

Golden Rules

Getting the balance right between making reading fun AND keeping up regular short bursts of reading practice can be tricky at times. Here are some dos and don'ts to help you out.

- DO keep reading TO your child, aside from his reading practice. It will help him to remember how interesting and enjoyable books are, and will keep him motivated to want to read himself.
- DO your best to stick to a ritual of ten minutes reading practice, most nights a week. It doesn't always have to be with a book - it could be a game such as looking for the letter 'p' around the house.
- DON'T point out every mistake your child is making. Children need encouragement and positive reinforcement to be confident, and a confident child makes a better learner.
- DO praise your child's efforts, even if you think she's not trying her best tonight. Learning to read is a tiring and lengthy business. It is really important to keep your child motivated.
- DO stop to look at the pictures and talk about them. Your child's teacher won't always have time to linger over things like this but pictures are a huge part of a book's attraction for children.
- DO give your child opportunities to read things she already knows by heart - jokes, song lyrics, birthday card messages or simple books for younger siblings.
- DON'T forget how important your input and attention is - just a little and often will help your child to WANT to learn to read and to understand how important you think reading is.