

How can I help my child with reading?

The single biggest predictor of high academic achievement is reading to children. Not flashcards, not workbooks, not fancy pre-schools, not technology or computers, but a cherished adult taking the time every day or night (or both!) to sit and read them wonderful books.

Involvement in your child's education is crucial. Children with involved parents and carers, irrespective of income or background, are more likely to have higher academic achievement, better social skills and behaviour, greater confidence and self-esteem.

This guide will help you support your child with their reading. It will provide you with some ideas and resources to ensure your child becomes an enthusiastic, confident, and fluent reader.

RECOMMENDED READING LISTS:

Use the website addresses below to discover some amazing books for your child to read:

EYFS (3-5 years): <https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/reading-lists-for-ks1-school-pupils/100-best-picture-books-to-read-before-you-are-5-years-old/>

KEY STAGE 1: <https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/category/reading-lists-for-ks1-school-pupils/>

KEY STAGE 2: <https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/category/reading-lists-for-ks2-school-pupils/>

BONUS TIP: JOIN A LIBRARY!

You and your child should join your local library and visit regularly. Enjoying books is the first step towards learning to read, and a young child will get off to the very best start if they have hundreds of books to choose from. Libraries often have story times and family events, which are particularly useful over the school holiday periods.

The Five Pillars of Reading

- 1) Phonemic Awareness:** Your child's ability to hear, recognise and manipulate sounds. It is one of the earliest predictors of reading ability.
- (2) Phonics:** Phonics is the matching of sounds with correct letters and letter patterns. Your child will learn to visualise and verbalise these sounds, letters, and words, which is the foundation for reading.
- (3) Vocabulary:** A strong vocabulary helps your child identify and understand more complex words, building upon previously learned words and acquiring new ones.
- (4) Fluency:** Fluency is your child's ability to read accurately, expressively, and at a rhythmic pace. As your child develops fluency, they will naturally increase reading comprehension.
- (5) Comprehension:** Comprehension is your child's ability to understand and retain information to create meaning from the written text. This pillar is the final stage and the accumulation of the previous four pillars. As your child develops their comprehension skills, they will also become more able to read objectively and critically across various topics and genres.

Reading Tips for Each Age Group

THE EARLY YEARS: Sharing picture books is fun. Do not worry if you do not have much time, as just a few minutes each day will make a big difference. Also, do not worry if your child gets distracted, chews the book, or wanders off, as this is perfectly normal. Turn off the screens and put down your phone to make it easier for both of you to enjoy the story without any distractions. Sit close together and encourage your child to hold the book themselves and turn the pages. Look at the pictures; do not just read the words. Maybe there's something funny in the images that you can enjoy together.

Talk about the book and ask questions. Get them to guess what will happen next. Picture books are an excellent way to talk through your child's fears and worries or help them deal with their emotions. Give your child space to talk and ask how they feel about the situations in the story.

There is no right way or wrong way to share a story as long as you and your child enjoy the experience. Use funny voices, act out situations, and your child will love this. Involve other family members, such as grandparents, as story time is something that everyone can enjoy, and it is an excellent way for relationships to strengthen.

Finally, remember: good readers become good writers!

Good writing follows on from good reading.!

Older children's writing improves the more they read!

THE PRIMARY SCHOOL YEARS: The more you read to your child, the better, but the evening bedtime story is often the easiest, the most appropriate and most enjoyable moment. Ten minutes may be enough with a young child, but if you can manage fifteen, that would be even better. Settle on the bed with your child, cuddle up and enjoy whatever book has been chosen. The downside to this (if it has a downside) is that your child will soon pick up their favourite books and demand them to be read again and again until you are bored – but your child will not be – they will love it. Every time you reread the same book, your child will hear new words in the story that will make the meaning even clearer. They will also see, recognise, and learn the print on the page.

Do not confuse learning to read with bedtime reading, which is reading for pleasure. Learning to read has an academic focus and should be separated from the bedtime book. Bedtime reading is the time for relaxation and preparation for sleep. If you are reading a lovely bedtime story to your child, do not suddenly hand the book over to them and demand, "Now you read the next page." Doing this will put your child under pressure and may make them associate anxiety and failure with reading. Often children are put off reading in this way.

Do not worry if your child keeps choosing books that you consider very simple, as the reinforcement lets them build up their confidence. Your child will feel safe with their much-read and much-loved books. If you are reading for pleasure, then you do not need to be concerned with driving your child on to the next reading level at school. It is about 'pleasure'. Show how much you enjoy books. Ensure that your child also sees you and other family members reading. If you want your child to enjoy reading, then you need to enjoy it yourself.

"Never trust anyone who has not brought a book with them" - Lemony Snicket

What if your child is reading below expectations?

If you are worried about your child's reading, the best thing to do is talk with your child's class teacher. Your teacher will set your mind at rest if they think your child is making good progress, or they will talk you through plans to help if they agree that your child needs more support. Tell your teacher if there is any history of reading or spelling problems in the family, as this will help them decide whether your child needs any extra help.

Ensure that you ask your child what they think of the books they read at school and look at them yourself. Make sure that your child is not getting bored by finding their books too easy, but do make sure that they choose the books they want to read as often as possible. It is very off-putting to be told what to read.

You can support them at home by:

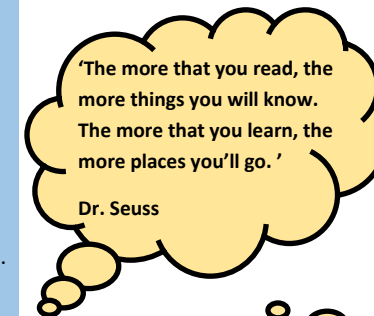
- Praising your child every time they read, even if they do not get everything right the first time. A 'well done' from you is very motivating. Remember to 'pause, prompt, praise'— wait before you correct a mistake so that your child has a chance to get it right themselves, then give your child clues to help them get the word right, and finally praise them if they get the word correct or even try to.
- Waiting until the end of a line before correcting mistakes when you are reading together, which will give time for self-correction. If your child does not know a particular word, get them to guess what it means from the other words around, or say 'something' instead and go back later to work out the word. Spending time reading together each week can help your child progress with reading.
- Making long words more accessible by clapping out the chunks of the word (syllables). For example, there are two in "luck-y" and three in "an-i-mal".
- Responding to their needs—some children need lots of practice, and others want to read the same book repeatedly, which is a normal part of learning to read.

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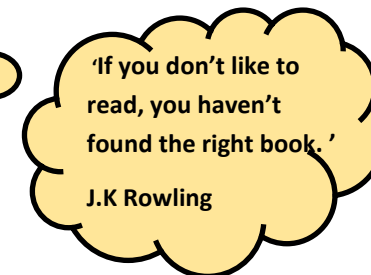
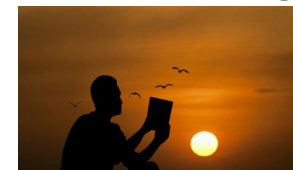
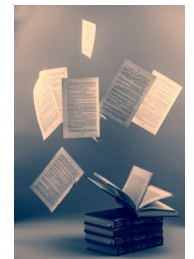
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A Guide for Parents and Carers



'The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.'

Dr. Seuss



'If you don't like to read, you haven't found the right book.'

J.K Rowling