

## HELPSHEET 2 SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD TO READ



Reading is a skill that needs practise and repetition. As adults, we forget the steps we had to take as a youngster to be able to read fluently and independently. It's a bit like learning to drive a car. All the different elements of driving are eventually mastered and we drive without even thinking about it. It's the same with Reading.

Before they can read for themselves, your child will use the pictures in their books to get 'clues' that will help them read the word. This really is the first step in learning how to read.

Every child will learn to read at a different pace. Some children pick up the initial skills of reading very quickly; others may take a while to show much progress. But with the support of mums, dads,

grandparents, brothers and sisters....every child will have independent reading skills by the time they go up to secondary school.

Reading doesn't always start with knowing what a written word says. It can also start with understanding how words come together to create a meaning and that can be done through talking about the book as much as reading the words. Right from the very start of school, your child's teacher will be helping them to develop their comprehension skills and there are things you can do at home with your

child which will support this learning in school.

**Pick your time** It sounds obvious, but try to avoid times when your child is likely to be hungry, tired or distracted and Keep it short - and fun! 10 minutes is fine. It doesn't have to be an hour long session and let them stop reading when they have had enough. Don't forget, they will probably have had a full on day at Nursery/School and book time with Mum or Dad needs to be something they look forward to and not a chore. 10-15 minutes a day should be plenty of time

**Keep it fun and light hearted!** You may need to be patient with a new reader  
**Look for every opportunity to do some reading practise** Your child will get just as much fun and essential reading practise by reading comics, age-appropriate websites,

non-fiction books on subjects that interest them, leaflets, magazines, the back of the cereal packet . . . the list is endless!

### Choosing a

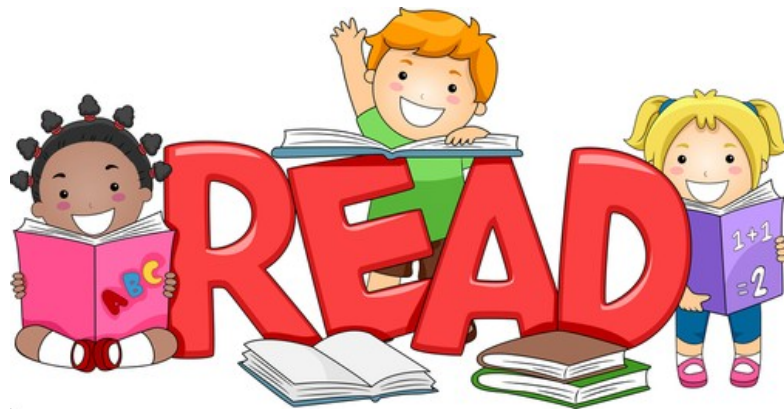
**book** When your child is choosing a book to read, help them by reading the back cover and talking about the story and the cover pictures together. This will help your child to understand how a book is constructed

**Navigating a book** Help your child to navigate their way around a book e.g "the front of the book is where we start and as we go we turn the pages". Use words like 'cover', 'page', 'picture' and 'words' when you

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[familysupport@toftwoodfederation.co.uk](mailto:familysupport@toftwoodfederation.co.uk)

Further information available at [Sleep Foundation website](#) or [Just One Norfolk](#)



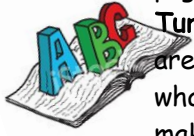
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talk about books. Let your child find the first page of the story before you start reading, and encourage them to turn the pages as you read



**Turning the pages** Talk about the book you are reading with your child. Tell your child what you think about the story, perhaps making links with other books you've read together or things you have done together. Ask your child to tell you what **they** think about the book as you are reading and get them to anticipate what might happen next. Ask them how they think the characters in the book might be feeling

**The words on the page** Point to the words as you read. This will help your child to spot that words are made up of letters and that words go from left to right on the page. As your child starts to build up confidence with sharing book time with you, get them to point to the words as you read. It doesn't matter if their pointing doesn't match with what you are saying at this stage! It is more about them starting to see that words are there

and they are recognising the direction that reading moves across a page e.g left to right, from the top of the page to the bottom

**Mix it up** As your child starts to develop their confidence with reading ask them to tell you which letter a word begins with. (Don't do too much of this in one go, or it might slow the story down and spoil the enjoyment!)

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Play 'hunt the letter' or 'hunt the word'. Say 'Can you find the word 'cat' on this page?' Or 'Can you find a word that starts with 'm'?'

### **Helping when your child gets stuck on a word**

In school your child will be learning ways to read a word they haven't come across before. If your child gets stuck on a particular ask them to sound out each sound and then blend the sounds together to read the word. And if they still can't say the word, then just read it for them and carry on.

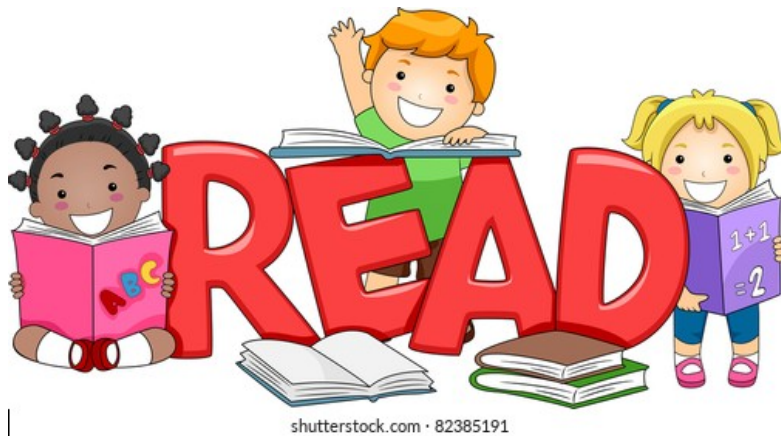
**Other things you can do** Keep reading books to them, as well as listening to them read. This gives them the opportunity to think about the story or the information, without having to focus on reading the words. This will really help exercise their comprehension muscles! It is also a lovely thing to do with your child and something they will take with them as a warm

memory into adulthood.

**When you've finished reading with your child** ask them if they can remember what happened in

the book. You can then develop this further by asking questions about how the characters might have felt, or how they reacted. This will help your child begin to understand different points of view.

**Where else to go to for support** Look on the school website or your class on line learning portal. Your child's class teacher will always be willing to offer advice about how you can help your child.



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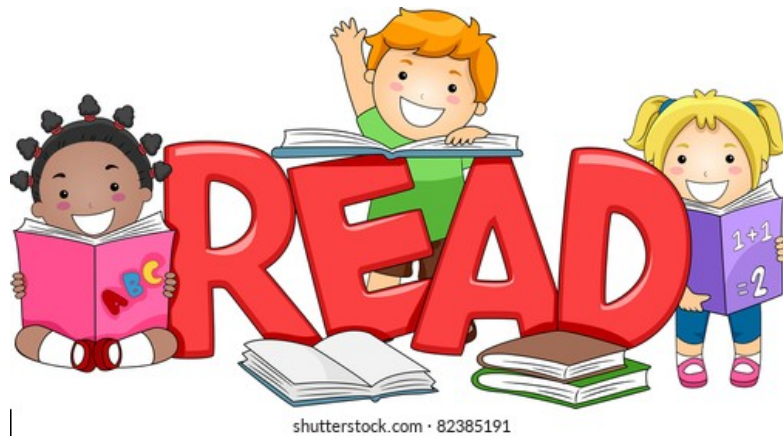


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The CBeebies Storytime app is packed with playful, imaginative stories designed especially to develop Early Years reading skills. There are fun things to touch, swipe and play

with in each story, as well as questions to build your child's comprehension skills. There are tips to help you support your child's reading development.



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