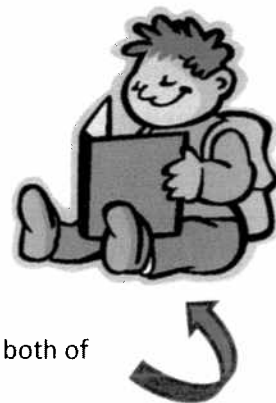


Reading with your child



As parents/carers you are your child's most useful and invaluable resource when it comes to learning to be a successful and confident reader!

Here are our top 10 tips on how you can help to make this a positive experience for both of you:

1. Make reading enjoyable

Make reading an enjoyable experience. Sit with your child at a quiet moment. Try not to pressurise if he/she is reluctant. If your child loses interest then do something else.

2. Be positive

If your child says something nearly right to start with that is fine. Don't say 'No. That's wrong,' but 'Let's read it together' and point to the words as you say them. Boost your child's confidence with constant praise for even the smallest achievement.

3. Maintain the flow

If your child mispronounces a word do not interrupt immediately. Instead allow opportunity for self-correction. It is better to tell a child some unknown words to maintain the flow rather than insisting on trying to build them all up from the sounds of the letters. If your child does try to 'sound out' words, encourage the use of letter sounds rather than 'alphabet names'.

4. Success is the key

Parents anxious for a child to progress can mistakenly give a child a book that is too difficult. This can have the opposite effect to the one they are wanting. Until your child has built up his or her confidence, it is better to keep to easier books. Struggling with a book with many unknown words is pointless. The flow is lost, the text cannot be understood and children can easily become reluctant readers.

5. Regular practice

Try to read with your child on most school days. 'Little and often' is best.

6. Communicate

You are probably aware that your child has a reading diary from school. Communicating regularly with positive comments and any concerns will help the reading process along. Your child will then have concrete evidence that you are interested in their progress and that you value reading.

7. Use a dictionary

Have a child friendly dictionary to hand and use it to check the meanings of new words. The newly introduced 'new words' page in the front of your child's reading record should help with this.

8. Talk about the books

There is more to being a good reader than just being able to read the words accurately. Just as important is being able to understand what has been read. Always talk to your child about the book; about the pictures, the characters, their favourite part. What would you have done if you were.....? Does this book remind you of anything that has happened to you? Can you guess what is going to happen next? You will then be able to see how well they have understood and you will help them to develop good comprehension skills.

9. **Make the story come to life**

Encourage your child to read with expression, focusing on characters' voices, the text's punctuation etc. Exaggerate! This will help them read more fluently and with greater understanding.

10. **Variety is important**

Remember children need to experience a variety of reading materials (eg. picture books, hard backs, comics, magazines, poems, and information books). Encourage your child to use the public library regularly.

Supporting reading – some common reading concerns

Consider first what can be expected from the child the first time they read a new book.....

1. Ensure you introduce the book well – make it sound as exciting as you can; they need to want to read it!
2. If it is the first read of a book, focus on accurate and speedy word reading – most of the child's energy may well be going in to decoding the text and so they may not have taken in much of the meaning on the first read so....
3. Always read the book a second and a third time. These reads then focus on enjoying the book's meaning – comprehension and developing fluency and expression

Common concerns:

My child does not take any notice of the punctuation as they read

- Before reading the next sentence/section/page (depending on the level the child is working at) ask the child to point out any punctuation. Discuss what each punctuation mark is telling the reader to do. Then ask the child to read that section. This could be done with the newly introduced text.
- Use the praise and prompts – praise where the child has used the punctuation to support reading.
- Read a sentence each. Tell the child that they are going to read up to the next full stop and then you will read to the the next full stop. To develop this further, take it in turns to read to the next punctuation mark e.g. in the sentence: Tom put in his bag: a loaf of bread, a lump of cheese, a rosy apple and some chocolate. The reader would change 3 times during the sentence. Do this for a short part of the familiar read.
- Play Kung Fu punctuation **for a small section of the text** at the start of the familiar read. Teach actions for each of the main punctuation marks. As the child reads they do an action for every time they meet a punctuation mark.
- See the praise and prompts for 'To attend to fluency and/or phrasing'

My child does not know many of the high frequency tricky words

- Identify, by keeping a running list, the high frequency tricky words (words that are not decodable/harder to decode or are not decodable at the phonic phase the child is currently working) that the child does not know. It is useful for children to know these words and the games below will support children in learning them but also remember to consider the use of the other cues as children read – if the child is developing their fluency they may be able to recognise the word from the meaning or structure of the sentence. Praise and prompt appropriately.
- Remember most of these words are decodable in part e.g. said. The 's' and the 'd' make sense – the difficult bit is the 'e' sound in the middle that is made by 'ai'. When teaching tricky words point out the bits that are decodable, where they can use their phonics skills.

Games that can support children using the visual cues (all games should be played with words identified as presenting difficulties from the child's reading):

Pairs: You need 2 sets of word cards. Pick out the word cards that your child already knows for the first few times you play the game so that they enjoy it and succeed. Then, gradually take out some of the word cards they know and replace them with a number of words they don't know.

Snap: You need 2 sets of word cards. Each person has a pile of cards they keep face down. Each person turns a card over in turn and says the word they turn over. If they match you have to shout the word (and not snap).

Silly sentence: Use one set of word cards. Spread the word cards out face down. Pick 3 cards and turn them face up, say the words as they are turned up. Now try and make up a silly sentence that includes all 3 words on the cards.

Shout out loud: Use one set of word cards. Spread the word cards out face down. Take it in turns to turn over one card at a time. The first person to shout the word out loud wins the card. Keep going until all the cards have been won. You can play this with silly voices. Before you turn over a card you have to decide what sort of voice you have to use to say the word e.g. whisper the word, say it like a gorilla, roar it like a lion, squeak it like a mouse.

Hunt the words: Use one set of word cards. Hide a number of them around a room (your child must not look). The child has to find the cards and bring them back to you saying the words they find as they find them.

Stepping stones: Use one set of word cards. Spread a number of cards over the floor. Ask your children to jump from one word to another as if they are jumping from stepping stone to stepping stone. As they jump they have to say what word they are going to jump to next. Make sure they say the word before they jump!

Slap the word: Use one set of word cards. Spread a number of cards out on a table or the floor. Ask someone to say one of the words. Whoever is first to slap the word with their hand (or the back of a spoon) wins the word.

I'm thinking of a word: Use one set of word cards. Spread a number of cards out. You pick a word but don't tell your child which word you are thinking of. Say "I'm thinking of a word, the word begins with....." The child has to guess what the word might be from the ones spread out. If they guess correctly they can keep the card. If they can't guess then give them another clue "I'm thinking of a word that hassounds" or ".....ends with....." or ".....has the word ant in it." Keep giving clues until they guess the word.

My child rushes through the reading

- It may be that the book being read doesn't interest the child. Try and find a text that is of interest. Try non-fiction if you have previously only introduced fiction books.
- Sometimes children who are reading really quickly do not understand what they are reading. Set some questions before reading – can you find out when...who...what...etc. Ask them to stop reading each time they think they have found the answer to the question. You may begin by only setting one question before reading.

- See ideas to support the child that does not take notice of punctuation. These strategies will also slow a child down and so even if it is not a punctuation issue this may support them.
- Use 'Readers Theatre'. Work with your child as their equal partner in the reading. Together look at one section of the text. Read it together and then decide which words need to be emphasised for performance, or repeated, whispered, have actions to accompany them etc. Perform the section together.
- For younger children, introduce an 'audience' e.g. a special teddy or puppet. Ask the child to read to the teddy but tell them they have to read slowly and clearly because the teddy finds it hard to listen.
- Using the finger to follow the words can slow children down – but this should only be a teaching strategy if the child does not really need to use a finger to track the words because it tends to disrupt fluency. So model using the finger the right pace of reading and ask the child to use their finger for a small section of the text.

My child misses out words or skips lines

- Stop the child at the bottom of a page or a section and ask if what they read made sense. Tell them they missed out a line. Ask them to find the line they missed or stop them at the end of a sentence and ask them if it made sense. Tell they missed out a word – can they re read and find the word they missed out.
- Tell the child you are going to read a sentence/section but you will be missing out a word. Can they spot when you miss it out (either by listening – and so focussing on meaning through listening comprehension or by following in the text, reading comprehension).
- Using the finger to follow the words can support children in securing 1:1 correspondence – but this should only be a teaching strategy if the child does not really need to use a finger to track the words because it tends to disrupt fluency. So model using the finger and ask the child to use their finger for a small section of the text. In the same way, for a short section you could use a card to identify the line the child is reading and move the card down as they read. This too should only be a temporary or teaching tool and is not helpful to use all of the time.

My child has pronunciation difficulties – they are not pronouncing words correctly when they are reading or when they talk normally

- It could be that the child has English as an additional language and even advanced bilingual learners sometimes have difficulties articulating certain sounds. This is not a problem if the child understands the word's means so check the child understands.

My child over relies on the picture cue

- Use your praise and prompts to highlight the other cues the child needs to use.
- Check your child is on the right level book? They may be over relying on the picture because they are unable to use their decoding skills and knowledge because the demands of the text are too high.
- Where the child makes an error because they have over relied on the picture cue make explicit that they need to use other cues.
- Find texts that have minimal picture cues for a short period of time.

My child predicts the next word in a sentence incorrectly regularly and so makes lots of mistakes.

- Check the child is reading the right level book – if they are making lots of mistakes they should probably be on a level below. If you need to ask the child to re-look at lots of words and so they are becoming disheartened they are probably on the wrong book.
- If the child makes a sensible prediction but the word is wrong say “Yes it could be but look again”

My child appears to read fluently, is effortlessly decoding but does not understand what they read.

- If this is the case the focus of all your teaching will be on comprehension. Remember to vary the way that you address this. First make sure they really do have effortless decoding skills – all the child’s effort may still be going in to decoding, leaving no ‘brain space’ for comprehension. So first, practise rapid grapheme recognition (flash cards) and rapid application of skills through word reading – could be word cards that contain the phonemes and graphemes practised or small sections of text matched to their phonic skills and knowledge. If possible match the child to a phonically decodable text at their phonic level. If they read this with ease then:
Consider:

1. Teaching vocabulary – identify in your planning words that you think will be difficult to comprehend. Talk about these words in the text introduction. Ask the child to look out for the word as they read. Stop them at the end of the sentence the word appears and ask them to tell you what the sentence means.
2. Teaching vocabulary – pick out some words from the text and play ‘snappy synonyms’, how many words can they think of that mean the same thing.
3. Teaching that you should expect what you read to make sense – for a **few sentences** play ‘I think that means....’. Read a sentence and then say ‘I think that means that.....’ e.g. Laura was hurrying down the road. ‘I think that means that Laura was in a rush and so she was going quickly down the road. I think she was in a hurry because she thought she was going to be late for school.’ You need to model this before handing over to the child.
4. Teach that when you read you need to create a picture in your head. When children have read a bit model how you have created a picture in your head of what has been read – for simple texts you can draw it. Ask children to create the mental image of what they have read.
5. Teach using our background knowledge to support our understanding of a text. Ensure in your book introductions that you probe children’s background knowledge of the content of the book – what experiences have they had that are similar; what stories/TV programmes/films do they know that are similar. Make explicit the connections to these as the child reads – stop them at different points and remind them about their experiences.
6. Teach that good readers ask questions. As the child is reading, model the sorts of questions a reader might ask e.g. I wonder where she is going? I think she might be helping her mum? I don’t think she should go that way, why would she go through the forest? Encourage the child to do the same. Do this for a couple of sentences/pages each session.
7. Teach that good readers make inferences. Ask the child to predict the story from the title/cover/first line/ the first page etc explaining why they think what they think.
8. At the end of reading ask the child to retell the story. As they become better at doing this ask the child to retell the story in only 10 words/ 5 words etc.

9. Focus questions on the literal (answers that can be 'lifted' directly from the text) and inferential questions (answers that the reader needs to look for clues to answer). Vary when you ask a question: sometimes ask the question before they read a page (the answer being on that page); sometimes ask the question during reading (stop them and ask a question about something that has just been read); sometimes ask questions when they have finished reading – remember to encourage children to flick back through the book to locate the answer.
10. Literal questions: **recalling** or **retell** what has been read; can **sequence** a story/event; can **identify** the main event; **can tell** you about a character from the information presented; can **find** information in a non-fiction text; can **locate** an event in a text
11. Inferential questions: **predict** based on evidence; talk about feelings of characters; **explain why**; **empathise**; **compare** events, actions and stories; **justify** your view

Comprehension questions to ask:

Retrieval questions

- Where and when did the story take place?
- What did s/he/it look like?
- Who was s/he/it? Can you name the....?
- Where did s/he/it live?
- Who are the characters in the book?
- What happened after?
- How many....?
- Describe what happened at....?
- Who spoke to? Identify who....?
- Can you tell me why?
- Which is true or false.....?

Inferential questions

- How did ___ feel?
- Why did ___ feel / think ___?
- Why is ___ important?
- Comment on a quotation
- Describe ___ reaction / feeling
- In what ways does ___
- Explain...
- Match feelings / thoughts to parts of the story
- If ____, which / why?
- Agree or disagree with an opinion. Justify.
- How do we know ___?
- What does this tell us about how ___ is feeling / thinking?
- Have you ever had a similar experience? How did you feel?
- Who do you know who is like ___?
- What do you think is happening here? (interpret)
- What happened in this part of the story? What might this mean? (interpret)
- Through whose eyes is the story told? (deduce)

- Do you know what might happen next? (deduce)
- What do we know about....? (deduce/infer) e.g. Sarah was up the tree in her best frock. What do we know about Sarah? (deduce)
- What could this tell us about the character? (infer)
- Describe in your own words(interpret)
- What do you think will happen because of ... (infer/deduce depending on text evidence)
- How do we know that?(deduce/infer- depending on text)
- If you were in _____'s shoes what would you do now? (interpret)
- Look at the text and find.... What do you think...?(infer)
- Could this have happened in? Why, what are your reasons?
- Which events could not have happened?
- If _____ happened, what might the ending have been?
- How was this similar to....?
- What do you see as possible other outcomes?
- Can you explain what must have happened when....?
- What were the motives behind...?

Prompts to use while reading:

Open-ended

Try that again.

Were you right?

How did you know it was...?

Look carefully and think what you know.

Was that okay?

How could we finish it?

Why did you stop?

Think what you know that might help.

How did you know?

How did you know it was right?

How did you know it said 'was'?

To Locate

Read it with your finger. Did it match?

Were there enough words?

Did you run out of words?

Point to each letter/word.

Use the pointer and make them match.

Try that again with your finger.

Can you find the tricky word?

What do you expect to see at the beginning?

..... at the end?

..... in the middle?

Where is the hard bit?

Why did you stop?

What did you notice?

Run a finger under it while you say it slowly

To find first letters

Can you hear this letter?

You said.... Was that right?

Can you hear the last part of 'looking'?
What sound does it make?
What is its name?
Make another word that sounds like that.
What sound can you hear in that word?
Does that sound right to you?

To look

Would X start like that?
I liked the way you were using your eyes.
Does it look right?
Do you think it looks like 'went'?
Use your eyes and think about it.
Look for something that would help you.
What can you see that might help?
Do you know a word that looks like that?
Can you see what might help?
See this letter.
Look at this letter/word.
Does this help?(pointing to a helpful clue)
You know a word that starts with those letters.
Make another word that looks like that.
Make another word that end with that pattern.

To attend to structure

You said ... Can we say it that way?
Is that a little letter or a big one?
Is that a capital letter or a small one?

To attend to meaning

You said ... Does that make sense?
Would X make sense?
Would that make sense?
Would 'went' fit in there?

To seek help from writing

You're saying 'said' for a word you know.
Write this word.
Write it quickly. Good job. What is it?

To think about processing

What could this word be?
You solved the puzzle. How did you do that?
You said, 'I think we shall go and find him.' Is that what the rabbit said?
And here Mother Bear is asking a question. How would she ask a question?
Was that ok?
How did you know?
What do you think?
You found out what was wrong all by yourself.
You made a mistake on this page. Can you find it?
How did you know?

How did you know it was right?

To attend to fluency, and/or phrasing

Let's put this together.

Let's put 'here comes' together.

Are you listening to yourself?

Did it sound good?

Can you read this quickly?

Put it all together so that it sounds like talking.

How would you say that?

Make it sound like a favourite book.

Make it sound like a story you would love to listen to.

Read up to your finger.

Read it smoothly.

Make your voice go down at the end of the sentence.

Change your voice when you see these marks on the page.

Prompt to remember

You need to know that word tomorrow. Have you got it in your head?

How can we finish it?

I liked the way you did that (searched memory).

You tried to think of that word. That was good.

What is another letter that looks like that?

Prompting to check

Check it.

Were you right?

What could you check?

Does it look right and sound right?

It has to make sense and it has to sound right.

What would make sense, sound right and look right?

You made a mistake on that page. Can you find it?

What's wrong with this?

To hear sounds and words

What is the first letter?

Let's go to the board. You write the first letter.

What's the first letter in 'look'?

We can take the first letter part way (to the left).

Where is the first letter?

Where do we start?

What is a word that starts with that letter?

What is a word that starts with that sound?

Make another word that starts like that.

General

Try again.

Try that again.

Try that again and think what could make sense.

Try that again and think what would sound right and look right.