

# Fill your house with stacks of books, in all the crannies and the nooks

Dr Seuss

## HELP TO MAKE THIS A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

- ❖ **Choose a quiet time** - Set aside regular time slots to read with and to your child a quiet time with no distractions. Ten to fifteen minutes is usually long enough.
- ❖ **Regular practice** - Try to read with your child on most school days. 'Little and often' is best.
- ❖ **Make reading enjoyable** - Sit with your child. Try not to pressurise if he or she is reluctant. If your child loses interest then do something else. Take it in turns to read to each other.
- ❖ **Maintain the flow** - Allow opportunity for self-correction; it is better to tell a child some unknown words to maintain the flow rather than insisting on trying to build them phonetically. If your child does try to 'sound out' words, encourage the use of letter sounds rather than 'alphabet names'.
- ❖ **Be positive** - Boost your child's confidence with constant praise for even the smallest achievement.
- ❖ **Success is the key** - Parents anxious for a child to progress can mistakenly give a child a book that is too difficult. Until your child has built up his or her confidence, it is better to keep to easier books. Struggling with a book with many unknown words can be detrimental.
- ❖ **Variety is important** - Remember children need to experience a variety of reading materials e.g. picture books, comics, magazines, poems, information books and even the internet.
- ❖ **Talk about what they have read** - There is more to being a good reader than just being able to read the words accurately. Just as important, is being able to understand what has been read.

***A house without books is like a room without windows***

- Heinrich Mann

## READING AND QUESTION PROMPTS

Below are the reading skills that your child needs to develop in order to become an efficient reader. There are also some questions which you may find useful. 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.

**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.

### Answer simple questions about the text

- *What happened after...?*
- *How many...?*
- *Who was it that...?*
- *Can you name the...?*

### Describe an event which happens in the book by looking at the text to find the answer

- *What happened before/during/after/at the same time as...?*
- *Describe what happened on page/paragraph/chapter...*
- *Describe how...*

### Say which part of the text the correct answer is on

- *Using the index, how would you find...?*
- *Using the table of contents, how long is chapter...?*
- *Where would we find...?*

## INFERENCE AND DEDUCTION

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.

**Say why something in the story has happened – even though the answer may not be in the book.**

- *Even though the author doesn't directly tell us, why/how/what...?*
- *What is meant by...?*
- *What does... think?*

**Find examples in the book to back up my opinion.**

- *Can you find an example of...?*
- *How many examples of... can you find in the text?*
- *What is your impression of... justify your answer with more than one example.*

**Explain what the author is describing by talking about the language.**

- *What word(s) tells us...?*
- *Why does the author use the language of...?*
- *What does the word... imply about...?*

## 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.

**Name different features of a text and talk about what they are used for.**

- *Why does the author use paragraphs?*
- *Which features of the text help the reader?*
- *What is the purpose of the subheadings?*

**Talk about the appearance of the text and the effects it has upon the reader.**

- *Why is... written in blue/capitals/that particular font?*
- *Why are some words written in bold/italic/underline?*
- *Why does the text... appear in boxes?*

**Know how to use the contents and index of a book to help find information quickly and effectively.**

- *Which chapter tells us about...?*
- *Using the index, which page(s) feature information on...?*
- *Using the table of contents only, which chapters might lead us to information on...?*

# There are perhaps no days of our childhood we lived so fully as those we spent with a favourite book

Marcel Proust

## Parent Reading Information



### 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.

**Describe messages that the author is telling the reader.**

- *How does this sentence tell you about...?*
- *Which words promote... in the text?*

**Identify meanings in the text by the words the author uses.**

- *Why is the word... effective in describing how...?*
- *The author chooses... words carefully. Which ones and why?*

**Talk about how special features used by the author affect the reader.**

- *What is the author trying to achieve by writing this sentence in this way: ...?*
- *What does the author use to make you, as the reader, feel...?*

**Identify repeated themes in the story and explain why the author has used them.**

- *Why has the author chosen to mention... so much?*
- *This section of text makes strong reference to... How has this been done and why?*

**Explain specific phrases using the text to help me.**

- *What message do you think the author is trying to get across?*
- *How does... and the title of the book explain...?*

**Identify parts of the text which are similar to what I have already read.**

- *What do you notice about the ... section of text compared to the ... section?*
- *How is chapter... linked to chapter...?*

**Use knowledge of different text genres to work out what kind of text it is.**

- *Which features confirm that this text is from the... genre?*
- *Which clues indicate the genre of this text?*

***The reading of all good books is like a conversation of the finest minds of past centuries***

- Rene Descartes

### PURPOSE AND VIEWPOINT

Children need to understand that authors write for a purpose, and 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 .

**Talk about why the author chose to include some details and ignore others to create effects.**

- *Does the author like...? How do you know?*
- *Why has the author chosen to mention... but not...?*

**Talk about why the author chooses to write in a particular way.**

- *What can you tell about the viewpoint of the author?*
- *What happens on page... to suggest that the author is building tension/excitement/anxiety in the reader?*

**I know how an author makes information stand out through a variety of methods.**

- *How does the author draw the reader's attention to...?*
- *What has the author done to raise the reader's awareness of...?*

**Identify parts of a story which make me feel a specific emotion.**

- *Which part of the text made you feel... Why?*
- *Identify a quote from the text that reflected a feeling of...*

### MAKING LINKS

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 the book was written.

**Identify when a story/non-fiction text was written by looking for clues.**

- *When was the text written? Explain how you know.*
- *Was this text written before/after...? How do you know?*

**Identify the type of text.**

- *Which features are common with the... genre?*
- *What kind of people might choose to read this text? Why?*

**Classify stories into different groups.**

- *Which genre of story is this? How can you tell?*
- *Who is most likely to buy this book? Why?*

**Identify messages about historical events/cultural views from the books I am reading**

- *What does... tell us about how... lived?*
- *How is the life of... similar/ different from life in...?*

### WHY READING IS IMPORTANT

Reading can be a wonderful, relaxing experience and can open up a whole new world for our children. Even in this technological age we need to be able to read; as it underpins everything we do and is essential to everyday life. In order to survive, we need to be able to read instructions, signs, and safety information as well as reading for pleasure. By the time children reach KS2 most of them can read, many read fluently. As children progress through the education system, more demands will be made upon them. As parents and teachers we must help our children to become accomplished readers but we also want them to enjoy the experience so that they can go forward into the world with confidence and a skill for life.

### HOW I HELP MY CHILD WITH HOME READING

Parents, families and caregivers are the first educators of children and they are the key to developing a child's learning. Home reading is an important part of a child's learning and setting routines and keeping to them offers your child a sense of security and helps them both at home and in school. Reading is an important part of home routines. We need your help! Please help us develop your child's reading by reading regularly with your child and supporting their home reading. Reading together will help to make your child a great reader and an even better writer.

