



Dream it, believe it, become it!

Reading at Home

A guide for parents or carers





At Hateley Heath Primary School we aim to promote a life-long love of reading.

Dream it: All pupils to behave like readers

Believe it: Be confident, enjoy books and talk about what they have read

Become it: Acquire a skill, which they will use throughout life, so they can participate fully in the world around them

What can a parent do to help at home?

- ◆ Find a really good time for reading practice – five minutes of quality time, when you can give your full attention to your child, is better than longer periods when neither of you are fully concentrating
- ◆ Talk about the book with your child before reading – you could introduce any words that you think your child will struggle with or any words he or she may not yet understand
- ◆ If your child is finding a book difficult, don't ask him / her to sound out every word - focus on words you know that your child can decode
- ◆ Sometimes read with your child (paired reading) or take it in turns to read a page

- ◆ 'Book Talk' is an essential part of the shared reading experience (see 'Book Talk' section for useful tips!)
- ◆ Give plenty of praise and let your child know that you are enjoying listening to the text
- ◆ Co-opt other people in to listen to your child read – grandparents, friends, visitors
- ◆ Keep reading sessions short and enjoyable – reading should never be a chore!
- ◆ Your fluent Key Stage 2 reader needs as much help as your beginner in Reception – see the 'Book Talk' and 'Reading for Meaning' sections for ideas



Strategies for Helping with Decoding

As you know, one of the vital first steps of early reading is to be able to 'sound out' words and blend sounds together in order to read them. This is called 'decoding'.

During the early stages of learning to read, children are given books which they are able to decode using phonic strategies that they have been taught at school. As they become more confident readers, they will continue to use these strategies and develop many others. Some of these strategies are listed below:

- ◆ 'Blending' or 'sounding out' whole words, particularly in the early years:
'ch – o – p', 'p – l – ay', 't – r – ai – n'
- ◆ Recognising common endings (-ing, -ed, -er, -tion, -able) and prefixes (un-, de-, in-)
- ◆ Finding the root word within more complex words (*discovery, subway, incoming, discontentment*)
- ◆ Using syllables to break words down into more manageable chunks (mis-con-duct, en-count-er-ing, ex-tra-or-din-a-ry)
- ◆ Recognising words 'at sight' (fluent readers read most words like this)
- ◆ Using the context of the word or picture clues

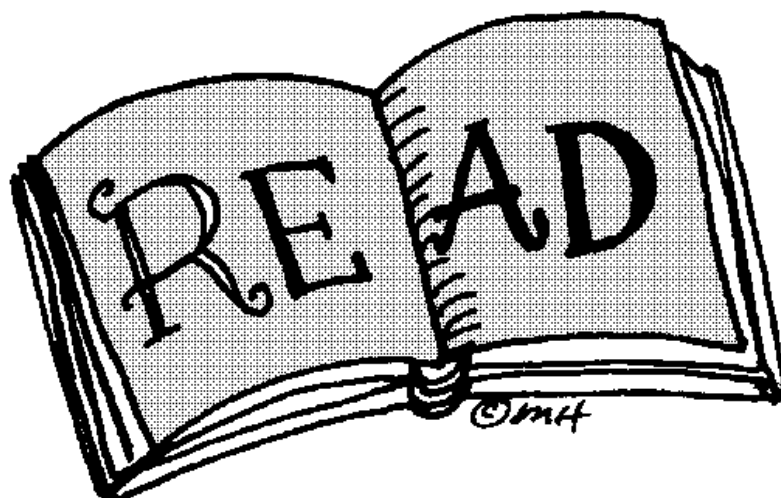
TOP TIP: It's a really good idea to stop and re-read the sentence, if you have paused to decode a word, so that you do not lose the sense of the text you are reading.

Reading for Meaning

Learning to decode words gives children access to our literate world, but we need to understand what we are reading in order to be able to make use of it. As your child grows in confidence as a reader, our teaching at school places less emphasis on simply decoding texts and more emphasis on understanding them. We call this **reading comprehension**.

Some of the key skills of reading comprehension are:

- ◆ 'Skim reading' a text to pick out important or useful information
- ◆ Understanding the writer's meaning and intention
- ◆ Knowing what devices the writer uses to make the meaning clear (this could be sub-titles in a non-fiction text, short sentences to create atmosphere in a scary story or metaphors in a poem)
- ◆ Having a wide vocabulary and being interested in finding out the meanings of new words
- ◆ Being able to express an opinion about a text and backing it up with examples and quotations
- ◆ Using inference to give informed opinions about a text (using clues from the text to understand something that is implied by the author but not directly stated).



Book Talk is a great way for you to help develop your child's reading comprehension skills and encourages you to engage in really meaningful discussion with your child about a text.

Don't feel as if you have to be firing questions at your child all the time. Try making statements about the book instead and allow your child to respond to your thoughts and ideas.

Here are a few conversation starters to get you going...

I wonder why that character is behaving so mysteriously / oddly / unkindly...

I love that word...it makes me feel...

I think he's mean because he...

Perhaps in the next chapter, they will find the treasure / make friends / meet someone new...

I really can't wait to find out what happens next!

I really like the pictures in this book about spiders because...

My favourite character is...because...

I really like the way the author is building up the tension / using speech / describes the mountain...

If it's all getting a bit too stressful...

- ◆ Try paired reading (taking it in turns to read a page / paragraph / chapter)
- ◆ Don't expect perfection – maintaining the *sense* of the book is more important than correcting every single mistake
- ◆ Keep reading sessions short and enjoyable – make them a really treasured part of the day!



What sort of things do I write in the reading record?

The following list is not an exhaustive list but offers suggestions that may be appropriate. It is very important to remember that the enjoyment factor is always worth commenting on.

Parents are not expected to comment on each of the following areas after each reading session!

- ◆ How enthusiastic is the child about the choice of book?
- ◆ Can the child remember the story so far?
- ◆ Is the child reading using only the pictures for clues?
- ◆ Does your child understand that the words they are reading mean something?
- ◆ Can the child read words out of context, e.g. when you point to a word without reading the whole sentence?
- ◆ Is the child confident to attempt new words?
- ◆ What reading strategies is your child using, e.g. sounds, use of the picture, use of the context?
- ◆ Can the child follow the text without using a finger or marker?
- ◆ Is there a pattern to the mistakes your child is making, e.g. words ending in “ed” or starting in “sh”?
- ◆ Does the child recognise mistakes and self-correct?
- ◆ Is the child recognising many key words?
- ◆ Is the child aware of punctuation?
- ◆ Is the child reading with expression?
- ◆ How long is the child able to sustain reading?

Other ways to support your child's reading

- ◆ Make time for discussion – of a TV programme, a news item, a film, during a walk, over a meal, in the car, at bath-time
- ◆ Read stories, poems and other texts aloud to your child – and don't deny yourself the pleasure of reading more challenging texts to older children
- ◆ Let your child see you reading for purpose and pleasure
- ◆ Visit the library / bookshops
- ◆ Listen to stories on CDs, the radio, the internet
- ◆ Give your child access to a wide variety of written material: books, magazines, websites, recipes, instructions, TV guides, catalogues, games