

How to help your child at home with reading

As parents you are well placed to support your children with individual attention.

- Read to them – listening to stories develops vocabulary and knowledge of how language and stories work. Try using different expressions and voices to make stories interesting.
- Let your children see you reading – books, newspapers, magazines, leaflets, information on a computer, instructions for making or using something
- Go to the library and choose books. Choose some for you to read to the child and let your child choose some to read independently even if they look too difficult. Sharing the reading or looking at the pictures is just as enjoyable and useful.
- Try to provide a wide range of books for your child to read, fiction and non-fiction. Have familiar or favourite stories and new ones, books about special interests and ones to introduce new topics.
- Read with them – help them read their school reading books, remind them of strategies to use when they are stuck and explain new vocabulary to them. Encourage them to discuss the story or content to develop their understanding.
- Find a good time and place to read. It doesn't have to be a long session. It is better to have 10 minutes of quality time where you can both focus on the reading and enjoy it than ½ hour of constant interruptions and distractions.
- Don't be tempted to give your child difficult books to try and make them a better reader. Children should be reading books they are confident with and not struggling or they may lose interest and confidence. They will often enjoy reading the same book again simply because they can!
- Please don't get the books we use in school and read them at home. This makes it difficult for us to have an accurate picture of your child's level as they may have already read a book we give them. It can also mean that we cannot offer your child the usual range of books as we have to leave out certain schemes.

Useful websites / documents

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/brochure/earlyreading

Helping Your Child Learn to Read - A Parent's Guide (Ontario Early Reading Strategy)
This is a Canadian document so please bear in mind that some things may not apply to English schools!

Contains some good general advice on helping children learn to read.

www.oxfordowl.co.uk/GetReading - This has lots of basic information and explains some of the terminology linked to reading. It also offers access to e-books and has information about phonics.

Please remember that this is a publisher's website.