



## Helping Your Child with Reading

Parents often wonder how they can help to develop the reading skills of children who are already good readers. The best way is to continue to share books with your child.

**Continuing to read with your child little and often (preferably daily) is important.**

However, another very important way to help develop and improve your child’s reading is by discussing the books they are reading in increasing depth.

### How does talking about the book help my child’s reading?

By talking with them and asking questions, you can help them to understand the ‘literal’ knowledge (what the text says) and the harder ‘inferential’ meaning (where they have to work out what the author is suggesting, but not telling the reader directly).

**To help guide your discussions, here are some questions you could ask – maybe one or two in each reading session - to support their understanding of the text.**

| <b>Choosing the book and sticking with it</b>   | <b>While you are reading the book</b>  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is, of course, very important that your child chooses books to read that he or she will enjoy, however, every now and then, encourage them to challenge themselves – maybe with a title from the School Reading List.</li> <li>Encourage your child to stick with the book – they may discover a new author that they really enjoy!</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What has happened in the story so far?</li> <li>What do you think will happen next?</li> <li>Find two sentences which describe the setting. What atmosphere has the author created? How?</li> <li>Who is your favourite character? Why? How has the author made this character likeable?</li> <li>Who is the character you like least? Why? How has the author convinced you to dislike this character?</li> <li>Does your opinion of this character change during the story? How? Why?</li> <li>Why do you think that certain characters behaved in the way that they did? What motivated them?</li> <li>If you met one of the characters from the story, what would you say to him / her? What advice would you give?</li> <li>Which part of the story so far is your favourite or least favourite? Why?</li> </ul> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Before you start the book</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When you first saw the book, what kind of book did you think it was going to be? Who is the author and illustrator?</li> <li>What does the blurb (on the back cover) tell you about the story?</li> <li>Do you know any other books by the same author or illustrator? Have you read any other books like this?</li> </ul>                                     |  |
| <b>When the book is finished</b>  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What type of book was this: science-fiction, mystery, historical, traditional, fantasy, adventure, horror, comedy? What are the features that make you think this?</li> <li>Would you change any part of the story? How?</li> <li>Would you change any of the characters? How?</li> <li>Which part of the story was the funniest/ scariest / saddest/ happiest? Find some evidence in the text to support your opinion.</li> </ul> |  |

Of course, it doesn’t have to be you always asking the questions. Why not turn the tables and let your child ask you about your reading material?

**You** are your child’s most influential role model – if they see you reading from time to time, they will want to read themselves.

