



# Reading with your child:

## A guide for parents and carers

Listening to your child read aloud regularly at home has a huge impact on their learning and their academic achievement across the curriculum. Reading for just 10 minutes each day can have significant benefits and enhance your child's ability to reach expected standards.

The starting point for reading is of course the actual skill of reading words on the page, but there is so much more behind the skill of "reading". This guide will help you to support the different areas of reading which are not only assessed at school, but also support your child in their learning journey across the whole curriculum.

### Hints for getting the most out of reading at home

- Find a quiet, comfortable place with no distractions.
- If your child is a reluctant reader, then share the reading with them or take turns in reading. Hearing fluent reading being modelled by an adult has a huge impact on the child's own reading ability.
- For younger children, allow them to spend a few minutes by themselves to explore the front cover, the illustrations and text, before they read with you.
- Be positive: if they make a mistake in their reading, praise them for their effort and say things like, "Let's read it together".
- Try to make the reading time fun and stress free.
- Talk about the book before they start to read. "This looks interesting. What do you think it's going to be about?" Can they recap what they have already read?

### How To Support Developing Readers

#### Focus on the meaning

If they come across unfamiliar words, try to help them understand the meaning rather than 'saying' individual words.

- What would make sense there?
- Have a look at this bit again.
- Can you guess what that word might be?
- Miss that word out and read on – now can you guess what it might be?
- Go back to the beginning of the sentence and have another try.
- What do you think the beginning of the word sounds like?

#### Responding

Praise them when they work out a word correctly. If they say: 'Is it .....?' and the

word is correct, reply:

- Let's see if that makes sense. Yes - well done!
- Does that sound right? Yes - well done!

When the attempt is incorrect:

- That's a good word and it would make sense but the word the writer used is...
- I like the way you tried that word but the word is actually...

If a child still can't attempt a word after prompting, read it yourself. Give positive feedback on other aspects of their reading as often as possible, but without interfering with the flow of the reading:

- Well done! You could tell that wasn't right couldn't you?
- That sounded so good. Well done!
- You clever thing. How did you know how to work that one out?

It is very important to respond to content. If there's a joke, laugh; if it's sad, say how moving you found it; if there is new information, discuss it, preferably giving the child the chance to share their own knowledge. Express an interest in knowing what's going to happen next.

### Coming to a close

The session needs to end on a positive note that acknowledges the effort the child has made:

- Thank you for reading with me.
- I look forward to you sharing a book with me again.
- I really enjoyed that book. The bit I liked listening to best was ...

If you have any concerns about your child's reading, note them down to tell the teacher. Don't let your child feel that they have disappointed or worried you in any way.

### How To Use Questions To Promote Understanding

Each of the boxes on the following page contain different styles of questions and are similar to those your child will encounter when undertaking comprehension activities at school. Often as the children get more skilled at reading and begin to read silently to themselves the frequency of hearing them read at home drops significantly. These questions will help you know how much they have understood, but also can explain about their book and the events and characters within it. Good levels of understanding will be reflected in the fluency of their answers. Children who cannot tell you about their book using details they have read, or struggle to give reason for their initial answers, need more talk time with you at home to develop confidence and fluency with inference.

Talking in this way with your child is as much 'Reading' as hearing them read aloud.

### Retrieval Questions

The answers are right there in what has been read, they just have to be found.

#### Questions you could ask your child:

- Where did the story / event take place?
- When did the story take place?
- Who are the key characters in the story?
- What did he/she/ it look like?
- What happened first in the story, how did it end?
- Read the part of the story that tells me about...?
- Can you find the part when...?
- What does the word ... mean?

### Inference and Deduction Questions

These are more challenging as the answer is not as obvious; it has to be worked out based on what your child has read and they need to use clues in the text. For example: If your child reads "the boy dragged his feet and slumped his shoulders on the way home" can your child deduce that the character is feeling sad?

#### Questions you could ask your child:

- What words tell you that he is...?
- How do you feel about what happens? Why?
- What evidence is there that the character felt angry /sad /disappointed /excited /etc ...?
- Why do you think he/she behaved in that way?
- What sort of person do you think that character is after reading his/her description?
- Predict what you think is going to happen. Why do you think that?
- Did one of the characters change the story line? How? Why do you think that?
- Look at the paragraph beginning ... What impressions of ... do you get? Why?

### Author Technique Questions

Can your child tell you the overall effect the author has created for the reader from their writing?

#### Questions you could ask your child:

- I wonder why the author has decided to describe the character like that. What do you think?
- Why do you think the author chose this setting and described it in this way?
- What makes this a good story? Why do you think that?
- What is the author trying to tell you about ...?
- Why do you think the author has written that sentence in that way? What effect do you think he is trying to have on the reader?
- What does the description of this character tell us about how the character is feeling?
- I wonder why the author described the character like that, what do you think?

### Layout and Organisation Questions

Can your child explain why the text has been set out in a certain way? E.g. why has the author used numbers in a set of instructions?

#### Questions you could ask your child:

- What kind of text is this (fiction, non-fiction, information, narrative) How do you know?
- What would you expect to find in a text like this?
- Why has this picture been used here?
- Why have these words been made to stand out?
- Why are these words in italics?
- Why are some parts of the text in boxes?
- What are the sub-headings for?
- What do the arrows tell you?

## How to use your child's reading record book:

We ask that parents and carers write a short comment and sign their child's reading record book after each home reading session. Below is a list of example comments that you may find useful. This is by no means an exhaustive list!

Word reading skills	Comprehension skills	Attitude and interest
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read all the words correctly.</li> <li>- Found some words difficult.</li> <li>- Tried hard to sound out trickier words.</li> <li>- Used his phonics well but found the words/sounds ___and ___more challenging.</li> <li>- Good word building.</li> <li>- Needs to practice again to reinforce the new words.</li> <li>- Read accurately and confidently.</li> <li>- Was able to work out new words using picture clues.</li> <li>- Confused "b" and "d" sounds at the beginning of the word "dig" but self-corrected when read within the context of the sentence.</li> <li>- Improved fluency, well done.</li> <li>- Steady pace, well done.</li> <li>- Needs to remember to pause for the full stops.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understood the story well.</li> <li>Good discussion about events in the story.</li> <li>- Was able to summarise the order of the main events with confidence.</li> <li>- Retold the story in detail.</li> <li>- Could talk about the story confidently.</li> <li>- Answered questions about the characters.</li> <li>- Needs to read again to improve understanding.</li> <li>- Used the pictures to assist understanding.</li> <li>- Needed lots of help to understand the main events.</li> <li>- Good predictions made and reasons given.</li> <li>- We discussed the characters and reasons for their behaviour.</li> <li>- Identified non-fiction features of the text: sub-headings, captions, glossary, etc.</li> <li>- We talked about the words the author used to describe the character.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read eagerly tonight.</li> <li>- Loved reading this book and we talked about our favourite facts.</li> <li>- Seemed a little distracted tonight and struggled to focus.</li> <li>- Needed a little encouragement so we shared the reading tonight.</li> <li>- We loved taking turns to read a page each tonight.</li> <li>- Read the book with enthusiasm and interest.</li> <li>- Really enjoyed reading to Daddy tonight!</li> <li>- We recorded her reading and she loved having it played back after!</li> </ul>

Finally, a huge thank you for supporting your child with their reading at home. If you need any further support or guidance, please do not hesitate to contact your child's class teacher who will be happy to help.