MacqLit
the Macquarie Literacy Program
for small group instruction

MultiLit

Frequently Asked Questions

What is MacqLit?

A systematic and explicit small group reading intervention program (4-5 students) for use in primary and high schools. It is particularly suited to those students who have not mastered the alphabetic code, lack reading fluency and require systematic and structured intervention to catch up with their peers.

Who is MacqLit for?

MacqLit targets those students in Year 3 and above who fall in the bottom 25% of a standardised reading test or curriculum-based measure (e.g., the WARP) and who have particular difficulties in the area of word recognition/decoding and reading fluency. These students will be struggling to keep up with their peers in the classroom. The WARP (Wheldall Assessment of Reading Passages) and the Placement Tests included in the program will help identify students suitable for the program. Other assessments such as a non-word reading test will also assist in identifying students who lack an understanding of the alphabetic code.

What is the focus of MacqLit?

MacqLit includes instruction in the five pillars of reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension, with the main focus on learning and applying the alphabetic code. Accurate and fluent word recognition is taught along with reading practice in sentence and story reading. Reinforced Reading, a component of MacqLit, ensures that the students are given sufficient opportunity to practise their reading in connected text. The primary focus of MacqLit is teaching students the alphabetic code so that they can access grade-appropriate text.

Is MacqLit suitable for dyslexic students and students with diagnosed disability?

Yes, MacqLit would be suitable for the majority of these students. MacqLit adopts a non-categorical approach to reading instruction. There are many reasons why a student may fail to learn to read. Research has shown that the approach to effective reading intervention is the same regardless of the 'label' or cause of the difficulty, i.e., systematic and explicit instruction in phonics with multiple opportunities for reading practice using real books. Most students will make good progress with such instruction. If students have a problem with accessing print, MacqLit will be suitable whether they have been formally identified with dyslexia or not. Students who are behind in their reading need good instruction based on scientific research, irrespective of their label.

For those students who are slow to respond, or who are resistant to effective teaching, more sustained and intensive, targeted teaching in phonics for longer in a one-to-one context will be required. See Response to Intervention.

Is MacqLit suitable for English language learners (ESL students)?

Many English language learners are eager to learn how English works. These students would greatly benefit from explicit instruction in the sounds of English, which are often different from the sounds in their own language. MacqLit offers systematic instruction in the alphabetic code and pronunciation of words. The vocabulary opportunities embedded in the program are very beneficial to ESL students and it may be worth spending a bit longer on the vocabulary and comprehension aspects of the program for these students. Of course, to benefit from the program students should be able to use English socially as they will need to understand and follow instructions.

Is MacqLit suitable for high school students?

MacqLit is very suitable for use in high schools. Specifically for those students who, are not yet able to confidently decode or read at an adequate level to access the high school curriculum. MacqLit supports high school students who need an intensive, structured literacy program to fill in the gaps and build confidence to decode accurately, and with fluency. MacqLit also builds spelling skills, vocabulary knowledge and *comprehension in a safe and supportive small group environment, giving these most vulnerable students the best chance to experience success in their high school studies.

How does MacqLit fit into a Response to Intervention model?

MacqLit provides more intensive support at Tier 2 to those older students who still need help as they progress through the higher grades. Tier 2 programs are typically delivered to small groups and are more explicit and targeted than whole-class instruction (Tier 1). Student progress is carefully monitored to check students' response to the intervention.

For those students who do not progress at a satisfactory rate using MacqLit, more intensive, individualised instruction will be required. This one-to-one instruction (Tier 3) may be at a slower pace, more scaffolded with more revision and delivered by more expert school personnel. The Reading Tutor Program can be used for Tier 3 instruction or MacqLit can be delivered one-to-one.

How does MacqLit fit in with the National Curriculum?

Given that MacqLit addresses the needs of students who have fallen behind their peers in literacy, the program incorporates many of the lower grade (Years 1-3) literacy strands outlined in the National Curriculum. These include: sound and letter knowledge, sight word knowledge, and examining and responding to literature. However, MacqLit also includes strands from the higher grades (Year 4 onwards) in the areas of spelling, morphology and vocabulary. The greater emphasis placed on phonics in the National Curriculum fits in with the MacqLit approach.

As reading improves, Reinforced Reading will increasingly incorporate higher grade level elements from 'Examining literature' and 'Responding to literature'.

How is MacqLit different to the Reading Tutor Program?

The Reading Tutor Program is delivered one-to-one while MacqLit is designed for groups. MacqLit is a more fully scripted program and covers a wider range of skills including reading and spelling multi-syllable words, and scripted reading comprehension questions at two skill levels. The MacqLit program combines phonic skills from the Reading Tutor Program (RTP) and Word Attack Skills Extension Program. The earlier levels (Parts A-D) correspond roughly with the skills covered by the RTP, and Parts E-I correspond roughly with the skills in the Word Attack Skills Extension Program.

How does MiniLit fit in?

MiniLit is a group intervention program for students struggling to learn to read in Years 1 and 2. If children have already had a period of intervention using our MiniLit or MiniLit Sage Program in Year 1 and 2 but are still not up to the level of their peers, they may move onto MacqLit which will provide another opportunity to secure these basic reading skills when they enter Year 3, a critical year for students who may still be floundering and at risk of slipping further behind. MacqLit introduces two-syllable words and exposes students to more complex text, providing those students who need further consolidation after MiniLit with additional challenge.

How many students in a group?

A group should be no more than 4-5 students. Groups may need to change in number as the program progresses in response to pace and skill level of individual students, but smaller groups enable the students to be individually monitored.

How are students grouped?

Students should be grouped according to their skill level. They can be grouped across grade level. The Word Attack Placement Test will ascertain a student's current knowledge of phonics and help group students.

What will MacqLit cost the school?

Pricing is listed on the MultiLit Shop. The Kit includes all the core materials to get started with one group (up to 5 students). If multiple groups are running at the same time and at the same level, additional Testing and Lesson Records Packs will need to be purchased. Individual copies of resources and consumables included in the initial Kit purchase, can also be replaced as and when required.

What consumables are required over time?

- 1 Testing and Lesson Records book for every group
- Activity Books for each student
- WARP Recording Forms

Can I use MacqLit in my private tutoring practice or business?

No. MacqLit is available for use in accredited schools only. Terms and conditions of sale are available to read on the MultiLit website.

Who can deliver the program?

Teachers and teacher aides can deliver the program. Teacher aides should be supervised by a teacher with appropriate experience. A good model of delivery is to develop a team of aides who work under the guidance of the learning support teacher. It is recommended that the learning support teacher gains delivery experience before supervising others.

Why is training necessary?

When implementing MacqLit for the first time, schools must purchase the two days' training. This ensures that the program is set up appropriately and delivered correctly from the start. The training provides teachers and aides with the theoretical and practical background necessary to use the program with confidence. Although the program is user-friendly, the style of teaching and the detailed content around reading instruction may not be familiar to all teachers and aides. When staffing changes, it is highly recommended that teachers and aides new to the program attend MacqLit training. Training is offered live in person or live via videoconference throughout Australia. In person on-sites or private videoconference workshops can be arranged upon request and where there is sufficient demand (minimum 10 participants).

I've been to MiniLit/Reading Tutor Program training so do I need to attend MacqLit training?

Yes, the program is purchased with two days' training. Prior training and experience in MiniLit or the Reading Tutor Program will certainly be very useful, but the key components of MacqLit will need to be learned. There are points of difference, which will be explained and demonstrated.

How long does a MacqLit lesson take?

A MacqLit lesson will typically take **up to one hour** to deliver. This includes group book reading at the end of each session. If a group needs to move more slowly, lessons can be taught over two sessions. However, the brisk pace of the lesson is critical to maintaining the students' interest and overall engagement. Additional one-to-one reading practice will need to be timetabled for Reinforced Reading (approximately 20 minutes a day). Reinforced Reading can be done at school or at home.

How many times a week should I implement the program?

Ideally, the program should be implemented four to five times a week for maximum progress to be seen. The fifth day of the week can be reserved for testing, top-up sessions with certain students who are falling behind or for hearing individual students read. Intensity of instruction is key for students who are significantly behind their peers.

Is MacqLit only about decoding?

MacqLit is not just about decoding and working at the word level. It incorporates multiple opportunities to read connected text so that students are able to apply their decoding strategies to authentic reading tasks. Students will engage in vocabulary work and comprehension as they read and respond to stories in Sounds and Words activities, group book reading and Reinforced Reading. It is not sufficient to simply teach the isolated skills. Students need to learn to generalise to text.

What skills sequence is taught in MacqLit?

Part A: Single sounds, VC and CVC words
Part B: Consonant digraphs, beginning and end blends
Part C: Split digraphs, suffixes, vowel digraph
Part D: Letter combinations
Part E: Suffixes, letter combinations
Part F: 'c' (/s/) and 'g' (/j/), V/CV syllable pattern, letter combinations, prefixes, suffixes
Part G: Letter combinations
Part H: 'ch' saying /k/, 'ph' saying /f/, suffixes
Part I: Prefixes, suffixes

Does MacqLit teach comprehension?

Though the focus of MacqLit is on accessing print, MacqLit offers multiple text reading opportunities, incorporating vocabulary instruction, text previews, activation of background knowledge and comprehension questions at both literal and inferential levels.

Reinforced Reading similarly incorporates these elements along with further opportunities to work on comprehension in the form of Pause, Prompt, Praise – Comprehension.

*It should be noted that although MacqLit assists comprehension, additional intensive and explicit instruction in vocabulary and comprehension strategies will be necessary for students with particular difficulties in this area.

Will I see improvement in spelling if I use the program?

Yes. Demonstrating the reciprocal relationship between reading and spelling is an important part of MacqLit. Once students have read words, they are asked to spell them saying the sounds as they write. Students are exposed to the different ways a sound can be spelled. It is recommended that MacqLit be followed up with a program like Spell-It, which is a thorough spelling program for students in Year 4 and above.

Where has the program been trialled?

Earlier versions of the MultiLit Group Program have been used in a number of MultiLit projects over the years. This has included a randomised control trial at Raymond Terrace Public School. The current group program, known as MacqLit, was informally trialled in a variety of school settings including state primary and high schools, independent schools, and catholic schools in four states and territories throughout Australia. The results of our research relating to MacqLit can be found here.

Find out more:
www.multilit.com/macqlit