



SHARING BOOKS

Please keep this book and refer back to it through your child's time with us.

SHARING BOOKS

Sharing a book is not just hearing your child read, or reading a bedtime story. It is a partnership between adult and child with both participating in the sharing.



We hope this booklet will help you to explore the many ways in which this can be done successfully.

WHAT SHALL WE READ TOGETHER?

Your child will regularly bring home books both from our library and from the collections of books we have put together.

These collections include books from many published reading schemes and are colour-coded according to appropriate reading levels. In each collection is a very wide choice of books, all offering a different kind of reading experience.

It is this range of experiences that is so important, so please do share your child's free choice of library book as well as the books from the selections.

In the early stages of reading, they will also bring home phonic flash cards to practice at home. These support the early stages in reading.

WHEN SHOULD WE READ TOGETHER?

Try and choose a regular time each day for sharing a book. Children are often tired immediately after school and at bedtime.



While children like and benefit greatly from a bedtime story, it may not be the time to expect them actively to participate. Earlier in the evening, or perhaps in the morning, might be a good time.

The time spent in sharing reading should not exceed the child's span of concentration and interest. Five or ten minutes is often long enough, although, of course, some children will want to continue longer.

HOW SHALL WE READ TOGETHER?

There are many ways to share a book together. The amount of adult help and support will depend on the particular book, the individual child, and how he/she is feeling.

Many young children choose books for themselves and often choosing to have a favourite story or rhyme read to them several times.

At first the child may just be reading from memory or not reading the print, word for word, but this is all part of learning to read and to understand about books.

With children in the early stages of learning to read, the adult may be doing all the reading. Make sure the child can see the print and the pictures. When you are reading from a book, following the print with your finger as you read will be helpful for the child.



OTHER WAYS TO HELP

Using the pictures

Pictures are a most important part of a book. They help the child to understand the story and they may help with a new word.



Allow plenty of time for the child to look at and discuss the pictures. They usually enjoy going right through the book first looking at the pictures.

Some of the books for shared reading only have pictures and no text. These books are not only for the very youngest children. The children can tell their own story to go with the pictures and this is an enjoyable and purposeful shared activity.

Meeting unknown words

When your child comes to a word they are unable to read, encourage them to "guess sensibly" using a variety of strategies, eg:

- pictures clues
- reading to the end of the sentence and asking "what might fit in there?"
- asking for the initial sound of the word—often a sufficient prompt



Never delay too long in giving the word if the above strategies fail. Praise all efforts.

Please remember that trying to "sound out" the whole word is often difficult for young readers and may interrupt the flow of the story. Also children will meet many new words that cannot be built up phonetically and that it may be discouraging if they are continually struggling over new words.

NB: Reading for meaning is all important.

The adult may be doing most of the reading with the child joining in occasionally, particularly where there are repetitive phrases or rhymes, and with the child now pointing at the print.

Adult and child may read aloud together. This can be particularly helpful when the child is reading without expression.

The child may do all the reading, the adult perhaps having read the book to the child if it is an unfamiliar book. However, if the child starts finding it difficult or seems tired, be prepared to finish reading it yourself.

The child may read just a small part of the book out loud and then finish the book by reading silently. The child then shares what has happened in the story with the adult.

Please do ask your child's teacher if you are not sure which is the most suitable way to share books with your child.



Reading for meaning is also important.

It is important to DISCUSS what your child has to read.

Stop every now and then and ask questions:

What do you think will happen next?

Do the people in the book remind you of anyone?

Why did that happen?

Is this story like another one we've read?



This discussion is most important—please allow plenty of time for it.

Coping with mistakes

Accept some mistakes if they do not alter the meaning of the text to avoid too many interruptions, eg "house" for "home". However, if a child misreads a word and it does not make sense, stop and talk about what has been read, having first given the child a chance to self-correct.



Children may reverse words they are reading, eg "no" for "on", "was" for "saw", etc. These are common errors and are rarely a cause for concern. If the children have been encouraged to read for meaning, they will usually notice such mistakes and go back and correct them when they find the sentence does not make sense.

Following the print carefully with the finger below the word as the child reads often helps overcome this problem. Sometimes it can also help if the adult points from above the word at the same time too.

Selection of books

Sometimes your child may bring home a book they have chosen before which seems too easy. Children enjoy reading favourite stories, or the same book may be shared many times, with your child gaining a different reading experience on each occasion.

Children enjoy reading favourite stories and repeating successful experiences! Also they may be able to read the book with more expression than previously because they are more familiar with it and because it is at an easier level. They also enjoy reading it to a younger brother or sister.

A child may well succeed in reading a more difficult book if it particularly appeals to them. Obviously more adult help would be required in such a situation.

It is important that children have the opportunity to move forwards and backwards in their reading levels.



HOW ELSE CAN I HELP?

Please visit the village or County library regularly to choose new books.

Let your child see you sitting and reading and enjoying books. In this way you provide your child with a good model to copy.



Remember that children do not always have to read aloud. Allowing them time to read silently is very important.

Try to find books which really interest your child. It may not be a story book. Many children prefer non-fiction, poetry books or comics.

Use shopping times, lists for holidays, etc.

During journeys encourage your child to find the names of places on a map and to look out for them on sign posts.

Borrow/buy story tapes. When the child listens to the story he/she should follow the lines of print with a finger and read with the voice.

Above all:

Continue to read a variety of stories to your children for as long as they enjoy this shared pleasure.

