



William Hulme's Grammar School
The best in everyone™
Part of United Learning

William Hulme's Primary Phase

HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD TO READ AND
ENJOY BOOKS



We all want to help our children with reading, but we may not be sure how to go about it. We may think that teachers are the best people to help a child with reading and that parents shouldn't interfere. But parents can instil a love of reading long before a child goes to school and deepen that love of reading as a child grows up.

Enjoyment of books is the most important factor when learning to read.

Sharing books with adults helps children learn to read independently.



THE GOLDEN RULES FOR READING

- ✓ Make reading a time of pleasure for both of you. Find a quiet corner and turn the television off!
- ✓ Start sharing books even before your child knows which way up to hold a book
- ✓ Always praise your child's efforts.
- ✓ Read books your child loves and don't set up a 'test situation'. Encourage your child to choose the book you are going to share.
- ✓ Focus on the things which are right, not on mistakes.
- ✓ Keep reading to children even after they've learned to read independently. A story in the evening before bed as part of a bedtime routine helps to prepare your child for sleep.
- ✓ Stop when they've had enough – it's not a punishment.



For some children, learning to read will seem to happen easily and quickly. For others, more time and support will be needed. Whatever the case, your help will be a powerful influence over your child's development as a reader. For **all** children praise, encouragement, reassurance and pleasure are the vital factors towards becoming a confident reader.

Reading with Foundation Stage Children

At this stage, children should learn that books give pleasure. They need to handle books, enjoy the pictures and hear lots of stories and rhymes. This is not the time to worry about testing them on the words they know or sounding out words. Just enjoy the time you spend together sharing books. This will give the children the best foundation for learning to read and love books. Grandparents and big brothers and sisters can be part of this too.

- Read to your child as often as possible – any time, any place, anywhere – in bed, in the car, in the bath. Also, try to keep a special time for reading, when you can cuddle up together.
- Bring stories to life with lots of expression and silly voices.
- Talk about the stories and pictures and play ‘Guess what’s going to happen next’. Talk about the book at the end and discuss likes or dislikes. Relate the story to your child’s own life if possible.
- Read favourite books over and over again. You might have had enough of reading *Three Little Pigs* or *Chicken Licken*, but young children love familiarity.
- Say the catchy bits together e.g. ‘run, run as fast as you can,’ or ‘he huffed and he puffed and he blew the house down.’
- Encourage your child to bring books home from nursery or school and make time to read them together.
- Buy books if you can. Boot sales are a good place for bargains. Put them around the house in baskets and boxes – like a lucky dip that your child can choose from.
- Go to the library – it is free and has a great selection of books for children. Librarians love babies and children who love books.



- Play a game of 'spot the words' on signs and labels – on the street, in shops, or in your cupboards.
- Make sure your child sees you reading newspapers, books and magazines – show them it's cool to read!

Reading with Infant Children

This is the stage when children can tell you about their favourite story and when they begin to pick out well-known words or phrases such as 'Once upon a time,' or 'In a dark, dark wood.'

- Take turns to read bits of a favourite story. A whole story is too daunting for a new reader. Don't worry if your child has memorized words or phrases. This is an important part of learning to read. It gives a sense of satisfaction and is not cheating. Recognising words will soon follow once the story is familiar.
- Talk about pictures and details that catch your child's interest. This will help with understanding the story and guessing new words. Guessing is important when the child understands what the story is likely to say and chooses words which make sense.
- Run your finger under the words as you read together. In this way, words are seen and heard together.
- Don't make a fuss if your child can't read a word. Either say the word yourself or encourage your child to think about what it might say. Draw attention to the starting sound of the word. Don't get cross. At this stage it is more important that your child enjoys sharing stories than getting every word right.
- Play alphabet and sound games such as 'I spy.' Children learn a lot about words, letters and sounds through these simple games.
- Continue to read to your child as well as with your child every day.



- Write notes or text messages to your child – it's a great way to get them to focus on words.

Reading with Primary Children

At this stage, many children want some independence and to read on their own. But they'll still want quiet times with you to share the books they love or to hear you read more challenging material.

- Keep reading together – every day! Take turns to read to each other.
- Show you are really interested in finding out what happens in the story. Talk about beginnings and endings; the characters and how they behave; the bits you find sad, funny or exciting; the words and pictures you find interesting.
- Encourage interest in a wide range of material by reading aloud from newspapers and magazines and by drawing attention to snippets which the children might like to read. Help your child choose a range of books from the library.
- Tell each other about your favourite books and recognize that you may have quite different ideas about what you like to read. Respect each other's preferences and choices.
- Encourage children to read with or to younger brothers and sisters.
- Suggest that children make a list or glossary of unknown vocabulary which they can research at school or at home using a dictionary.
- Find out what topics children are studying in school and encourage them to read around the subjects to help them with their school work.



PARENT QUESTIONS

When should I start reading with my child?

It is never too early to read to your child or to sing songs and rhymes. Babies and toddlers enjoy looking at picture books and hearing stories read aloud. They love the rhythms and patterns of familiar stories and rhymes, as well as the pleasure of snuggling up to parents or grandparents.

What sort of text should I read to my child?

Anything that you feel happy to read – rhymes, picture books, folk tales, information books, comics, signs, labels or sports reports from the newspaper. Children love the experience of sitting close to you and hearing your voice, and if you are enjoying what you are reading, they are learning that reading is a pleasure.

What if they want the same book over and over again?

Let them have it. Children love favourite stories. Through re-reading, they learn the patterns of written language, and that reading is an enjoyable experience. Just make sure that you also introduce new stories to give them a taste of something different.

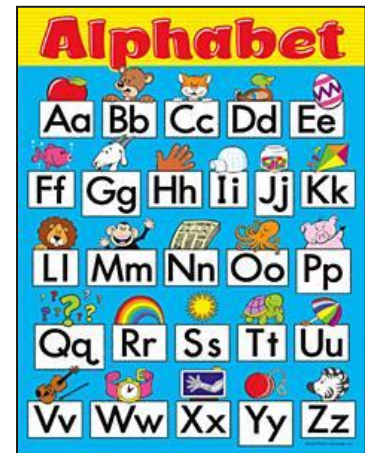


When shall I ask my child to take part in reading?

Most children have a favourite story. When reading a story that is familiar to your child, leave gaps and you will find that they will finish the ends of sentences or join in with repeated phrases. This is the beginning of reading, although your child is 'reading' from memory. Once a child is familiar with the story, they can then begin to recognize the words in print. At this stage, children may choose to take the book and 'tell' the story in their own words.

What about the alphabet?

Encourage your child to learn letter names and letter sounds. Children need easy familiarity with letters to recognize their shape and talk about them by name. Alphabet friezes and plastic letters help children learn the names of letters. Games such as 'I Spy' or silly sentences, rhyming games and songs help children hear letter sounds or word patterns.



What if my child makes a mistake?

If the 'mistake' makes sense, let your child continue reading. The mistakes that matter are the ones that don't make sense. It's helpful to read the last two sentences again. Include the word your child used. Talk about whether it makes sense. Tell your child the correct word. The most important things when reading is that the meaning is clear.

What should I do if my child doesn't recognise a word?

In the early stages, just say the word to keep the meaning of the story, or quietly say the first sound and see if your child can predict what the word is. Don't automatically ask your child to sound out an unknown word as this often doesn't work, particularly with small, common words such as 'the', 'this', 'you'. If in doubt, always tell your child the word.

Should I cover up the pictures?

No. Pictures are full of interest to children and give clues about what is happening in a story. Encourage your child to look closely at the pictures, to help them with their predictions.

How often should my child read to me?

Encourage your child to read to you every day at a time that suits you both. They may also like to read to a younger brother or sister or to grandparents or friends. If your child gets tired, always finish the story and chat about what you've read.

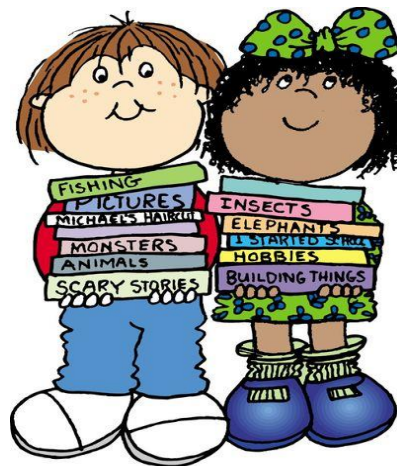
How can I help when my child wants to read silently?

If your child prefers to read silently, particularly as they read longer stories, make sure you have a chat afterwards about what they have read. You could discuss their view of the story, or the style of the author or the illustrator. You could talk about the characters in the story and how they interact with each other, and you could ask your child to predict how they think the story might end. Continue to show that you are interested in their choice of book, but respect their growing independence as readers.

It is important, however, to continue to read aloud to your child, whatever their stage of reading development.

My child's reading book seems too easy!

It is very important for children to read books which they find easy, as this makes reading an enjoyable experience for them, especially after a busy day at school when their brains have been working very hard! Discussion with an adult to ensure that they have understood what they are reading is still essential. Children can be encouraged to choose books from the library and will generally select a range of easier and harder books.



If you have any questions regarding your child's reading, please do not hesitate to speak to your child's class teacher.

Thank you for your support.