

## How to Help Your Child with Reading

*"To learn to read is to light a fire; every syllable that is spelled out is a spark"*

Victor Hugo



### **What can I do to help when my child is reading aloud?**

Try to choose a time when you are both relaxed and not rushed. One strategy we use as teachers is called **"Pause, Prompt and Praise"**. This allows the child to become an independent reader by allowing them time to search for clues (pause), helping them to recall a skill or strategy (prompt) and confirming that they have problem solved by praising their efforts.

**At the early stages of reading:** Talk about the cover/title/illustration and remind your child that they can help themselves to read by looking at a picture for clues, or looking carefully at the word.

### **While they are reading: (prompt)**

- ⇒ Read the whole word if it is a **High Frequency Word**. Make flashcards for these words
- ⇒ Look at the picture
- ⇒ Get the first letter of a new word ready on my lips to use as a cue
- ⇒ Read the sentence — what word would fit for the sentence to make sense?
- ⇒ Did it sound right?

### **When they have finished:**

Ask questions about events, characters to see if they have understood the story (the 5W's: who, what, when, where, why?)

Choose a part to return to, if your child had a problem—can they help with it?

Ask for their opinion, discuss favourite parts, predict the next part.

## What can I do at home to help my child?

- ◆ Try to encourage a love of language—read short poem or rhymes, listen to the lyrics of songs, listen to audio books
- ◆ Talk about everything...speech is crucial and the development of a more complex vocabulary is vital for life...as educationalists, we believe that: **"Reading and Writing float on a sea of talk"**
- ◆ Read with your child. Listen to them read and read for them. Read together. Release the inner performer—try out different voices, act out the story—if you dare!
- ◆ Re-read familiar stories—children love it, even if it's rather tedious for the adults!
- ◆ Miss out words for them to fill in as you go along
- ◆ Remember it's not just books: comics, newspapers, recipes, instructions, food packaging...read it all!
- ◆ Make flashcards of the High Frequency Words. Use the flashcards to play snap, read as many as they can in a minute etc.
- ◆ Learn nursery rhymes and songs. These are really important for understanding pattern and rhyme in language
- ◆ Try to show the importance of reading by providing real contexts whenever possible
- ◆ Make up stories together—play games—saying one word or one sentence each
- ◆ Provide different audiences for your child's reading—reading sections or chapters of a book to Grandma on Skype etc.
- ◆ Most importantly show that you enjoy language. Children copy what we do—if they see us talking, reading and writing they will do it too.

*"If you are going to get anywhere in life you have to read a lot of books"*

Roald Dahl



## As children become more confident readers:

The emphasis will be more on how the reading sounds:

- ◆ Ask them to “make it sound like talking”
- ◆ Encourage the child to look carefully at the word and not to panic. Don't try to read too quickly
- ◆ Read a text/ chapter/story beforehand and make flashcards of key words to practise prior to reading, to help fluency
- ◆ Encourage children to predict new or tricky words by looking at the context, or finding sections of the word that they recognise
- ◆ Break down longer words into their syllables
- ◆ Ask: 'Do you know a word that looks like this? What letters are at the beginning?'
- ◆ Have they understood what they have read? Discuss the text.
- ◆ Use the punctuation to read aloud accurately—this will also greatly help with the structure of their own writing
- ◆ Use different voices for dialogue, to help understand the use of speech marks
- ◆ Encourage the reading of books, BEFORE the watching of the film based on the book! Then discuss the difference.

