

# Reading at Home

At Wearhead Primary School we know how important it is for teachers and parents to work together to give your child the best start. Reading together at home is one of the easiest but most important ways in which you can help your child. As you share books you are helping improve your child's reading skills and also showing them how important and enjoyable reading is.

We hope that you might find this short guide useful.



## Supporting Reading at Home

1. Find a place to sit together that suits you both
2. Try to read for at least 5 to 10 minutes a day and once over the weekend. Encourage it as a pleasurable experience
3. Find some time to talk about the book as well as reading it.



Start with the title, look at the cover and briefly chat about what you might find inside. At the bottom of each page, encourage your child to predict what might happen next. If your child gets stuck, ask what word would fit best, ask them to sound it out (if appropriate), or simply supply the word yourself. What happened in the story? Does this remind them of anything in their lives or anything they have read before? Did they think the book was funny? Did they spot any interesting words and phrases? Did they enjoy the book?

4. Read to your child. You can help your child to understand the emphasis of particular parts of the story.
5. Encourage your child to retell the story you have just shared. This will give you an idea of how much they have understood.
6. Do not condemn the book as 'too easy' or 'too hard'. Children need a range of reading materials. Any 'easy' book helps them to relax with reading. A difficult book can be read to your child. Both are important.



7. If your child misreads a word without changing the meaning, e.g. 'Dad' for 'Father', accept it. If they hesitate, repeat a word or leave one out, say nothing provided the meaning is not lost. If they say a word which does change the meaning, or they are simply stuck, you can help them by;
  - a. Pointing to the picture if it is relevant
  - b. Asking a question to remind them of the context, e.g. 'Where did they say they were going?'
  - c. Re-reading the sentence up to the unknown word to remind them of the context.
  - d. Saying or pointing to the first letter of the word.
  - e. Telling your child the word to avoid losing momentum.
  - f. If the word can be read easily by sounding out the letters, encourage them or help them to do this **Pause, Prompt and Praise**

**PAUSE** to help them work out the new words

**PROMPT** by using some of the techniques mentioned

**PRAISE** them for trying whether they are right or wrong

**It is important to use as many clues as possible to help your child when they encounter difficulty.**

## **After Reading**

Talking about the book with your child at the end will help your child in their enjoyment and understanding of the book.

- Did you enjoy that book? Why? Why not?
- Who was your favourite character? Why?
- Which part did you like the best? Why?
- Was there any part you didn't like? Why?
- Would you choose this book/story again?

## **Which books are best?**

1. Books your child likes.
2. Books suggested by your child's teacher
3. Books your child chooses from a library or bookshop that they want to read
4. Never be afraid of re-reading books.

What else can your child read?

- Comics
- Magazines
- Travel brochures
- Instructions or recipes
- What's on television tonight
- Information books
- Manuals
- Newspapers
- Poems
- Taped/CD/Recorded stories
- Sports Reports
- Shopping lists.....

## My child is a good reader. Can I still help?

YES! Although children will often want to read in their heads when they become fluent readers and you should not insist on too much reading aloud, there are still many things that you can do. Discuss with them what they have read – about the character, about the plot, about the important parts of the story, about what they have learnt from the information, about their feelings as they read the story... For example;

- Which part of the story did you like best? Why?
- What do you think will happen next?
- Would you like X as a friend? Why?
- What do you think X should have done when..?
- How do you think the story will end?
- Was the information detailed enough?

Encourage them to think about the way the book has been written; the print, the layout and the illustrations.

- Take your child to the library
- Help your child to choose books
- Try reading bits of a book together into a tape recorder using different voices!



My child won't read, no matter what I do. How can I help?

- Read to your child as much as possible
- Don't make an issue out of it
- Talk to your child's class teacher (this is a great idea as we have lots of ways to help you)
- Working together will help

Here are some ideas that parents have given us for times when their children have been reluctant to read.

- Try getting them to read with a different member of the family i.e. if usually Mum then try Dad.
- Get the child to start off and read for a while (a page, 2 pages, a few paragraphs) , then take over for a while, and then let the child do their amount again.
- Snuggle under a blanket together...or perhaps in a den, a tent, or in the garden.
- Read in a regular time that suits you all...one family has tea, then reading before pudding! Other families have treats after tea such as a few sweets but again only after the reading has been done.
- Just read a few pages don't try to do too much.

**ALSO...**

**Read yourself!** Set a good example by sharing your reading. Let your children see that you value books and keep them at home.

**Keep books safe.** Make your child their own special place to keep their books. Show them how to turn pages carefully.

**Point out words all around you.** Help your child to read the words around them: on food packets in the supermarket, on buses, in newspapers, in recipes.

**Visit your library** – it's free to join! All libraries have children's sections. Many also have regular storytelling sessions.

**Make time to read.** Read a bedtime story with your child every night. Encourage them to share reading with grandparents, brothers and sisters and aunts and uncles.

**Keep in touch with school.** Make sure your child swaps their home reading books regularly at school and try to make a regular time slot of about 10 minutes to hear them read.

**Be positive.** Praise your child for trying hard at their reading. Let them know it's all right to make mistakes.

**Turn off the TV!** It's easier for your child to concentrate if there are no distractions.

**Give them time.** Let them make a guess before you tell them the word. Help them to get the first sound or try breaking the word up into smaller sections.

**Point with a finger.** Encourage them to follow the words with their finger.

**Don't make them try too hard!** It doesn't matter if you have to tell them the word sometimes.

**Let them read their favourites.** It's good practice to read the same books over and over again.

**Ask lots of questions.** Check they understand the story by asking them questions about what happens. Use the pictures to explain what's happening.

**Don't read for too long.** A good ten minutes is better than a difficult half hour.

### **Activities to try at home to make reading fun!**

Organise a treasure hunt around the house on a rainy day. Give your child a list of things that they can find in the house and see how quickly they can collect all the items.

Create a monster dictionary by making up names of frightening monsters that begin with different letters



Cut out pictures from magazines and add some speech bubbles.

Make comic books...these are fun to read and write (remember to let them read lots of comics as research!). There are several online programs for making comic books.

Make an ideas jar: cut out slips of paper and write a word or two on each - blue/smooth/frosty/loved OR monster/forest/flying carpet/Get the children to pick three to five words and make up a story using them.

Enjoy playing with words... learn a poem every week and make up some fun moves to go with them.

Look at magazines and newspapers together and have fun spotting some letters or words that they know.

Make a scrapbook of anything that they are interested in so that they can share it with other people.

