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# Teacher's Manual

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Reading for Life







# Teacher's Manual

*SECOND EDITION*

2019

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# Educational Philosophy

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We believe that *all* students deserve a high-quality education and that, with the right support, *all* students can succeed. We believe that teachers are the key to the improvement of our educational system, and for that reason, our program supports teachers through book donations, trainings and coaching.

Additionally, we consider the most powerful tool we can provide a student is literacy. Reading and writing are habits that enrich life, open doors to different opportunities, help people make better decisions and develop critical thinking. Literacy empowers our students to create a better community and world, which is why our curriculum is based on creating readers and writers for life.

We view our students and teachers' native languages and cultures as the basis for strong educational practices. We believe that teachers who are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge are able to make the best educational decisions for their students.

## A New Educational Paradigm

The traditional educational paradigm was established many years ago, and it is no longer adequate to prepare our students with all the knowledge and skills that they need to succeed in today's world. The goal of a reformed education is not simply that our students retain facts, but instead that they become independent learners and critical thinkers who love learning. Together with the National Base Curriculum (CNB in Spanish), we promote a new educational paradigm that is characterized by three fundamental tenets:

- 1** *Critical thinking:* higher order thinking in which the person analyzes and evaluates a topic. Students need to develop critical thinking in schools in order to be able to think for themselves and solve their own problems.
- 2** *Active participation:* involving all students in the learning process through cooperative work and discussions. Students who participate actively absorb more content and learn to work more effectively as a team.
- 3** *Integrated literacy:* the incorporation of reading and writing in all subject areas. Our students not only need to learn to read but also to read to learn. Therefore, it is essential to integrate literacy and its tools in all subject areas.



*The goal of our program, Reading for Life, is to provide literacy tools that facilitate the creation of a new educational paradigm.*

# Education for All: An Inclusive Approach

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At Child Aid, we believe that all students can learn, and we know that education is most successful when adapted to the needs of the students. We recommend differentiating your teaching through varying levels of support, group sizes, and bilingual scaffolds based on the needs of your students.

## Levels of Support

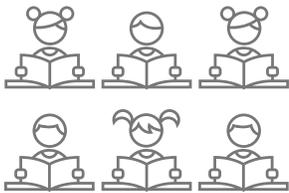
Our goal is for students to be independent readers and writers; however, in order to achieve this, we must model for them and practice together with them. Below you will find a description of these different levels of support, known as the gradual release of responsibility model, which we can implement with our students to guide them to independence:

### The Gradual Release of Responsibility Model:

- > *Thinking Out Loud During Reading or Writing:*  
Modeling for students the reading strategies of good readers and writers. While showing them how to use a reading strategy, we explain why we do what we do.
- > *Shared Reading or Writing:*  
Dividing the responsibilities between the teacher and the students as both read or write the same text. In this way, students can complete a more complex task than they can do independently.
- > *Guided Reading or Writing:*  
Establishing goals and strategies for students in reading or writing and monitoring their progress while they work, supporting them when necessary.
- > *Independent Reading or Writing:*  
A time when students guide their own learning by reading or writing at their level, while practicing the strategies they have learned.

# Group size

Not all students learn in the same way or at the same speed. By working with different group sizes, students can receive additional support in the areas that are challenging for them. Here you will find several grouping strategies that can be used in the classroom:



## > *Whole Group Instruction*

Working with the entire class is the most effective approach when you have the same goals for all students. In this model, the teacher is guiding instruction. Reading aloud, writing, and shared reading itself are effective in this model.



## > *Small Group Instruction*

Working with small groups gives students the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities, collaborate in teams and support each other to achieve the objectives. Groups can be formed based on students' abilities and the teacher can focus on specific groups depending on the students' needs. Alternatively, students with differing levels of ability can work together in a group and learn from one another. Guided reading and writing can be very effective in small groups.



## > *Independent Work*

Independent worktime requires students to be responsible for their own learning. Individual work should be a task that the student can complete independently and can occur while a teacher meets with a small group of students. Students can also work on guided reading or writing projects individually while a teacher circulates, monitoring their progress.

# Bilingual Scaffolding

Since a student's native language is a valuable resource in itself, continuous acquisition and development of cognitive skills in this language is preferable, when possible. Research shows that students who learn to read first in their native language develop better skills, both in their first and second languages. However, when resources are not available for teaching literacy in the student's first language, the native language remains an important resource for learning to read and write in the second language. There are many ways to use a student's native language to develop literacy skills. Here are some suggestions to use in the classroom:



*"You live a new life for every new language you speak."*

- Czech proverb



*"Language is the road map of a culture. It tells you where its people come from and where they are going."*

-Rita Mae Brown

- > ***Books in the Mayan languages*** that you can read to your students in their native language. In particular, for younger students who do not speak much Spanish, this is a way of working on the most advanced thinking skills, as well as the development of L1 (Language 1) vocabulary.
- > ***Preview and review in the students' native language*** Before reading a book in Spanish, you can review the book in the students' first language, looking at the pictures and talking about what they see or asking questions that are based on their prior knowledge related to the subject. This allows students with limited skills in the Spanish language to understand the book more easily. Reviewing the book in the first language after reading will allow you to check students' understanding.
- > ***Vocabulary work*** can be useful for more advanced students. Before reading a book, you can identify words that can be difficult for students and provide either a translation in the first language or simple definitions. This practice increases reading comprehension and helps enrich students' vocabularies.

# Students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities

In each group of students, there is always a variable range of skills, talents and ease with which they can learn academic subjects. In addition to the standard range, one or more students almost always faces a severe learning disability, or a developmental disability, such as a low intellectual level, autism or other physical or genetic conditions. Child Aid follows three principles to meet the needs of students with special abilities:

- 1** *Inclusion:*  
We believe that every student, without exception, has the right to and benefits from studying in the same classroom as his or her classmates and from having the opportunity to play and socialize with the group.
- 2** *Appropriate Education:*  
We believe that each student, without exception, has the right to an appropriate education in which he or she can learn successfully, show progress, and have access to the same content as his or her peers, even if modified for his or her specific level of difference.
- 3** *High Expectations:*  
We know that teacher expectations can affect students' progress, positively or negatively, and that there is a tendency to have low expectations for children who have different needs. Therefore, we believe it is essential to maintain high expectations for every student. Each student can learn to read, for example, with sufficient personalized attention, access to texts, practice, and time.

Our program, Reading for Life, is designed for all students. We believe that, with the appropriate interventions, such as those already mentioned above, and the tools and assistance provided by our coaches, every child will succeed.

# Child Aid's Coaching Model

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The Child Aid Team is in a continuous process of growth and learning because we always have more to learn. We believe that, through coaching, we can improve our teaching practices, and therefore student outcomes, more quickly. Coaching is a method that consists of accompanying a teacher in the classroom in order to meet goals or develop specific skills to improve his or her instruction. Coaches have particular experience and can help individuals and groups using a variety of tools, including: the definition of goals, questioning, modeling, co-planning, classroom observation and motivation, among others.

After each training, you will have two to three coaching sessions with a literacy coach (Coordinador técnico de lectoescritura, or CTL, in Spanish), who will visit your classroom. These sessions are important to help you apply the material to your classroom. According to our personalized pedagogy, the focus of our coaching will depend on the needs of the teacher and will follow the support levels of the gradual release of responsibility model. That is to say, we will provide: modeling, co-planning and co-teaching, observation and feedback.

Within the materials of each training, you will find suggestions that will help you prepare for the coaching sessions.

## Other Literacy Activities

Throughout the school year, the CTL assigned to your school will organize various literacy activities at the school level. At the beginning of the school year they will introduce your school to the book donation and help you classify and organize the books for your library. The support provided during the school year will depend on the needs of each school but may include: the creation of reading corners in each classroom, a book lending system in the library, a “Star Readers” reading incentive program, or additional coaching sessions. For more information on these activities that promote the habit of reading, see Annex C.

# About the Program

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The Child Aid program is a four-year program divided into eight trainings, with two to three individual coaching sessions after each training. During each training, you will participate in interactive learning activities and reflect on your classroom experiences with facilitators and other teachers.

## Trainings

### > Year 1: Building Critical Readers

#### *Training 1: Reading Aloud*

In this training, we will identify both basic comprehension and critical thinking skills and use them to plan a read-aloud.

#### *Training 2: Reading Strategies*

In this training, we will define several reading strategies and techniques, modeling them for our students using the gradual release of responsibility model.

### > Year 3: The Writing Process

#### *Training 5: Writing to Entertain*

In this training, we will introduce the writing process for the purpose of writing to entertain.

#### *Training 6: Writing to Inform*

In this training, we will apply the writing process to informative writing, integrating writing into different areas.

### > Year 2: Reading Non-fiction

#### *Training 3: Non-fiction Strategies*

In this training, we will learn reading strategies and techniques for non-fiction texts.

#### *Training 4: Integrating Reading into Subject Areas*

In this training, we will integrate the practices of a good reader in different subject areas.

### > Year 4: Facilitating Learning

#### *Training 7: Personalized Learning*

In this training, we will develop a focus lesson based on the needs of a group of students.

#### *Training 8: A New Chapter for Education*

In this training, we will reflect on everything learned during the four years to create a new educational paradigm.

# Use of the Manual

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This volume of the manual includes agendas and supporting documents for the two trainings that make up the first year of this curriculum. The objective of each training appears with the agenda in the training materials.

This manual is yours. Feel free to take notes and underline sections of interest. Throughout the manual you will find bullet points where you can add relevant information from your own experience.



*In the manual you will find text boxes with the National Base Curriculum (CNB in Spanish) logo. These boxes indicate connections between the ideas in the manual and suggestions and requirements of the CNB. For more information, explore the CNB in the following link: [http://www.mineduc.gob.gt/DIGECUR/?p=CNB.asp&t=Curriculo\\_Nacional\\_Base\\_CNB](http://www.mineduc.gob.gt/DIGECUR/?p=CNB.asp&t=Curriculo_Nacional_Base_CNB)*

You will also find sidebars in the text with teaching tips that you can use to improve your literacy instruction.



*Teaching Tips*

Additionally, throughout this manual you will find symbols for each of the three tenets of educational reform. When you see a symbol, stop and ask yourself: how does the idea described here represent this specific tenet?



*Active Participation*



*Critical Thinking*



*Integrated Literacy*

In Annex A, there is a toolbox with techniques, which are activities and games to enrich learning. These are just a sample of the activities that can be used in the classroom. In Annex B, you will find blank templates that can be photocopied and used with your class. In Annex C, we include a list of literacy activities that promote habits of good readers. See Annex D for suggestions on classroom management and assessments.

# Glossary

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- Active participation:** involvement of all students in the learning process through cooperative work and discussions.
- Basic comprehension:** the literal understanding of something read or heard, including the retention or interpretation of facts.
- Coach:** the person who helps a teacher or group of teachers improve their teaching practices in literacy.
- Coaching:** method that consists of accompanying a teacher in the classroom with the objective of meeting goals or developing specific skills to improve the teacher's instruction.
- Coaching session:** session in the classroom with the support of a literacy coach to help the teacher put into practice the content of the trainings.
- Thinking skills:** mental abilities that develop progressively through guided instruction. In Child Aid, the four skills we develop in students are: retention, interpretation, analysis, and creation.
- Critical thinking:** higher order thinking in which the person analyzes and evaluates a topic. Students need to develop critical thinking in schools in order to be able to think for themselves and solve their own problems.
- Fiction:** genre of books characterized by imaginary events.
- Formative evaluation:** evaluation that measures student progress during a class, course or year. It helps the teacher adjust his or her teaching processes according to the needs of the students.
- Gradual Release of Responsibility Model:** pedagogical approach through which the teacher provides the necessary support to students, progressively giving more responsibility to the learner until he or she is able to do the skill independently.
- Inferences:** the act and effect of inferring (deducing something, drawing a conclusion from something else, leading to a result). To make inferences in reading, previous experiences are combined with textual clues to draw new conclusions.
- Integration:** with regard to literacy, it is the incorporation of reading and writing and its own tools in the other subject areas of learning.

**Literacy:** ability to read and write that includes, as basic elements, phonetic knowledge, fluency and comprehension, as well as analyzing and developing opinions about texts.

**Literacy activity:** series of regularly scheduled events or tasks whose objective is to develop critical thinking skills and habits of good readers.

**Literacy Coach (CTL):** Child Aid staff responsible for providing training and coaching sessions to teachers to support them in applying what they learned to their classrooms.

**Non-fiction:** genre of texts characterized by elements based on real events.

**Paradigm:** model or example. The new education paradigm, defined by the CNB, values three tenets: critical thinking, integrated literacy and active student participation.

**Scaffolding:** support provided to a student to help in his or her learning, which can be removed when the student can complete the task independently.

**Strategy:** series of planned actions that achieve a specific result. Reading strategies, specifically, are mental processes that help readers overcome obstacles to their comprehension.

**Technique:** activity that requires the active participation of the student and always has as a goal a specific objective.



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## Year 1: Building Critical Readers

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*First Training: Reading Aloud*





# 1.0 Agenda

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## Reading for Life First Training: Reading Aloud

*Sponsored by Child Aid*

### Objectives

- > Identify the three tenets of educational reform and explain why they are important.
- > Describe the four thinking skills and apply them to create a lesson plan for a read-aloud.

### Content of Agenda

| ACTIVITY  | TIME  |
|---|-------|
| A. Introduction   | 8:00  |
| B. Shifting Paradigms<br>1.1 A New Educational Paradigm<br>1.2 The Three Tenets of Educational Reform | 8:30  |
| C. The Four Thinking Skills<br>1.3 Basic Comprehension and Critical Thinking Skills                   | 9:30  |
| BREAK   | 10:30 |
| D. Reading Aloud<br>1.4 Reading Aloud   | 10:45 |
| E. Planning a Read-aloud<br>1.5 Lesson Plan for a Read-aloud  | 11:15 |
| F. Practicing a Read-aloud  | 11:45 |
| G. Coaching<br>1.6 Coaching Sessions  | 12:00 |
| H. Evaluation and Distribution of Materials<br>1.7 Preparing for a Coaching Session                   | 12:15 |



# 1.1 A New Educational Paradigm

A **paradigm** is a model or example. The traditional education paradigm was created approximately two-hundred years ago, in a technological landscape very different from the current one. It is amazing how little education in the classroom has changed given how much the world has transformed.

The traditional way of teaching no longer prepares children for the current world in which we live or for the future that awaits them at the end of their studies. It is time for a new educational paradigm. In this new paradigm, the student transforms from passive recipient to active participant. The teacher no longer transmits knowledge but facilitates student learning. Instead of assessing conformity and memorization of facts, the new paradigm values creativity, critical thinking, multiculturalism and collaboration.

Write down your ideas about the two educational paradigms in the table below. What might one expect to see? What might one expect to hear? What activities are characteristic of each paradigm?



*The CNB says that students must be “active agents in their own learning” and teachers must help them to “develop higher-order thinking.”*



*Traditional Paradigm*



*A Reformed Education*



## 1.2 The Three Tenets of Educational Reform

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### What and why?

### How?



#### Active Participation

**Active Participation** means involving all students in the teaching and learning process through cooperative work and discussions. Students who participate actively absorb more content and learn to work more effectively as a team.

- > Read-alouds
- > Questioning
- > Child Aid's Techniques
- > Discussions and group/partner work
- > Clear roles for group work
- > Participation sticks



#### Critical Thinking

**Critical Thinking** is higher-order thinking in which the person analyzes and evaluates a topic. Students need to develop critical thinking in schools in order to be able to think for themselves and solve their own problems.

- > Critical thinking questions
- > Reading Strategies
- > Citing text evidence to justify responses



#### Integrated Literacy

**Integrated Literacy** is the incorporation of reading and writing in all subject areas. Our students not only need to learn to read but also to read to learn. Therefore, it is essential to integrate literacy and its tools in all subject areas.

- > Reading and writing every day in all subject areas
- > Using Child Aid strategies and techniques in other subject areas, like Social Studies and Science



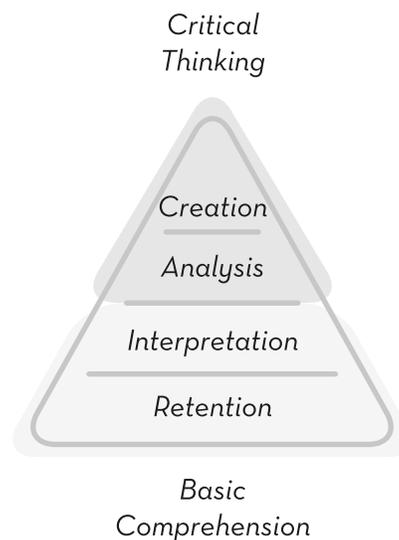
*The goal of our program, Reading for Life, is to provide literacy tools that facilitate the creation of a new educational paradigm.*

## 1.3 Basic Comprehension and Critical Thinking Skills

How do we teach critical thinking to our students? One way to achieve this is through **thinking skills**. These skills, derived from Blooms and Marzano's Taxonomies, are mental abilities that are progressively developed through guided instruction. The skills at the bottom of the pyramid: retention and interpretation, develop **basic comprehension**.



The skills at the top of the pyramid: analysis and creation, require critical thinking. Traditionally, students are asked to demonstrate basic understanding, but it is important to challenge them to think critically so that they learn the skills necessary to succeed in today's world.



The skills should be considered when planning each part of a lesson: the learning objective, the questions, the techniques, or learning activities, and the final product or evaluation.

### Steps for Planning an Effective Lesson

➤ **Verbs and Learning Objectives:**

When defining the purpose of a lesson, it is important to consider the thinking skills; What do you want students to achieve at the end of class? That they can identify the main characters? That they can analyze the impact of the Civil War on the indigenous people of Guatemala? The objective, which is derived from the CNB standards, must include one of the verbs that reflects the level of critical thinking in the lesson.

➤ **Questions:**

The questions you ask during the lesson should correspond to the level of critical thinking of the objective. See page 26 for a table of sample questions.

➤ **Techniques:**

Each Child Aid technique that supports reading comprehension objectives helps develop a thinking skill. See Annex A for a list of all techniques.

➤ **Final product:**

The final product of a lesson should measure the objective and thinking skill selected. For example, if the objective is for students to analyze the impact of civil war, an essay or debate on the subject would be appropriate as a measurable outcome.



# Critical Thinking Skills



## Analysis: Reading for deeper understanding

Students classify, synthesize and consider connections related to the entire text. They learn to read guided by a purpose, to identify key concepts and questions, and to synthesize information and integrate it with prior knowledge.

- *Verbs*
  - Compare, contrast, differentiate, categorize, criticize, defend, argue, evaluate, organize, synthesize, prioritize, resolve, infer
- *Learning Objectives*
  - Compare and contrast the two different versions of the story “Little Red Riding Hood”
  - Evaluate the impact of deforestation on animals in the jungle
- *Questions*
  - How would you solve the problem of water pollution?
  - Was it a good or bad decision for Froggy to swing? Why?
  - What similarities and differences are there between reptiles and amphibians?
- *Techniques*
  - Reading Detectives, Mystery Person, Story Map.
- *Final Products*
  - Research project, presentation, debate, graphic organizer.

## Creation: Expression of original ideas

Students organize and combine information from various texts, sharing their own thoughts in order to create something original. They formulate their own opinions and can express and justify them for a specific audience.

- *Verbs*
  - Build, invent, formulate, hypothesize, imagine, design, debate, create, produce
- *Learning Objectives*
  - Invent your own ending to a familiar story.
  - Imagine an interview with Malala based on her biography.
- *Questions*
  - What would have happened if the arrival of the Spaniards had not occurred?
  - If you could write a new chapter to this story, what would you write?
- *Techniques*
  - Finish the Story, Write your Own Chapter
- *Final Products*
  - An original song or story, persuasive speech, interview

# Questions to Develop Basic Comprehension and Critical Thinking

Although learning is not a linear process, it is most effective to develop your questioning from simple to complex; that is, start with retention and interpretation questions before asking questions that require more critical thinking. The list shown below includes example questions, but you can create your own.



*It is important for students to justify their answers, using text evidence and prior knowledge.*

## Question Stems

### Retention

Who is...?  
What did...?  
What happened first?  
Where did they go?  
How many...?

### Interpretation

What would....be like in your own words?  
How can you apply this to your life?  
How can you connect to what we just read?  
What does...mean?  
Do you know other examples of ...?

### Analysis

What kind of person is ...? As you know?  
Why did he ...?  
How does... affect...?  
Was... a good or bad decision? Why?  
What differences/similarities are there between... and ...?  
How would you solve the problem?  
Which elements indicate us that it is a book of ...?

### Creation

What would be a new end to this story?  
Imagine you are ... What would the story be like from your perspective?  
What would an interview with one of the characters in the story be like?

# 1.4 Reading aloud

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Reading aloud is one of the most important tools for sharing the magic of reading with students. Reading aloud to our students is the perfect opportunity to develop basic comprehension and critical thinking skills and develop the tenets of the new paradigm.



*Reading aloud helps your students to be more critical readers.*

Since they can listen to stories that are more complicated than they could read on their own, it improves their understanding and critical thinking skills. Their vocabulary will increase as they are exposed to more texts. Your modeling will give them the opportunity to improve their fluency and expression.



*Reading aloud stimulates the active participation of students.*

Teacher modeling and questioning gives rise to students having their own conversations with the books and with their classmates about books.



*Reading aloud helps students improve in all their courses.*

Students can learn new Social Studies or Science content from books they read; for example, reading aloud from a biography could introduce a historical figure they are studying in Social Studies. Before students do their own research for a task, a topic can be introduced through a read-aloud.

Finally, by showing reading as something fun and engaging, read-alouds can motivate students to read independently. When teachers read with an expressive voice, students can imagine the personality of the characters and the moments in the story that are exciting, sad, happy, etc. If you enjoy the story, students will enjoy it, too; if you show your enthusiasm and emotion when reading, the students will likewise be excited.



*Listening comprehension, oral expression, and vocabulary development are three skills that the CNB requires students to develop according to the Communication and Language Objectives. All of these skills can be developed through read-alouds. Read aloud to your students daily to give them as many opportunities as possible to develop these skills.*



# 1.5 Planning a Reading-aloud

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## > *Text*

When selecting a text, you should consider several factors, including: text level, genre, vocabulary, and the content related to the learning objective or students' lives.

*Title:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Author:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Book Level:* \_\_\_\_\_

## > *Objective*

Your goal during reading is the development of the thinking skills. You can use your own CNB objective or copy one from the objectives in the Box of Techniques (Annex A). Once you have chosen an objective, make sure that the questions, activities, or techniques you use before, during and after reading support that objective.

## > *Before (5 min)*

- Make connections with previous knowledge and experiences
- Present the book and preview learning
  - (Optional: teach one or two vocabulary words)
- Introduce the learning objective

## > *During (15 min)*

- Develop the learning objective through questions and techniques to encourage the participation of all students

## > *After (5-10 min)*

- Evaluate the learning objective
- Reflect on new learning
- Apply new learning

## > *Materials*

Write down the materials required for this lesson.

# Lesson Plan

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**Text**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_ Book level: \_\_\_\_\_

**Objective:** \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Before:**

Language of Instruction: \_\_\_\_\_

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- 
- 

**During:**

Language of Instruction: \_\_\_\_\_

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- 
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**After:**

Language of Instruction: \_\_\_\_\_

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- 
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**Materials:**

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- 
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## 1.6 Coaching Sessions

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At Child Aid, we believe that we are always growing and developing professionally, and the way to improve as quickly and effectively as possible is through coaching. **Coaching** is a method that consists of accompanying a teacher in the classroom in order to meet goals or develop specific skills to improve his or her instruction. Coaches use a variety of tools, including: the definition of goals, questioning, modeling, co-planning, co-teaching, classroom observation, motivation and feedback, among others.

After each training, you will receive two to three coaching sessions adapted to your needs. Our intention is to support and clarify any doubts about how to use the training materials. We want this to be a comfortable learning environment where you can build on what you learned in the training. Similarly, we as coaches are always open to your feedback on how we can maximize our impact.

# 1.7 Preparing for a Coaching Session

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- 1** Review the content from the first training
- 2** Read aloud to your students using a lesson plan that incorporates questions that develop basic comprehension and critical thinking skills.
- 3** Write down any questions you have for your CTL.

## Space for ideas and Questions



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*This is an excerpt from our Teacher's Manual. If you have questions or would like to learn more about our curriculum, please contact us at:*

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