



READING WITH YOUR CHILD AT HOME

IDEAS FOR PARENTS OF YOUNG CHILDREN

Reading is important

- Reading has always been an important skill. In our modern world it is more important than ever.
- Children learn about the importance of reading as they watch family members use reading and writing for everyday purposes.
- Reading with your child at home will help your child in all learning areas of school.
- Children see you reading and writing in everyday life – reading for pleasure, sharing a story with your child, using a recipe, making a shopping list, writing a birthday card or reading street signs. This teaches them that reading and writing are useful skills in today’s world.
- Often parents are asked by the school to listen to their child read at home. It’s a good way of supporting your child’s reading. Books may be borrowed from your school library or your local library.
- Be confident that your child will learn to read.

What you can do at home to help

- Be yourself. Involve children in everyday conversations.
- Read aloud to children. It helps them to learn the language of books and will encourage them to enjoy books and reading.
- Talk about books, read together and make reading an enjoyable, shared activity.
- Make sure there is a wide range of reading material for your child at home, both fiction and non-fiction.

- It is important to read to your child in your home language if your first language is not English. Experience shows that using your home language will help your child to learn to read in English.
- Try not to let television intrude on reading time. Make a special time for reading with your child, away from interruption.
- Listen to your child every day, even for a short time.
- Give books as treats and presents.

Hints for listening to your child read

- Before reading, talk about the cover, the title, the pictures, and discuss what the book may be about.
- During reading, discuss what has been read up to that point, and imagine what will happen next time.
- After reading is finished, talk and ask questions about the story and the pictures.
- When reading a harder book together, take turns. Beginning readers can read the repetitive parts and more experienced readers can read a paragraph or a page.
- On finding an unknown word:

Pause to give your child time to work out the word

Prompt

- go back to the beginning of the sentence, or read past the difficult word to the end of the sentence.
- look for a clue in the picture or the words
- look at the first letter and think about what the words could be
- ask “Does this make sense?”
- try to sound out the word
- if necessary tell your child the word

Praise your child for trying even if mistakes are made.

What to read and do

- Tell and re-tell stories of all kinds including favourite stories, fairy tales, movie plots, local news items and family history.
- Play games such as “I spy... something beginning with d”.
- Ask your child to read out simple recipes while you cook together.
- Read comics, magazines, short stories, poems and rhymes, including nursery rhymes.
- Do crosswords & other word puzzles together.
- Read the TV guide before watching a program.
- Look at letterbox leaflets together.
- Read directions and signs when driving and shopping.
- Read and write notes and letters to family members.
- Play board games together and read the rules.
- Provide plastic letters, crayons, pencils, pens and writing paper.

And do remember...

- Discuss the meaning of stories and words.
- Encourage your child to read anywhere and at any time.
- Let your child see you enjoy reading.
- Visit and use a library near you. Borrow books for yourself as well as your child.
- Talk to your child’s classroom teacher or the principal for further help and advice.
- Enjoy reading – it should be fun.

Contact your child's school and get more information on how to help you child read.