

# READING AT HOME

## a guide 'where to start'

### UNDER 3 YEARS OLD

- Follow your child's lead as much as possible and allow your child choice about which play experiences and activities, they want to participate in.
- Give your child as much or as little time as they need for each learning experience.
- Read stories with your child, making sure they can see the pictures and following the words with your finger, making them sweep left to right. Ask them 'What do you think might happen next? Make the noises in the book? Discuss the pictures.
- Make a collage based on the setting of one of their favourite stories.
- You might get them to draw a picture of their favourite part of the book.

### 3-5 YEARS OLD

- Allow your child choice about which, and the timing of the play experiences and activities, they want to participate in.
- Read stories with your child. Talk about the Author and Illustrator. Point to the words as you read. Get them to attempt to read to you (only if they show interest). Ask them to retell the story you, start with what happened on a page and then build up to the whole story.
- Encourage your child to illustrate their favourite part of the book. Help them to notice characters features by pointing these out, begin to discuss and brainstorm describing words.
- Share your favourite childhood stories together, tell them why it was your favourite.

### 6-8 YEARS OLD

- Read to/with your child DAILY
- Point out important features about a book Eg. the words, and pictures, the front cover, the Author and Illustrator, the spine, the contents page and the title.
- Encourage your child to predict what will happen in the story. Why do they think this?
- Explore new or interesting words using a dictionary.
- If your child is confident in their reading, allow them to read without interruption. Fluency is gained with confidence.
- Model using different voices when reading to your child. Point out why you chose to use 'that' voice. For example the character was sad, so I used my sad voice.
- On completion discuss the book. Did they like it? Recap what happened? Ask clarifying questions. Give it a rating out of 10.

### 9+ YEARS OLD

- Encourage your child to read daily. Model this behaviour.
- Discuss news and current events together. Subscribe to a 'kids news' outlet like [Kidsnews](#) or [Time for Kids](#). Ask questions like 'What do you think caused the event?' Etc.
- If your child has a preferred Author help them find another of their books or series.
- Help your child to use a dictionary to look up words they don't understand.
- If you can, try to read the books with your child (or before them) so you can have deep and meaningful discussions around the plot, characters, messages and your personal opinions.
- High Schools tend to use 'Text Ebooks' get your child familiar with these by borrowing Ebooks from your local library. Podcasts and Audiobooks are also a great resource.

### TIPS FOR ANY AGE

- Visit your local library often, encourage your child to pick new books, as well as familiar ones. You might also borrow magazines or use their online services to access audiobooks or download eBooks.
- Make reading part of your daily routine.
- Model Reading yourself, be it a book, the newspaper, magazines, signs, recipes etc.
- Make Reading in your home fun, use funny voices, share stories, act parts out etc.
- Encourage your child to read BOTH Non-Fiction and Fiction books.

# WRITING AT HOME

## a guide 'where to start'

### UNDER 3 YEARS OLD

- Give your child as much or as little time as they need for each learning experience.
- Follow your child's interest. If they don't want to draw, paint etc. Don't make them. If they want to draw a pink dinosaur, or a rainbow zoo let them.
- Encourage them to use their imaginations.
- Write for a purpose; make a card, draw a picture for people in your street or family friends, make signs for imaginative play or for around the house, if you went somewhere exciting (say a zoo) gently encourage your child to draw a picture of their experience, help them to label it. Once completed put on display.

### 3-5 YEARS OLD

- Allow your child choice about which, and the timing of the play experiences and activities, they want to participate in, always encourage them to follow their interests.
- Encourage your child to 'make marks'. Before your child can write they will make letter-like shapes. As above get them to do this whenever they show interest.
- Write for purpose. When ready encourage them to write their name whenever possible, copy familiar words like mum, dad, dog, brother, sister, grandma, grandpa etc. Encourage your child to 'write' about experiences (this might be them drawing a picture, you labelling them and your child reading it back).

### 6-8 YEARS OLD

- Encourage your child to write whenever appropriate, they might fill out their name on forms, write cards, keep a diary or gratitude journal, thank you notes, shopping lists, recipes, create stories for you to read, make pictures for around the house etc.
- When you are writing show them, explain that being able to write is an important skill for adults to have (even with computers). Talk about your experiences with learning to write.
- Bring writing into your child's play. If you have magnetic letters in the house encourage them to make words with these. If they set a 'shop' encourage them to make signs, money, lists, labels etc. You may like to provide them with a letter chart to help them with this.
- Start to point out that an 'author' writes for a purpose. When reading discuss the beginning, middle and end of a story. Talk about who the story was written for? Read Non-Fiction texts and discuss the different language used compared with Fiction.

### 9+ YEARS OLD

- Continue to encourage to write for purpose (ideas as above).
- Encourage your child to write (and read) different genres. Often children develop a preferred genre and they don't like to try writing/reading other styles. Genres might include realistic fiction, historical fiction, science fiction, fantasy, mystery, tall tale, fairy tale, myths, fables, legends, informational, biography or autobiography.
- If you watch a movie or your child has finished a novel discuss it together, encourage them to write down their ideas and then you might even write an online review for it.
- Computer Literacy at this age becomes important. Give them practice typing on a device (if possible). Encourage them to write using the computer, you might use word, [Google Docs](#), [Canva](#), or an app of their choosing (remember they will know more apps than we do).

### TIPS FOR ANY AGE

- Make sure your child has the resources that they need. Set them up a space in the house where they can 'do their work'. Ensure they have pencils, paper, textas, pens etc.
- Always value writing and show a positive attitude towards it.
- Keep a family board and write messages to each other on it.
- Provide your child with 'Post It Notes' so they can write themselves reminders, or you notes.
- When reading discuss the writing process. What was the Author thinking? Why was this book written? Note the types of language used.

# MATHS AT HOME

## a guide 'where to start'

### UNDER 3 YEARS OLD

- As with the learning of Reading and Writing, Maths at this age is all about positive experiences and play. Listen to your child's interests, never forcing them to do an activity.
- Sing number songs (5 little ducks, 10 in a bed, 10 green bottles, 5 little monkeys etc).
- Count objects. Children begin understanding numbers by 'counting all'. Help them do this. Collect objects (shells at a beach, rocks, sticks etc). Count them together. Encourage them to touch & move each object as they count them.
- Make counting part of your day-to-day routine. Count pieces of fruit, cutlery at the table, toes on their feet etc.

### 3-5 YEARS OLD

- Continue to allow your child choice about which, and the timing of the play experiences and activities, they want to participate in (you want all learning to be positive).
- Continue with the above activities. Count objects. Sign songs about counting.
- Begin to share mathematical language with your child. Go on a 'bear hunt' or design an obstacle course. Use the language over, under, near, far, right, left, in front, behind etc.
- Hunt for numbers. Point out numbers when out and about. Signs, newspapers, registration plates, calendars, shopping catalogues, speed signs, houses at the shops etc.
- Introduce mathematical thinking into role play. If you have a 'shop' make money, put prices on items, label shapes around the house, order from tallest to smallest, use scales.

### 6-8 YEARS OLD

- Continue as above. Encourage role play, counting, model mathematical language, encourage your child to be part of any mathematical processes you use day to day.
- Teach your child some new card games. Depending on their ability these may include snap, Uno, 21, 10 or 20, Math war, Math Boggle (I will post instructions on this soon, or just google).
- Do a family jigsaw together. Discuss the shapes & use mathematical language.
- Make recipes, get your child to do the measuring, half or double the recipe.
- Measure things around the house. Discuss using mathematical language (this will differ depending what country you are in).
- Encourage your child to keep track of their favourite sports team. Add goals, create a tally, work out differences between their favourite and other teams etc.
- Include your child in shopping experiences, you may like to give them pocket money to encourage saving, keeping track of their money and working towards a goal.

### 9+ YEARS OLD

- Continue with the above activities and experiences (where appropriate to your child).
- Watch the weather. Visit [BOM](#) (or your countries weather site) discuss and track weather patterns, air quality, sunrise and sunset times, weather trends around Australia, Etc.
- Use sports to encourage mathematical practice. Track the ladder, scores etc. Design a new field for the sport using angles and measurements? Average of goals per game in a year? Etc.
- Timetable travel. As students get closer to going to high school it imperative that they are able to understand how timetables work. Going on a family trip, get your child to work out which train, bus, route to take. How long should you spend at each activity? Write out what the day should look like in am/pm and 24hr time. What is the latest you can leave? What will the day cost? When will you get home? How many Km will you travel? Etc.
- Allow lots of opportunities to handle money. Work out %, averages, best Buys, total Fees, Etc.

### TIPS FOR ANY AGE

- Always voice a positive attitude towards Maths. Studies have shown if parents say things like 'I was bad at Maths when I was at school' that children will believe this of themselves.
- Whenever completing 'real life maths' discuss it with your child. Using money to buy something? Making a recipe? Designing something? Measuring something? Share the experience with them to show them maths learning is important.
- Play games as a family, card games, board games, games outside, all teach different mathematical concepts.