

# 10 Tips for Reading at Home with your Child

We very much value the significant part that parents and carers play in helping children to progress with their reading.

These are our top ten suggestions on how to make reading at home a positive experience for your child.



1. **Choose a quiet time** - set aside a quiet time, with no distractions. Ten to fifteen minutes is usually long enough.
2. **Make reading enjoyable** - make reading an enjoyable experience. Sit with your child and try not to pressurise them if they are reluctant or tired. It is often helpful to look at the book together first, commenting on the pictures and title, as this will support them in being successful at reading the book.
3. **Maintain the flow** - try not to interrupt immediately if your child mispronounces a word. Allow them the opportunity to self-correct. It is better to tell a child some unknown words to maintain flow, rather than insisting that they build them all up from the sounds of the letters. Encourage them to use the letter sounds instead of alphabet names when they are sounding out words. In the early stages of learning to read, it can also be helpful to encourage pointing at the words to keep track of the words on the page.
4. **Be positive** - if your child gets a word nearly right to start with, try not to say 'No, that's wrong.' Instead, say something like 'Let's read it together.' and then point to the words as you say them. Boost your child's confidence with constant praise, even for the smallest achievement.

5. **Success is the key** - parents anxious for a child to progress can mistakenly give a child a book that is too difficult. This can have the opposite effect to the one you were trying to achieve. Until your child has built up their confidence, it is better to keep to easier books. Struggling with a book containing unknown words is pointless. Flow is lost, text cannot be understood and children can easily become reluctant readers.
6. **Regular practice** - try to read with your child on most school days, little and often is best. There is limited time in school to hear children read individually.
7. **Communicate** - please use your child's reading diary to communicate with the class teacher, noting positive comments or any concerns. Your child will see that you are interested in their progress and that you value reading.
8. **Talk about the books** - there is more to being a good reader than being able to read words accurately. It is also important that children understand what they are reading. Always talk to them about the book; the pictures, the characters, their favourite part and how they think the story will end. This will give an indication of how well they have understood and will help them to develop their comprehension skills. Some of the reading scheme books have suggested questions at the back.
9. **Make use of the library** - join the local library and make use of the wonderful children's section. Libraries also offer special activities and events throughout the year so keep an eye out for these being advertised.
10. **Variety is important** - it is important for children to experience a wide variety of reading materials. Offer your child picture books, comics, magazines, poems and information books. Your child will also bring home a book from the school library to read at home but you can supplement these with your own books or books they have borrowed from the library.

