



## Reading with your child at home

As a parent, you can play an important role in helping your child learn to read. Research shows that children who are helped at home make better progress in school. Reading with your child can be fun and very rewarding. It also shows that you value his/her efforts. If children enjoy reading, it will benefit their whole education. They are also more likely to carry on reading as adults.

### How can you help?

- Find a quiet, relaxing place away from distractions such as TV
- Sit comfortably in good light and talk to your child about their book
- Read for 15 minutes; a regular short time of quality is better than a long session which happens only occasionally
- Ask why they have chosen the book
- Talk about the cover and title and what the story might be about
- Ask them to tell you who wrote the book or point to the author
- Look at the pictures and ask them to tell you where the story takes place
- Ask who they can see in the pictures (especially in simple caption books)
- Try to be supportive and positive during the reading time
- Encourage your child to point to each word as they read aloud
- Don't forget to read a page/chapter to them; even fluent readers enjoy listening to a story
- Where possible wait for your child to decode words

### If they get stuck on a word, you could:

- Let them read on so they can work out the word themselves from the context
- Point to a picture if it will help them guess the meaning
- Give them the first or last sounds to help them
- Read along with them then pause, prompt, praise if they get it right
- Model how to read the word
- When they are confident with sounds, let them sound out unknown words – break longer words down in to syllables do not sound out words which are not phonetic e.g “because”
- When a mistake is self-corrected or a previously unknown word is recognised, praise highly
  
- Encourage expressive reading by drawing attention to punctuation
- Help understanding by talking about the story or text – the setting, the plot, the characters
- Discuss the kind of people the characters are and the way they behave
- Talk about the kind of story it is (adventure, fantasy, science fiction, myth...)
- Encourage your child to refer to words and passages in the text to justify opinions
- If your child is finding a book difficult, help out by reading it together

**Please find below ideas of questions you can ask your child when they are reading.**

## **Useful Questions Reception & Key Stage One**

Who is in the story?  
Where is the story set?  
Can you use the pictures to tell part of the story?  
How do you think the story will end?  
What will happen next?  
Do you like the characters? Why?  
What happens in the story?  
What did the characters say? Why?  
How did a character scare, upset or help another character?  
Has this ever happened to you? How did you feel?  
Did the story make you think of something that has happened to you or someone you know?  
Can you put the main events in order?  
How would you feel at this point in the story?  
What would you do?  
How do you think a character feels?  
Why did a character do/say something in the text?  
How did a character in the book help/upset another in the story? Why?  
What advice would you give the characters?

## **Lower Key Stage Two**

Can you explain why you think a character did that in the story?  
What does this word/phrase tell you about the character or setting?  
What does the word 'X' tell us about 'Y'?  
Find two ways in which the writer tells you about an event/setting/character/theme?  
Which words did you like the most? Why?  
In the story 'X' is mentioned a lot. Why?  
What other words/phrases could the writer have used?  
What do you think the writer meant by writing 'X'?  
Which words do you think are the most important in this sentence/paragraph/page? Why?

## **Upper Key Stage 2**

What did that character mean when they said 'X'?  
Are the character's actions a surprise or what you expected?  
Why is that character surprised/scared/excited/angry?  
Explain the character's actions or reactions to events in the story?  
What clues are there in the story to show that that character is happy/angry/sad/excited etc?  
What do you think this character thinks or another character? Why?  
How did the writer make you think this?  
Has the writer been successful in creating a setting/mood/character/theme? What else could they have done? Choose a passage from the text describing a particular event and question the children on the atmosphere before and after the event.  
Describe different character's reactions to the same event?  
Who is the 'voice' in the text?  
Which character does the writer want you to like or dislike? How have they done this?  
What do you think will happen because of a character's actions/dialogue/thoughts?