

Stratford-sub-Castle Church of England VC Primary School.

Learning for Life in a Positive and Caring Christian Community



'The Reading Journey'



Some helpful hints to help you and your child on your way

Research shows that your interest and involvement in your child's learning and education is more important than anything else in helping your child further their potential. You accompany your child on their learning journey. Each journey is unique- children take different routes and 'arrive' at different times.

What follows is a list of suggestions- a 'guidebook' for you to dip into as you embark on your travels. The list is by no means exhaustive. You know your child best, and what works for them. You may even have ideas that you can share with us.

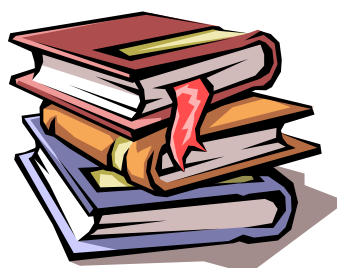
'Before' Reading

- When?** Choose a good time for both of you- if possible try to establish some sort of routine. However, reading 'happens' all the time, so try to capitalise on any opportunities e.g. reading birthday cards, road names, shop signs etc. *Remember- a good ten minutes rather than a tortuous half hour!*
- Where?** Once again, choose a place that is mutually convenient. Ideally try to avoid any distractions, especially the TV (easier said than done!). If younger/ older siblings want to 'muscle in ' on the action, try to involve them too. They can act as an audience, ask questions or take on a role in the story. How about reading at bath time? (remember to hold the book at a safe distance!) Or what about keeping a selection of books in the car?
- What?** In addition to your child's 'reading book' there is a wealth of material around us, which is equally valuable- don't feel embarrassed to use it. Instructions, comics, the internet, even your child's own writing can broaden their understanding of the written word, as well as give reading a purpose. Label objects around the house, so that your child learns by association. Encourage your child to join the library- they're never too young! Use letter magnets to write words on the fridge, or even write in the bathroom steam. ***Most importantly, let your child in choose what they want to read. Focus on their interests and pick 'settings' which they are familiar with.*** Repetition, at an early age, is so important. Teaching your child nursery rhymes, as well as reading books with rhymes can help your child enormously.
- How?** Let your child 'prepare' for reading. Can they hold the book the right way up? Do they know how to find the right page? Can they point to the page numbers? Can they recognise the title, author or even illustrator? What do they think the story is about? Why? Does it remind them of another story they have read? Read the 'blurb' (summary at the back)- what does it tell us about the book?

'During' Reading

- **Modelling**-this is such an important 'tool' when encouraging children to read. You can 'model' reading by showing them the letter you are reading or the newspaper article you are looking at. Tell them about your favourite books as a child or why you enjoy a particular author. Share the secret of this life-skill. Let your child know how important it is to be able to communicate effectively.
- Read first, and then let your child copy - a small chunk at a time.
- Read alternate sentences, paragraphs or pages.
- Start off by reading together, and then fade in/out according to your child's needs.
- Decide on a *signal* for difficult words so that your child can indicate an unknown word without interrupting the flow of the story.
- Demonstrate how to read ahead when faced with a difficult word and then go back to make a sensible suggestion.
- Miss out words on purpose (how mean!) and ask your child to fill in the blanks.
- Use clues in the pictures to help overcome difficulties

Most importantly- keep the story line going. Aim to read for meaning... and more importantly, enjoyment.



Playing the fool- have **fun** whilst reading.

- Make deliberate mistakes- do they notice?
- Make silly predictions- do they correct you and say why?
- Use silly voices and expressions (it depends where you are!)
- Substitute the name of the characters for family members, friends or famous people (try not to offend anyone!)

Talk about the book

- What do the illustrations show us?
- What do you think is going to happen next?
- Can they think of a word that rhymes with...?
- Can your child ask you a question?
- Was the ending happy or sad
- Which bit did they like best?
- Would they like to read the book again?

Word Games

- Can you find a word with double letters?
- Can you find any homophones? i.e. same sound, different spelling e.g. meat/meet
- Can you find any compound words e.g. snow/man?
- Can they guess which words will start off the next page, before turning over?
- Play 'eye-spy' - look for words beginning with....
- 'Chase' the alphabet through the book. Find a word beginning with a, b and so on. How about chasing the letters in their name?
- Make a word box and post into it words your child can read independently.



'After' reading

Praise- lots of it! Focus on the achievements, rather than the mistakes. Achievements could include:

- Simply *wanting* to read
- Having 'a go' at a word
- Making a good start
- Self-correcting
- Predicting
- Using expression
- Taking note of punctuation
- Talking about the story
- Drawing comparisons with other stories or something that has happened to them.
- Picking out words which begin/end with a particular sound or letter.
- And so on ...

On a final note...

Try to promote reading as a valuable and enjoyable experience. The reading journey is not a race. Your child, with encouragement from you, will reach their destination in their own particular way. The amount of support that they need will vary as they travel on the road to independence. Undue pressure and anxiety is detrimental- your child will pick up '*the vibes*'. Send out positive messages about reading and your child will make progress. They will also derive pleasure from this activity as they venture into the magical world of books.

