



How to get the best from hearing your child read

A guide for parents and carers

Introduction: Listening to your child regularly at home has a huge impact on their academic achievement. Just taking 10 minutes per day to read with your child, outside of class, can have great benefits and enhance their ability to reach expected standards.

Our aim is to encourage children to have a love for reading and therefore read willingly and progress throughout their years at school.

The starting point for reading is the actual skill of reading the words on a page, but there is a lot behind the skill of "reading". This guide is to help you to understand the different areas of reading that are assessed at school.

Hints for getting the most out of reading at home:

- Try to find time for 10 minutes reading when there is not a rush before or after the 10 minutes.
- Try to read in a quiet place where there are no distractions.
- If your child is a more reluctant reader, then make reading time a maximum of 10 minutes, with 5 minutes of questioning about what both of you have read.
- Try to make each reading session fun, so that your children want to do it each night, if they think it is just questioning they may resist.
- Sometimes read to your child or share the reading of a book with them.

Developing Reading Skills

Each of the boxes on the following page develop a particular skill when reading. You may want to begin by asking a couple of questions from one or two of the boxes; try to vary the question types, for example one day you may ask questions about Author Technique Questions and the next night you may use Retrieval Questions and Layout and Organization Questions. By the end of the week questions in all the boxes should have been covered.

Reading the words on a page is only one part of being able to master the skill of Reading. These guidelines are to help you support your child in developing their whole reading ability; these can be developed through effective questioning.

Different styles of questions (these are the type of questions that children will encounter when undertaking SATs tests)

Retrieval Questions:

The answers are right there in what has been read, they just have to be found.

Questions you could ask your child:

Where did the story / event take place?

When did the story take place?

What did he/she/ it look like? / Who are the key characters in the story?

What happened first in the story, how did it end?

Read the part of the story that tells me about...?

Can you find the part when...?

How old is it?

Where did he go to school?

Inference and Deduction Questions

The answer is not given, it has to be worked out based on what your child HAS read.

For example: If your child reads "the boy dragged his feet and slumped his shoulders on the way home" can your child deduce that the character is feeling sad?

Questions you could ask your child:

What words tell you that he is...?

How do you feel about what happens? Why?

What sort of person do you think that character is after reading his description?

Predict what you think is going to happen. Why do you think that?

Did one of the characters change the story line? How? Why do you think that?

Author Technique Questions

Can your child tell you the overall effect the author has created for the reader from their writing?

Questions you could ask your child:

I wonder why the author has decided to describe the character like that. What do you think?

Why do you think the author chose this setting and described it in this way?

What makes this a good story? Why do you think that?

How does this story make you feel? / What is the author trying to tell you about ...?

Why do you think the author has written that sentence in that way? What effect do you think he is trying to have on the reader?

What does the description of this character tell us about how the character is feeling?

I wonder why the author described the character like that, what do you think?

Layout and Organization Questions

Can your child explain why the text has been set out in a certain way? E.g. why has the author used numbers in a set of instructions?

Questions you could ask your child:

What kind of text is this (fiction, non-fiction, information, narrative) How do you know?

What is the main event in this story?

What would you expect to find in a text like this? / Why has this picture been used here?

Why have these words been made to stand out? / Why are these words in italics?

Why are some parts of the text in boxes? What are the sub headings for?

What do the arrows tell you?

