

Supporting reading at home in the Early Years



Children learn to read by...

- being read to every day
- seeing important people in their lives read
- seeing themselves as readers and having a go

The purpose of reading at home is...

- For children to enjoy reading with a significant person in their life and to develop a sense of value for reading
- To encourage a "love of literature", a sense of fun and enjoyment, improved comprehension and confidence in expression and fluency of reading

Reading is about making meaning

Reading must always have a purpose, e.g. to learn something new or to have fun.

If a child loses meaning gently prompt them:

- What do you think would make sense here?
- Let's check back on the previous page
- What's happened so far in this part?
- Hang on, I'm confused...

Reading is about making connections

Making connections when reading supports comprehension.

Ensure the child makes connections to the text:

- Have you ever felt like that?
- That reminds me of....
- Wouldn't that be exciting?
- This is like that other book....
- I'd love a puppy too!



A strategy to support reading at home

As children will be reading a variety of texts, they will need differing levels of support to engage with the text. One strategy to allow this to happen would be the: **reading to**, **reading with** and **reading by** strategy. This strategy involves a gradual release of adult support as the reading becomes more independent for the child.



	Reading to the child	Reading with the child in partnership with the adult	Reading by the child
Text choice	Texts are challenging, they inspire children to want to read or to read a family favourite!	Texts have tricky concepts, perhaps above the child's current capabilities but manageable with help	Texts are easy, few, if any mistakes are made when reading
What it looks like	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expands the child's vocabulary Builds a love of literature Allows for the adult to model reading Demonstrates concepts about print e.g. reading left to right Ways to help: make connections to the text, consider what prior knowledge the child might need Focus on any language that may be unfamiliar Ask questions and encourage the child to ask questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages the child with a text containing tricky concepts that are a little beyond the child's capabilities, but manageable with help Encourages the child to join in with different parts or to read some parts while you read others etc. Ways to help: make connections to the text, consider what prior knowledge the child might need Focus on any language that may be unfamiliar Ask questions and encourage the child to ask questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child is confident with the text The child makes few mistakes, reads easily and has a solid understanding of the text The purpose is to build confidence and fluency in the reader The purpose is about the child experiencing success as a reader The child can reread the same text several times as this helps to develop comprehension, fluency and sight word vocabulary

Keys to reading at home

- Create a happy atmosphere
- Be encouraging and supportive
- Read a variety of texts with diversity of topics and with a range of difficulty
- Keep the session short (little and often)
- Make it fun!
- Get everyone involved
- Chat about the text

A wide variety of texts is key

- Students can choose texts from their school library
- Consider real world texts, e.g. read at breakfast (the back of the cereal box), share a magazine, a map of a recent visit to a theme park, read and co-author the shopping list, share the school or class newsletter, look at a bus or train timetable, read environmental print such as road signs
- Visit the local library and borrow books
- Search for online texts on a topic of interest to the child
- Listen to audio books and follow along with an audio book using the hard copy

Selecting texts when reading at home

To develop a love of reading, encourage your child to read a wide variety of texts for a variety of purposes and reasons. Use the guide below to help determine the difficulty of a text and the level of support needed.



Read by the child	 Easy Books “This will help me practise my fluency”	Can be read independently – easy to recode and comprehend
		Read for enjoyment and relaxation
		A favourite book
Reading with someone	 Just Right Books “This will help me practise my strategies”	Could be a book that has been read before
		Will contain some new words, but not enough to cause frustration
		Could be a book that has been read before
Being read to	 Challenging Books “I might need someone to help me”	Difficult to read and/or understand
		May cause frustration and disengagement if the reader is not supported
		Could be a book of interest

Strategies to support reading at home

These strategies are useful when children choose books beyond their instructional level. They choose books they want to read but as yet, cannot read them independently. Before introducing these strategies, it is always best to allow the reader to read for a few minutes while monitoring the mistakes. After a few minutes of reading aloud, and when a pattern in the errors indicates that meaning is lost and reading is laboured, show the reader any of the following strategies. Usually introduce echo and shared together and then ask the reader to choose. These strategies are not hierarchical. They all offer layers of support to give the reader access to the book of their choice. Remember, the reader always holds the book.



Echo reading

What: Echo reading is simply where the adult reads a sentence, paragraph or page and the child repeats it back.

Why: Echo reading can eliminate frustration and anxiety that may be associated with reading aloud. It allows for the child to have the opportunity to sound like a fluent reader. This is important in building a child's sense of what it feels like and sounds like to be a good reader.

How: Before starting, negotiate with the child to read a sentence, paragraph or page. The adult reads first, then the child re-reads (echoes). The adult is modelling good reading. When the adult makes an error, the experience is shared with the child and the child sees that all readers make errors and self-correct.



Shared reading

What: Shared reading is taking turns to read, e.g. the adult reads, the child reads.

Why: Shared reading ensures that comprehension is maintained. It eliminates the frustration of reading because the adult is a partner in the reading of the selected text.

How: Negotiate with the child to read a sentence, paragraph or page depending on the text. When the adult reads, any loss of meaning, misunderstandings or mispronunciations that have been made by the child are rectified without drawing attention to the child's miscues. When the child comes to unfamiliar words, they will hear it read correctly by the adult and will automatically self-correct the next time the word appears.



Paired reading

What: Paired reading is simply reading together at the same pace and in the same place.

Why: Paired reading is an effective support for readers who ignore punctuation, read in a monotone, and/or extremely quickly or slowly. It is also a good strategy when children choose to read their favourite book for the 55th time. Just read it together and love it one more time.

How: The adult reads in a normal reading voice. It usually takes a couple of sentences for both readers to fall into sync. It is like dancing with a partner and it might feel a little awkward until a common rhythm and rhyme are reached. The child holds the book, turns the pages and enjoys the time together.



Neurologic Impress Method (NIM)

What: The child reads aloud 'mimicking' the words of the text as the adult reads aloud.

Why: When using NIM, the child has an opportunity to sound like a fluent reader. This is important in building a child's sense of what it feels like and sounds like to be a good reader. The child sounds like a fluent reader and builds confidence and trust. There is no stress and angst.

How: The child reads a couple of words behind the adult. The adult tracks with a finger so the child can keep up. It is important to avoid word pointing – instead, the adult finger moves across the line in a fluid movement. The only reason, the adult tracks is because children get distracted and when they drop back into the reading, they know where the adult is reading. The adult reads at a normal reading pace. When the child looks away from the book, the adult does not stop reading. Continue with enthusiasm and the child will return to the book.