opportunities through books designed for learning, a progress App, and learning activities which are designed to show how reading can be meaningful in every-day situations (like having a conversation and sharing knowledge!).

The learning process is straightforward: **make progress every day.**

## How to be a competent reader

- Read every day with books *designed* for learning.
- Get immediate, daily feedback. Know how many words have been read, how many times they need to be read for them to be learnt.
- Learn *your way*. Use data to find out what works best for your learning.
- Think about what you've read. Find out about topics.
- Be confident, be positive. There are no words you can't read, just words that are waiting for you to learn them.
- Enjoy your achievements.

# About Total Words Books

Total Words books function to generate rapid progress and to create confident, motivated readers. Total Words books are expertly designed for learning to read. Features include:

- **Short, concise length, written to specific lengths**, short enough to be read cover-to-cover, and long enough to make sure students have to actively think about and engage with text details.
- **Word Counts** in each book to allow precise measures of the number of words read, the opportunities for learning new words and the number of repetitions required to increase reading accuracy and speed.
- **Friendly page formats** with no pages of solid text.
- **Real topics, relevant vocabulary** describing history, science, biography and social events in scenarios that inform students and increase their knowledge.
- Digital library for **inclusive access** to books - ensures children read whole books, every page and for individual reading performances to be recorded.
- **Highlighted key words**, reading lists, before-after word checks.
- **Summaries of content** in each book to prepare students for topic vocabulary.
- **Five titles per topic** offer a range of topic angles of interest easier and it is much easier to read five short books than one long book.
- **Repeated key words** in text.

# Design-for-Learning Features

Total Words books come in four ranges: To Start, Aspiring, Challenge, Curriculum.

The books are written to specific lengths. The number of words in a book determines the learning potential for specific skills.

Our books are written and designed in levels of **progress potential**. Each range of books target specific reading skills: recognising words, learning words, reading with confidence, extending vocabulary, sustaining reading focus, understanding content.

## **To Start**

### **50-100 words**

Short books with repeated words and phrases from every day experiences designed to introduce children to words and word-patterns.

## **Aspiring**

### **100-250 words**

Books to build a reading vocabulary, practise high frequency words, and introduce key topic vocabulary.

## **Challenge**

### **300-600 words**

Books with topic details to extend key vocabulary, to read, understand and extend topic knowledge.

## **Curriculum**

### **800-1300 words**

Books to read with sustained focus, to extend vocabulary, to gain topic knowledge, understand and extend connection to topic content.

# Using Total Words:

## Three Components for Effective Learning

Books are for	Activities are for	App Data is for
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Topic details</b></li> <li>• <b>Topic vocabulary</b></li> <li>• <b>Reading longer texts</b></li> <li>• <b>General knowledge</b></li> <li>• <b>Focused reading for purpose</b></li> <li>• <b>Ideas to enrich writing</b></li> <li>• <b>Reading confidence</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding information in text</li> <li>• Understanding content</li> <li>• Recalling details</li> <li>• Expressing opinions</li> <li>• Sharing topic details</li> <li>• Making decisions</li> <li>• Choosing research</li> <li>• Grammar skills</li> <li>• Planning creative projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting personal reading challenges</li> <li>• Focussed skill-improvement</li> <li>• Increasing the number of words read in a day or in a week</li> <li>• Increasing reading speed,</li> <li>• Reading books at 100% accuracy</li> <li>• Preparing students for SATs</li> </ul>

# Using Each Book Range

## Curriculum

Curriculum books are designed for students to:

- Read to learn, to increase topic knowledge
- Read and understand topic details
- Find information in text
- Use text to form opinions, extend their thinking skills, recall and curiosity
- Sustain periods of focused reading
- To read confidently and fluently

The Total Words App is used with the Curriculum books range to:

- Increase topic vocabulary through prompted words
- Ensure reading speed is adequate for classroom expectations
- Practice reading books at 100% accuracy
- Manage an attainment gap between students
- Support independent self-challenge reading in school and at home

## Challenge

Challenge books are designed for students to:

- Gain confidence in reading longer text
- Make rapid progress in reading accuracy and speed
- Increase their reading vocabulary
- Read text for meaning
- Learn topic details from text

## The Total Words App is used with Challenge Range books to:

- Provide immediate feedback on daily reading accuracy and speed
- Ensure students read new words correctly (using the voice prompt)
- Enable students to challenge themselves to read more, increase their skills
- Record how many words a student can read in a day
- Show the relationship between the number of words read each day and progress

## Aspiring

### Aspiring books are designed for students to:

- Establish a reading vocabulary
- Build their confidence in reading whole books
- Make rapid progress in vocabulary, accuracy and reading fluency
- Learn that reading progress is achieved through repeated, correct practices
- Expect to read meaningful text

## The Total Words App is used with Aspiring Range books to:

- Show daily progress
- Show how many words can be read in a day, in a week
- Practice reading new words correctly
- Show how many words can be learnt over period of time
- Share clear evidence of reading achievements

# Total Words Reading Progress App

## What is the App for?

To answer the question: *Is this child making reading progress today?*

## What Does the App do for Teachers?

- Provides immediate data on student performance that can be used to plan individual and group programmes for progress
- Highlights words that students need to learn
- Let's teachers share evidence of student achievements with parents
- Shows where additional resources can be used most effectively and where they are not required

## What do the Books + App do for students?

- Tells students how many words they have read, how many words they know, how long it takes to read each book they select
- Let's students describe exactly what progress they have achieved in reading sessions (i.e. what they have been able to do today that they could not do yesterday)
- Builds confidence by showing what progress is being made, day-by-day, week-by-week
- Keeps a record of the total number of words read each week
- Shows what effect more practices have on the number of words read, the number of new words learnt, reading speed and accuracy



# Activities

Reading is more than saying words on a page. Reading can build knowledge, belonging, confidence.

Research is more than looking at and copying a sentence from the internet. Knowledge is having information that a student can share, ask questions about and be inspired by.

Readers in the 21st century need to be able to read accurately, understand, identify key details, ask questions, talk about content and form opinions.

Total Words books have accompanying downloadable activities to practice word recognition, reading comprehension, language development and thinking skills — recalling details, sharing opinions, asking questions — **reading for meaning.**

## Total Words Reading Activities are about:

- Thinking about content
- Being inspired
- Talking about topics
- Planning more learning
- Remembering details
- Learning more words
- Planning projects
- Forming an opinion
- Noticing word patterns
- Reading with a purpose
- Showing what you know

<b>Book Range</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Accompanying Activities</b>	<b>Targeted Skills</b>
<b>To Start</b>	<b>Up to 150 words</b>	Three pages of simple word and sound identification activities at the end of each book	Noting features of words, letters and sounds from text.
<b>Aspiring</b>	<b>Up to 250 Words</b>	<b>Four activities with each book:</b> Pre-teach word study, Pre-teach sentence study, Language Extension – vocabulary, Language Extension - Using Language	Using key words, finding details in text, phonic patterns, sequencing details, verbal recall, explaining, describing, changing tense, asking questions, saying the opposite, meanings of keywords.
<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Up to 600 Words</b>	<b>Six activities accompany each book:</b> Reading for Information, Remembering Details, Topic Thinking Skills, Research Projects, Pre-teach word study, Pre-teach sentence study	Learning vocabulary, reading text for details, sequencing, identifying key content, finding details in text, recalling content, expressing an opinion, share remembered details, using key words, planning research projects, asking questions.
<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>Up to 1300 Words</b>	<b>Six activities accompany each book:</b> Reading for Information, Remembering Details, Topic Thinking Skills, Research Projects, Pre-teach word study, Pre-teach sentence study	Extending vocabulary, reading text for details, recounting content, recall in sequences, identifying key details, editing skills, word meanings, express an opinion, explaining events or concepts, asking question, optional project work.

# Using Total Words

Where do we start? What skills does this child need?

Skill required:	Book range + App
Learn first words	To Start, Aspiring
Learn high frequency words	Aspiring
Build up a reading vocabulary	Aspiring, Challenge
Extend topic vocabulary	Challenge, Curriculum
Read more accurately	Aspiring, Challenge
To make fast progress	Aspiring, Challenge
Read to remember details.	Challenge, Curriculum
Read longer texts, building up reading endurance	Challenge, Curriculum
Prepare for SATS	Curriculum
Read fluently	Aspiring, Challenge, Curriculum
Read faster	Aspiring, Challenge, Curriculum

# No Levels - Only Data-Driving Progress

We don't have books designated into levels of difficulty. The data that the system collates provides clear measures of the progress that a child can make in reading each book and within each reading session.

We want to know what a child can learn not what they have learnt so far. Age levels that just tell us that the way they have tried to learn to read have not produced a great outcome. Individual data from day 1 is more useful because it will tell us what a child can learn in a book, in a day, in a week.

It doesn't make sense to be saying *"Ok, we want you to make fast progress but, we're only going to let you start with books that you can already read"*. We are building learning confidence, showing a child that they can learn, can learn fast and we will show them how they can learn with repeated practices, and saying words correctly.

For fast progress each book needs to offer scope for progress (i.e. have a number of words that a child can't read on the first time they read that book, words that they can learn with repeated practices.) Unknown words are a source of learning potential, not a sign of lack of ability.

Allocating children to levels designates some children to slow-lane learning. They stay in that lane until it's too late; many never learn to read competently with accuracy and fluency.

The language that we use in everyday living is not organised in layers of difficulty. We learn language by hearing, understanding and using what is relevant to us not by being allocated a range of words that are 'at our level'.

# Using Total Words App Data

Who For	Key Focus Questions for App Data
Whole Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are all students able to read at expected levels (100-150 by Year 6)?</li><li>• What are the most frequently unknown words?</li><li>• What is the discrepancy between high attaining students and below expected levels students?</li></ul>
Group Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How many words are being read during reading sessions?</li><li>• How many practices are required to achieve 100% accuracy?</li><li>• What is the highest number of words in a session that each child has read?</li><li>• How much potential for increasing reading vocabulary has this book provided?</li><li>• What is the impact on speed and accuracy by re-reading this book?</li></ul>
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How many words are being read each day?</li><li>• What was baseline reading speed and accuracy?</li><li>• What increases in baseline skills have been achieved? How many unknown words are gained?</li><li>• How well is this student retaining previous vocabulary?</li></ul>
Targeted Skill Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How many words does this child need to read each day? What is the impact of repeated reading practices?</li><li>• What is the impact of selected activities on accuracy, increases in vocabulary and reading speed?</li><li>• How many words can this child learn in a week?</li></ul>
Reading at Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is the impact of reading practices at home on reading speed, accuracy, number of new words learnt?</li><li>• How many practices can this child complete at home?</li></ul>

# Reading with a Whole Class

Mr Jesson decided to use the Total Words **Science and Medicine** books for a week of guided reading in his Year 5 class. There are five titles in the **Science and Medicine** library set, with a range of supporting activities. Over five days the class can read all five books to gain wide topic knowledge, and Mr Jesson can select the activities that best suit each group.

Class reading group	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>Red</b>	Penicillin + <i>Pre-Teach Word Study and Sentence Study</i>	Dr Snow Scientific Thinker of Soho + <i>Pre-Teach Word Study and Sentence Study</i>	Malaria: The Challenge for Scientists + <i>Pre-Teach Word Study and Sentence Study</i>	Edward Jenner + <i>Pre-Teach Word Study and Sentence Study</i>	Saving our Smiles; Saving our Bites + <i>Pre-Teach Word Study and Sentence Study</i>
<b>Blue</b>	Saving our Smiles; Saving our Bites + <i>Reading for Information</i>	Penicillin + <i>Reading for Information</i>	Dr Snow Scientific Thinker of Soho + <i>Reading for Information</i>	Malaria: The Challenge for Scientists + <i>Topic Thinking Skills</i>	Edward Jenner + <i>Topic Thinking Skills</i>
<b>Green</b>	Edward Jenner + <i>Reading for Information and Remembering Details</i>	Saving our Smiles; Saving our Bites + <i>Reading for Information and Remembering Details</i>	Penicillin + <i>Reading for Information and Remembering Details</i>	Dr Snow Scientific Thinker of Soho + <i>Reading for Information and Remembering Details</i>	Malaria: The Challenge for Scientists + <i>Reading for Information and Remembering Details</i>
<b>Yellow</b>	Malaria: The Challenge for Scientists + <i>Reading for Information and Research Projects</i>	Edward Jenner + <i>Reading for Information and Research Projects</i>	Saving our Smiles; Saving our Bites + <i>Reading for Information and Research Projects</i>	Penicillin + <i>Reading for Information and Research Projects</i>	Dr Snow Scientific Thinker of Soho + <i>Reading for Information and Research Projects</i>
<b>Orange</b>	Dr Snow Scientific Thinker of Soho + <i>Pre-Teach Word Study and Sentence Study</i>	Malaria: The Challenge for Scientists + <i>Pre-Teach Word Study and Sentence Study</i>	Edward Jenner + <i>Topic Thinking Skills</i>	Saving our Smiles; Saving our Bites + <i>Topic Thinking Skills</i>	Penicillin + <i>Remembering Details</i>

# Reading in Small Groups

Reading in a group used to mean each student read a quarter of a book, every 4th page. The slower the readers, the fewer word practices, the slower the progress. Quite simply, this is not how to make a competent reader. Total Words increases the efficiency of reading groups. Teachers can keep accurate measures of reading practice, monitor individual students and make precise plans for progress.

## Example:

Dolphin Class is studying Science and Medicine. Their class teacher is using the Total Words 'Science and Medicine' books. The class is divided into five groups, with each group to read and report back to the whole class on the information they have read.

Within 20 minutes, the whole class gains knowledge about Science and Medicine. They have access to keywords, the topic is embedded into class discussion and all students can make an informed contribution to the class study.

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
<i>Malaria: The Challenge for Scientists</i>	<i>Saving Our Smiles, Saving Our Bites</i>	<i>Dr John Snow: The Scientific Thinker of Soho</i>	<i>Edward Jenner: Scientist, Doctor, Observer and Experimenter</i>	<i>Penicillin: The Drug That Happened by Chance</i>
<b>Key concepts:</b> Varying solutions to a problem	<b>Key concepts:</b> From History to the present - understanding Dentistry	<b>Key concepts:</b> Creative use of scientific observation	<b>Key concepts:</b> Planned study and experimentation	<b>Key concepts:</b> Observation and research to understand antibodies

# Using Total Words in Secondary Schools

Learning to read doesn't stop at Year 6. Reading to learn is essential in secondary school. Total Words is a reading system that works with secondary schools to deliver:

## Efficient use of time

- Clear consistent evidence of practices and progress
- Independent practice sessions
- Data that can increase student motivation
- Fast progress for students
- Targeted activities to increase reading-thinking skills
- Practice in building reading endurance
- Confidence-building through positive, no-error practices
- Self-driven goal-setting

## Informative texts

Secondary school students learn that they can learn and how they can make fast progress.

## Examples of reading goals that secondary students could select:

- *Read more words this week than last week*
- *Read at least two books to 100% accuracy*
- *Learn all the words on the word prompt list*
- *Read 2 books every day and do one activity*
- *Read over 1000/2000 words each day this week*
- *Go back to a book I read 2 weeks ago and see if I can still read it accurately*



# Total Words for Teaching Assistants

Teaching Assistants become Learner Assistants

Total Words enhances teaching assistants' role in two ways:

- Precise weekly plans with daily learning-process goals to be delivered for each child.
- Providing data as a focus for positive, achievement, learning-focused talk.

## Data-driven Weekly Goals

The Total Words data can be used to set precise, progress-making goals for teaching assistants who are working with individual children. Class teachers can specify daily outcomes, be assured that TA time is delivering effective learning and have clear evidence of what has been delivered and the impact of TA support.

### *Example:*

*Lee: data last week showed that Lee learnt 22 new words. The highest number of words read in a day was 254. In total, last week he read 948 words. The selected goal for this week is to increase the number of words that he reads each day to at least 300 words a day, which will take his weekly total to at least 1500 words.*

*Izzie: data showed that Izzie learnt 10 new words. The highest number of words read in a day was 125. The goal for this week is to increase the number of words read each day to at least 200 per day and to increase the number of new words she learns to 15 for the week.*

## Example: TA Goals

Choose daily or weekly goals:

- *To read at least 200 words each day*
- *To read more words this week than last week*
- *To learn at least 10 new words*
- *To re-read last week's book to see what words have been remembered*
- *To read at least one book with 100% accuracy*
- *To complete at least 3 activities*
- *To read more than 200 words in 3 minutes*
- *Read to Mr XXX/ Ms XXX so they can see what I can do now*

## Example: Weekly Plan for TA

Student	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Aliyah	<p><b>Garden:</b>  <b>Book 1:</b>            210 words.  <i>Who Wants to make a Garden?</i></p> <p>Practice prompted words list</p> <p>Pre-teach <i>On what Pages</i></p> <p>210 words</p>	<p>Book 1            210 words (read twice)</p> <p>Practice prompted words list</p> <p>Pre-teach <i>Fill in the Gaps</i></p> <p>220 words</p>	<p>Book 1:            210 words.</p> <p>Check Accuracy</p> <p><b>Book 2:</b>  <i>Here's the Watering Can</i></p> <p>215 words – read only</p> <p>425 words</p>	<p>Book 2:            215 words.</p> <p>Practice prompted word list.</p> <p>Activities:  <b>Find the Words</b></p> <p>215 words</p>	<p>Book 1 + Book 2</p> <p>Activity:  <b>Match the sentences and Pictures</b></p> <p>Check Words Gained</p> <p>425 words</p>

# The Narrative of Positive Learning: Talking Progress to Make Confident Learners

We talk progress. Each day the conversations between adults and students are about reading progress. There is no imaginary success-line that a student has to cross over which we will then call achievement – progress, any progress is positive and is acknowledged.

## Having progress-centered conversations starts with...

- How many words have been read today?
- How many words have been read correctly?
- What words have you learnt in this book?

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **What would an individual reading session look like?**

The sessions are primarily for reading. The purpose of each session is to read as many words as possible and to read them correctly. Each book may be read 2-3 times in a session, or several books may be read in a session.

### *A session may look like:*

*15-20 mins reading (with an adult or independent practice with the App and word prompt)*

*5 mins data review - discussion on progress and achievements*

*10-15 mins completing selected activities, reviewing word prompt list*

## **What about phonics?**

Phonics is not the only way to learn to read. It is a useful generalising skill, but for some children, reading words as phonic segments is slow and confusing. Total Words books are designed for children to be familiar with whole words first and then to look at word details, always working with solid word knowledge, then looking at specific phonic details that may be useful.

## **If we tell the child the word straightaway, won't they just get dependent on an adult and expect to be spoonfed?**

Children like to show adults what they can do. In the learning relationship, we constantly build a very positive narrative to support personal achievement through daily progress measures.

Isn't it negative for children if an adult takes a note of every time they have to prompt the child for a word they do not know?

No, not if it is presented by a friendly adult as a challenge and not an assessment.

## **What do you do if a child is just 'parroting back' the prompts that an adult has given them, without really reading the words?**

You can do three things:

- 1) Delay the time between an adult prompting a whole sentence and the child being asked to read it so they have to recall after some interference to their memory and therefore need to use different memorising strategies;
- 2) Make sure the child is looking at the words and pointing with their finger while an adult is prompting them;
- 3) Pick out individual words or phrases in sentences and ask the child to read them again.

## **What if a child just makes up a story, not taking any notice of the words on the page?**

Slow the reading down by using longer pauses between an adult prompt and the child's reading; insist they read words correctly; focus their attention on the words in the text by observing word details and fluent phrasing of the sentence content.

# Making Confident Learners

## Learning Wellbeing: Working in Positive Learning Partnerships

Wellbeing isn't an optional add-on to learning—it can be integral to the learning task

When we are relaxed and happy, we can listen and learn. When we experience success, we can be motivated to do more. When the task itself allows us to experience positive emotions, we learn to value the task and to value ourselves. We are what we do.

When using Total Words books for SEN rapid reading interventions, we actively nurture pupils wellbeing by:

### 1. Practising the skills we want.

Pupils practise fluent, accurate reading, without errors. We want pupils to feel what competent reading is like, to know that they can read like a competent reader. If they are unsure or make errors, we tell them words, show them how to read, to look at words and say them correctly. Pupils practise the skills we want.

### 2. Asking success-only questions.

Ask questions that reinforce success, that do not allow failure e.g  
“I saw you read that word correctly, how did you know that that word says ‘Friday?’”

“I can see the garden in this sentence. Can you find that word on another page? How do you know this word says garden?”

“That word ‘asks’ is a tricky one for you. How are you going to try and remember it?”

“I know that this word says ‘allotment’. How do you think I know that it says ‘allotment?’”

### 3. Share the data, share the joy of achievement.

Total Words adds a vocabulary to the language of success. Rather than saying, ‘I did reading today’, a pupil can say, ‘I did reading today. I read 455 words and only needed help with 25.’