



A Reading Guide for Parents and Carers

The ability to read fluently and to read with understanding is one of the most important skills that we can give to a child. Research shows that when parents get involved in their child's education, it makes a big difference to how well their child does. As parents you can help your child with reading, by showing them how important it is, and by finding ways to help your child enjoy reading. Studies show that children who enjoy reading, often do much better at school.

We hope that this leaflet will give you some useful ideas about reading at home with your child. Please do not hesitate to come and see us if you need any further help or advice.

General strategies for reading at home:

Spend 10 minutes a day reading together. (Take it in turns, talk about books and make up your own stories.)

Talk about the book before you start reading.

Give plenty of praise and let your child know that you are enjoying listening to them read.

Reread the same book lots of times so that your child becomes confident and so that they can spend longer thinking about what the book means. (The more children read and hear familiar patterns and phrases, the easier reading will become. And, their confidence will grow at the same time.)

Keep reading sessions short – reading should never be a chore!

Reading for Meaning:

Learning to decode and use phonics when reading gives children access to books and writing, but they need to understand what they are reading to be able to make use of it. As your child becomes a better and more fluent reader, Bells Farm places less emphasis on reading the words and more emphasis on understanding them. We call this comprehension.

There are some key skills all children need to be able to succeed with comprehension. Below are some activities linked to the skills that your child will be learning to do at school. There are also some questions or sentence starters included to help with book talk.

Key Stage 1		Key Stage 2	
Skill	Activity	Skill	Activity
Explaining understanding	<p>10 things I notice... Children should read and then find 10 things that they have noticed. This can be from the pictures or the text.</p> <p>Book talk: What is this book about?</p>	Explaining understanding	<p>I wonder... Children should read to themselves then explain to adult any questions they have had while they have been reading.</p> <p>Book talk: I think the author is trying to ...</p>
Become very familiar with stories	<p>This reminds me of ... Children should begin to make links between stories and their own experiences and between different stories.</p> <p>Retelling stories Children should be encouraged to retell the story many times. They can retell it to different people or use toys to act out the story. Drawing the story as a story map is another way to do this.</p> <p>Book talk: This reminds me of...</p>	Listen to and discuss a wider range of stories, poetry and information texts	 <p>Book talk: What do you like to read and why?</p>
Recognising and joining in with predictable phrases	<p>Everybody join in Children are also learning to read when they are read to. Get them to join in with predictable phrases as you read to them.</p>	Read books that are structured in different ways	<p>Book talk: Where have you seen that phrase/idea/theme before?</p>
Learning to appreciate rhymes and poems	<p>Sing songs, repeat nursery rhymes.</p> <p>Play rhyming and riddle games.</p>	Recommend books they have read giving reasons for their choices	Sing songs, repeat nursery rhymes. It is still a valuable task even for older children.
Discuss word meanings and link new words to words they already know	<p>What other word could I use? Choose a word from a sentence and replace it with another word. Discuss whether it means the same now or the meaning has changed.</p> <p>My favourite word is...</p>	Discuss words and phrases that capture the readers' interest and imagination	Draw a scene and write words and phrases from the text on to it. Explain why they were chosen.

	Choose a favourite word from a book. Discuss why it is like. Book talk: I like the word...It makes me feel...		Book talk: I like the word...It tells me...
Draw on what they already know	Tell me... Talk about/write a sentence about a picture from the book before it is read. Ask me... The children should ask 3 questions about the book before it is read. By asking questions, the children are having to think about what the book might be about. This in turn encourages the use of new vocabulary and prepares them for what they might have to read.	Ask questions to improve their understanding	Book talk: What do you already know about this book/topic/author before you start reading?
Check that a text makes sense to them.	Thoughts in the head Discuss what different characters might be thinking. Draw thought bubbles for the characters. Speech bubbles Discuss what the characters might be saying. Draw speech bubbles for the characters. Writing in role Write a note/list/letter from the character. Statement game Give the children a statement and ask them to agree or disagree and explain why.	Check that a text makes sense to them, discussing their understanding and the meaning of words	Short conversations Write or act out short conversations two or more of the characters might have. Writing in role Write a letter/diary entry/email a character might write.
Discuss the title and events	Alternate title Write different titles for the book. Book talk: I like that title because...	Identify themes and story or book conventions	Book talk: I wonder why...has done...
Summarise the story	This story/book is about...	Identify the main	

	Ask the children to summarise what they have read.	ideas and summarise them	Book talk: This is about...
Make inferences based on what was said and done	Draw a face... Ask the children to draw a face to show how the characters feel at different times in the story. Book talk: My favourite character is...because...	Draw inferences such as characters' feelings, thoughts and motives and use evidence from the text to prove it	Book talk: I think he is mean/kind/scared/etc. because ...
Make predictions	I think... What will happen next? Draw or discuss what the character might do next, what the next book might be about etc.	Predict what might happen from what is written and what is implied	Page 99 Choose page 99 (or any other page that hasn't already been read), read it and discuss what must have already happened and what might happen next. Book talk: In the next chapter, I think...will happen because...

Instant ideas:

Buy books as presents.

Make a special place to keep reading books.

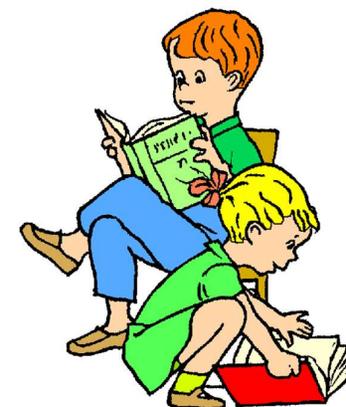
Let your child see you reading. Talk about what you've read.

Read other forms of writing together – newspapers, magazines, websites, games, recipes.

Talk about TV programmes. The same skills are needed to understand what you seen on screen and what is read in a book.

Take books with you when you are going on a journey, waiting for an appointment or going shopping to help pass the time.

Visit the local library or the Library of Birmingham. www.birmingham.gov.uk/libraries



Frequently Asked Questions:

I am really busy and don't have time to read with my child. What can I do?

10 minutes a day or a few times a week will make a real difference. Make it part of your routine.

My child doesn't like reading. What can I do?

Try to find things to read about things that interest your child. Researching on the internet, reading instructions on games, following a recipe all involve reading. Reluctant readers are more likely to read if they want to do something.

Try paired reading (taking it in turns to read a page/paragraph)

Don't expect perfection – as long as it makes sense and the words are close enough, don't correct every word.

My child finds reading difficult. How can I help?

If your child is experiencing difficulties, make an appointment to see your child's class teacher, Mrs Knipe or Miss McClelland.

I find reading difficult. How can I still help my child?

Even when parents struggle to read or can't read English, research shows that talking about books, pictures and TV programmes at home still makes a difference.

My child doesn't change their book often enough. What should I do?

Discuss this with the class teacher first. Often books are not changed each day as children benefit hugely from rereading a book several times. Reading a book several times allows your child to internalise new vocabulary and sentence structures as well as becoming a more confident reader.

My child's books are too easy. What should I do?

Discuss this with your child's class teacher. Often children's ability to understand what they have read does not match their ability to decode and read the words on the page. This is often why children have a book that they find easy to read. If your child is finding a book easy, make sure you ask lots of questions to ensure they have a solid understanding of the words and text. Remember also that a longer book is not always more difficult.

Useful Websites:

<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/advice-for-parents/reading-at-home/>

<https://www.pearson.com/uk/learners/primary-parents/learn-at-home/help-your-child-to-enjoy-reading/top-10-tips-to-help-children-enjoy-reading.html>

<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/reading-tips-parents-multiple-languages>

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/tips-and-advice/reading-tips/how-to-read-with-your-child/>