



Coxheath Primary School

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Reading at home

Reading in our modern world is more important than ever. When your children see you reading and writing in everyday life – reading for pleasure, sharing a story with them, using a recipe, making a shopping list, writing a birthday card, reading street signs, or reading and writing emails – it teaches them that reading and writing are useful skills.

What parents can do at home to help their children with reading

- Be confident that your child will learn to read. Give positive messages and involve them in everyday conversations and opportunities to read.
- Read aloud to your child. It helps them to learn about the language of books and will encourage them to enjoy books and reading.
- Read to your child in your home language if your first language is not English.
- Make reading enjoyable and talk about books, magazines and computer stories that you have read together.
- Try not to let television intrude on reading time. Make a special time for reading with your child, away from interruptions.
- Listen to your child read as often as you can, every day if possible, even if only for a short time.
- Give books in print or electronic form as a treat.

Hints for listening to your child read

- When reading together at home try to make the time relaxed, enjoyable and positive. Vary it. Read together, read to your child and take turns or have them read to you.
- Before reading, talk about the cover, the title and the pictures, and discuss what the book may be about.
- During reading, discuss what has been read up to that point and predict what might happen next.
- After you've finished reading with your child, talk and ask questions about the story and the pictures.

Useful reading tips

When your child is reading and encounters words that are difficult for them, use the Three Ps technique 'Pause, Prompt, Praise' to support them.

Pause: when your child comes to a word they don't know, try not to jump in straight away. Wait and give your child time to work out the word.

Prompt: if your child successfully works out the problem word, suggest they go back to the beginning of the sentence and re-read it (to recap meaning) before reading on.

If your child has not worked out the problem word, prompt them with some quick, low-key suggestions. Say things like:

- "Try reading on for a sentence or two, miss out the difficult word and see if that helps you to work it out."
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- "Look at the sound the word begins with, use that clue, and think about what may make sense here? Look at the pictures."

If prompts like these are not working, simply tell your child the correct word.

Try not to spend too much time prompting, as your child will find it difficult to maintain the overall meaning of what they are reading.

Praise: praise your child's reading efforts and successes.

Things to remember about reading

- The goal of reading is always to make sense of what is read.
- Try to be interested, supportive and enjoy the time together.
- Read with your child anywhere and at any time; don't forget that many everyday experiences provide opportunities to put reading and writing into action.
- Visit and use a library near you. Borrow books for yourself as well as for your child.

Key questions that you could ask:

- What has happened in the story so far?
 - What do you think will happen next?
 - Who is your favourite character? Why?
 - Who is the character you like least? Why?
 - Do you think the author intended you to like / dislike this character? How do you know?
 - Does your opinion of this character change during the story? How? Why?
 - Find two things the author wrote about this character that made him / her likeable?
 - If you met one of the characters from the story, what would you say to him / her?
 - Which part of the story is your favourite / least favourite? Why?
 - Would you change any part of the story? How?
 - Would you change any of the characters? How?
 - Which part of the story was the funniest/scariest/ saddest/ happiest? Find some evidence in the text to support your opinion.
 - What is the purpose of this book? How do you know?
 - Why is this page laid out in this way? Could you improve it?
 - Pick three favourite words or phrases from this chapter. Can you explain why you chose them?
 - Did this book make you laugh? Can you explain what was funny and why?
 - Have you read anything else by this author? Is anything similar?
 - Does this book remind you of anything else? How?
 - When do you think this book was written? How do you know? Does it matter? What would it be like if it was written now?
 - Do you think the title of the book is appropriate? What would you have called it?
 - What is the genre of the book: sci-fi, mystery, historical, fantasy, adventure, horror, comedy? What are the features that make you think this?
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- Find two sentences which describe the setting.
- Is the plot fast or slow moving? Find some evidence in the text, which supports your view.
- Would you like to read another book by this author? Why/ why not?

Of course, it doesn't have to be you asking the questions. Why not turn the tables and let your child ask you about your reading material? The greatest encouragement for your child is to see you - their most influential role model - reading.