



## Supporting Reading at Home

Research into the reading skills of teenagers found that children who read regularly do better at school than those who don't read in their own time. We also know that parents who talk to their children about books, TV series and films help to keep their children engaged with reading. Having books, newspapers and magazines at home makes a huge difference to how interested children are in reading.

### **So, how can you encourage good reading at home?**

**Allow your child to select what they want to read** – it doesn't matter what you think they should be reading. Engaging with reading materials frequently matters and we want them to enjoy it.

**Be a reader!** Let your child see you read at home and try to do it at a time when they can catch you reading. It doesn't matter what it is – pouring over a newspaper or magazine with a cuppa, browsing a cookery book, studying a computer manual or diving into a novel.

**Get your children to join in** – if you're cooking, can they read the recipe? If you're watching a film, can they read a summary or blurb first? If you're researching a day out or holiday, can they read about the destination?

**Show your children that we read lots of texts online now** – you might be reading an article online or a novel on your tablet or phone, but they might not realise you are actually reading so tell them when you are doing it!

**Encourage your child to read magazines, comics, newspapers and the internet** as well as books. Remember lots of articles are free to access online.

**Buy books as presents, if possible.** Look for bargains in charity shops and don't forget to look for books about interests such as films, TV shows, computer games or bands.

**Join the public library,** if you are not already members. It is free and most libraries have audiobooks, CDs and DVDs that can be borrowed very cheaply too.

**Encourage them to visit the school library often** – praise them when they do and take an interest in the books they pick to read.

## How should I read with my child?

**Read together.** Select material about interests or topics you both enjoy, like your favourite sports team or an interesting celebrity.

**Little and often** is the key: 10 minutes a few times a week will make a huge difference. You might want to be flexible and read at different times or, if you are a busy family, have set times each week when you drop everything and just enjoy reading together.

**Chat** to your child about the types of reading they do in different subjects at school. What topics are they doing at the moment? Can you match any books or articles to what they are learning at the moment?

## What should reading with my child at home look like?

It depends on what they are reading and why they are reading it.

**Try some skimming and scanning** together. Skimming is when you read through a piece of text quickly to find out what the main idea is; scanning is glancing through a piece of text to find a specific piece of information. This works better with shorter texts – maybe ask your child to find something out for you like the cost of the entry fee mentioned in a leaflet. Ask them to scan a newspaper for information about a local event or get them to skim read a recipe to tell you the method.

**Help your child to figure the meaning of an unfamiliar word** by getting them to read the rest of the sentence – look for clues. Use your tone of voice and expression when reading sentences with unfamiliar words as this emphasis can really help your child to understand the meaning.

**Develop the number of words your child knows** – their vocabulary. As they progress through school, your child will be introduced to specialist words. You will often find lists of these words in exercise books – ask your child what these words mean. And acknowledge when your child uses these words in conversation at home too.

**Cut out newspaper articles** about topics your child is studying. Or send them links to articles you think they'd enjoy.

**Look up technical words you or your child don't recognise** – show them that even as an experienced, adult reader, you still sometimes need to check the meaning of more complicated words.

**Praise your child** when they read and tell them how much you enjoy hearing them read to you!