

# Reading At Home



**A Booklet for Parents**

## Introduction

It is vital that every child learns to read so that they can access the written word in the world around them.

At Dove Bank, we want children to read aloud with fluency, confidence and expression, and also to have a sound understanding of texts and the techniques used by writers. Most importantly, we want children to develop a love of learning through a desire to read for information and for pleasure.

## Reading at Home

Reading has been a success at Dove Bank for many years. Much of this success can be attributed to the support and encouragement that children are given from reading with parents at home. Strong home-school partnerships are highly beneficial to reading development throughout a child's time at primary school. This document offers ideas and suggestions to help you and your child gain the most from your reading experiences.

## Reading material



At school pupils are given access to a wide range of reading material and books are regularly taken home. Pupils will read a mixture of 'real' books and those from our reading schemes. Sometimes a book will be chosen by the class teacher and at other times children will make their own selections especially when visiting the library.

Children may sometimes choose a book that they have read before or that you may consider too easy for them, but it is important that they are given these opportunities to build confidence and allow them to show off what they can do.

It is also important to remember that reading opportunities are all around us, everywhere. Children should be encouraged to engage in these as fully as possible in everyday life. These include choosing from a menu, choosing and checking times from a TV or cinema guide, reading advertisements, looking at sign posts and directions, reading emails and letters, sport reports, reading instructions from a recipe, making a model or rules for a game ... the list is endless!

## Supporting your child at home

Make time to read. At Dove Bank we request that children read a minimum of four times a week. Try to read for at least 5 to 10 minutes each session. Choose a time and a place that is comfortable for you and your child. Encourage independent reading but don't be afraid to still tell a bedtime story.

All readers make mistakes and it is sometimes necessary to prompt if the child is losing the flow of a story. When it is necessary to prompt, try some of the following strategies:



- Which letter sound (phonemes) do you recognise? Can you break down the word then blend the 'sounds' together? E.g. sh o p = shop
- Does the word make sense? Read the sentence again to check.
- Is there another word that would make sense?
- Is it a word you know? Have you read the word before? Is it on another page?
- Are there any bits of the word you recognise?
- Try reading the whole sentence and think about what could fit and make sense. Miss out the word, say 'mmmm' - finish the sentence. Then go back and work out what the word was.
- In a rhyming book, think of a word that rhymes.
- Use the first 1 or 2 sounds with another strategy.

- Always go back and read the sentence again.

Don't spend too long struggling with one word. To avoid losing momentum, you may need to supply the word yourself and move on. However, it is not always advantageous to provide words too quickly as this prevents the child re-reading and correcting the mistake spontaneously.

It is also sometimes more useful to encourage young readers to guess at the meaning by pointing to the picture if it is relevant or asking a question to remind them of the context, e.g. 'Where did they say they were going?'



If your child is struggling with so many words that it disrupts the flow, this indicates that the text is too challenging at that time. If this is the case it may provide encouragement and support to read the text aloud in unison with your child.

If your child misreads a word without changing the meaning, e.g. 'Dad' for 'Father', accept it. If they hesitate, repeat a word or leave one out, say nothing provided the meaning is not lost.

Remember to praise your child. The best kind of praise is that which tells the child exactly what has pleased you. For example:

- I liked the way that you checked the pictures for clues.
- I liked the way that you realised that didn't make sense and checked again.
- I liked the way you made that sound like a question.

Do not condemn the book as 'too easy' or 'too hard'. Children need a range of reading materials. Any 'easy' book helps them to relax with reading. A difficult book can be read to your child. Both are important.

Adults can become a lot more involved with their child's reading by being interested in not only the child's performance, but also in the material that they are reading.

As well as helping to develop an interest and enjoyment of reading, discussing a book with your child will also help comprehension. For example, examine characters in a story, discuss how illustrations enhance the text, predict endings and discuss any other similar stories or work by the same author. This interaction will also increase your child's involvement with the text.

### **Continuing to support and guide your child as they become confident readers ...**



As children become older, reading habits tend to change and the emphasis may move away from 'reading aloud' to parents to children wanting to read silently to themselves.

It is still important, however, that children are encouraged to regularly read at home and that this parent-child interaction continues throughout their primary years and beyond. To ensure that the child's reading development continues to move forward, we would encourage parents to question the 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.  
(AF stands for 'Assessment Foci' – aspects of reading that teachers assess pupils' comprehension against)**

## **Before reading ...**

- 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?

## **Questions to ask before your child begins/resumes their 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?
- Are you involved in the story? Why?
- Where is the story set? Is there a description? When is the story set? (Past, present, future)
- Who are the characters in the story? Who do you like/dislike? Why?
- Do you feel similar to any of the characters? Tell me what is similar?

## **AF 2 - I can understand, describe, select or retrieve information events or ideas from texts using quotations.**

- Where does the story take place? When did the story take place?
- Can you describe the character's appearance?
- Can you predict what the story may be about the title?
- Where do the characters live?
- Who are the main characters?
- What happened in the story? Can you describe the problem in the story? How would you solve it?
- Can you identify words that describe the setting or character?
- What happened after....?
- Can you tell me why....?
- Look at the picture of the character, how do you think they are feeling? Why might this be?
- Describe what happened at/when.
- What do you think will happen next?
- What did the character say to....?

## **AF3 - I can deduce, infer and understand information from the text that I am reading.**

- What does the word ... imply/make you think of?
- If you were going to interview/ask a character a question-who would you ask and what would your question be?
- What do you think will happen because of .....
- Through whose eyes is the story told?
- Why do you think ... feels...?
- If this was you, what would you do next?
- How have the characters changed during the story?
- Predict what you think is going to happen next. What makes you think this?
- How do you know that...? (Deduce/Infer)
- What does the main character feel at this point in the story? How do you know this-can you pick out a sentence?

#### **AF4 - Think about the structure and organisation of the text-what it looks like.**

- How do headings help you when you scan the text? How does the layout help the reader?
- How does the title of the story encourage you to read more?
- How does the story blurb on the back cover encourage you to read the book? What things do you now want to find out after reading the blurb?
- Some of the text is printed in a different way, why do you think the writer does this?
- Why has the author repeated structures, words and phrases?
- What is the purpose of the pictures? What is the purpose of a caption?
- Why did the author choose to change paragraphs here?
- Why has the author used 'fact boxes' for key points? What is the purpose of the chapter titles?
- Which words tell you what order to follow?

#### **AF5 - Explain and comment on the writer's use of language-including grammar features.**

- What does (word/phrase) mean?
- Which words has the author used to make the writing sound more formal/informal?
- Why has the author used .... (italics, bold, exclamation marks, headings, bullet points, captions etc.)
- What has the author used in the text to make the characters sound funny/sad/angry?
- Think of another word you can use here. What different effect would your word have?
- As a reader, how do you feel about this character? What makes you feel that way?
- Can you find any similes/metaphors in the story?
- Find some adjectives that help you picture the scene/character in your mind.
- Find a sentence that encourages you to want to read more of the story.
- Why has the author set out the text like this?

#### **AF6 - What is the writer's purpose and viewpoint of writing the story?**

- Can you think of another story that has a similar theme? (good/evil/weak/strong)
- Why does the author choose this setting?
- What makes this a GOOD story? What effect do you think the story has on the reader?
- Could the story be better? What would you suggest?
- What impression does the author want to give of this character? Why?
- What is the purpose of this paragraph? (e.g. time moves on)
- What question would you like to ask the writer of the story?
- Would you solve the problem in the story in a different way?
- Does the article/story try to get you to care about anything? What can you tell about what the author thinks?

#### **AF7 - Try to relate the story to its social, historical or cultural tradition.**

- Do you know any other stories like this? (good over evil, wise over foolish)
- Where is the story set? What does the story remind you of?
- How is the hero/heroine of this story similar to others you have read about?
- Does the story remind you of something that has happened to you?
- How would you have felt in that situation?
- What might you have done instead?
- What other stories have similar openings/endings to this one?
- Many stories have messages, what is the message of this story?
- Are there any familiar patterns that you notice? E.g. story structure, imagery.
- Does the story make you want to find out anything else about ..... the history, cultural, social area being discussed?

## Advice if Reading becomes a challenge at home

We would like all of our children to enjoy reading rather than to see it as an effort; something that they don't enjoy. If your child is a reluctant reader the following may help:

- Try not to worry as your tensions will pass on to your child.
- Don't force your child to read—encourage. Try to avoid confrontation.
- Offer alternative reading material, e.g. internet access, magazines, non – fiction etc...
- Read to your child in a relaxed, cosy setting. Make it a pleasant, special, one to one experience.
- Share books with them—you read a page ask your child to read a page.
- Allow your child to read books which are easy then gradually move to more challenging material when your child is ready.
- Encourage reading at different times of the day or week.
- If your child has a busy social life, allow him/her to read for 15 minutes before going to sleep.
- Let your child see you reading.
- Buy/borrow books on CD from the local library and then you can listen whilst in the car or before bed.
- Share the problem with your child's teacher, we are here to help.

## What do I write in the Reading Record?

It is important that the Reading Record reflects the child's reading patterns. Regular comments from the parent, linked to any of the questions below, are also needed to show that the child is extending his/her reading through questioning and interaction with an adult. The following is not an exhaustive list but offers suggestions that may be appropriate.

- How enthusiastic is the child about the choice of book?
- Can the child remember the story so far?
- Is the child reading using only the pictures for clues?
- Does your child understand that the words they are reading mean something?
- Can the child read words out of context e.g. when you point to a word without reading the whole sentence?
- Is the child confident to attempt new words?
- What reading strategies is your child using e.g. sounds, use of the picture, use of the context?
- Can the child follow the text without using a finger or marker?
- Is there a pattern to the mistakes your child is making e.g. words ending in "ed" or starting in "sh"?
- Does the child recognise mistakes and self-correct?
- Is the child recognising many key words?
- Is the child aware of punctuation?
- Is the child reading with expression?
- How long is the child able to sustain reading?



Please remember to complete the record every time your child reads to you – older pupils can complete the record by themselves if reading alone.

## Reading to your child

It is also important for children to be read to. You can motivate your child to read by regularly sharing a book with them. Your child will sense your love of books, your enjoyment of a good story and your appreciation of good illustrations. With younger children it can be fun to read familiar stories together, pointing at the words and allowing children to enjoy the stories, join in with well-known stories and develop ideas of the relationship between sound and print. With children of any age it will help to develop imagination and enrich vocabulary development.

## Some useful websites for you:

[www.jollylearning.co.uk](http://www.jollylearning.co.uk) - Jolly Phonics  
[www.parentlink.co.uk](http://www.parentlink.co.uk) - contains ideas to help at home  
[www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) - school section (words and pictures for phonic activities)  
[www.phonicsplay.co.uk](http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk)  
[www.literacytrust.org.uk](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk)  
[www.crickweb.co.uk/assets/resources/flash.php?&file=ww](http://www.crickweb.co.uk/assets/resources/flash.php?&file=ww)  
[www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/interactive/onlinestory.htm](http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/interactive/onlinestory.htm)  
[www.snaithprimary.eril.net/rindex.htm](http://www.snaithprimary.eril.net/rindex.htm)—nursery rhymes  
[www.oxfordowl.co.uk](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk)  
[www.wordsforlife.org.uk/](http://www.wordsforlife.org.uk/)  
[www.astoryforbedtime.com](http://www.astoryforbedtime.com)  
[www.bbc.co.uk/parenting](http://www.bbc.co.uk/parenting)  
[www.booktrust.org.uk](http://www.booktrust.org.uk)  
[www.childliteracy.com](http://www.childliteracy.com)  
[www.parentscentre.gov.uk](http://www.parentscentre.gov.uk)  
[www.helpthemread.co.uk](http://www.helpthemread.co.uk)  
[www.dfes.gov.uk/parents/discover/](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/parents/discover/)  
[www.readtogether](http://www.readtogether)

## Finding and choosing books

Here are some useful websites and online resources to help you choose books for children, young people and adults. You might also like to ask in your local or school library for recommendations, or check your local library websites -many of them list recommended reads.

[www.bookheads.org.uk/](http://www.bookheads.org.uk/)  
[www.braw.org.uk](http://www.braw.org.uk)  
[www.cool-reads.co.uk](http://www.cool-reads.co.uk)  
[www.firstchoicebooks.org.uk](http://www.firstchoicebooks.org.uk)  
[www.guysread.com](http://www.guysread.com)  
[www.mrsmad.com](http://www.mrsmad.com)  
[www.readingmatters.co.uk](http://www.readingmatters.co.uk)

***The greatest gift you can give children is to read to them from a very early age.***

***You don't have to be an expert.***

***There's no magic in supporting children's reading, just lots of patience, time and affection, plus a little skill.***

***Be an actor! Look interested. If it's a frightening book, look scared. If it's funny, then laugh.***

***If it's a mystery book, look puzzled.***

***Give the impression that you are happy as long as they are doing their best.***

***Always end on a 'high note'.***

***Happy Reading!***

