

Enjoy choosing books together from the library or bookshop

Explore the different purposes of books - fiction, poetry, non-fiction, reference.

- Use titles, cover pages, pictures and 'blurbs' to predict what the book might be like.
- Ask the more confident reader about his favourite author and get him to recognise familiar publishers. He could make his own anthology of his favourite poems, books, authors etc.
- Choose from a wide range of fiction including traditional tales, stories from other cultures, best-selling authors and books that he's been introduced to at school.
- Get him to recognise that certain types of books are targeted at particular readers, for example fantasy, junior science fiction, humour.

Continue to read to your child and make this a cosy relaxed time - even when he's a fluent reader

- Make the experience interactive. Ask questions about the story, get your child to predict what will happen next, what does he think of the characters? Where is the story set? For older children, talk about the dilemmas facing the characters. Can he predict the endings? Link themes in books with his own experiences.
- *Read poetry and rhyming books that play with language, for example Dr Seuss books.*
- *Find information in non-fiction books using the contents page or index.*

Encourage your child to read out loud

- Early on, prompt him to re-tell stories that you've read to him. Encourage him to get the main points of the story in sequence. 'What happened first? What came next? How did it end?'
- Encourage him to make up stories from pictures in books. Some books are published without words for this purpose.
- **Help him learn and recite simple poems and rhymes with actions.**
- More confident readers can role-play characters in stories with you. Make this fun, changing the voice for each character. Look at how dialogue is written.
- Involve the whole family - read simple plays together. Encourage expression and varied tone of voice when reading stories.
- Ask him questions about what he's read. Why has this happened? Why did the character do or say that? What does he think about what's happened?
- Get him to predict what will happen, how characters will behave.
- Use a dictionary
- Recite the alphabet and look at simple picture dictionaries. Use more complex dictionaries later on to look up the meanings of new words discovered in reading.

Some Teacher Reading Secrets...

- Clues, clues, clues! Help him be a detective and look for clues to unknown words in books.
- Pictures! What is happening in the pictures? What does he think a character is saying?
- Phonics. Start with the beginning sounds of words. Use letter blends as one sound, for example 'th', 'sh', 'ch'. Later on, use the end or middle sound of a word to distinguish between similar known words. Fluent readers - break unfamiliar words into smaller chunks or syllables.
- Look at the shape of the word - do letters go up, down? Does he recognise the shape of the word from before?
- Write out common words to learn, draw round the outline and cut them out. Practise reading them like flash cards.
- Prediction - what word does he expect to come next using his common sense? Most good school reading schemes use books where the text is predictable for a child. Given the confidence, children are usually right!
- Encourage this at times by covering over obvious or repeated words and asking him to 'guess' the missing word. This works particularly well with rhymes.
- Skip the word and read on - read the rest of the phrase or the sentence. Can he work out the missing word?
- Use punctuation - Stop at full stops. Start again at capital letters. Pause at commas.

Don't try to use these all in one go!

Other Tips

- Don't get stuck on one word! Otherwise the sense of the text will be lost, and the enjoyment will go. If some of the clues above don't work, tell the child the word and move on.
- Share the reading. Read a sentence or a page each. Get your child to read a couple of pages and you read on. He can re-read the bits that you read at another time.
- Have patience and concentrate on the enjoyment. Children learn to read at different rates and at different ages. For some children it will suddenly click. For others it will be slow and steady. They all have their ups and downs.

Giving your child confidence with plenty of encouragement and praise is the biggest help you can give while they're learning to read.