



Caversham Park Primary School

Tips for reading with your child at home



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10 Top Tips for Reading at Home

1. Encourage your child to read

Reading helps your child's wellbeing, develops imagination and has educational benefits too. Just a few minutes a day can have a big impact on children of all ages.

2. Read aloud regularly

Try to read to your child every day. It's a special time to snuggle up and enjoy a story. Stories matter and children love re-reading them and poring over the pictures. Try adding funny voices to bring characters to life.

3. Encourage reading choice

Give children lots of opportunities to read different things in their own time - it doesn't just have to be books. There's fiction, non-fiction, poetry, comics, magazines, recipes and much more. Try leaving interesting reading material in different places around the home and see who picks it up.

4. Read together

Choose a favourite time to read together as a family and enjoy it. This might be everyone reading the same book together, reading different things at the same time, or getting your children to read to each other. This time spent reading together can be relaxing for all.

5. Create a comfortable environment

Make a calm, comfortable place for your family to relax and read independently - or together.

6. Use the local library

Libraries are open to all so visit them when you're able to and explore all sorts of reading ideas.

7. Talk about books

This is a great way to make connections, develop understanding and make reading even more enjoyable. Start by discussing the front cover and talking about what it reveals and suggests the book could be about. Then talk about what you've been reading and share ideas. You could discuss something that happened that surprised you, or something new that you found out. You could talk about how the book makes you feel and whether it reminds you of anything.

8. Bring reading to life

You could try cooking a recipe you've read together. Would you recommend it to a friend? Alternatively, play a game where you pretend to be the characters in a book, or discuss an interesting article you've read.

9. Make reading active

Play games that involve making connections between pictures, objects and words, such as reading about an object and finding similar things in your home. You could organise treasure hunts related to what you're reading. Try creating your child's very own book by using photos from your day and adding captions.

10. Make it work for them

You know your child best and you'll know the best times for your child to read. If they have special educational needs and disabilities then short, creative activities may be the way to get them most interested. If English is an additional language, encourage reading in a child's first language, as well as in English. What matters most is that they enjoy it.

Most importantly: enjoy being together!

How to read with your child

On the first reading:

- Make reading aloud feel like a treat.
- Make it a special quiet time and cuddle up so you can both see the book.
- Show curiosity about what you're going to read: 'This book looks interesting. It's about an angry child. I wonder how angry he gets...'
- Read through the whole story the first time without stopping too much. Let the story weave its own magic.
- Read with enjoyment. If you're not enjoying it, your child won't.

Reading non-word books:

Non word books are an essential start to your child's reading journey. There is no pressure to be right or wrong and a brilliant opportunity to develop speaking and language skills.

- Start by looking at the front cover and asking your child what they can see and what the story may be about.
- Encourage your child to hold the book correctly and turn the pages independently.
- Support your child to describe what is happening on each page. If they are not sure they can tell you what they can see.
- Introduce new vocabulary
- Encourage and support your child to use story language, e.g. once upon a time; next; later.
- Ask them to make predictions
- Talk about how the characters are feeling and explain why they feel like this.
- Encourage children to speak in full sentences.
- Ask questions to support understanding (often some at the back of the book). Use a range of question types: who, what, when, where, why, how.
- Relate the story to children's own experiences.

Reading books with words:

- Ask the child to point to the words and say each of the sounds (unless a tricky word).
- They have a go at blending the sounds - encourage them to repeat the sounds quicker and quicker to see if they can hear the word.
- If they cannot blend the word themselves then the adult says the sounds for child to blend, e.g. adult: c,a,t; child: cat!
- If they still cannot hear it then the adult models the whole process (c,a,t-cat) and then over time the child will begin to hear it for themselves
- Support them with automatically recognising tricky words by sight and spotting capital letters.
- Continue to ask questions, make predictions etc as with the non-word books.

Read favourite stories over and over again. On later readings:

- Let your child pause, think about and comment on the pictures.
- If you think your child did not understand something, try to explain: 'Oh! I think what's happening here is that...'
- Chat about the story and pictures: 'I wonder why she did that?'; 'Oh no, I hope she's not going to...'; 'I wouldn't have done that, would you?'
- Link the stories to your own family experiences: 'This reminds me of when ...'
- Link stories to others that your child knows: 'Ah! Do you remember the dragon in? Do you remember what happened to him?'
- Encourage your child to join in with the bits they know.
- Avoid asking questions to test what your child remembers.
- Avoid telling children that reading stories is good for them.