

Top Tips for Reading at Home with Your Child



As parents, you are your child's most influential teacher with an important part to play in helping your child with reading.

Here are some suggestions on how you can help to make this a positive experience.

1. Choose a quiet time

To help boost your child's skills, we ask that he or she reads for 30 minutes a night. This can involve your child reading silently to him or herself, but it will also help greatly if you can find the time to read together. Set aside a quiet time with no distractions. Ten to fifteen minutes is usually long enough.

2. Make reading enjoyable

Make reading an enjoyable experience. Sit with your child. Try not to pressurise if he or she is reluctant. If your child loses interest then do something else... don't force the issue if it is becoming stressful. If your child isn't enjoying the book they have chosen, try a different approach... reading doesn't always have to be from a traditional book! You may decide to read a sports report together, or perhaps something from the newspaper, a recipe, or a non-fiction book about a subject in which your child is interested.



3. Variety is important

Remember children need to experience a variety of reading materials eg. picture books, hard backs, comics, magazines, poems, and information books. Don't be afraid to experiment! If they enjoy using a computer or iPad, why not find a story online for them to try? There are stacks of sites out there with online stories for children. Here's one:

<http://www.magickeys.com/books/>

4. Be positive

If your child says something nearly right to start with that is fine. Don't say 'No. That's wrong,' but 'Let's read it together,' and point to the words as you say them. Boost your child's confidence with constant praise for even the smallest achievement.



5. Maintain the flow

If your child mispronounces a word, do not interrupt immediately. Instead allow opportunity for self-correction. It is better to tell a child some unknown words to maintain the flow rather than insisting on trying to build them all up from the sounds of the letters. If your child does try to 'sound out' words, encourage the use of letter sounds rather than 'alphabet names'.



6. Success is the key

Parents anxious for a child to progress can mistakenly give a child a book that is too difficult. This can have the opposite effect to the one they are wanting. Until your child has built up his or her confidence, it is better to keep to easier books. Struggling with a book with many unknown words is pointless. Flow is lost, text cannot be understood and children can easily become reluctant readers.

7. Visit the Library

Encourage your child to use the public library regularly. Many libraries have great fun-days where they can meet an author or explore a story in a fun way. The brand-new Birmingham Library has a stack of reading-based activities throughout the year. They are well worth checking out and it's a great place to get your child excited about reading.



<http://www.libraryofbirmingham.com/younglibraries>

8. Talk about the books

There is more to being a good reader than just being able to read the words accurately. Just as important is being able to understand what has been read. Always talk to your child about the book; about the pictures, the characters, how the story might end and any favourite parts. You will then be able to see how well your child has understood and you will help him or her to develop good comprehension skills.

