

# Supporting Your Child's Reading





## Reading at Foundation Stage and Key Stage One



Between the ages of four and seven, most children learn to read. Even when they can read, you should still try to read to them as often as possible. Sharing stories with a grown-up will teach them new words and will encourage them to become better readers.

Children develop their reading skills in different ways. Some may want to get every word exactly right while other children will race to the end of a story. Other children may read hesitantly. Try to respond to your child's needs and let them read at their own pace.

If they get stuck, encourage them to sound out the phonemes in order to blend the word to read. If the word is not phonetically regular, encourage them to use all the available information and everything they know to read the word - they should look at the pictures and remember what has happened in the story. Their ability to predict and guess accurately will gradually improve.

### **You can help by doing the following:**

- Whenever you're reading together, make sure your child feels OK and is comfortable.
- Use books with pictures, and later, with pictures and words. Picture books help children match the pictures to the words. Don't cover up the pictures to make your child 'read properly'.
- Write titles under pictures (for example, dog, mummy, house) to show them that words belong to things. You can also stick labels on things at home – or when they're older get them to do it themselves (for example, door, cup). Start with simple words.

**You can also help by doing the following:**

- Make the most of books your child brings home from school. Read them (or parts of them) yourself and talk about them with your child.
- Check your child is really following what they're reading by asking them to tell you the story in their own words – who's it about? What happens?
- Allow your child to re-read favourite and familiar stories, or to hear you re-read them. Knowing a familiar book will help them notice more about the words on the page and they will start to recognise the patterns in new words and stories.
- Listen to stories learned by heart and encourage your child to re-tell them in their own words, or even act them out. Encourage this.
- Buy books as presents instead of toys.
- Set up a special place for books from the library or their own books.



## Some more ideas to help your child to read

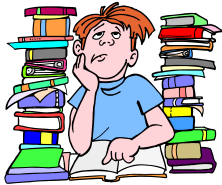
- **At breakfast time**  
Look at the words on cereal packets, milk and fruit juice cartons. Get them to see how many words they can make out of the letters.
- **Going to the shops**  
Some shops still have a sign over the door that says what they sell. Can your child put the words together with what's in the window (hairdressers, shoes, and so on)?
- **Look in the papers**  
If your child recognises a famous face (for example, a footballer or a TV star) it will make them want to try to read the story.
- **In the streets**  
You'll see advertising posters and place names.
- **In the shops**  
Your child can help you find things in the supermarket by reading out what's in the aisles.
- **DVDs**  
DVD boxes usually tell you the story. Get your child to read what's on the box as well as just watching the film.
- **On a bus or train trip**  
Place names on the front of the bus or train, posters on the bus or tube. Even the ticket is worth reading to a child!
- **Look at holiday brochures together**  
Help your child read about other places.
- **Unpacking the shopping**  
Your child can read the words on your groceries (for example, corn flakes, tea bags, and burgers) while helping you put things away.
- **Some CDs and tapes have song words printed on them**  
Your child will probably find it easier to follow words if they hear them at the same time.

## **Helping Children to Read at Key Stage 2** **'Reading Between the Lines'**

By the time they enter Key Stage 2; most children should have begun to demonstrate more sophisticated understanding during their reading time. The questions that we ask children should demand a depth of thought and imagination that goes beyond the printed text. When sharing books with your child try to:

- Discuss ideas, themes and issues emerging from their reading
- Hypothesise about events and actions (ask 'what would happen if?')
- Suggest motives for characters and their actions
- Identify personality traits of characters
- Make comparisons between characters in the story and other stories read
- Predict outcomes

It is important for children to justify their answers by direct reference to the text; some good questions to ask could begin:



- What do you think would happen if?
- Why do you think.....?
- How do you know.....?
- Do you think it would have been different if.....?



As children mature as readers they often prefer to read a non-fiction text. When sharing a non-fiction book with your child try to:

- Encourage use of the contents and index pages
- Pose questions to focus research
- Compare different types of information
- Encourage children to scan pages quickly to locate specific information
- Make comparisons between style and presentation of different types of text
- Encourage children to summarise information in their own words

Some good questions to ask might be:

- What do we know about this subject?
- What do we want to know?
- What will help us to find out where to look?
- Do we need to read all of this page?
- What have you found out?



The most important thing to remember is that reading is a pleasant thing to do! It is an opportunity to talk and share ideas with your child. If you are not already a member, keep in mind that the local library is a marvellous resource and offers many services for your children. Did you know that they offer story-telling sessions? Membership is free and children are not charged for late books!