

In the Classroom

Teachers may want to set aside regular classroom time for *Dominoes* reading. (See the [Lesson Planners](#) for each level to see how reading classes can be organized using the different *Dominoes* components.) *Dominoes* can be used in three classic ways:

1) The Class Reader

- Choose a book that the class can read together. Chapters can be read in class or assigned for homework.
- Build up class motivation before students begin the story by asking them to predict what they think it will be about. Ask them to focus in turn on the title, the front cover illustration, the author's biodata on the title page, the story description on the back cover, the chapter titles, and the story illustrations. Students' predictions should become more developed with each new element they focus on. It is not necessary for them to guess the story content 'correctly' at the prediction stage, but simply to make reasonable hypotheses, which they will check as they read the story. (This pre-reading hypothesizing is a useful reading sub-skill to develop.)
- If a film or TV version of the story is available, before students start reading you can show a short scene from the DVD to introduce the characters, and to make students curious about what is going to happen in the story. Once students begin reading, it can be interesting to compare a story scene with the same scene from the movie (see the '[Movie versus Book](#)' [Graphic Organizer pdf](#) in the [Photocopiables folder](#)).
- BEFORE READING, READING CHECK and GUESS WHAT activities provide an excellent starting point for reader-based discussion work in the classroom.
- Giving each student a [Recycled word spotter](#) sheet can help them to work on new vocabulary. (See the pdf in the [Photocopiables folder](#).)
- Giving each student a [Reading Comparisons](#) [Graphic Organizer](#) can help them prepare for oral or written description work. (See the pdf in the [Photocopiables folder](#).)
- More ideas for engaging reader-related activities can be found in the [Follow-up activities](#).

If students need training in Extensive Reading Skills (reading independently at length outside the classroom) it is best to start by using a Class Reader. Once students are confident with this approach, you can then organize the class into [Reading Teams](#). When students are coping well with Reading Teams, you can finally introduce the idea of a Readers Library. The structured nature of *Dominoes* readers, with their integrated Activity Pages, helps to support students as they progress from controlled class reading, through less controlled group reading, to autonomous individual reading, or extensive reading.

2) Reading Teams

- Students work in similar interest teams, with each team working on a different book at the same time. Chapters can be read in class or assigned for homework.
- Students discuss each chapter with others in their team after they have read it. At very low levels, part or all of this discussion could take place in the students' mother tongue.
- Giving a [Reading Detective Notebook](#) or a [Reading Diary](#) [Graphic Organizer](#) to each student in the team can provide a good basis for this discussion. (See the pdf in the [Photocopiables folder](#).)
- For more varied groupwork, six [Reading Team Cards](#) are provided to help structure post-reading discussion. (See the pdf in the [Photocopiables folder](#).) For teams larger than six, duplicate some cards (but not team captain). For teams smaller than six, eliminate some cards (but not team captain).
- With a mixed-level class, different ability teams can work on different level *Dominoes*.

3) The Class Library

- Set up a *Dominoes* library and let students choose a book to read to match their personal interests and level. Individual self-study reading can be done in class or at home. Classroom time can be used for borrowing books, monitoring progress, checking Activity Answer Keys, discussing books read with other students in the class, doing Projects, taking Tests, or marking Tests using the Test Answer Key.
- Provide each student with a [Dominoes Library Checklist](#) (see the pdf in the [Photocopiables folder](#)) so they can tick each book they finish, charting their route through the library. This helps you check individual progress at a glance.
- Give each student a [Reading Log](#) [Graphic Organizer](#) (see the pdf in the [Photocopiables folder](#)) so they work on improving their reading speed and reduce their reliance on using a dictionary.
- Ask each student to complete a [Book Report](#) [Graphic Organizer](#) about each book they read (see the pdf in the [Photocopiables folder](#)). These can be stuck on card and should go in a 'Book Report Box' to be read by other students thinking of which book to read next.
- Give each student a [Word Counter](#) [Graphic Organizer](#) to keep track of the number of words in each book they read (see the pdf in the [Photocopiables folder](#)).
- More detailed information on managing a class library can be found in [Background to Reading](#) on the OUP Readers website.

Reading Aloud

Stories are more suitable for reading aloud than factual texts. However, reading aloud in front of the class can be embarrassing for less confident students, or those with pronunciation problems. It can also be boring or frustrating for students who are listening. It is better to ask for volunteers to read aloud, or to dot around the class, rather than have students read aloud one after the other round the class. The best option, if you wish to do reading aloud in class, is for the teacher – or a stronger student volunteer – to be the narrator, and for other volunteer students to take different characters' parts.

If students wish to work on their pronunciation privately, reading aloud is a useful self-study activity. We suggest using the *Dominoes* audio for support in these ways:

1) Mouthing the Story

The student 'mouths' part of the story silently while reading it on the page and listening to the audio. This activity is a first step in helping students to build up their confidence in reading aloud.

2) Whispering the Story

The student whispers part of the story while reading it on the page and listening to the audio. This activity helps students work on speed and phrasing.

3) Filling the Audio Gaps

The student reads part of the story on the page aloud while listening to the audio. From time to time the student turns down the volume of the audio to zero but lets the CD continue to play. They continue reading the story aloud at the same pace for a while. When the student turns up the volume again they should be at the same place in the story in their reading aloud as the audio. Students may need practice to achieve this aim every time. This activity helps students work on pace.

4) Shadow Reading

The student reads part of the story on the page aloud while listening to the audio. Ideally the student should listen to the original audio using earphones and simultaneously record their own voice. Afterwards the student can listen to the recording and compare it with the original audio. This activity helps students work on pace and intonation.

5) Stress Marking

The student listens to part of the audio version of the story, pausing it as required. On the written text the student marks the heavily stressed syllables or short words by underlining them, putting a dot above them, or colouring them with a highlighter pen. Then, without listening to the audio, the student reads the marked text aloud, stressing the highlighted words. Ideally the student should record their own voice at this stage. Afterwards the student can listen to the recording and compare it with the original audio. This activity helps students work on rhythm and stress.

Acting Out and End-of-Term Drama Productions

Acting out a short story, or a scene/chapter from a longer story, can be a motivating post-reading group activity.

- At a basic level, a group of students can use the story text as it is, with one or more students taking the role of the narrator, and other students playing different characters' parts. Students playing the characters can read from the book, or learn their lines by heart before acting out.
- With more preparation time, students can prepare a play script based on the story text, adding stage directions and extra lines of character dialogue, and reducing the narrator's words accordingly. Different groups could work on different sections of the same story.
- If time allows, a fully developed theatre show based on the story text could be written, rehearsed, and performed – complete with costumes, props, sets, music and sound effects, publicity posters, and programmes. This could make an excellent end-of-term or end-of-year drama production.
- Videoing groups acting out can be a useful activity. Students can watch themselves on video after they finish. This video can be added to students' reading portfolios.

If groups are reluctant to act out in front of the class, here are some suggestions:

- Ask a group of students representing the different story characters to come to the front of the class. They should mime the actions of the different characters while they listen to the audio. Allow them to rehearse before they do this.
- Have students work in a group with some students reading the narrator's and characters' lines, while other students mime the different story characters' actions at the front of the class. Allow them to rehearse before they do this.
- Have students prepare and record a radio play, complete with sound effects and incidental music. Once the recording stage is finished, each group can then play its recording for other students in the class to listen to. This audio could be added to students' reading portfolios.
- Have students prepare one-sided, cardboard cut-out puppets of story characters stuck onto cardboard 'slides', together with cardboard scenery (a backdrop and wings). They can then perform a 'cereal box theatre' version of the story at the front of the class, while listening to the original story audio, their own recording, or students in their group reading the narrator's and characters' lines aloud. Allow them to rehearse before they do this.

For a sample playscript, go to [page 20](#).

SCENE FROM *SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE NORWOOD MYSTERY*

Cast:

STORYTELLER
HOLMES
WATSON
MRS HUDSON
JOHN MCFARLANE

Props:

table	packet of candy or joke cigarettes
two cups and saucers	lighter
three chairs	ashtray
newspaper	

SCENE 1: HOLMES'S ROOMS IN BAKER STREET

STORYTELLER: One morning, at his rooms in Baker Street, Sherlock Holmes was talking with his friend Dr Watson. *WATSON and HOLMES are sitting at the table. Cups and saucers and a newspaper on it. WATSON is reading his newspaper.*

WATSON: That was a wonderful breakfast, Holmes.

HOLMES: Mmm... But life in London is not what it was, Watson.

WATSON: True, Holmes. For most people life is much better now.

HOLMES: But for me, Watson, life is not so interesting.

WATSON: What do you mean, Holmes?

HOLMES: In the past I loved to read the newspaper, hoping to find some news of an interesting crime for me to investigate, or a dangerous criminal for me to catch. But where are all those clever criminals these days, Watson?

WATSON: Sometimes I don't understand you, Holmes. I like living a quiet life myself.

HOLMES picks up the newspaper on the table and starts to read. We hear a loud knocking at the door, offstage. Watson puts down his newspaper at once. HOLMES closes his newspaper slowly.

HOLMES: Who can that be?

MRS HUDSON comes in.

MRS HUDSON: Mr Holmes, there's a wild young man at the door to see you. He didn't give his name.

HOLMES: Very good, Mrs Hudson. Bring him in.

McFARLANE comes in, pushing past MRS HUDSON. He is excited, afraid, and shaking wildly.

MRS HUDSON: Here he is, sir.

HOLMES: Thank you, Mrs Hudson.

HOLMES: Very good, sir.

MRS HUDSON goes out with the cups and saucers.

HOLMES: (*angrily*) Who are you, sir? And what do you want with me?

McFARLANE: (*shaking*) I'm sorry, Mr Holmes. I'm sorry. Please don't be angry. I feel so afraid, Mr Holmes.

HOLMES: Well, come in, sit down, and have a cigarette. Then tell us who you are and why you've come here.

McFARLANE sits at the table. WATSON gives him a cigarette and lights it. McFARLANE smokes the cigarette and stops shaking. Then he speaks.

McFARLANE: My name's John McFarlane.

HOLMES and WATSON look at each other questioningly.

HOLMES: (*to McFARLANE*) Yes... and?

McFARLANE: And I'm in terrible trouble. You must help me, Mr Holmes. The police want to arrest me and send me to prison. And I've done nothing, Mr Holmes, nothing.

HOLMES: Interesting. Very interesting. Don't you agree, Watson?

WATSON: Yes, Holmes, I do.

HOLMES: So, Mr McFarlane, please tell us: why do the police want to arrest you? What have you done?

McFARLANE: Nothing. I told you. I've done nothing. But they think that I murdered a man called Jonas Oldacre, a builder who lives – who lived – in south London, at Norwood.

HOLMES: I see. I'm very sorry to hear this, Mr McFarlane. Please tell us your story.

McFARLANE: Of course. It's here in today's newspaper.

STORYTELLER: And with that, John McFarlane opened Watson's newspaper and started reading the story to them.

Sample playscript based on
Dominoes Level Two:
Sherlock Holmes: The Norwood Mystery