

Advice Sheet

Did you know...

- 90% of the brain develops within the first 5 years of a child's life.
- Children who are read to regularly have a much larger vocabulary than those who are not.
- Children with a larger vocabulary do much better at school.



With all the benefits of reading, we would like to show you a video that will remind you of some the things that you are doing right when reading with your child, and that may give you some pointers if you are not feeling too confident.


Talking about sounds in words is one of the first stages of learning to read and write. Children learn about sounds gradually. They initially recognise syllables and rhymes, and are eventually able to identify the individual sounds in words. Helping them to develop their awareness of rhythm, rhymes and sounds will get them started on their journey to reading and writing!


Hints and tips!


Some ideas for making reading fun, as well as ways to help your child become aware of rhythm, rhyme and sounds


- Let your child do the choosing.** Allow your child to choose which book they would like to be read. The more enjoyment your child feels when reading, the better they will learn. Lift the flap books are a great way to make reading fun and interactive for young children. If you haven't done so already, introduce this type of book to your child and see how they respond.
- Talk about how words sound and what they mean.** It's useful to check whether your child knows the words in a story, and to explain them if necessary. Pointing to a book's illustrations and explaining the meaning of words will help your child to link words with objects, extending and firming up their knowledge and vocabulary. Split the word into syllables or 'beats' to make it easier for your child to say, especially with longer words, like 'all-ig-at-or'.
- With really long words, you can point this out to your child, and see if you can count all the beats in a word, by clapping or banging on the table together. 'hi-ppo-po-tam-us'.
- Rhyme:** Talk about the ways words can sound the same- like words that rhyme: 'hat' and 'bat'. When words rhyme in a book like 'mouse in the house', point it out to your child and say 'do you hear how these words sound the same- mouse, house'?
- Fill in the rhyme:** When you've read a book a few times, try leaving out the last word of a rhyming sentence to see if your child can remember it and complete the sentence: 'the cat sat on the ____'. Again, if they're not sure- don't worry, just fill in the blank for them! This will help focus their attention on the way words sound

similar. If it helps, put some rhythm into the rhyming sentence to help emphasise the rhythms and patterns of the words. You can also give them the first sound as a clue.

 **Play games with rhyme:** If your child is old enough, think about other words that rhyme with words in the book- take it in turns to think of rhyming words. If they can't think of any, don't worry, just give them lots of examples to demonstrate and turn it into a game!

 **First sounds:** Help your child to recognize the first sounds in words. When reading, pick out a character's name in the story and talk about its first sound "Do you hear the sss sound in 'Sammy'? Point it out when a sentence has lots of different words beginning with the same sound- like ' silly Sammy saw a spider'". Remember we're thinking about sounds rather than letters so sugar and shark wouldn't be a good example of the 'ss' sound here, even though they begin with 's' in the spelling.






 **What else starts with the same sound?:** To get your child used to thinking about the idea that the same sounds appear in lots of different words, you can practice thinking about different words that begin with the same sound as the character's name- 'Lots of other words begin with 's'- 'Sammy, silly, snake, sausage'. Take it in turns to think of words beginning with the same sound if they can. Don't worry if this is too hard, just keep giving lots of examples.

 **Make it personal!:** You might come across a character or something else in a book whose name begins with the first sound as your child's name (or their brother's/pet's teddy's name!). Draw their attention to this when it happens. Often children are able to identify the first sound of their own name sooner than other words, so this is a good way for them to recognise that the same sounds appear in different words.

If you would like to watch the video again, you can find it at *(link removed)*



Other things you can do to get your child interested in reading

-  Being a good **role model** - If your child sees you reading books/magazines/newspapers this will spark their interest in reading and they will learn that reading is important, fun and valuable.
-  Getting your child a **library card** as soon as you can (even babies can get a library card!) and making library visits part of your routine.
-  Keeping a record of what your child is reading. Using a **reward chart** is a good way to encourage more reading.
-  Create a nice cosy and **quiet setting** to read in. Having a comfortable space with no distractions should mean that you and your child are happier when reading together.
-  Incorporate your child's **favourite toy** into the shared book reading experience so that your child is engaged and comfortable with the activity.

How to make time for reading



Making time for reading means that you are making special **one-to-one time** to spend with your child.



Turn off the TV while you read! Create time for reading by limiting the amount of time your child spends watching television or playing computer and video games.



Always **keep a book close by** e.g. in your bag/car/pushchair.



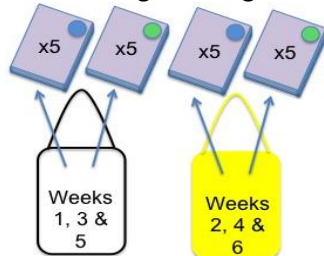
Make reading part of your **daily routine** e.g. Read to your child while they are in the bath, while you are on the bus home together or before bedtime.

What type of book does your child like to read?

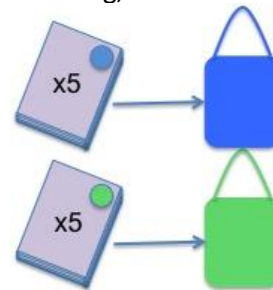
Some books have lots of words, some have mostly pictures. Some books are useful for emphasizing the different sounds in words, with lots of rhymes and alliteration, and others aren't, but you can fit it in with any books by talking about the different sounds that appear. Be prepared to read favourite books over and over! You might be able to vary what you talk about on each reading, e.g. pointing out a different part of the picture or relating it to your child's life in a different way.

What we would like you to do over the next 6 weeks

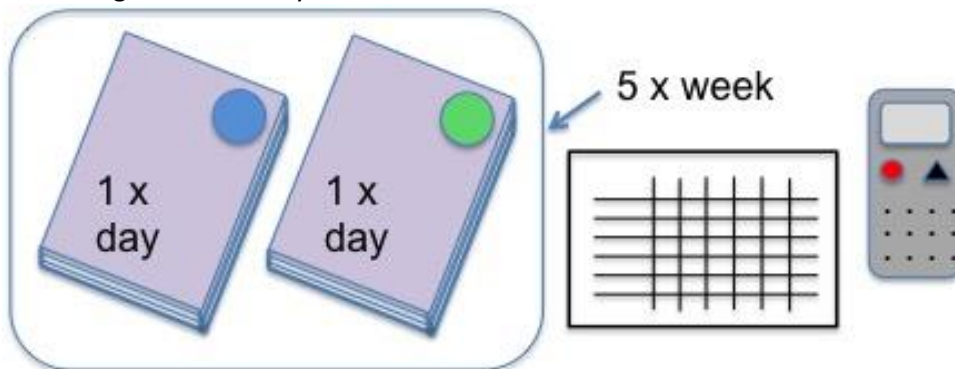
- At the beginning of each week, take the 10 books out of the correct bag (white for weeks 1, 3 and 5, yellow for weeks 2, 4 and 6) and put all of the books with a blue sticker into the blue bag, and all the books with a green sticker into the green bag.



then



- After reading, put the completed book back into either the white bag (on weeks 1, 3 and 5) or the yellow bag (on weeks 2, 4 and 6). At the end of the week you should once again have 10 books in each of the white and yellow bags (5 with a green sticker and 5 with a blue sticker in each bag) and the blue and green bags should be empty.
- Read 2 books per day, five days per week. If you have read all of the books with your child before the end of the week and would like to read our books on the remaining days, allow your child to choose any book from the same coloured bag as you've been using that week (white or yellow), making sure you put the books back in the same bag. Or of course you can read other books too.



- At the beginning of the second week, put the white bag to one side and split the books from the yellow bag into the blue and green bags. At the end of the second week all 10 books should be back in the yellow bag and blue and green bags should be empty. At the start of the third week, put the yellow bag to the side and split the books from the white bag into the blue and green bags. Continue swapping bags weekly until the end of the study.
- Audio record each book reading.
- Fill in the chart after each reading – write the number of the book on a green or blue sticker (if the book had a blue sticker, you would write on a small blue sticker), then stick the numbered sticker on the correct day/week box in your chart. Write the time and place you read the book in the same box, next to the sticker.
- At the end of the 6 weeks we will arrange a visit to your home to come and pick up the recorder and the books, and to play some final language games with your child.

Thank you!