

Reading with your child

The most important thing when reading with your child is that it is an enjoyable time to spend together. This can only be achieved if it does not become a chore to you or your child, but a relaxing time when your child has your full attention. To aid this:

- Choose anything that your child is interested in - fiction/non-fiction books, magazines, newspapers etc
- Best to spend daily short periods of time (15-20 minutes) rather than one long session a couple of times a week
- Go to a quiet room with few distractions and turn off TVs etc.
- It is just as important to read to your child as it is for them to read to you as you will model the fluency and expression needed

Strategies used for reading:

- Phonics - breaking the words 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 make sense?
- Making word links - identifying a word based on another e.g. identifying 'fright' by knowing the word 'light'
- Pictures - predict what the word might be from looking at the pictures (this is not cheating!)
- Knowledge of story - Predict what the word might be from their knowledge of other stories e.g. once upon a time

Most children will not use just one strategy, but a mixture to decode a word. If they are stuck on a very difficult word or on a name, it's okay to just tell them the word rather than let them struggle with it.

Comprehension:

The most important thing for your child is to understand and discuss what they have read, even if they struggle with the decoding. Below are some of the types of questions you might ask whilst you are reading to encourage your child to think about what they have read and to have an opinion. They are just to get you started, but as long as you are talking about the book you are making them think about it. If your child is unsure of the answer then give your opinion so that they can learn how to respond to questions asked.

- What happened in the story? What do you predict will happen next?
- Why do you think that happened?
- What is your favourite part/ character/ illustration etc? Why?
- Did you enjoy the story? Why?
- What did we find out about the characters?
- Why did the character behave in that way? What is your opinion of what they did?
- How is the character feeling? How do you know? How would you feel in their situation? Why?
- Has the character changed in the story? How?
- Would you be friends with this character? Why?
- Why has the author used this word/phrase etc?
- Why is this word in bold/italics etc?
- Why did the author choose this setting?
- Do you like the way this author writes? Why?
- Would you recommend this story to someone else? Who? Why?
- What message was the author trying to give us?
- Has reading this changed your opinion?
- Can you think of another story/author similar to this?