

**Early Years Reading Support.**  
**How to help your child begin to read.**

***A Guide for Parents at Eden Park Primary School***



## **Reading at School**

Every day, the children will experience all sorts of books: alphabet and counting books, picture books, nursery rhyme collections, poetry books, traditional stories and fairy tales from all around the world, information books, pop-up and flap books. Many of the books do not have a lot of words, indeed some don't have any! Books that have a repeated pattern in the story or rhythm and rhyme help children to remember. They will soon join in with repeated words and sentences.

### **These are the most important things we, as parents and teachers, want beginner readers to learn about reading:**

- That more experienced readers (parents, older brothers and sisters, teachers) make reading a shared and enjoyable experience that the beginner reader really wants to join in;
- How to look at a book, e.g. to look at the cover and title and flick through to get an idea of the story or type of book;
- How to hold a book the right way up and turn the pages;
- How to retell what happens in the story and relate this to things that happen in their own lives;
- Understand the differences between print and pictures and that print carries meaning that never changes;
- Understand that print is read from left to right;
- Begin to recognise different types of stories, e.g.: that stories starting 'once upon a time' usually end with 'happily ever after';
- The importance of the child following the more experienced reader pointing to the text so that the child hears the words and sees the text at the same time.

### **Here are some activities you can share with your child to support their reading:**

- Talking with your child;
- Reading lots of stories to your child;
- Visiting the library and choosing books together;
- Reading writing you see in shops and on signs and packaging;
- Letting your child see you reading, e.g.: shopping lists, the internet, books.
- Making simple books together for you or your child to write in, linked to their own interests or experiences;
- Making up your own stories;
- Learning nursery rhymes and repetitive stories together;

## **An example of how you might share a story with your child.**

### **1. Look at the cover before you start to read.**

Talk about the title of the book and look at the pictures on the front cover.

### **2. Briefly look through the whole book.**

Talk about the pictures. Your child will enjoy comparing the things that happen in the story with everyday experiences, e.g. "Do you remember when we went to the shops and bought your new wellies?"

### **3. Look again at the pictures.**

Talk about the characters in the story and what is happening in the pictures. In the picture book *Alfie's Feet*, you could talk about Alfie's feet getting so wet after stamping in the puddles. Ask your child, "What do you think will happen next?"

### **4. Read the story**

You could read the book to your child, read it together, or let your child read it to you. Or do all three in that order!! Don't worry if your child wants to interrupt the reading to talk about what's happening. Follow under the words with your finger as you read so that your child begins to understand that it is the print which gives the meaning to the story.

### **5. Look at and talk about the new words and ideas.**

Ask your child about favourite parts of the book. Talk about how the story ended and if it could have had a different ending. Compare it with other stories you have read together. Talk about words which your child has met for the first time in this book, or that have a special appeal: 'splish, splash, SPLOSH!'



AT Eden Park Primary, we use the strategies for teaching reading as set out in “**Read, Write Inc.**” a very comprehensive and supportive programme that has superb results. To support your child best with this programme, we would ask parents to follow some basic ideas:

### Top Tips to Support Your Child with Reading at Home

1. **Saying sounds correctly** in the purest form without the ‘uh’ sound at the end. ‘Mmmmmmm’ instead of ‘muh’. If sounds are learnt in pure sounds it will help with their writing.
2. **Linking sounds to letters** through the use of flash cards
3. **Two letters, one sound** (digraph) or **three letters, one sound**. Some sounds are represented using 2 letters e.g. sh in sh-o-p, ch in ch-i-n. Some sounds are represented using 3 letters e.g. igh in l-igh-t air in f-air. When you are out and about see if you can spot them in signs, posters, labels etc.
4. **Practise, practise, practise** helps your child to build up their sound knowledge quickly so that it becomes automatic. This can be done through the use of flash cards.
5. **Putting sounds together to read simple words**. Make sure your child can read the sounds really well before you start. Practise saying the sounds in the word with your child. Say the slowly ‘s-i-t’ and repeat ‘s-i-t sit’ a few times. What sound am I going to put on the table/floor first? Say ‘s-i-t’ again encourage your child to identify and sounds and with support and construct the word. Then encourage your child to point to each sound and blend them together. Repeat with other words (examples can be found on the assessment/band letter)
6. **Tricky words**. Some everyday words have some tricky spelling that can be sounded out. These words need to be learnt by sight. For example: said, was, to, she, he, me, be etc.
7. **Using pictures**. Pictures are great when sharing a picture book but do not encourage your child to use pictures to guess words. It is important they try to decode the words. If it is a tricky word tell them what it is and move on.
8. **Writing letters**. Using the correct formation and saying the sound as they write the letter will help your child with recognising the sounds.

Short video clips for each top tip can be found at

<http://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/resources/playlist-ruth-miskins-top-tips-parents/>

*Above all, reading should be a fun activity to enjoy  
with your child.*

*Happy reading!*

## **Ideas for general reading activities**

- Clap out the beats or syllables in your child's name. Which person's name in your family has the most syllables?
- Enjoy spotting rhyming words in stories and poems. Play around with inventing new words that rhyme, even if they are nonsense words!
- Encourage your child to talk about the story at any time, even if this interrupts your reading. Talking is part of sharing the enjoyment of reading.
- Check that your child knows where to start reading and how to follow the print by asking, "Where do you begin?" or "What do you do next?" at the start of a new page or line.
- Use the book language your child will have met in school. These are words such as title, author, illustrator/illustration, capital letter, full stop.
- Ask, "What's going to happen?" "Can you guess?" This will encourage your child to be imaginative and to predict how the story might turn out.
- When ready to do so, encourage your child to follow the story with a finger as you read. This helps to develop the understanding that the words we say match the print, one to one.

## **Reading games**

### **Target word Snap**

- Make a set of Snap cards - four copies each of six to eight cards. Play with two to three players.
- Shuffle and deal the cards.
- Players take turns to put down a card face up.
- If a card matches the last one down, players call out the word on the two cards.
- The first player to call correctly keeps the matching pair of cards and begins the game again.

### **Target word Pairs**

- Make cards as above for Snap.
- Lay them upside down on a table.
- Players take turns to turn over 2 cards and read aloud the words on the cards.
- If a player turns over two the same, he or she keeps the pair and has another go.

### **Target word Bingo**

- Make Bingo card templates. Write five to eight target words on the Bingo card and on small pieces of card.
- Draw the small cards out of a bag and say the words clearly.
- Players cover the words on their cards with counters when they hear them called out.
- First player to cover all the words on his/her card wins.

### **Hunt the word**

- Choose a page of a book which repeatedly features a target word.
- Ask your child to ring that word with a finger every time it appears on the page.
- Ensure that your child knows the meaning and sound of the word and that the word is used when talking about the activity.

### **Target words Sorting Game**

- Have some small boxes with the chosen target words on them.
- Give your child a set of cards with several copies of the chosen words written on them.
- Your child has to sort the cards into the right boxes.
- For an extra challenge, your child could use a timer to 'beat the clock' or improve on a previous go.