



Seven tips for helping your child read at home

Fulbourn Primary School



1. Find a setting that is relaxing and free from distractions.

Make a cosy reading area: children enjoy a quiet corner where their imaginations can run free.

2. Show that reading is a source of pleasure – and give them a choice.

Encourage your child to explore both fiction (stories) and non-fiction (fact). Show them a variety of books. Find out what interests them. When your child has chosen, explore **title**, **cover**, **blurb** and **contents** together. Discuss **illustrations**. Use the **index** (if applicable) to find information.

3. Accentuate the positive, praising effort rather than success.

Ask your child to read from their chosen book and listen attentively. Be patient and encouraging. Tell them what you liked about their reading.

4. You have a big impact on how your child views reading: share in the journey.

Read to your child, modelling how to read accurately and with expression. Choose books that are more advanced but that interest them. Then take turns reading their book in easy chunks: allow your child to correct their errors and read at their pace. Sound out tricky words together.

5. Be clear and precise about where and how you think they could improve.

If they could improve (like reading more clearly or pausing after a sentence), say, “Why not read that bit again, this time in a nice clear voice and pausing after the end of that sentence?” Re-visit tricky words. Use the dictionary together (KS2) to find meanings, spellings and word origins.

6. Reading is not just about fluency – it is also about developing thinking skills.

In primary school a child must learn to think about and comment on what they read in order to develop the skills of understanding. Ask your child good questions as you read together in order to help them think more deeply about a text. You might like to study the following table first.

Skill	What this means in practice	Examples
Vocabulary	Explaining the meaning of words as they are used in the text.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>In the first sentence, what do you think ‘petrified’ might mean?</i> <i>What is meant by ‘a thunderous look’ in the second paragraph?</i>
Retrieval	Finding information in the text or identifying key details.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Where did Stefan first see the strange-looking creature?</i> <i>What are the three things all divers have to remember?</i>
Summarising	Capturing the most important ideas in a few words.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>What lesson do you think the cat learned in this story?</i> <i>Suggest a title that would be a suitable summary of this chapter.</i>
Predicting	Using details in the text to suggest what might happen next.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Explain what you think Mel might do when she is given the box.</i> <i>What evidence is there that the war might end soon?</i>
Inference	Drawing conclusions using clues in the text and justifying with evidence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>What impression do we gain of the house? How can we tell?</i> <i>How do you think the sister is feeling when they arrive? Why?</i>
Commenting	Discussing the content of a text and comparing events and characters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Find two ways in which the brothers are similar to each other.</i> <i>Which character is most content in the end? How can you tell?</i>
Authorial choice	Explaining the effect on the reader of an author’s choices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Find two examples of alliteration in the first stanza.</i> <i>‘The glassy lake’ – what impression does this give of the water?</i>

7. The more they reflect on their reading, the faster they will progress.

Discuss what your child likes. Fiction or non-fiction? Favourite books and authors? Encourage them to say why. What they are most proud of achieving? How would they most like to improve?