

# Sharing Books at Home



Learning to read is one of the most important skills that your child will learn in school. We want children to enjoy reading and see it as a pleasurable leisure activity, as well as a means of finding out things. Reading together at home is one of the easiest but most important ways in which you can help your child. As you share books you are helping to improve your child's reading skills and also showing them how important and enjoyable reading is. Books open up a whole new world of learning and imagination.

## Helping to encourage your child to read

1. **Set a good example** by reading yourself.
2. **Read to your child or share books with them.** You can help your child to understand the story.
3. **Point out words all around you:** on food packets, in supermarkets, on buses, in newspapers and magazine.
4. **Visit your local library.** All libraries have children's sections.
5. **School reading books and reading diary.** Make sure your child swaps their library book regularly at school (remembering to return their books

on the correct day – or, even better, leave the books in their book bags). Try to share school books with them every day. A few minutes may be enough for some children to begin with. Write constructive comments in the reading diary e.g. X was able to find the mouse in the picture/recognise the initial sound of the word.

6. **Allow children to choose which book to share if possible** – even if it is a choice of two.
7. **In the early stages, many children will find it easier to engage with a book which has different textures, flaps or music.** Home made books with photos of people they know and places they have been are also popular.
8. **Look at the pictures together, pointing to and naming characters and objects.** The next step is for your child to say what they see, using words, symbols or just pointing e.g. Where is Kipper?
9. **Encourage your child to use picture ‘clues’ to predict the final word of the sentence you are reading.** For example: He ate one.....apple. You can point to the picture as a prompt.
10. **If sharing a familiar book**, such as Three Little Pigs, encourage them to join in with repeated phrases.
11. **Say the first letter sound of the word.**
12. **As children develop their phonic skills, help them to sound out simple words eg d-a-d.** Do not sound out irregular words such as ‘are’ : these have to be learned separately.
13. **If English is not your family’s first language** there are a number of dual language books in school. Research shows children with autism benefit from being exposed to their family home language.
14. **Praise** them for trying hard at their reading.
15. **Let them reread their favourites.** It’s good practice to read the same books over and over again as it helps to build their confidence.

**REMEMBER** Reading should be fun!

