



St John the Baptist

Church of England Primary School

Guide to supporting reading at home

Our Ethos:

At St Johns, 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 have a diverse range of books to support your child's reading within the school, and this will enable your child to experience a range of authors and styles of books including non-fiction and poetry.

In terms of reading, we want children to be able to:

- Enjoy reading and see it as a pleasurable leisure activity, as well as a means of following instructions and finding things out.
- Have the reading skills necessary to read a range of text types for pleasure and for information.
- To be confident and competent readers, children need to have access to a range of reading experiences

Reading Strategies:

Pause, Prompt and Praise

PAUSE to give them time to work out the new words

PROMPT by using some of the techniques mentioned in this booklet

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. Below are the reading strategies we teach when tackling reading words.

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?

Which books are best?

- Books your child likes.
- Books suggested by your child's teacher
- Books your child chooses from a library or bookshop that they want to read
- Never be afraid of re-reading books, this is a great way to increase fluency.

What else can your child read?

- Comics or Magazines
- Instructions or recipes
- Information books
- Newspapers
- Poems
- Recorded stories



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, you should still encourage them to read aloud occasionally so that they continue to develop their expression and fluency.

Discuss with them what they have read - about the character, about the plot; about the important parts of the story; about their feelings as they read the story; about what they have learnt from information texts, etc.

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 - working together will help

Top Tips for Reading at Home:

- Keep sessions short
- Keep sessions relaxed - find a comfortable place where you and your child can settle down
- Give lots of praise, progress may not always be fast - children do not always find the skill of reading and understanding easy to grasp
- Talk about the book before you begin to read - look at the front cover, and the pictures (if any) and ask your child to think about or even guess what the book may be about.
- Ask questions to check your child's understanding e.g. What might happen next? Why did something happen?
- Talk about the book afterwards - did your child enjoy it? Why? What was the best bit?
- If your child struggles over a particular word, try to find ways to help them remember it e.g. by looking at the 'shape' of the word, or by guessing the word from the meaning of the sentence.
- Don't give up on the bedtime story, even if your child is a good reader.
The more stories and books your child hears, the more they will want to read.
- Be a good model for your children - let them see you reading - anything and everything - newspapers, magazines, catalogues, books etc. - let them know that reading is a valuable skill.
- Telling them about a book or story you liked when you were a child. You may still be able to find a copy of it on the internet!
- Making up a story or telling them about when you were a child or something that happened to you at school, remember you don't always need a book to tell a good story.
- Taking it in turns to read parts of the story.
- Telling them one thing you really enjoy about listening to them read.



Helpful questions to ask children when reading:

Children's understanding of what they have read is the key to success and enjoyment of reading. It allows children to challenge ideas, collect a wider range of vocabulary and become creative writers as they use the language they have acquired to improve their writing. Below are grouped questions under different themes that you may ask your child after they have read. They are some basic question starters that will give you a starting point for the type of questions to ask your child about the book they are reading.

Retrieval Questions

Where/ when does the story take place?

Can you describe the character's appearance?

Can you predict what the story may be about from the title?

Where do the characters live?

Who are the main characters?

What happened in the story?

Can you describe the problem in the story? How would you solve it?

What happened after....?

Look at the picture of the character, how do you think they are feeling? Why might this be?

Describe what happened at/when....

What do you think will happen next?

What did the character say to....?

Inference Questions

What does the word ... imply/make you think of?

If you were going to interview/ask a character a question-who would you ask and what would your question be?

What do you think will happen because of?

Through whose eyes is the story told?

Why do you think ... feels...?

If this was you, what would you do next?

How have the characters changed during the story?

Predict what you think is going to happen next. What makes you think this?

How do you know that...? (Deduce/Infer)

What does the main character feel at this point in the story? How do you know this-can you pick out a sentence?

Questions about structure of texts

How do headings help you when you scan the text?

How does the layout help the reader?

How does the title of the story encourage you to read more?

How does the story blurb on the back cover encourage you to read the book? What things do you now want to find out after reading the blurb?

Some of the text is printed in a different way, why do you think the writer does this?

Why has the author repeated structures, words and phrases?

What is the purpose of the pictures?

What is the purpose of a caption?

Questions about language

What does (word/phrase) mean?

Which words has the author used to make the writing sound more formal/informal?

Why has the author used ... (italics, bold, exclamation marks, headings, bullet points, captions etc.)?

What has the author used in the text to make the characters sound funny/sad/angry?

Think of another word you can use here. What different effect would your word have?

As a reader, how do you feel about this character? What makes you feel that way?

Can you find any similes/metaphors in the story?

Find some adjectives that help you picture the scene/character in your mind.

Find a sentence that encourages you to want to read more of the story.

Why has the author set out the text like this?

The Big Picture - making links with other reading

Do you know any other stories like this? (good over evil, wise over foolish)

How is the hero/heroine of this story similar to others you have read about?

What does the story remind you of?

Does the story remind you of something that has happened to you?

How would you have felt in that situation?

What other stories have similar openings/endings to this one?

Many stories have messages, what is the message of this story?

Does the story make you want to find out anything else about(e.g. the history, cultural, social area being discussed?)

Websites to help the development of Reading at home & School:

Oxford Owl Press <http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk>

Wordsforlife.org.uk <http://www.wordsforlife.org.uk/>

A Story For Bedtime www.astoryforbedtime.com

BBC Parenting website www.bbc.co.uk/parenting

Booktrust www.booktrust.org.uk

The Child Literacy Centre www.childliteracy.com

DfES Parents Centre www.parentscentre.gov.uk

Help them read www.helpthemread.co.uk

Parent Link www.parentlink.co.uk

Read Together www.readtogether.co.uk

Silly Books www.sillybooks.net

Finding and choosing books:

Here are some useful websites and online resources to help you choose books for children, young people and adults. Remember visit Danny at West End Lane Books who has an amazing knowledge of children's literature of new books as well as classic stories for your child. Also, when you mention you are a parent of Emmanuel the school get 10% of the sales at the end of the year as a voucher to spend on books for the school.

Bookheads <http://www.bookheads.org.uk/>

Books, Reading and Writing www.braw.org.uk

Cool Reads www.cool-reads.co.uk

First Choice Books www.firstchoicebooks.org.uk

Guys Read www.guysread.com

Mrs Mad www.mrsmad.com

Reading Matters www.readingmatters.co.uk