

Make Reading Fun!

Nothing sparks a child's imagination like a good book and reading is the most important thing in determining a child's educational success. Here are some tips for getting your children hooked on reading ...

Young readers

Children are never too young for books and even newborn babies can benefit from hearing stories. Young children love squashy books, ones that make noises and books with flaps and "touchy feely" parts.

Words are everywhere

Point out all the words around you ~ labels on food, street signs, shop names, makes of cars, and place names on buses ... words are everywhere.

Make a scrapbook

Keep a record with your child about their life which is full of pictures and words. Read them together and encourage your child to say what they want to add.

The local library

Many shops sell cheap books, but don't forget that the local library is full of exciting classics and brand new contemporary reads. There are often holiday schemes to promote reading and a range of other fun activities for your child to get involved in.

Bedtime stories

Get into the habit of reading a bedtime story and let your child choose. It's good to share favourite stories again and again. Repeating phrases helps build up children's language.

Same old story?

Don't worry if your child has a favourite story character or book that they like to read over and over again. We all have our preferences and returning to a personal favourite is a great way for a child to gain confirmation that they can read. A well-loved book is like a best friend!

Joint effort

Encourage your child to join in when you read them a story. Let them turn the pages and ask them to guess what will happen next. Follow the words with your finger, point out the pictures and talk together about the story. You could use funny voices, toys and actions to make the characters come alive.

Don't overdo it

Young children can get bored quickly, so little and often is best. A good ten minutes is better than a gruelling half an hour.

Keep it upbeat

Be positive! Praise your child for trying hard and having a go at unfamiliar words. Always remind them that it's ok to make mistakes.

Let them read comics

At some point, your child will start to become more independent in their reading choices. Reading newspapers, comics, magazines and items on the internet expand children's vocabulary and help foster a love of words and language.

It's good to talk

Ask questions about what's interested your child in their reading recently. Talk about the characters; what they've done and why. Ask how the story, or certain parts of it, made them feel. When your child is a fluent reader they may no longer want to read aloud to you, but you can still be involved with their reading by asking questions and getting them to retell the story to you.

Live by the book

Set a good example by showing your child that you read for pleasure. Talk about the reading that you do at home, at work and elsewhere.

