

Reading with your child

Sharing a book with your child is fun. It's a time for laughing, talking and enjoying quality time spent together. Reading together shouldn't be a chore, but a special moment in the day for both you and your child. Below are the answers to some frequently asked questions:

How can I find the right book?

Ask your child the kind of books they like or they have enjoyed reading at school. Even if they choose something that might be a little difficult for them, you can read parts to them and you can discuss the illustrations and themes. You can ask teachers and other school staff for tips about good books to read. Find out about recommended books at libraries, bookshops and on book websites (see reverse).

How do I find the time?

It's best to fit in daily short sessions (15-20 minutes) rather than a really long session a couple of times a week. Reading is a relaxing pastime and can be a good way to start the bedtime routine. Try to read in a quiet place without TVs, computers etc that might be a distraction.

Should I just listen to them read out loud and not interrupt them?

It's just as important for you to read out loud to them as the other way round, as you can model the fluency and expression they need to use. If they are struggling with a word and have tried to read it a few times, it's fine to help them by telling them the sound/word.

Should my child only read books?

No, variety is great! Encourage your child to read anything that interests them. This could include comics, magazines, joke books, annuals, poetry and books about pets or sport. Also, it's great to set an example, so if your child sees you reading – anything from newspapers, letters and emails to recipes, magazines and books, that may encourage them.

How does my child learn to read? What strategies do they use to try to read?

- Phonics – breaking the word into the sounds they make and then blending them back together.
- Chunking – breaking words into chunks and blending together.
- Context – predict what the word might be based on what they have been reading, or read on and come back to the word - does it now make sense?
- Making word links – identifying a word based on another e.g. identifying chop by knowing the word chip.
- Pictures – predict what the word might be from looking at the pictures (this isn't cheating!)
- Knowledge of story – predict what the word might be from knowledge of other stories with familiar patterns e.g. Once upon a time....

Most children will use a range of these strategies when they are reading.

What kind of questions should I ask my child when we read a book together?

The most important thing of all is just to talk to your child about the book. As you read, questions will naturally pop up either from them or from you. How well a child understands a text and can discuss what they've read is known as reading comprehension. To help to improve your child's reading comprehension, you could ask them some of the questions below when you read a book together:

- What happened in the story? What do you think will happen next?
- Why do you think that happened?
- What is your favourite part/character/picture? Why?
- Did you enjoy the story? Why?
- What did you find out about that character?
- Why did that character do that? What do you think of what they did?
- How is the character feeling? How can you tell? How would you feel if you were them?
- Has the character changed in the story? How?
- Why did the author use this word/phrase/sentence/picture?
- Why is the word in italics/bold/underlined?
- Why did the author choose this setting/location for the story?
- Would you recommend the story to someone else? Who? Why?
- What was the message/moral of the story? Did you learn something from it?
- Can you think of another story or author similar to this?

Below are some helpful websites to visit:

www.literacytrust.org.uk – lots of useful information including recommended booklists for children of primary age.

<http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/> - interactive resources for each phase of phonics learning

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education> - excellent tool for all areas of literacy learning

<http://www.ictgames.com/literacy.html> - literacy resources including phonics

<http://resources.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/interactive/literacy/> - fun interactive resources related to literacy

www.oxfordowl.co.uk – free eBooks

www.childrenspoetryarchive.org – free poetry

Popular author websites:

www.pottermore.com – JK Rowling

www.roalddahl.com

www.jacquelinewilson.co.uk

Have fun reading together!