

Table 3.2: Linking the scaffolding functions to the guiding of readers

SCAFFOLDING FUNCTIONS (FROM WOOD <i>ET AL.</i> , 1976: 98)	USING THE SCAFFOLDING FUNCTION TO GUIDE READERS
<p><i>Recruitment</i></p> <p>‘Enlist the problem-solver’s interest in and adherence to the requirements of the task.’</p>	<p>It is easier to get readers reading if the text is interesting. When planning the teaching and learning interaction, texts must be chosen carefully to ensure that they will interest the pupils.</p>
<p><i>Reduction in degrees of freedom</i></p> <p>‘This involves simplifying the task by reducing the number of constituent acts required to reach a solution. In effect, the “scaffolding” tutor fills in the rest and lets the learner perfect the component sub-routines that he can manage.’</p>	<p>This will occur before the lesson, through the choice of texts and the learning focus. For example, if the focus is on developing inference-making, then it would not be appropriate to choose a text that is difficult to decode. If the teacher really wants to use a text that is difficult to decode, the teacher should read it to the pupils, to simplify the task.</p>
<p><i>Direction maintenance</i></p> <p>‘Learners lag and regress to other aims, given limits in their interests and capacities. The tutor has the role of keeping them in pursuit of a particular objective. Partly it involves keeping the child “in the field” and partly a deployment of zest and sympathy to keep him motivated. The effective tutor also maintains direction by making it worthwhile for the learner to risk a next step.’</p>	<p>This scaffolding function occurs during the course of the lesson. The teacher can keep the reader’s attention on the task by using a variety of strategies, especially through careful questioning.</p>
<p><i>Marking critical features</i></p> <p>‘A tutor, by a variety of means, marks or accentuates certain features of the task that are relevant.’</p>	<p>This scaffolding function occurs both before and during the course of the interaction. The teacher will have considered the text potential before teaching and noted points appropriate for investigation. These points – or critical features – will be highlighted in the dialogue with the pupils.</p>
<p><i>Frustration control</i></p> <p>‘There should be some such maxim as “Problem solving should be less dangerous or stressful with a tutor than without.”’</p>	<p>This scaffolding function occurs both before and during the interaction. The text will have been chosen taking into account its decoding difficulty but also considering its conceptual difficulty. It would be inappropriate to present a text too far removed from the reader’s experiences and interests. During the lesson, the teacher should make links with the reader’s background knowledge through questioning, making it worth the effort needed to understand it.</p>
<p><i>Demonstration</i></p> <p>‘Demonstrating or “modelling” solutions to a task ... The tutor is “imitating” in idealized form an attempted solution tried (or assumed to be tried) by the tutee in the expectation that the learner will then “imitate” it back in a more appropriate form.’</p>	<p>This scaffolding function occurs during the interaction. Teachers can model the strategies they intend the pupil to use. This modelling will involve the teachers verbalizing their thought processes for the pupils.</p>