

Reading Together

Reading stories and books to your child is a vital part of their journey towards becoming readers themselves. Once your child begins school and starts to learn to read, continue to read to them as often as you can - they are never too old or too sophisticated to listen to a story!

As well as reading to your child, try to read with them. Help them to read with you by asking them to point at the text and encouraging them to repeat words of the text after you. This is known in school as 'echo' reading which is very effective in developing children's reading skills. Try doing this at home with any kind of book, or coming into school during 'shared starts' to read with children in class.

Your child will bring a variety of books home from school. Some will be sharing books for you to enjoy together - others will be books from the school reading scheme. Enjoy these books together, looking at building up sight vocabulary and using the words and pictures for discussions.

The emphasis should always be on the enjoyment of the story and shared time together.

*Let's get
reading!*



We hope you find our ideas useful.
Put this pamphlet somewhere handy
to get quick inspiration!

*Enjoy reading
together!*



Reading Tips for Parents



These handy hints have been put together
by Riverside parents and staff.

Enjoyment

As soon as reading feels like work, a child will lose interest. Reading is fun! Making reading an enjoyable experience - and not a trial - is important to fostering life-long reading skills. Here are some ideas for keeping reading fun:

- **No pressure** - Keep it relaxed, and stop if the child becomes too distracted.
- **All books are fun** - Treat 'school' books and 'fun' books the same as much as possible. Let your child choose as often as possible.
- **Follow the leader** - Pay attention to your child's cues. What stories do they like? Do they enjoy funny voices? Do they prefer to join in, or listen? Look at the pictures and characters and talk about them.
- **Word of the day** - Kids like having special knowledge (and showing it off). Teach them a more difficult (but fun or interesting) word now and then to encourage vocabulary expansion.
- **Be positive** - Praise even the smallest achievement. Try not to say 'that's wrong', instead try 'nearly right' or 'let's read it together'. A positive attitude will rub off on your child and boost their confidence.
- **Reward** - Consider rewards for reading achievements (e.g. stickers, cuddle or high-five at the end of a book)

A Time and a Place

Reading is a great opportunity to share a happy and bonding experience with your child. A little planning helps make the experience even better:

Time

- **Now is good** - Choose a good time to read together that best suits you and your child (e.g. not too near bedtime when you're both tired!)
- **Shhhh** - Set aside a quiet time when you can give your full attention. Your child will appreciate this bonding time to share with you.
- **Just a bit** - 10-15 mins is usually long enough. Little and often is best.
- **Take it easy** - Don't force your child to read, make sure your child is willing. Don't worry if they lose interest, just stop at the page you're on and say 'we can carry on tomorrow'.

Place

- **Here is good** - Choose a place with no distractions e.g. kitchen table
- **There is good, too** - Make it exciting by reading in fun places e.g. in the garden or on picnics.
- **Me too!** - If you have other children it is handy to give them their own task or book. Even put the TV on in a different room if they crave attention.
- **Be prepared** - It is handy to keep small books in your bag for reading on outings - to keep the kids amused!

Books and Beyond

There are many opportunities to explore words and reading with your child in the world of books and beyond. Here are a few ideas to consider:

- **Read everywhere** - We're surrounded by words in our everyday environment e.g. signs, at the supermarket, at a restaurant, in the shopping centre.
 - Explore a menu with your child, often there are pictures that will help them to identify the words
 - Ask them to try and read the food labels in the supermarket, they will get an idea from the actual produce or pictures.
 - Help them with simple road signs
- **Word play** - Children love playing games, try games involving words and letters
 - Word bingo
 - How many words can you find that rhyme with...
 - Find a word beginning with....
 - 'I spy'
- **eReader** - Computers really engage children, consider using this medium to help them explore words and their meaning, and to play word games.
- **New (and new for you)** - Libraries and books shops are a feast for young enquiring minds - and libraries are friendly on the pocket!
- **Build vocabulary** - Help your child investigate words and their meaning. Use a suitably aged dictionary, thesaurus, and encyclopaedia. Often they use pictures which help a child's understanding.