



In this pack you will find books that we have chosen specifically for your child. Where possible, we have tried to link these book titles to their reading level and their general interests. We hope that this supports you with reading at home. To help further, we have put together this quick guide for reading at home. You do not need to do all of these things every time you read, but pick and choose what works for your child.

Before Reading

Get comfortable! Snuggle up together somewhere warm and cosy, whether it's in bed, on a beanbag or on the sofa. And make sure your child has somewhere comfy to read on their own too, or just to look at books.

Start a conversation about the book before reading. Link it to other stories and experiences you have shared e.g. 'This reminds me of...'

Use props or toys for younger readers e.g. Have a teddy bear with you if you are reading a story about a teddy bear.

Have a conversation about where the story is set. Have you read any other stories with the same setting? eg 'We're going on a Bear Hunt' and 'The Gruffalo' are both set in the woods.

Make predictions—talk about what the story might be about or what might happen.

Have a conversation about whether the book is fact or fiction. How do they know?

It is important that your child also hears you read, so start off the reading that way. If it is a shorter book, read the story through once without stopping so they can listen and enjoy the whole story. For a longer story or book, you can start by reading the first paragraph. If you think your child may not understand something, say something like 'Oh, I think what's happening here is that...'

During Reading

Encourage children, especially older children, to use expression when reading, such as for the voices of different characters.

Discuss the punctuation on the page, and encourage children to take a breath when there is any punctuation. This will help them to read whole sentences together and hear if what they are reading makes sense.

You do not have to read the entire book every time you sit down to read! Start by focussing on just 2 or 3 pages and talk about the characters, story and setting in lots of detail.

Take it in turns so your child can hear how you read.

Resist the temptation to 'jump in' and correct all misread words. Some of these can be talked about after reading.

Where possible, let your child read without interrupting too often or frequently. Enjoy listening to them!

After Reading

The conversation after you have been reading is often just as important as the reading itself. Here are some suggestions of different things you can chat about:

Return to any words they found 'tricky'. If there were a lot of these, just pick one or two words they are likely to come across in other books to focus on.

Discuss the meaning of words. You could look up any words together, go back to the sentence that word was in and check it makes sense.

Discuss feelings by asking, 'How do you think the character is feeling?' 'What has made them feel this way?' You can model giving answers to start off with, for example 'I think they might be scared because...'

Ask them if they liked the book. What did they like? What didn't they like? Why?

Strategies for when your child is stuck:

When reading in school, we ask the child to use different strategies if they get stuck on a 'tricky' word. Encourage your child to 'use their strategies' to try to work out unfamiliar words, rather than immediately providing them with the word.

Here are some strategies they will be familiar with:

- 'chunk' the word or use their 'fingers as windows' to break the word into sections. Sound out each section, then blend back together to hear the whole word.
- Look at the picture and then look back at the word.
- Ask 'What word would make sense here?' 'Does it sound right?'
- Skip the word, read the rest of the sentence and see if that helps.
- Re-read the sentence.
- Ask 'Does it look like any other words I know?'

Top Tips:

Ask your child to choose what they'd like to read. They'll feel more interested in the story if they've picked it out themselves. (And don't worry if they keep returning to the same story, either!)

Sit close together. You could encourage your child to hold the book themselves and turn the pages, too.

If you can, turn off the TV, radio and computer. It's easier for both of you to enjoy the story without any other distractions.

Ask questions and talk about the book. Use the pictures—picture books can be a great way to talk through your child's fears and worries, or to help them deal with their emotions. Give them space to talk, and ask how they feel about the situations in the story.

Have fun! There's no right or wrong way to share a story – as long as you and your child are having fun. Don't be afraid to act out situations or use funny voices... your little ones will love it!

All reading is good – Don't rule out non-fiction, comics, graphic novels, magazines or leaflets. Reading is reading and it's all worthwhile.