

## 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.

### Hints and tips!

- Let your child do the choosing.** Allow your child to choose which book they would like to look at. This might mean that you end up reading the same book over and over again. As long as you are reading together, it doesn't matter how many times you read the same book. 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.
- Remove distractions.** Help your child to focus on the book and on you by turning off the TV and other electronic devices while you read.
- Move your body.** Making movements and gestures create energy around a book and will capture your child's attention. Gestures are a simple and an effective way for a parent to bring a story to life.
- Action!** Performing the actions in a book provides an opportunity for bonding and having fun. You could also ask your child to turn the pages of the book. The responsibility of having to turn the page will make your child feel more involved in the activity and will teach them about turn taking.
- Have a variety of books for your child to choose from.** Your child may get more enjoyment out of certain books depending on how they are feeling. This might change from day to day, or even from minute to minute! For example, if your child is feeling tired, they might just want to hear you reading to them, and a book with many words might be better. If they are in a playful mood, a book with lots of pictures that they can point to and talk about might be better. Having a variety of books available will ensure there is something to read whatever your child's mood.
- Make reading a shared experience.** If your child asks questions, answer them. If they want to talk about what is happening in the book or to relate it to their experiences, listen and respond. This will help to make reading a bonding experience between you and your child. Sitting close to your child will allow you both to look at the book and at each other.







 **Create different voices for characters.** Don't be embarrassed about giving characters different or funny voices. It will help your child to differentiate between characters, and will keep them interested in the book. Facial expressions are great for conveying a character's emotions and work well with a distinctive voice.

 **Make it fun!** Reading should be fun for both of you. If your child loses interest in a book, try to make it more lively. If you still can't regain their attention, you can either whizz to the end of the book, or put it down and come back to it later.




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 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.
-  Make up stories and have your child contribute. You can use existing books and make up your own stories by looking at the pictures in the book and reinterpreting them.

### How to make time for reading

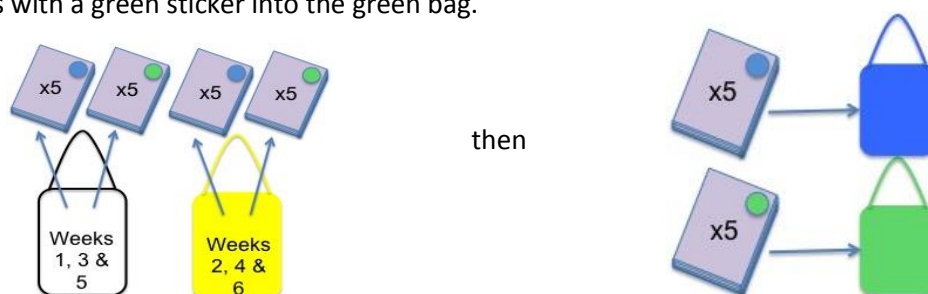
-  Making time for reading means that you are making special **one-to-one time** to spend with your child.
-  Always **keep a book close by** e.g. in your bag/car/pushchair.
-  Make reading part of your **daily routine** e.g. Read to your child while they are in the bath, while you are on the bus home 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 have lots of facts, some are all about the story. **Reading should be enjoyable so take notice of what they like.** 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.

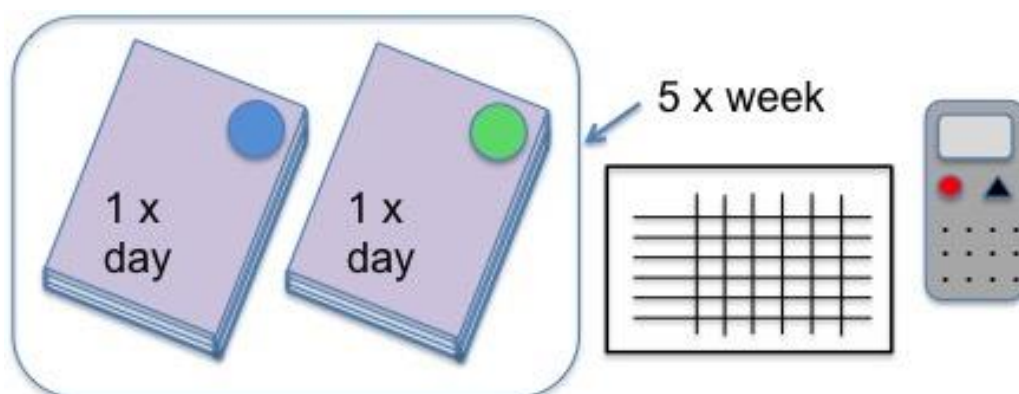
## What we would like you to do over the next 6 weeks

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.



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!**