

How to help your child learn words

Things to remember

- Have fun with words.
- It is about talking as much as reading and writing.
- When talking about words, use comments more than questions.

Everyday things you can do to support vocabulary

Reading

Reading to your child from an early age and continuing to support their reading is an effective way in which you can support vocabulary development. Once your child is an able reader, spend a little time talking about what he/she has been reading. This will help him/her to use the words he/she has read.

Watching TV

Set your child a task when watching TV. Can he/she come and tell you a word that he/she has heard? Can he/she tell you a word that he/she thinks you might not know? Ask him/her to describe a character from the show or compare two characters he/she has been watching. All of this involves vocabulary!

School activities to support home learning of vocabulary

Stickers

Your child will sometimes get a 'word sticker' from school. This will have a word on it that he/she has been learning about. As he/she is still just learning it, it is best if you just use the word in sentences and talk about it rather than ask "What does that mean?"

Word buddies

Word buddies are people who children can ask about words that they do not know. If you are asked to be a word buddy your job is to tell your child a bit about what the word means, use the word in a sentence and, if you are not sure, then look it up in a dictionary together.

Fridge Words

Your child is going to be bringing home a list of 'Fridge Words'. These are words that he/she is learning about in school. These are to be displayed either on the fridge or a noticeboard. As with the sticker words, he/she is still just learning them so it is best if you just use the words in sentences and talk about them rather than ask "What does that mean?"

Reading and talking

When reading with your child take a moment to talk about the vocabulary. Examples include: "What words did you like?" "On this page can you find a word that means ...?" "Find a word that you don't know the meaning of." "Find a word that sounds funny." By building this into your reading routine you are developing your child's vocabulary.