

Reading with your Child

Phonics

This basically means the sounds of the letters, rather than letter names. We use a method in Reception where the children have an action which they associate with each letter sound. The children then progress to blending sounds together to make a word, for example c-a-t to make cat. We start with simple three letter words and gradually build up. Please encourage sounding out and blending as one of their reading skills for working out unknown words.

High Frequency Words

Of course, not all words can be sounded out, but they are frequent, everyday words that the children need to know. Some examples of these are 'the' and 'said'. We often call these 'tricky words'. Most classes have high frequency words displayed in their classrooms for the children to see every day. They are also taught through the daily phonics session. With regular reading the children become familiar with these words quite quickly. The more a child sees a word, the more they submit it to memory- we call this reading mileage. We will send home a set of tricky word flash cards each time we move on to a new set.

Using pictures

The pictures are a very important part of the story, especially for younger children. It is not cheating if the child uses the pictures to help them. Sometimes a book introduces a new word, such as the name of an animal or musical instrument that the child has not seen before. The picture clue will help them to read the sentence without pausing too much to work out the new word. As children become confident they will rely less on the pictures to read, but still enjoy looking at them.

Book Banding

At school we have banded our books according to the text features such as vocabulary, size of font and frequency of tricky words. Please do not be concerned if you think the book your child is reading at home is too easy! The children take the band home which will allow them to rehearse reading and increase their reading mileage. In school, children read books of a higher level so they can learn reading skills.

Give them time

Let your child try to work out the word themselves before jumping in too quick to give them the answer. They are probably using a range of learnt reading strategies to work out the word. Sometimes they will read a word incorrectly, get to the end of the

sentence and realise their error which they will then self-correct. This is a vital skill! If you do correct, wait until they have reached the end of the page and you could do it by asking them. For example, "In this sentence you said 'The monkey sat on the slide'...can you check that word, does it look like sat?"

Spot Words Within Words

The children are taught the strategy of recognising words within words. Some larger, more complicated words have smaller words hidden within them. Also, they can 'chunk' or break down longer words to read them in more manageable bits. For example, fan-tas-tic for fantastic.

Omission

Another reading skill children are taught is that if they have tried other strategies they could omit the word and read to the end of the sentence, then go back and re-read again and the word will fall into place.

Let Them Read Favourites

Sometimes children are happy to read their favourite books over and over again. This is great for increasing their reading mileage and they obviously enjoy reading that book! If you would like to encourage them to move on, you could ask their teacher to recommend similar titles.

Expression

If your child can read with tone and expression it will really bring the story to life. It will also help with their understanding of what is happening in the story. Giving your child an example of how to do this, by reading to them, will help.

We hope that you have found this guide helpful. If you have any worries or concerns about your child's reading, please speak to their class teacher.