

Reading at Home



Woolton Hill Junior School



Children learn to read by reading

Children are natural learners. They are constantly learning about their environment through interaction, exploration, trial and error, and 'having a go', at things.

Adults can offer support and encouragement when a child is reading, by demonstrating how books work, talking about the illustrations and indicating how they relate to print, the adult is showing the child the meaning and purposes for reading.

The literate environment

Children are surrounded by print from their earliest days at home, and in the wider community.

Teachers and parents can inspire this interest by taking children on a "print walk" around the neighbourhood; collecting examples of notices, signs, advertisements, and labels etc. including non-written symbols and in some areas printed in different language, scripts and visual texts.



Choosing books

At our school we use several reading schemes, which have a large bank of colour coded fiction and non-fiction books for children to choose from.

The children are also encouraged to choose books from our library, therefore, they may bring home books which they cannot read alone and favourite books which they have read repeatedly.

Each class has an allocated library slot, which allows children to spend time in the library choosing up to two books which they can take home to read. These books can be fiction, non-fiction, poetry, picture books etc. Using the school library or public libraries, can help children develop reading for pleasure.

We will help your child to select books.

We believe that children should:

- Behave like readers
- Be confident
- Enjoy books
- Talk about books they have read
- Acquire a skill, which they will use throughout life.
- Supporting the initial stages of reading development



What can a parent do to help at home?

Try to choose a quiet time every day, to sit with your child and share a book. Either you read to your child or the child reads to you.

Allow plenty of time for discussion before you turn over a page. A valuable question is: **“what do you think will happen next?”**

If your child is too tired or reluctant to join in, just make it an opportunity for you to read in a relaxed and enjoyable way. Do not force participation.

Make reading fun! When reading to your child use different voices for different characters and encourage them to do the same.



Supporting your children as readers

If your child is a more confident reader, it is still important to read with them regularly. You can still support and guide your child!

Confident readers may have reached the stage where they no longer wish to read to an adult and want to read silently to themselves. This is ok! The interaction between the parent and child changes at this stage.

To ensure that the child's reading development continues to move forward, we would encourage parents to question their child about what they are reading, at an appropriate time, to extend their reading and share their enjoyment of the book.

The following questions will provide ideas that you can extend to suit individual needs:

Questions to ask when you child has chosen a book:

- What is the title of the book?
- What kind of book is it? (fiction, non-fiction, poetry, short story etc.)
- Who is the author / illustrator?
- Have you read any other books by the same author?
- What made you choose this book? (Author, cover, illustration, recommendation, etc.)
- Did you read the blurb before selecting the book?
- Could you tell anything about the book before you started reading it? What were the clues?
- Have you read this book before? Why have you chosen it again?
- How does the way the title is written encourage you to read the book?



Questions to ask before the child begins or resumes the book:

- What has happened so far?
- What do you think will happen next?
- What are the clues that make you think this?
- How would you like the story to end?
- Where/when (past, present, future) is the story set? Is there a description?
- Who are the characters in the story? Who do you like / dislike? Why?
- How are the characters feeling? Explain how/why you know?
- Do you feel similar to any of the characters? Tell me what is similar.
- How do you feel about...? Why?
- Can you explain why...?
- If you were going to interview this character/author, what questions would you ask?
- Through whose eyes is the story told? Who was the storyteller? How do you know?
- Did the characters change during the story? How did they change?
- Why are some words/phrases/paragraphs in **bold** or *italics*?
- Why has the author chosen to use that word/phrase?
- What image does this paragraph create in your mind?
- Do you understand what that word/phrase means?

Questions to ask when your child has finished reading the book:

- Was the book as you expected?
- What were your favourite parts of the book? Why?
- Was there anything you disliked about the story?
- At what point did you decide you liked / disliked the story?
- Did you notice anything special about the way language is used in this book? (Dialect, descriptive writing etc.)
- If you had written this book, how would you have made it better?
- Has anything that happens in this book ever happened to you?
- Can you describe an exciting moment or favourite part of the story?
- Is the story straightforward? Is there more than one story happening at the same time?
- Who was telling the story? Was this the most important character in the story?
- Do we get to know the characters quickly, or do they build up slowly through the book?
- Was the ending as you expected? Did you like the way the story ended?
- Do you like the illustrations? Do you have a favourite?
- What kind of text is this? How do you know?
- Why did the author choose to use illustrations in the book?
- Some of the text is printed on a dark background. What effect do you think the designer wanted to achieve by doing this?
- Can you think of another story that has a similar theme?
- Would you recommend this book to your friends? Tell me what you would say to a friend.

Reading must be enjoyable!

- Avoid confrontation.
- Offer alternative reading material e.g. internet access, magazines in which the children have an interest. Non-fiction often appeals to boys more than fiction.
- If your child has access to an iPad or Kindle, allow them to choose books on there to read.
- Encourage reading at different times of the day or week.
- Buy / borrow CDs from the library to encourage a love of language.
- Listen to stories on journeys, at bedtime, etc.
- Share reading activities and interact with the text together. For example, work together on the internet to book a holiday, explore a football team website, etc.
- Share any problems with the teacher and ask for ideas.



Do I need to write into my child's reading diary? If so, what sort of things do I write?

From Year 3, the children are encouraged to write in their reading diaries themselves about when they have read. As a parent you are able to support the children in doing this by guiding them on what to write. The list below offers some suggestions.

- Can the child predict what the story will be about?
- Can the child tell me what happened in the story so far?
- Can the child tell me what they think will happen in the next chapter/part of the story?
- Definitions of words that your child did not understand when reading.
- What does your child like/dislike about the book? Why?
- Tell me about the characters.
- Can they relate the book to another book they have read or link it to a personal experience?

