

- Your child can borrow Dual Language books (books with the story written in two languages) from the school library.
- If your child has joined the public library, there are a great number of Dual Language books they can borrow and read at home with you.



Where to get books?

- School library
- School book fairs
- Charity shops
- Internet (Book People, Red House etc)
- Public library
- School book swaps
- Swap with friends



Local public library

We are very lucky to have two public libraries in Watford. One is close by near Asda (North Watford Library) and the other is in town near the Leisure Centre (Central Library).

They offer regular fun activities for children, like Story Sessions and Baby Rhyme Time. Look out for other events.

Your child can join the library and borrow books for free. Why not pop in if you haven't been before and ask about joining.



Working together

By schools and parents working together, your child will have a positive experience of reading and books and reading skills which will set them up for life.

Parkgate Infant School

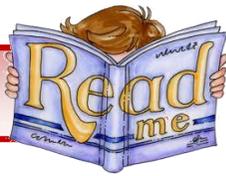


Reading with your child



Year 1

Why reading matters



Children who read at home with their parents perform better at school.

- Reading is the basis of all education. It is fundamental in helping children progress in all their other subjects.
- It is an essential skill they will use throughout their whole lives.
- Regular reading has been linked to increased levels of attainment.
- Reading helps speech skills and extends vocabulary.
- It helps them learn more about the world around them.
- Your child uses their imagination and creativity.
- It can help increase children's attention span.
- As they get older and read more, they understand logical concepts and relate to scenarios.
- And of course reading is fun!



Reading at school

- At Parkgate Infants, children have guided reading sessions to help them to learn to read. The books used are part of the Oxford Reading Scheme (ORT) - you might know them in your child's early years as the 'Biff, Chip and Kipper' stories!
- These are sent home with your child for them to practise reading with you. It is so important for you to give them your time and attention if they are to move on with their reading skills.
- A Reading Diary goes home for you to write comments about what and how your child read.
- Children can borrow a story book each week from the school library. They will have chosen this story themselves, so it would be great if you and your child could sit down and enjoy it together.

If your child is reading with you and having difficulties, you could try some of the following:

- You could read the first few pages of the book to get you both 'into' it
- Perhaps you could take it in turns to read pages.
- Ask them to look at pictures for clues.
- If they are reading, perhaps they need to slow down.
- Are there any words they might already know?
- Get them to read the sentence, leaving out the tricky word. Then ask them, having read the sentence and got an idea of the context, what they think the tricky word might be.
- Ask them to sound out the word, breaking it into phonemes (basically sounds within a word). For example, 'th' and 'ey' are split but when joined together make the long sound 'they'.
- Ask them to look at the first letter of the word and see if they can work it out from there, perhaps again in context.
- Perhaps there are some words in a pattern (for example, ending in -ing) or a word that looks similar to one they already know (for example, fright and night).
- Some children are able to break down phonemes but then find it difficult to figure out what full word the phonemes make.
- If they still don't know, you can tell them the word and then re-read the sentence.



English not your first language?



- If English is difficult for you, you can still read to your child in your first language. This can still be helpful whilst your child is learning English.
- Tell them folk tales from your own country - storytelling is important for children and they will learn about their culture as well.
- If you have other English-speaking family members, encourage them to read with your child (an older sibling at school?).

What to read?



Reading isn't just about books. You can introduce your child to a wide variety of reading materials.

Before your child starts formally learning to read at school, they can take in simple and common words which are all around them. For example:

- letter fridge magnets
- milk (on plastic bottle)
- greetings cards
- signs in shops ('Toy Sale!')
- street signs (STOP!)
- bath letters
- shopping list
- No Dogs!
- signs (Toilet)
- instructions

They are already learning everyday concepts in print. As they grow, encourage them to read picture books, fiction, non-fiction, poetry books, comics and look at (reading and fun book) websites.

Difficulties?



Your child may not be interested in reading. So what can you do? Perhaps they are not in the mood or too tired but it might be something else. If you have tried the tips below and your child is still reluctant to read, you may want to speak to your child's teacher.

If your child seems reluctant to read with you, you could try the following:

- find out what they like. Take them to the public library and let them choose.
- if they don't enjoy picture books or fiction, try some non-fiction (factual) books instead.
- boys in particular seem to enjoy non-fiction more. Dinosaurs, aliens and pirates generally go down well!



- Teachers also read stories to the children.
- Your child's teacher acts as their reading role model whilst at school - but you can also have a huge impact at home.....

Reading at home - what you can do



..... You are your child's main reading role model! What you do at home or when you are out and about, really does make a difference. Have confidence in your own abilities to read to your child - you know them best. And above all, don't be afraid to read!

Many parents lead busy lives, juggling jobs, family and other commitments. Sometimes you may feel too tired to read with your child. However, just 10 minutes (as a minimum) out of your day to sit down cosily with your child will be rewarding for you both. If you have two or three children, that's only a half hour out of your day spending valuable 'together' time.

To help you get the best out of reading with your child, some tips have been provided below.

Top Tips!



BEFORE

- Make reading enjoyable! Even if reading isn't your thing, still show enthusiasm for your child.
- Choose a place that is comfortable and a time that suits you both. Just before bedtime is generally a good time when you can both relax and enjoy a story together.

- Switch off the TV! Try to limit the amount of time your child spends watching TV and playing on games consoles.
- Read little and often. This is better than cramming a week's reading into a half hour session.
- Read regularly, for at least 10 minutes every day (more if possible, spread out throughout the day). This time spent reading with your child **will** make a difference.
- Once your child has chosen a book, look at the cover together and ask your child what they think it might be about.

DURING



- Read aloud to your child.
- Don't be afraid to use expression in your voice, make gestures or put on a silly face! You may feel a bit uncomfortable at first but children, even older ones, love their parents (or grandparents or older siblings) making stories come to life.
- Sing any songs or rhymes, even if you don't know how it goes - make up your own tune!
- Allow your child to read the story (if they are beginning to read) or 'read' the pictures to you if they want to.
- Maintain the flow. Be prepared to answer a few questions as you read! Don't interrupt if they are reading or telling the story from pictures but keep in mind where they slightly mispronounced a word or got a bit of the story wrong.
- Is there a point in the story where you can ask them what they think will happen next, before they/you turn over the page?
- Show you are enjoying the book - laugh, look scared, shiver. Whatever it takes.
- For younger children, help them follow the story by running your finger under the words as you speak.
- Look at the pictures - are there any clues in them?
- Let your child turn the pages - it gives them a feel for books and independence in handling them.
- Don't be afraid to abandon a book if your child isn't interested. You could always re-visit it another time.



- If your child is beginning to read, praise them, even if they make mistakes. This will keep them motivated.
- Always be positive if they are attempting to read from the words or the pictures as this will boost their confidence.

AFTER



- Chat about the book you have just read - about the pictures, what your child liked best about the story, who was their favourite character, how did so-and-so feel.
- Ask them to tell you the story in their own words, either by looking at the pictures or from memory. This is also a way for you to check if they have understood the story.
- Read it again! If your child really liked the story, they may ask for it over and over again! There's no harm in repetition and they will eventually move on to another story.
- Play I-Spy. For example: I-Spy an animal behind the tree -what is it? I-Spy a word beginning with the letter 'b', etc.
- You could watch a programme or film about the book you've just read (see 'Other Ideas' further on).
- Write in your child's school Reading Diary. Comment on how they enjoyed the book, how they read (if they read), any discussions or difficulties. Your child's teacher will appreciate the information and your child will know you're interested in their progress and that you value reading.
- If they enjoyed the story, find another one
 - by the same author/illustrator
 - in the same series
 - on a similar topic
 - as a TV or film tie-in
 - or find related activities from the internet to keep their interest going.

