



Tips on Hearing Your Child Read

Before You Start

- Check that the text is suitable. Remember that reading is not just about decoding words but also about fluency, expression and understanding. Don't forget to vary the type of text, e.g. fiction, non-fiction, poetry, comics, magazines, etc.
- Make sure that there are no distractions, e.g. television, music, etc. Make sure that your child is comfortable.
- Ensure that your child is willing to read. Don't force them if they are overly reluctant as this may give them a negative attitude to reading. Remember that reading should be enjoyable.
- Talk about the cover and appearance of the book:
 - Why did you choose it? (If they chose it themselves)
 - Who is the author? Have you read any other books by that author? How did you feel about them?
 - What do you think the story will be about? (fiction) Does the front or back cover give you any clues?
- Remind your child of the different ways they can work out words on which they are stuck:
 - Phonetic: Sounding out each phoneme.
 - Contextual: Reading the rest of the sentence in order to find a word that gives the sentence sense.
 - Pictorial: Clues can sometimes be found in the pictures.

During Reading

- Use plenty of praise for your child's achievements. Do not criticise when they get something wrong.
- Stop at appropriate places in the text to ask questions about the plot and characters. Ask your child to make predictions about what might happen next.
- If your child stumbles over a word or mispronounces one then allow them some time to self-correct.
- Do not force your child to decipher every word that they struggle with. Flow is important too as it helps to maintain understanding. Focus on words that they come across regularly (High Frequency Words).
- If your child loses interest then stop.

After Reading

- Discuss the text and your child's attitude towards it:
 - Did you enjoy it? Why?
 - Did you have a favourite part or a part you didn't like?
 - Did you have a favourite character? Was there a character you didn't like?
 - How do you think this character felt when.....?
 - Was the story happy / funny / sad / scary / exciting? Why?
 - Did the story end how you thought it would?
 - Why was the book called.....?
 - Did you learn anything new from this book? (non-fiction)
- Ask your child to read a few appropriate words from the text out of context.
- Communicate regularly with your child's school expressing any positive comments or concerns. Many schools provide some form of reading record book for this purpose.

Remember that the questions given here are examples only and should not be asked, in sequence, every time your child reads. Questions should be appropriate to the text.

Reading should not just take place at a set time and place. Don't forget to ask your child to read suitable words from the environment, e.g. signs, labels, etc.