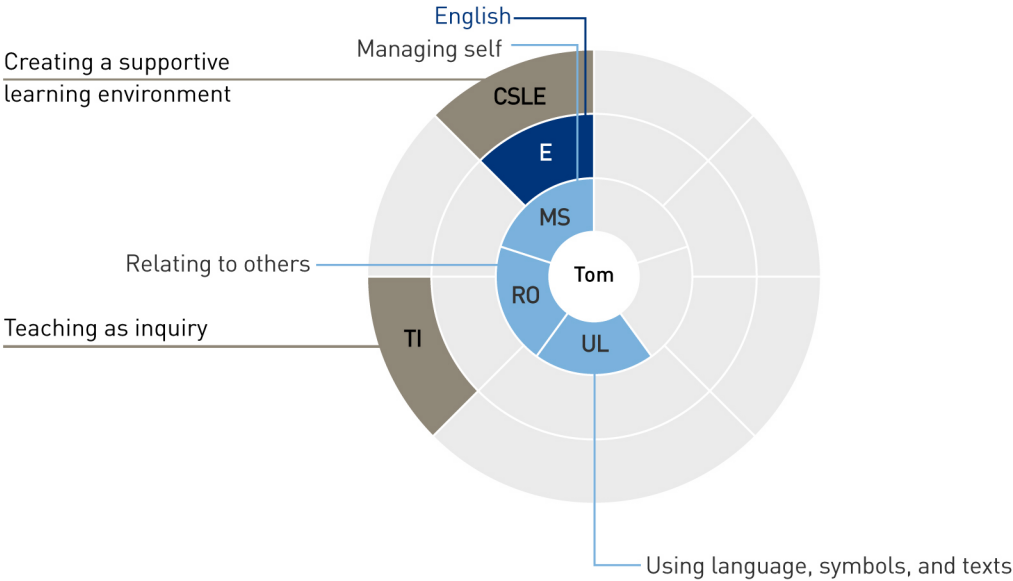


Tom is a buddy reader

Links to the curriculum



Student background

Name	Tom
Age	10
Year	5/6
School	Primary

Tom enjoys numbers and the computer. Tom has autism and attends a small Catholic primary school in a rural town. He is in a class of 22 children. Tom’s school receives ongoing and reviewable resourcing schemes (ORRS) funding to support Tom’s learning; he has 0.1 FTE support from a specialist teacher and 27.66 hours of teacher aide support per week.

Tom is non-verbal and communicates by using sounds, body language, and occasionally picture cards. He is generally passive and his face shows little animation when he is learning. Tom would prefer to be on his own.

Four learning stories

- 1. Tom is a buddy reader** 7 May 2008
- 2. Choosing another book** 13 May 2008
- 3. Tom becomes a listener** 15 May 2008
- 4. A new buddy for Tom** 27 May 2008

This string of learning stories shows Tom becoming more comfortable and confident during “buddy reading” in a variety of situations.

Tom is a buddy reader

Students	Tom	Date	7 May 2008
Topic	Buddy reading	Observer	Paula (teacher aide)

Intended learning

- The children will read a book to their partner.



During interchange, Tom helps the new entrant class for buddy reading. The younger children love listening to Tom read and most take turns at being his buddy.

Today it is Lucy's turn. I help Tom, with a verbal prompt, to choose a book from his browsing box. It is one he has read lots before so he settles quickly and starts reading to Lucy. He works his way methodically from beginning to end and completes the buddy reading task along with the rest of the children.

Tom seems comfortable in this buddy reader role.

Great work Tom – Lucy loves listening to you!

Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Key competencies

Relating to others

Tom is involved in a class activity where sharing a book involves Tom interacting for a sustained period of time with another child.

Using language, symbols, and texts

Tom is using all the skills learnt at reading time to read a book to someone else.

Learning areas

Level 1 English: Listening, Reading, and Viewing: processes and strategies

Tom knows how to use his finger to match one-to-one, he reads left to right, and uses the return sweep without prompting. He knows some high frequency words and can recognise interest words with their picture.

Where to next?

Key competencies

We hope to use a visual prompt so Tom will choose a book himself that he can read to his buddy.

Learning areas

We will use books that are meaningful to Tom about experiences he has had (for example, making pizzas, shifting house, looking after pets) to help him read a wider variety of material.

Choosing another book

Students	Tom	Date	13 May 2008
Topic	Buddy reading	Observer	Paula (teacher aide)

Intended learning

- The children will read a different book to their buddy.



Today, Tom chooses one of his favourite books to read with his buddy reader. I put the books from his browsing box on the desk. I give him a gestural prompt to select a book by pointing at them.



It is a book about colours that we made using some pictures Tom recognises. It is different from the book he usually chooses. Because he knows it well, it will still be a comfortable experience for him without increasing stress levels.

As Tom reads, another classmate walks past and is drawn into listening to Tom's book. The children are all very supportive of Tom's attempts at reading and always finish with a "high five" for a job well done.

Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Key competencies

Managing self

Tom responds to the gestural prompt by selecting a book independently to read to Lucy. He settles to his reading task quickly and shows he is a capable learner.

Learning areas

Level English: Listening, Reading and Viewing: processes and strategies

Tom is able to select a known story that he enjoys. He is able to read the book confidently. Tom re-reads some pages to make text sound better.

Where to next?

Key competencies

We will give Tom the opportunity to become a listener for his buddy reader.

Learning areas

We will slowly and carefully introduce Tom to a variety of books (books using some words he knows; books about pets, vehicles, or food; familiar things for Tom), while still allowing him to read his favourites again and again.

Tom becomes a listener

Students	Tom	Date	15 May 2008
Topic	Buddy reading	Observer	Paula (teacher aide)

Intended learning

- The children will swap roles during their reading.



Tom likes routine and is sometimes reluctant to try new things. I feel he is confident as a reader and it is now time to try a different role.

Today, it is Tom's turn to listen to a story read by his buddy, Lucy. She sits close to Tom and holds the book so he can look at the pictures, engaging him in the story.

You are doing a great job Tom, by staying in the chair and letting your buddy sit close to you to share a book. You show you are a listener by looking at the book Lucy is reading to you.

Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Key competencies

Relating to others

This is the first time Tom takes a different role at buddy reading – he is the listener rather than the reader and demonstrates some appropriate listening skills.

Learning areas

Level English: Listening, Reading and Viewing: processes and strategies

Tom is aware there is a connection between oral and written language. The book was especially chosen as Tom has a puppy of his own and enjoys stories about dogs. This seemed to aid Tom in his new role as listener.

Where to next?

Key competencies

We will provide more opportunities for Tom to practise being a listener and introduce a new buddy for Tom

Learning areas

We will continue to provide familiar texts that Tom can listen to during buddy reading.

A new buddy for Tom

Student	Tom	Date	27 May 2008
Topic	Buddy reading	Observer	Paula (teacher aide)

Intended learning

- The children will read to a new buddy.



The new entrant teacher encourages children in the class to experience buddy reading with a variety of children.

Buddies are swapped around today and Tom joins up with Teia to read a different book, which he has selected independently from his browsing box. Teia is chosen because he is a good reader and will understand the words Tom is saying, as he can already read them.

Tom knows the routine clearly now when he does buddy reading, so he settles quickly in his favourite chair and gets on with the business of reading. He seems very comfortable with his role and is unfazed by the change of buddy.

Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Key competencies

Relating to others

Tom surprises me with his ability to adapt to a change of buddy and he seems to know when it is the time to co-operate.

Managing self

The familiar activity, familiar surroundings and familiar book are constants for him, so introducing a new partner goes very smoothly. He remains on task for the time it takes to share the book.

Learning areas

Level English: Listening, Reading, and Viewing: purposes and audiences

Tom selects another book that he knows well and enjoys. He reads confidently to his new buddy with this familiar text. Tom is beginning to understand that children enjoy listening to him read and sharing books is a valuable activity.

Where to next?

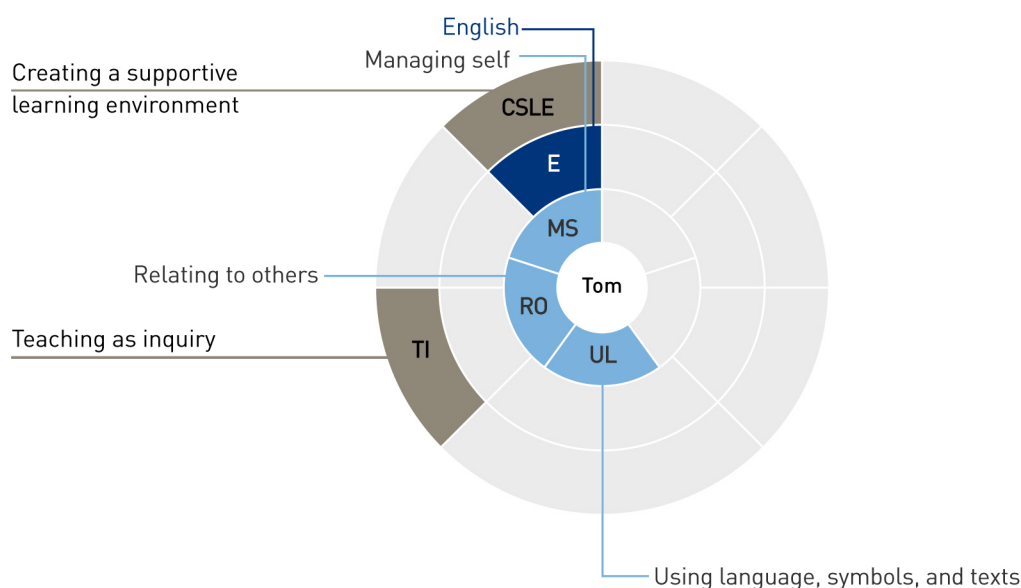
Key competencies

We will use familiar reading books as a way of encouraging Tom to work with different children on a regular basis without adding any stress.

Learning areas

We will keep adding books to Tom's browsing box, and extend the range of books he reads that contain known sight words, without causing anxiety.

Reflection – what these stories exemplify



Key competencies

As Tom feels more comfortable as a buddy reader, he joins in more and takes on different roles (relating to others and managing self). Daily use of familiar and interesting texts enables Tom to grow his confidence as a reader (using language, symbols, and texts).

How might these stories strengthen Tom's identity as a learner?

Tom has really stretched himself on a number of fronts – working with others, working in another room, and trying new roles. He has taken on these challenges and succeeded (agency).

The increased complexity of Tom's learning as a buddy reader has been demonstrated with different people, with different books, and in being a confident listener, as well as a reader (depth). It is also a great feat for Tom to be selecting his own books now without prompting.

For more information on the four dimensions of agency, breadth, continuity, and depth (ABCDs), refer to *Narrative assessment A guide for teachers*.

Learning areas

Level 1 English

This learning is in the Listening, Reading, and Viewing strand of English. In selecting known texts, Tom is confidently demonstrating his knowledge of concepts about print. Listening to others read further supports his growing understanding of an engagement with texts.

Effective pedagogy

What does this tell us about teaching and learning in this setting?

Tom's teacher set up a buddy programme for Tom with another class which further supported Tom's reading and interacting with others. Using resources around the school helps create a supportive learning environment for Tom in the school community.

This teacher was also prepared to make considered adjustments to the environment (buddies, roles, and resources) to further extend Tom's learning area and key competency achievements (teaching as inquiry).

Reflective questions for the reader

“What roles can your students take on in your school?”

“What resources do you have available in your literacy programme that students would be interested in?”

Useful resources

Ministry of Education. (2003). *Effective literacy practice in years 1 to 4*. Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education. (2007). *Literacy learning progressions: meeting the reading and writing demands of the curriculum: a professional tool for teachers: draft for consultation*. Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education. (2008). *The English Language Learning Progressions: a resource for mainstream and ESOL teachers*. Wellington: Learning Media.

Scheuermann, B., & Webber, J. (c2002). *Autism: teaching does make a difference*. Australia ; Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Thomson Learning.

Janney, R., & Snell, M. E. (c2006). *Social relationships and peer support* [Part of the set *Teachers' guides to inclusive practices*] (2nd ed.). Baltimore, Md.: Paul H. Brookes Pub. Co.

Wagner, S. (1999). *Inclusive programming for elementary students with autism*. Arlington, Tx.: Future Horizons Inc.