

Reading At Home



KS2 Parent Guide

READING WITH YOUR CHILD - TOP TIPS

By the time we reach Keystage 2, the aim is that the children have developed a number of strategies to help them decode new texts and there is an increased focus on comprehension. The best way to support your child is to continue to share books with them, regularly listening to them read, sometimes reading to or with them, but also discussing books read in increasing depth. As the children progress through Keystage 2, they may choose to read with greater independence however it is still important to discuss your child's reading book with them.

To become good readers children need to develop skills in several key areas and it can be useful to think about these when reading with your child.

Decoding: this is the skill that parents are generally most familiar with, and deals with the varying strategies used by children to make sense of the words on the page. Even fluent readers can be stumped by an unfamiliar word, and it is useful at these times to discuss the range of strategies used to make a sensible guess.

Retrieval and recall: early readers need to develop this skill, in order to locate important information and to retell stories and describe events.

Inference: reading between the lines. Encouraging children to make inferences based on clues in the text and their understanding of the context of the book will help them to develop this important skill.

Structure and organisation: as children read a wider range of text types, they need to be able to comment on the features of each and how they are organised. Discussing the presentation of the text, e.g. the use of subtitles to assist reading of a non-fiction text, and the author's reason for organising the text in this way, will support children's development in this area. Making links between the purpose of the text and its organisation is a useful place to start.

Language: specifically, thinking about the language choices made by writers, their possible reasons for making those choices and the effect the choices have on the reader. Discussing alternative choices and their effects can be a good way to begin discussion about the author's language and an opportunity to develop vocabulary generally.

Purpose and viewpoint: Who is the narrator of this story? What does the writer of this biography feel about his/her subject? Children need to understand that writers write for a purpose, and to be able to recognise that this will have an impact on the way a text is written. Newspapers and advertisements are perfect examples of this and can lead to lots of lively discussions.

Making links: as adults, we are constantly making links between ideas and experiences. Good readers connect the book they are reading with real life experiences; with other books read and stories heard; with films; and with the context in which they were written. A child reading 'Goodnight Mister Tom', for example, will need to place the story within the context that it was written to fully understand it.

Below and overleaf are some questions linked to the above points, which may help you when discussing books with your child. This is not an exhaustive list and it is not necessary to ask every question each time your child reads but they may prove to be useful prompts to start a more focused discussion.

- What has happened in the story so far?
- What do you think will happen next?
- Who is your favourite/least favourite character? Why?
- Do you think the author intended you to like / dislike this character? How do you know?
- Does your opinion of this character change during the story? How? Why?
- How do you think the character is feeling? What evidence is there to support your idea?
- Which part of the story is your favourite / least favourite? Why? Would you change any part of the story? How?
- Would you change any of the characters? How?
- Which part of the story was the funniest/scariest/ saddest/ happiest? Find some evidence in the text to support your opinion. What is the purpose of this book? How do you know?
- Why is this page laid out in this way? Could you improve it?
- Pick three favourite words or phrases from this chapter. Can you explain why you chose them?
- Did this book make you laugh? Can you explain what was funny and why?
- Have you read anything else by this author? Is anything similar?
- Does this book remind you of anything else? How?
- When do you think this book was written? How do you know?
- Do you think the title of the book is appropriate? What would you have called it?
- What is the genre of the book: sci-fi, mystery, historical, fantasy, adventure, horror, comedy? What are the features that make you think this?
- Find two sentences which describe the setting.
- Is the plot fast or slow moving? Find some evidence in the text, which supports your view.
- If the author had included another paragraph before the story started what do you think it would say?
- Would you like to read another book by this author? Why/ why not?

