

Reading at Home



Learning to read is one of the most important skills that your child will learn in school. We want children to be able to enjoy reading and see it as a pleasurable leisure activity, as well as a means of finding out things. Reading together at home is one of the easiest but most important ways in which you can help your child. As you share books you are helping to improve your child's reading skills and also showing them how important and enjoyable reading is. Reading opens up a whole new world of learning and imagination. **The aim of reading is for children to understand what they read.** Asking questions tests comprehension so give them lots of opportunity to talk about what they have read.

Helping to encourage your child to read

1. **Set a good example** by reading yourself.
2. **Read to your child or share books with them.** You can help your child to understand the story.
3. **Point out words all around you:** on food packets, in supermarkets, on buses, in recipes, in newspapers and magazines.
4. **Visit your local library.** All libraries have children's sections and many also have regular story telling sessions.

5. **School reading book and reading diary.** Make sure your child swaps their reading books regularly at school and try to make a regular slot of about 10 minutes to hear them read. A good ten minutes is better than a difficult half hour. Write constructive comments in the reading diary e.g. X was able to recognise the initial sound of words.
6. **If English is not your family's first language** there are now a number of dual language books for sale. School is happy to give you the titles of such books.
7. **Praise** them for trying hard at their reading.
8. **Let them re-read their favourites.** It's good practice to read the same books over and over again and helps to build their confidence.

REMEMBER *Encourage it as an enjoyable experience.*

Supporting Reading at Home

Find some time to talk about the book before they start to read:

- Read the title of a new book then ask them to predict from the title/picture what the book will be about. This looks interesting, what do you think it's going to be about?
- Ask if they like stories about – dinosaurs, magic, space, monsters and imaginary worlds?
- Give them a brief overview of the whole book-include place names and character names.
- Identify points of potential difficulty Draw their attention to new or difficult words e.g. If 'look' is a new word ask them to find 'look' on the page. Prompt with "You find 'look' on this page. What does 'look' begin with?" Let them find the word and then read the whole sentence. Do not choose words that they can decode (read) independently.

If they get stuck on a word:

- Allow them thinking time before helping (6-10 seconds.)
- Encourage them to use picture clues to help them.
- Encourage them to work out words for themselves. If they make a mistake let them get to the end of the sentence before saying anything. This allows an opportunity for self-correction.
- Ask them a question to remind them of the context e.g. "Where did they say they were going?"
- Re-read the sentence up to the unknown word to remind them of the context. Ask them what word might make sense here. Encourage guessing.

- Say the first letter of the word.
- If the word can be read easily by sounding out the letters e.g. d-a-d, encourage them or help them to do this. Do not sound out irregular words e.g. 'said'
- Break the words into smaller parts e.g. sup-er-mar-ket.
- Read the word for them if it helps the flow.

Responding to what they read:

- Some children may only be looking at picture books so encourage them to talk about what is happening.
- If sharing a familiar book e.g. "The Three Little Pigs" encourage them to join in repeated phrases.
- If it is a book they have already started reading, ask them if they are enjoying it and why? Ask them to tell you what has happened so far.
- If they are reading a longer text, read part of the book and ask them to tell the rest of the story in their own words.
- Respond to the content - if there's a joke, laugh; if it's sad, say how it makes you feel. If there's new information, discuss it and give them a chance to share their knowledge with you.
- If they read the book easily ask them to tell the story in their own words or to think of a different ending.
- Express an interest in what might happen next. Encourage them to predict what they think might happen.
- Discuss the characters- why do they like/dislike characters? Talk about where the story is set. Have they read other stories with similar settings? Is this a book they think a friend would like to read?

After reading

Talking about the book with your child at the end will help your child in their enjoyment and understanding of the book.

- Did you enjoy that book? Why? Why not?
- Who was your favourite character? Why?
- Which part did you like best? Why?
- Was there any part you didn't like? Why?
- Did you think the book was funny?

- Encourage them to retell the story you have just shared. This will give you an idea of how much they have understood. Does it remind them of anything that happened in their lives or anything they have read before?
- Perhaps identify a part you particularly enjoyed and tell them why.

What else can your child read?

- Picture Books
- Rhymes and poems
- Non-fiction e.g. 'A Day in the Life of a Footballer.' Boys particularly enjoy reading non-fiction.
- Comics
- Magazines
- Shopping lists
- Catalogues e.g. Argos (a particular favourite for some pupils)
- Instructions or recipes
- Television guides
- Sports reports
- Newspapers
- Information books
- Manuals
- Travel brochures
- Emails
- Websites
- E-books
- Graphic Novels

How to help good readers

When children become fluent readers they often want to read in their heads and you should not insist on too much reading aloud. You can still help by discussing the plot, characters; important parts of the story, what they have learnt from the information, about their feelings as they read a story. Encourage them to think about the way the book has been written; the layout and the illustrations.

