

Hassocks Infant School

Reading with your child – Some Tips and Suggestions

How do children learn to read?

Children go through a variety of stages when learning to read. These will include;

- ✧ Making up their own story to the pictures.
- ✧ Retelling the story using book language.
- ✧ Playing at reading, being the teacher reading to a teddy or younger sibling.
- ✧ Developing an understanding that print carries meaning.
- ✧ Memorising the text and reading from memory.
- ✧ Revisiting the same book over and over again.
- ✧ Seeing print in the environment and making the connection with reading.
- ✧ Later on children will pick out letters and familiar words.
- ✧ Children learn through rhyme and love Nursery rhyme books.
- ✧ Children will start to use a range of strategies including their phonological knowledge, using the pictures, guessing etc.

How we teach reading at school?

- ✧ At school we aim to immerse children in language and print
- ✧ We aim to make reading enjoyable and fun.
- ✧ We have well organised book areas and encourage the children to take a book home every night.
- ✧ Everyday the children will have reading experiences including reading individually with an adult, as part of a group, reading their own writing and adult scribed writing, reading as part of other activities during the day.
- ✧ We use big-books to model how we read, pointing to the text as we go.
- ✧ We also teach the children the letter names and sounds through a structured approach called Jolly Phonics, which we then link to reading and writing activities.
- ✧ Key words are taught in context and the children may be given these to practice at home when they are ready.
- ✧ We also have a range of talking books and reading games on the computers at school.

What types of books do we use to teach reading?

We believe it is very important for the children to have a range of high quality books that are enjoyable and fun and we use a core set of books. We also use Story Chest books which have a good deal of repetition.

How do we ensure the children are making progress?

- ✧ We keep records on how your child is making progress by recording regular comments and monitoring how the children are progressing.

How you can help

- ✧ Above all, reading should be an enjoyable experience for you both. It is very important that you and your child enjoy this special time. Choose a time when you both want to share a book, you

are relaxed and in the right frame of mind, preferably when they are not tired and are not distracted by the television

- ✧ If it should become a negative experience, stop, come back to it later or gently take over the reading completely and release the pressure
- ✧ It is very important to continuously praise your child throughout, whatever their reading level
- ✧ Remember to make the links between reading and writing explicit.

Pre-reading stage:

- Take time to read aloud a range of texts regularly
- Talk, ask questions, speculate and wonder about actions, events and characters in stories
- Choose non-fiction texts that connect to their own lives and experiences
- Choose rhymes and texts with predictive patterns
- Use puppets or props alongside stories and revisit stories, rhymes and events through role play
- Encourage children to join in with repetitive parts of the text or on a second reading
- Encourage children to recognise own name and some familiar and common words
- Sometimes link sounds to letters, name and sound the letters of the alphabet especially familiar letters e.g. ones in their own name
- **Follow text with your finger under the words**
- Sharing, familiar print in the environment is also valuable. Pointing out names of streets, shops, writing on cereal packets etc.

Early Stage:

- Discuss your child's choice of book and their reasons for choosing it
- If it is an unfamiliar book, read the book to your children before they attempt to read it
- Start by sharing the book, letting your child take over as they feel confident
- Read the text together encouraging them to join in with words they know
- Get your child to follow the text with their finger as you read and as they read
- Ask questions and encourage your child to make predictions as to what might happen next – no right or wrong answers just great alternative ideas
- Try to maintain the flow when reading. Avoid focusing on too many unknown words, just give the child a word freely to further develop their confidence and enjoyment of the book
- Maintain understanding of the story by rereading and discussing what's happening
- Encourage your child to retell the story, talk about the characters, settings or events
- Look at reading skills *after* sharing the book e.g. picking out keywords, identifying initial sounds, guessing
- Sometimes children will make up their own story to go with the pictures which is a normal stage
- Children will often know the text so well and be able to read it from memory which is an important stage and needs to be valued

A few other ways of helping

- Play I Spy using letter sounds
- Point out print in the environment, street names, the label on the cereal packet etc
- Encourage your child to have a go at writing and read it back to you.
- Point out words that start with the same letter as their name

Recommended texts:

- Familiar stories – it is fine if they bring home the same book on numerous occasions
- Books with predictable or repetitive texts
- Rhyming books
- Story Chest books
- Supportive picture books
- Books of their own choice which can be challenging or simple

If your child continuously brings home books for you to read and never chooses books to tackle themselves, we would like you to encourage your child to choose two – one for them to read and one to share.

Moving On:

Once your child is more confident and independent you can support them using a range of strategies:

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- Look at the pictures to see if they give a clue to the text
- Read up to the unknown word, use the first letter sound as a cue, and make a good guess
- If they make an appropriate guess at the word and it doesn't affect the meaning let the flow continue without correction
- See what would make sense in the context, read on and come back to that word
- In shorter phonetically spelt words say the sound of each phoneme
- In longer words split the words into chunks/syllables and look for words within words

If you have any more questions or concerns please talk to your child's class teacher. Remember that at all stages, reading should be an enjoyable experience for both your child and you.

