

Reading with your child: some useful tips



Your child will bring home a school book to read regularly. Some children are keen to read and need little encouragement, others may be more reluctant. Most will be both on different days! There are some things you can do to support your child with their reading:

- Read to your child regularly. Story time is a good time for sharing and enjoying each other's company, as well as calming down before sleep and developing a love of stories and reading. Encourage your child to share their reading with grandparents, brothers, sisters, aunts & uncles...
- Keep reading fun – 5 minutes of stress-free, quality reading time is better than 20 minutes of forced reading!
- Find a relaxed time for reading, after some food, when you know you can sit with your child for a while without too many interruptions. Turn the TV off so that you can both concentrate on the book.
- Be positive: praise your child for trying hard at their reading. Let them know it's all right to make mistakes.
- Some children may need a finger to point at the words when starting out. This will help children to focus on the words and develop their left to right tracking skills, as well as helping them to keep their place on the page. Others may need a book mark to help keep their place under the line they are reading.
- Give your child time; they may like to look at the picture before attempting the words. Let them make a guess before you tell them a tricky word.
- Don't make them try too hard! If they have to struggle with a difficult word they'll start to lose interest and the flow of the story. Tell them the word and move on.
- Encourage your child to sound out the letters then blend them together to hear the word. Ask them to re-read a sentence once they have decoded it (or read it back to them) so that they hear the flow of the words and can pick up on the meaning.
- Try breaking longer words into sections or looking for small words within the long words e.g. **hand**some.
- If stuck on a word try reading ahead then coming back to it. What might make sense in the context of the whole sentence?



- Look for letter patterns e.g. ‘Can you find –st at the start or end of a word?’
- Ask questions. Check your child understands what they have read by asking them about the story e.g. ‘*Why did they say that? What do you think might happen next? How do you know they are sad? Which words tell you the place is new?*’
- Use the pictures to help explain what is happening in the story. Sometimes the pictures tell their own story!
- Let your child re-read their favourites. It's good reading practice to read the same books over and over again.
- Help your child remember to bring their book-bag to school daily – encourage them to take responsibility for it themselves.
- Remind your child to change their book regularly, and let them choose their own book.
- Colour graded scheme books are a part of your child’s reading journey: they are books that they can read themselves, but they are not all there is! Encourage your child to read widely: posters, magazines, chapter books, notices are all relevant.

In Key Stage One children are inevitably at different stages of their lifelong reading journey. Reading is a skill made up of several elements which may develop at different times. A child may be proficient at sounding out and decoding words, but not yet grasp the meaning of what they read. Similarly, children need to have a degree of challenge to what they read in order that they don’t get bored: it’s a balancing act!



When children reach Key Stage Two we are aiming for them to be able to sustain their reading, both silently and aloud, with intonation and expression; to be able to explore and discuss underlying themes and ideas; to evaluate a text and express their own opinion; to scan a text to find and interpret relevant information and to make informed reading choices... and it all begins with sounding out and looking at the pictures!