

Reading together in families counts!

Children need support to develop the habit and love of reading. These core **strategies** of reading aloud, reading together and using 'book chat' supports readers to relax with books and take pleasure in reading at home. This resource will give you some ideas on how best to approach that with your child.

Top tips for engagement:

- Being read to regularly
- Having books at home and in early years settings
- Having a choice in what to read
- Finding time to read
- Having trusted help to find a book
- Making reading FUN!



While you read together, pause to give your child time to look at the pictures, make comments and ask questions.

Ask them to tell parts of the story back to you, or predict what might happen next.

Your conversations about the story and relationship with the characters will develop with each reading of a book.

Inspiring Reading

Children need support to develop the habit and love of reading. How can you be their inspiration?

Tempt

- Talk about their interests. Find connected texts that tempt to explore and discuss together. Explore by going on a reading treasure hunt!
- Find regular opportunities to visit your local or school library.
- Recognise and celebrate diversity in texts.
- Empower your child to read a wide range of texts - magazines, comics, graphic novels and reading that reflects different realities.

Share

- Make reading time relaxed and interactive - chat about pictures, characters, likes, dislikes and interesting facts.
- Find regular time to read aloud and share texts together.
- Invite others into the reading space - welcome siblings, grandparents and other family members to share and talk about top reads together.

Support

- Be a reading role model - share what you like to read in your own time.
- Ensure that reading and book chat are part of the everyday family routine. Think about when and how this could best fit into your day.
- Join in with opportunities to build a home-school reading connection.

Choosing a book gives your child the opportunity to feel in control and builds their confidence with making decisions.

It is important that children have the opportunity to explore both fiction and non-fiction books from a range of authors, and showing a variety of pictures, photographs as well as illustrations.

Watch and listen carefully to follow their interests

Observe and respond: Pay attention to what captures your child's attention and build on their interests, for example, 'Oh, you've spotted the...!'

Leave pauses: So they can look closely and think, this will lead to comments on the pictures or questions. Respond to their lead and let the book chat flow.

Invite your child to get involved

Pose questions: Open questions encourage thinking and discussion, such as, 'How do you think the boy is feeling?'. Try to avoid closed questions, such as 'What colour is that?'; these have a single answer and don't keep the conversation going.

Draw attention to illustrations: Encourage your child to notice details in the pictures and think what they might mean, for example, 'Look! What's that hiding, what do you think it might be?'.

Wonder and connect to your lives

Ponder and wonder: Encourage your child to think about what might happen, using phrases such as, 'I wonder if/ whether /who/ why/ what ...'.

Make personal connections: Picture storybooks not only allow children to empathise with the experiences of fictional characters but enable them to make sense of events in their own lives. Talk about connections, for example, 'That reminds me of when...'.

Share your emotional responses!

Comment on your feelings: By sharing your emotional response to a character or something that's happened you encourage your child to do the same, helping them engage and learn to express their emotions.

Keep it light and enjoyable!

Your combined pleasure counts: Bring the story to life with facial expression, actions and sounds, encouraging your child to join in! Do offer information to help with unfamiliar words, such as 'That's the hencoop, it's where the hens live', but keep the focus on fun.

Reading aloud to your children shows them reading is a pleasure, not a chore. Older children can read to younger ones too.



Making time to read alongside one another helps develop children's reading stamina and interest. Let them choose what to read and relax together.

Book Chats encourage readers. Invite them to make connections and share their views. Join in with your thoughts too!



Children who read, and are supported as readers, develop strong reading skills and do better at school.

Phonics at home:

First, your child will be taught the most straightforward letters and the sounds they make. For example, they will be taught that the letter 'm' represents an mmm sound and the letters 'oa' represent an oh sound.

We use the word **grapheme** to talk about the letters on the page and **phoneme** to talk about the sounds those letters represent.

Next, they will learn how sounds can be put together (blended) to make words. For example, they will learn that the sounds of the letters 'm-a-t' blend together to make the word 'mat'. There are 44 sounds in English and many different spellings used for each sound.

Then the children will really start to read! They will learn to recognise the different letters or pairs of letters (graphemes) in a word, say the separate sounds (phonemes) slowly, then put (blend) them together. For example, they will be taught that the word 'boat' can be separated out (segmented) into 'b-oa-t' which represents the sounds bbb-oh-ttt. They can blend these sounds into the word 'boat'

In phonics, we use the word **decode** to talk about reading a single word. We use the word **segment** to talk about breaking a word down into separate sounds and **blend** to talk about putting the sounds together to make a word.

How can I help at home?

There are lots of simple things you can do at home to help your child learn phonics.

- 1) Learn how to say the sounds using Little Wandle Phonics or How to pronounce pure sounds website.
- 2) Use flashcards to help your child practise saying sounds. Use the flashcards to make words for your child to read through blending. These words could be silly or even made up.
- 3) Listen to your child read every day, even just for five minutes. It really will make a difference. If your child gets stuck on a word, model how to say the sounds and blend them together. If you are worried that the book is at the wrong level for your child, check with your child's teacher.
- 4) Read aloud to your child every day to show them that reading is fun.

Creative lessons at home:

1. Sound scavenger hunt
2. Rhyme time
3. Build a word
4. Sound matching
5. Word families
6. I spy the sound

There are two types of reading book that your child may bring home:

A **reading practice book**. This will be at the correct phonic stage for your child. They should be able to read this fluently and independently.





A **sharing book**. Your child will not be able to read this on their own. This is for you both to read and enjoy.

'Tricky words' are words that cannot easily be decoded ('sounded out' and read). This is because some of the sounds in the words are spelled in an unusual way. It is important for children to be able to read these words as they are among the most commonly used words.



If you live in England, your child will be given a phonics screening check in Year 1. The phonics screening check will find out how your child is progressing in phonics. The test will be carried out informally by your child's teacher in a one-to-one session. The teacher will ask your child to:

























- 1) Sound out and blend graphemes (letters representing sounds) in order to read simple words.
- 2) Read phonically decodable (can be read using phonics) one-syllable and two-syllable words, for example cat, sand, windmill.
- 3) Read a selection of nonsense words (known as pseudo words) to check that your child is not guessing words and is able to read new words.






| Section 1 | Section 1 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| sut  | shop |
| yad  | yell |
| dop  | peel |
| uct  | check |







Phases 2, 3 and 5 are taught weekly in Year R, one and two.

Alongside these, tricky words will be covered.

Grapheme mat Phases 2 and 3

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| or | ur | er | ow | oi | ear | air |

My child is reading the books fluently, do they need a more challenging book?

No! We want children to be able to read fluently and not find reading a chore. Instead, focus on adding expression when reading aloud and showing their understanding of the book. Use the prompts on the back page of the books to help.

Phase 2, 3 and 5

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| ay | ea | ie | o | ue | ue | u* | a* |
| a | e | i | o-e | u-e | u | oul | al* |
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| eigh | ie | y | oe | ou | ew | | |
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*depending on regional accent