



Why is reading important?

Good readers make good learners. Children who enjoy reading, and who think of themselves as readers, are more likely to do well at school.

When we talk about reading, we're talking about more than story books. As your child moves up through primary school, he or she will be learning how to read and understand instructions, letters, magazines, information books and even websites. By Key Stage Two, children are not just learning how to make sense of the words on the page, they are learning how to make sense of the ideas they are reading about. Through reading, they are beginning to discover the world around them.

If children are confident readers, they will not only do well in reading and writing tasks, they will be able to understand of what is being taught in every other subject: science, history, geography and even maths.

How can I help?

By helping your child to see that reading is fun, you are helping your child to become a keen and confident reader.

On the other side of this page, you will find a few tips on how to encourage your child to read at home.

Top tips for reading at home with your child

1. Read aloud to your child. Even children as old as twelve enjoy the experience of a parent or loved one reading aloud to them. You may have read to your children when they were very little: get back into the habit and it's something you will both enjoy. It's a great opportunity for you and your child to talk, to be close and share a few laughs.
2. Encourage your child to read aloud to you. Be positive and patient about your child's reading - even when they are being very slow or are struggling. The most important thing you can do to support your child's reading is to offer encouragement and patience.
3. Make sure your child has a cosy, comfortable place in which to read: somewhere with no noisy distractions - and no television.
4. Help your child to choose books that he or she will find really interesting. If your child loves Star Trek, choose a science fiction novel. If he or she is a football fanatic, find a book, poem, comic or magazine which is all about their favourite sport. Do you know the name of your child's favourite author? It's time to find out.
5. Make sure there are plenty of books at home. Borrow them free of charge from the school library or from your local public library; buy second-hand books from charity shops and car boot sales; give your child a book on birthdays.
6. Don't worry if your child wants to read the same book over and over again, or if your child chooses a book which seems to be too easy or too young for him or her. The most important thing is that your child enjoys reading. Children will move on to more difficult books when they are ready.
7. If English is not the language your family speaks at home, enjoy sharing books written in your home language.
8. Ask your child about what he or she is reading at school. Encourage your child to talk about books they've enjoyed at school, and if your child has to do some reading as homework, encourage him or her to read aloud to you and to talk to you about the characters and ideas that come up in the book.

Did you know...

...that the people who work in libraries and book shops love to talk about books? Ask librarians and booksellers to recommend great books for your child to enjoy. You can also find hundreds of book recommendations at www.booktrust.org.uk