

Tips and ideas to help you develop your child's reading at home.(KS2)

As parents / carers, you are your child's most influential teacher with an important part to play in helping your child to learn to read. Whilst children read at school, there are also lots of ways that you can support your child at home. We would encourage you to hear your child read their reading books as often as possible (remember little and often is best), but there are also other ways that you can read with your child or promote the pleasure of reading and here are some suggestions on how you can help to make this a positive experience.

'Young people who read outside of class daily are 13 times more likely to read above the expected level for their age.'

National Literacy Trust, 2012

'Children who read for pleasure are likely to do significantly better at school than their peers, making greater progress in mathematics, development of vocabulary and spelling.'

(Sullivan & Brown, Social inequalities in cognitive scores at age 16: The role of reading, 2013)

Vocabulary is vital

'Poor vocabulary is the prime cause of academic failure' (Clegg et al)

'The lack of vocabulary knowledge is primarily caused by lack of opportunity not a lack of natural ability' (Chall et.al)

'It is very rare that a child with a good vocabulary does badly in a reading comprehension' (Pie Corbett)

Did you know that around 20% of the marks in the new curriculum SATs reading test are based around giving / explaining the meaning of words in context, so developing the children's vocabulary is vital.

Why not have a word of the week on the fridge at home. We also have a word of the week in school in each classroom.

Here are some ways you can help your child:

1. Choose a quiet time to hear them read daily.

Set aside a quiet time with no distractions. Ten to fifteen minutes daily is usually long enough. If they are a free reader set up a routine where they have 15-20 minutes of quiet time to read independently. This could be just before bedtime. Even if they are free readers it is still important to hear them read and question them on their book.

2. Make reading enjoyable.

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

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. 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.

5. 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. Remember 'Nothing succeeds like success'. 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. Flow is lost, text cannot be understood and children can easily become reluctant readers.

6. Visit the Library.

Encourage your child to use the public library regularly.

7. Regular practice.

Try to read with your child on most school days. 'Little and often' is best. Teachers have limited time to help your child with reading.

8. Communicate.

Your child will most likely have a reading diary from school. Try to communicate regularly with positive comments and any concerns. Your child will then know that you are interested in their progress and that you value reading.

9. 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, how they think the story will end, their favourite part. You will then be able to see how well they have understood and you will help them to develop good comprehension skills.

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.

Help your child start a home library; paperback books are fine. Encourage your child to swap books with friends. Check used book stores. Give books as gifts. For gift ideas, ask for someone to buy them their favourite book when they were that age.

11. Want your children to be good readers?

Let them see you read.

12. Try holding D-E-A-R times at your house.

"DEAR" stands for "Drop Everything and Read." During DEAR time, everyone in the family sits down for some uninterrupted reading time.

14. Reading harder books to them if they want to hear more complex stories, but letting them read the easy bits.

15. Reading their favourite book again and again with them.

Repetition helps your child learn new words and internalise language patterns and story structures.

16. **Buy an audio book** to listen to in the car or instead of watching TV - this will also help with language development as well as enabling them to enjoy stories. There are also some websites with free audio stories.

17. **Talking about what you've just read together** helps children think about what they've read, boosts their imagination and grows their confidence. It's also a good way to pick up on new words and check that they understand what they've read.

Why not try:

- Getting your child to think of questions they can ask you to test if you've been listening!
- Asking how they think a particular character in a story might be feeling (you can look at the faces in pictures, if there are any, to help them get started).
- Asking them to tell you what they would do if they were in the story, or what they think is going to happen next. These questions encourage your child to say more than 'yes' or 'no'.
- Can they summarise the story so far? What does this word mean? How could you work it out without a dictionary? (Read around the word - are there any clues?) Encouraging them to be 'story detectives', looking for clues in the pictures and text to help with challenging words.

18. **Think outside the book!**

Never before have children had such access to a range of wonderful creative story and picture books, websites, applications, audio books and mobile devices. E-readers and interactive books are now adding further to the wealth of exciting opportunities for children to read. However, children still need to 'crack the code' by learning the basic building blocks for reading. As your children grow up ask them the kind of things they like to read and 'how' they like to read them.

Why not try:

- Joining your local library. Not only do they provide access to a huge variety of free books, they also provide DVD's, audiobooks and even internet access for a small charge. You will need ID to sign up.
- Making a simple book together with pictures they draw or photos they take and help them to write a simple story alongside it.
- Remembering that having fun talking, listening, telling stories and reading together will not only help your son or daughter learn to read but will create memories for you both that will last forever.
- If you would like access to some fantastic ebooks, try visiting www.oxfordowl.co.uk. There are over **250 free books** for parents / carers to read with their child at home, with lots of ideas on how to support your child with reading.

18. Have fun!

Children love it when their parents / carers play with them and praise them.

If you have fun reading stories, then chances are your child will too!

Younger children can have a short attention span so 'little but often' might be the best way to keep them motivated and enthusiastic.

Why not try:

- Reading adventure or ghost stories in the dark or under the duvet by torchlight. Try reading the book in a funny accent or breaking up the character parts so you take it in turns to read.
- Making up a story about your child and all their favourite toys - and use them to act it out.
- Making up a treasure hunt around your home with a clue in every room for your child to find and read. Or do this for an exciting short story and each time they find a clue, you give them the next paragraph.

19. Play Games

Many games are really useful for developing the language skills that children need as developing readers. You probably already have a host of really useful games in the cupboard, so dig out the *Scrabble*, *Bananagrams*, *Boggle* or a crossword, to name just a few. This will also help their spelling ability.

20. Keep books safe and encourage children to have a special place where their books can be stored. Show them how to turn pages carefully.

21. If English is not your family's first language, look for books that are printed in a dual language. You can talk about books or stories in any language.

Reading is one of the most valuable and rewarding skills your child will learn. We believe that children who read regularly to an adult at home, make greater and quicker progress in the development of their reading and comprehension skills and therefore any time you can spend hearing your child read will provide valuable support to their learning. Speak to your child's teacher if you want any book recommendations.

Useful websites

<http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/home/reading-owl/top-tips--3>

Booklists for ideas about what to read

<http://www.booktrust.org.uk/books/children/booklists/>

<http://www.lovereadings4kids.co.uk/>

Children's newspaper

<http://www.firstnews.co.uk/the-newspaper>

Range of ideas for reading

<http://www.wordsforlife.org.uk/>

Cheap books

www.bookpeople.co.uk

www.fantasticfiction.co.uk