

Things to try with your child

Sharing reading

1. It is still good to share



Don't give up on talking about picture books with your child and sharing that bedtime story or information book. It's just as important now to enjoy reading these books together, as well as those that come home from school, to help develop your child's vocabulary, their understanding of stories and to encourage a love of reading.

2. Join the Library

This is an excellent opportunity for you to develop skills and reading habits. Show your child how to browse and choose books. Talk about the books you find together and why your child might like them. Use the librarian to discover great authors linked to your child's interests.

Our local libraries do lots of activities, especially during the holidays to develop an interest in reading.

It saves lots of money. You then only have to buy the books that your child really, really likes and wants to read time and time again.

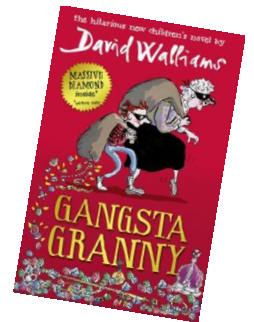
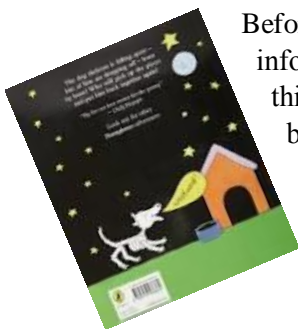
3. Read with expression

Read with expression when reading to your child. Use different voices and vary the volume for effect or for different bits of information such as, Did you know that the Tyrannosaurus Rex...? Wow! You'll soon see that your child will then try these skills when reading to you!



4. Talk about books, words and pictures

Before reading a book together, always talk about the title, the pictures and the information on the cover (front and back). If it's new, ask what your child thinks the book might be about. If it's an old favourite then talk about the bits you love most! Don't worry if some books get chosen again and again!



5. Retell stories or events

When reading aloud use lots of expression and try different voices for different characters. Get your child to join in with bits too, such as, 'They pulled and they pulled!' and 'Fee, fi, fo, fom...'. See if your child can copy you!



6. Make links

As well as talking about the book itself, make links between events or information in the book and your child's own experiences: 'Do you remember when we did that ...?'. Get them to ask questions too: 'Is that how Grandad does it too?'

Practising early reading skills

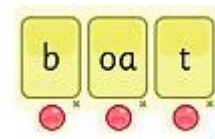
1. Listen to your child read

Books that your child brings home from school will be at the right challenge level for your child. The words should be readable for your child. They are written to ensure steady progress and success. (The book bands contain books that vary slightly in difficulty, so do not worry if some are easier than others.) Many of these books include helpful notes for parents inside the front cover.



2. Sound it out

If your child gets stuck on a word, try phonics first. Get your child to say the letter sounds and say them quickly to try to hear the word; this is called blending. If the word can't be sounded out then it's best if you say it quickly and move on. If the book is at the right level then this should not happen too much.



3. Clap and chunk

Clapping out syllables or chunks in words and names can help with reading longer words: Di-no-saur! Cho-co-late! Or point out that some words are made up of two words, so wind and then mill makes windmill.



4. Try expression and flow

Your child's expression might sometimes sound stilted on the first read of a sentence or a page. This is because they are focusing on making sounds into words. To keep your child hooked into the story, read it again with expression – after lots of praise, of course!



5. Don't be afraid to back track

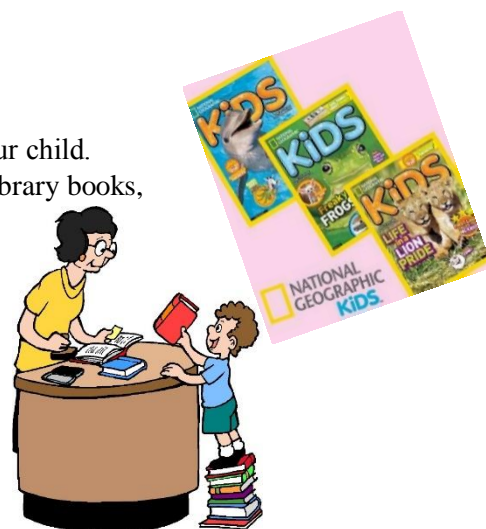
It's sometimes good to get your child to re-read a sentence or even a page if it has been tricky to work out. This helps with meaning, flow and confidence – we all still have to do this sometimes!

6. Spot letter patterns in words

Ask your child to point out words that look like they should rhyme but don't: *home and come*; do and no. And words which do rhyme even though they look different: *come and sum*; *there, bear, hair*. This will help with their writing too.

7. Read, read, read!

It's really important to read as much as possible with your child. Read the books that come home from school, borrow library books, and buy books and magazines. Read signs and notices, and find interesting websites to read. And keep reading together at bedtime too.



Developing confident, fluent readers, who love to read.

1. Read to your child as often as possible.

Whenever and wherever, reading can take place whenever the fancy takes you. Always have a book, magazine or comic to hand. The batteries will not run out like a screen and you child will be engaged rather than blankly watching. Reading to your child is the best way to develop a broad vocabulary base.

2. Don't stop reading to them once they have learnt to read.

Read to your child every step of the way, for as long as they will let you. Continuing to read will keep them interested as their skills develop. And it gives you lots of fodder for great conversations about values and choices.

Parents often complain that their early readers CAN read, but just don't seem interested in doing so. Most children go through this stage, but you can help to keep it a brief one. The child's problem, of course, is that they can read simple books, but their imagination craves more developed plots and characters. Those books are agonising work, with too many words your child doesn't know. The solution? Keep reading to your child, to keep the fascination with the secrets of books. That's what will motivate them to do the hard work to become a proficient reader.

Picture books with lots of words work well, since children can use the pictures to help them stay interested and figure out the words. Within a few months, they'll be able to handle simple chapter books. At that point, look for series books, which often lure children on to the next book and the next.

3. Ritualize daily reading time.

Set up a “cosy reading time” every day. This can be a perfect chill-out time after school, or after lunch in the summer, or a wind-down time at the end of the evening.



4. Help your child tackle the next level.

Pick a book your child can read, but that is a bit harder than they might choose on their own -- a simple chapter book, rather than a picture book, for example. Read together the first chapter or two book, so your child is hooked. Then tell them it's time for them to read-alone. It's their choice. Most children grab the book and finish it themselves.

5. Help to improve your child's reading by alternating pages with them

...during your read-aloud time. But if they stumble, supply the word. Don't make them stop and sound things out; your goal is to keep him excited about the book by moving forward with the story.



6. Try comics for reluctant readers.

Some children get a terrific jump start from comics, which are less intimidating to them than chapter books.

7. Read yourself.

Be a good role model. If they don't see you read, why should they? Discuss what you're all reading at the dinner table.