

**Supporting reading fluency at home**

Support and encourage your child. Realise that he or she could become frustrated by reading.

**(1) Read Aloud to Your Child to Improve Reading Fluency.**

Even if your child is old enough to read by themselves, it's helpful for them to hear someone more practiced read to them. Read aloud to your child to provide an example of how fluent reading sounds. Let them get a better sense of rhythm, intonation and, if you pick a variety of different genres, will develop an appreciation for all types of books.

**(2) Work on Phonemic Awareness Skills**

Many children have trouble with reading fluency because they have trouble understanding how the pieces of words (such as chunks, digraphs, and blends) are manipulated to make new words. Help your child decode words well, help them build speed and accuracy by:

- Reading aloud and having your child match their voice to yours
- Having your child practice reading the same list of words, phrase, or short passages several times.
- Reminding your child to pause between sentences and phrases

**(3) Build Sight Word Vocabulary**

Sight words, sometimes known as core words, are the foundation of a child's reading and writing skills. If he can't quickly recognise common words, your child is more likely to stumble as they tries to sound out everything he reads.

**(4) Paired Reading**

Paired reading can mean alternating sentences while you read with your child, or reading aloud together. Just come up with a signal to indicate when your child wants to read a sentence by herself or is stuck on a word.

**(5) Echo Reading**

Echo reading is a great strategy for children who have great technical reading skills, but for whom expressiveness is a problem. If your child struggles to read with expression, try reading a section and then having them "echo" you, using the same intonations and emphasis you used.

**Reading Fluency Checklist**



**Accuracy**

I read the words accurately



**Rate**

My reading rate is just right – not too fast and not too slow!



**Expression**

I read with expression –NOT like a robot!



**Punctuation**

I read in phrases and show I understand the punctuation in the text.

## COMPREHENSION AT HOME

Below you will find a list of possible questions to help you with conversations about your child's reading. They are not intended to be used all at once or every time you read with your child. Use them at your discretion and where they are appropriate.

### Questions to ask before you read

- Can you look at the pictures and predict what you think will happen in this book?
- What makes you think that?
- What characters do you think might be in our story?
- Do you think there will be a problem in this story? Why or why not?
- Does the topic/story relate to you or your family? How?

### Questions to ask during the reading

- What do you think will happen next?
- What can you tell me about the story so far?
- Can you predict how the story will end?
- Why do you think the character did \_\_\_\_\_?
- What would you have done if you were the character?
- How would you have felt if you were the character? (use different characters)
- As I read \_\_\_\_\_, it made me picture \_\_\_\_\_ in my head. What pictures do you see in your head?
- As you read, what are you wondering about?
- Can you put what you've just read in your own words?
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### Questions to ask after reading

- Can you remember when/where/who/why \_\_\_\_\_?
- In your opinion, was it a good title for this book? Why or why not?
- Were your predictions about the story correct?
- If there was a problem, did it get solved?
- What happened because of the problem?
- Why do you think the author wrote this book?
- What is the most important point the author is trying to make in his writing?
- What was your favorite part of the story?
- If you could change one thing in the story, what would it be?
- Can you retell the story in order?
- If you were \_\_\_\_\_, how would you have felt?
- What is the most interesting situation in the story?
- Is there a character in the story like you? How are you alike?
- Why did you like this book?

## ORANGE

Orange books consolidate the later phonemes in Phase 5. Once children have completed the Little Wandle phonics scheme they progress to Orange, which introduces new words and reinforces those already encountered. Orange books will have an increased number of words on each page.

### How to support your child with Orange level books:

Your child is now beginning to read with more independence. They should be feeling more confident and will rarely need to sound out words.

### You can help them by:

- Listening to them when they read aloud. If they make mistakes, but they keep the sense of the text, don't interrupt. Point out conjunctions such as 'because', 'if' and 'so'
- For polysyllabic words, divide the words into chunks or syllables and then put it back together.
- Reminding them of useful strategies if they can't read a word, for example sounding the word out under their breath, dividing a longer word into syllables or looking at the word without an -ing or an -ed ending.
- Asking them to break the story into the beginning, the middle and the end.
- Can they retell the story using their own words and a fewer number of them.
- Encouraging some use of expression, especially for character-speech in fiction books. You may wish to model reading some pages aloud for your child to copy.
- Talking about how characters are feeling and why might they be feeling that way.

## TURQUOISE

Turquoise focuses on different suffixes and spelling patterns. Turquoise books will include an increasing number of adjectives and more descriptive verbs. The number of pictures on each page will decrease, whereas the text amount will increase.

High-interest themes such as danger, courage and anger are introduced, and children will be confident with around 450 high frequency words.

### How to support your child with Turquoise level books:

Your child is now beginning to read with more independence and their books are getting longer.

### You can help them by:

- Listening to pages read aloud, encouraging the use of expression and paying attention to punctuation marks.
- Talking about how events in the book relate to each other and helping your child to understand how the story builds up in a longer book.
- Asking them to tell you about interesting things they found out and to show you where the information is in the book.
- Looking at the descriptive words (adjectives) and what they show about the setting or character.
- Asking them to choose their favourite descriptive words from the text and why they like them.
- Asking them to look for onomatopoeia (words which sound like the sound they create).

## PURPLE

Purple books will start to have more of the longer sentences and a wider range of challenging vocabulary. A lot of purple books will start to have shorter chapters to encourage a child's reading ability. Children will have encountered more of the high frequency words by this level, and teachers will be promoting reading for pleasure.

### How to support your child with Purple level books:

Your child is now beginning to read with more independence and their books are getting longer.

### You can help them by:

- Encouraging them to read poetry as well as fiction & non-fiction.
- Listening to them read some pages aloud, encouraging the use of expression and paying attention to punctuation marks.
- Talking about how events in the book relate to each other and helping your child to understand how the story builds up in a longer book.
- Helping them to notice alliteration (words starting with the same sound).
- Asking them to tell you about interesting things they found out and to show you where the information is in the book.
- Encouraging them to use a dictionary to look up the meanings of unfamiliar words & recording what these mean.
- Discussing whether they enjoyed this book, or not, and why?
- Discussing which was their favourite part and why?

Gold books have a much more sophisticated style of language and will try to challenge the reader. Children at this reading level will now be able to understand unusual text layouts, complex language and notice the variation between different characters.

### How to support your child with Gold level books:

Your child is now reading longer books with fewer illustrations so they continue to need your help to ensure they are getting the full meaning and enjoyment from the text. They may prefer to read one chapter or section at a time, rather than reading the book in one session.

### You can support them by:

- Listening to them to read some pages of the book aloud to you so that you can enjoy hearing them read with expression and pace.
- Asking them to find parts of the text, which describe a character or place and talking about the words used in the description.
- Asking for regular updates about what is happening in the book, so that they and you know how the different chapters or sections link.
- Encouraging them to look for how adverbs (such as happily, sadly, carefully) and discuss what these show us about the character and what they're doing/ feeling.
- Using the glossary, contents and index to find information.

## WHITE

Sentences with two or three clauses and several verbs become more common in White and the length of texts extends to help build reading stamina. Real-life problems are also introduced to encourage empathy.

### How to support your child with White level books:

Your child is now reading longer books with fewer illustrations so they continue to need your help to ensure they are getting the full meaning and enjoyment from the text. They may prefer to read one chapter or section at a time, rather than reading the whole book in one session.

### You can support them by:

- Asking them to find parts of the text, which describe a character or place and talking about the words used in the description.
- Asking for regular updates about what is happening in the book so that they and you know how the different chapters or sections link.
- Discussing how the synonyms of said (e.g joked, snarled, bellowed, mumbled) give us information about the character's personality as well as feelings.
- Identify similes (e.g blind as a bat or brave like a lion) and what these then show us about the person, setting or object being described.
- Talking about how much they enjoy a book, or a type of book, and encouraging them to look for more books of the type they enjoy.
- Looking in the thesaurus to find other words which mean the same thing as a word in the text.
- Discussing their favourite characters and their least favourite characters and why they are.
- Identifying titles, subheadings and captions in non-fiction books.

## LIME

Lime provides a variety of chapter books and non-fiction titles. Lime readers should be encouraged to experience different texts, writing styles and genres to develop their own reading tastes. This colour band also includes a variety of topics and issues to provoke discussion.

### How to support your child with Lime level books:

Although your child is now taking off as a reader, it is still important that you read with them and talk to them about their reading. This reassures them that their reading is still important to you, as well as giving you an opportunity to share an enjoyment of books.

### You can still help them by:

- Listening to them to read aloud some parts of the text which they particularly enjoy. This may include action or description. Talk about how the writer made those parts so enjoyable.
- Talking about how characters develop or how they react to different people, places or events.
- Reading the book yourself so that you can talk together about the smaller details of the book.
- Looking for time adverbials (later that day, meanwhile, a few years later) and how these guide the reader through when things happened.
- Encouraging them to look for clues as to what is going on or what the character might be feeling (inferring information)
- Encouraging them to make links with other books they have read which are similar.
- Encouraging them to look for instructional language and features (such as: imperative verbs [pick, take, cut], how adverbs [carefully, quickly], time adverbs [first, then, next, after that] headings, subheadings, bullet points).

## COPPER/TOPAZ

Copper and Topaz books will continue to give children a variety of texts they need to become confident and successful readers. A range of characters, topics and text styles help to keep children engaged and encourage discussion.

### How to support your child with Copper and Topaz level books:

Your child may not want to read aloud to you so often now, because they probably enjoy silent reading more. This is fine as long as your child continues to read actively when they are not reading aloud and does not just skim over the words and they still read to you at least 3 times a week.

### You can help by:

- Continuing to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions and reading your book while your child reads.
- Prompt them to read fables, traditional tales and moralistic stories. Can they identify the moral of the story and can they discuss what makes the stories similar to other ones they have read?
- Asking them to identify the use of rhetorical questions? (a question that gets asked, which doesn't need a response).
- Having a conversation at the end of each independent reading session: can they tell you what's happening in their book?
- Asking them to choose a part of the text to read aloud to you, using expression and pausing in suitable places.
- Asking questions which make your child go back to the book to find answers - support them as they develop skills in skimming and scanning to find the information to answer your question.
- Asking your child to find examples of apostrophes of contraction in speech (e.g. can't, I'll) to make it more realistic.
- Discussing with your child, the use of sentence starters and pronouns (e.g. he, she, me, us, we, it) to avoid repetition.
- Asking them to make predictions of what might happen next but based on evidence from the text.
- Continuing to read aloud to your child. This shows them the importance you place on reading as well as developing their language, vocabulary and love of story.

## RUBY/EMERALD

Children reading Ruby and Emerald banded books will be able to interpret more sophisticated wordplay and understand a range of narration styles. Children should now be able to discuss the characters and narrator in much more detail.

### How to support your child with Ruby and Emerald level books:

Your child may not want to read aloud to you so often now, because they probably enjoy silent reading more. This is fine as long as your child continues to read actively when they are not reading aloud and does not just skim over the words and they still read to you 3 times a week.

### You can help them by:

- Continuing to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions and reading your book while your child reads.
- Asking them to choose a part of the text to read aloud, using different voices to show their understanding of different characters.
- Having a conversation at the end of each independent reading session: can they tell you what's happening in their book?
- Asking questions which make your child go back to the book to find answers - support them as they develop skills in skimming and scanning to find the information to answer your question.
- Asking them to identify the 4 stages in the story telling: introduction – build up – climax/dilemma – resolution.
- Looking for examples of when the author shows a character's emotions rather than just telling us them so we have to infer what the person is feeling.
- Discussing setting descriptions with your child. How has the author used the 5 senses? How has the author used prepositions (where adverbs [over, under, by, next to]).
- Looking for examples of puns and word play together and discuss what these mean.
- Looking at persuasive texts and discussing how the author persuades you to do something.
- In non-fiction writing, looking at how the author has sequenced the text and structured the information to make the information easy to access.
- Continuing to read aloud to your child. This shows them the importance you place on reading as well as developing their language, vocabulary and love of story.

## SAPPHIRE

Sapphire books provide a selection of stories and non-fiction books, including a range of content, narrative styles and points of view. This level encourages readers to form opinions and discuss their own reading tastes. These books will have more complex text features, such as an overarching plot and deeper structures of character relationships and themes.

### How to support your child with Dark Blue level books:

Books at Sapphire level are more complex, which means that it is important that the reader is conscious of the structure, language and vocabulary the writer is using. Although your child should enjoy them, the books will provide a challenge and need the reader to be alert and willing to learn. They still need to be heard 3 times a week.

### You can support them by:

- Continuing to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions and reading your book while your child reads.
- Sometimes asking them to choose a part of the text to read aloud, showing their understanding by using expression, tone and pace.
- Looking out for words which have unstressed letters (such as thumb, thistle).
- Helping them apply their growing knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes including: -sion, -tion, -cial, -tial, -ant/-ance/-ancy, -ent/-ence/-ency, -able/-ably and -ible/ibly, to read aloud fluently.
- Discussing the use of metaphors (when it claims it's something it's not [the storm raged, the moon was a ghostly galleon]) and what image this creates.
- Discussing the atmosphere of the section. Is it happy? Is it tense? Is it sad? What techniques has the author used to create this feeling?
- Discussing why the author has used a short simple dramatic sentence or a longer complex sentence to give more detail.
- Discussing how the use of modal verbs (can/could, may/might, shall/should, will/would) or adverbs of possibility (maybe, surely, probably, definitely) affect how definite something is.
- Helping them to differentiate between fact and opinion.
- Helping them to identify when a text is bias or impartial.
- Asking them to predict, in a story, what might happen next but they must give evidence from the text to back up their opinions.
- Before a reading session, asking your child to find and note down some particular information. It could relate to the plot or it could be something like: a really good descriptive passage; three words which are adventurous; two words you want to use in your next piece of writing; an example of something typical a character does or says; how one character's reaction towards another shows their relationship. These types of questions don't mean you have to read the book yourself but they help to alert your child to its possibilities. Don't forget to discuss what they found.

## DIAMOND

Diamond books encourage children to synthesise information from different places in a text. Children are beginning to recognise how layers of meaning allow for the build-up of humour, or tension, and can discuss how the author has achieved the effects. Books at this level are written in a much subtler way, meaning that the reader will need to fully engage with a book in order to understand it.

### How to support your child with Diamond level books:

The books at this level will provide a level of challenge which means that it is important that understanding will be deepened through not only reading aloud 3 times a week but also through opportunities to discuss what they have read.

### You can help them by:

- Continuing to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions and reading your book while your child reads.
- Discussing the use of figurative language (similes, metaphors, personification, onomatopoeia, hyperbole [purposeful exaggeration: I could eat a horse!], idioms [ a saying e.g It's raining cats & dogs], alliteration) and evaluate the impact on the reader.
- Discussing why different text types are structured in different ways.
- Discussing why different types of sentences (simple, compound & complex) have been used and the effect of these.
- Discussing different levels of formality; why has the author chosen to write that way?
- Asking for a summary of the information or what has happened so far.
- Ensuring the children give evidence from the text to back up their point but then explain why it does; how does it prove they're right?
- Before a reading session, asking your child to find and note down some particular information. It could relate to the plot or it could be something like: a really good descriptive passage; figurative language that was really effective; three words you want to use in your next piece of writing; an example of something typical a character does or says. There are lots of questions you can ask which don't mean you have to read the book yourself, but help to alert your child to its possibilities. Don't forget to discuss what they found!
- Suggesting that your child recommends and shares new books with others.

## PEARL

Pearl banded books are the final level of the Book Band grading system. Children reading at this level are strong, confident readers. They select a book by personal preference and often read for pleasure. Pearl books will have very few, or no illustrations, and have complex text features found in 'real' or non-scheme books.

### How to support your child with Pearl level books:

The books at this level will provide a level of challenge, which means that it is important that understanding will be deepened through, not only reading out loud 3 times a week but also having opportunities to discuss what they have read.

### You can help them by:

- Continuing to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions and reading your book while your child reads.
- Discussing why the author has used complex punctuation (brackets (), semi-colons:, colons:, hyphens-, dashes - -, ellipses ...).
- Presenting a contrasting point of view and asking your child to argue against it using evidence from the text.
- Asking your child to identify techniques the author has used for impact and how they achieve the desired effect.
- Looking for different story writing techniques such as: flashbacks or flash forwards, cliff hangers, epiphanies, foreshadowing and plot twists.
- Identifying where the author has used dialect in speech (e.g. "ello 'arry")
- Discussing persuasive devices such as: hyperbole, flattery, bribery and blackmail and how these persuade the reader to act.
- Discussing when texts aren't as effective and why not.
- When looking at persuasive texts, discussing why the author has chosen either to be formal or informal and why.
- Asking them to summarise the main ideas from a paragraph.
- Looking at different accounts of the same event and discuss the different viewpoints.
- Discussing how characters develop across a text or across a series.
- Comparing different versions of a text.

## TOP TIPS

### **1. Build reading into your child's daily routine**

Find a regular time for reading in your child's day, so that they can begin to expect it as part of their routine. This can be any time of day. Some children enjoy reading before bed, but others can just be too exhausted at night. It might be better for some children to read just after dinner, or in the morning after breakfast, when they have more energy. You can encourage your child to track their reading using a weekly reading chart. This will help them celebrate their progress.

### **2. Read every day.**

Reading regularly at home provides children with the practice they need to become great readers. Remember, "The more kids read, the better they read," and the same holds true for the opposite effect, "the less kids read, the poorer they'll read." Beyond practice time, reading at home reinforces a positive attitude around reading—kids start to enjoy reading!

The best way to incorporate reading in the household is to devote 20 to 40 minutes, at the same time every evening, to family reading time. Make it part of a routine, as discussed in tip #1. Another fun idea is to have children read to their pets, siblings, or stuffed animals, like a game.

### **3. Make a special reading spot.**

Designating a special reading spot for children to read with their parents guardians is not only fun, but is also a great way to create a distraction-free zone where children can concentrate. The reading spot should be rid of any extraneous noise, toys, etc. Putting some pillows or a comfy chair in the corner of a living room and surrounding the area with books is a great way to go.

### **4. Encourage your child to follow their interests**

Let your young children choose the books they read. You can do this by keeping books on a shelf they have regular access to, or presenting them with two to three books and letting them choose. Let them read the same book, or same genre of reading material (such as football magazines!), over and over again. Repetition will help younger children learn words and understand how language is structured. Following their interests is also the best way to keep them engaged and make reading fun, which will make them more likely to want to read more widely going forward.

Finally, if you are reading the book to them, let them turn the pages, skip pages, return to pages and let them interrupt you – even if it feels like they are getting off track. Talking about the book helps them makes sense of what they are reading.

• Give positive feedback as they need, so that soon they

**5. Be a great reading partner!**

It's no fun to read when you're forced to or feel embarrassed to read. Building trust and supporting a child reader is crucial as a reading partner. Here are some tips for becoming a great reading partner:

- Be patient and encouraging.
- Read aloud and track the words with your finger as you are reading.
- Read the same stories over and over. Try reading the same stories in different ways, with different voices to make it fun and interesting.
- Ask questions about the story while you're reading to gauge comprehension.
- Pick books that are at the right level for your young reader—5+ mistakes on one page is too hard. No mistakes or only one mistake per page is too easy.
- Gently correct mistakes and re-read the entire sentence.
- Give positive feedback and tell the reader he or she is doing a great job.

**6. Surround your child with books.**

When children have access to books in their home, they become familiar with books and the act of reading, effectively giving them a head start in learning. A child who looks at books and reads with his or her parents/guardians everyday has a major advantage compared to children who never read at home and who have never been introduced to the concept of reading. Simply interacting with books on a regular basis makes a huge difference in a child's development.

**7. Bring books everywhere.**

Incorporating books into everyday activities will continue to help children become more familiar with books and will encourage everyday reading. Place books in every room of the house, in the car, and take books everywhere.

**8. Set a good example; be caught in the act!**

Children are a product of their upbringing and mimic the behavior they see at home, repeating the actions they observe from their parents or guardians. If a child observes his or her parent/guardian reading every night, then that child will emulate the same behaviour.

**9. Be enthusiastic!**

Positive attitudes are very important to a child's reading development and generate a desire to read. Showing genuine excitement for children's reading skills will encourage them to become great readers. Struggling readers may start to develop a negative attitude towards reading, but showing them that reading can be fun will get them excited about reading time. Great times to praise a child when he or she is reading include, when he or she sounds out a difficult word, self-corrects and re-reads a sentence, or asks questions as he or she is reading.

**10. Take breaks while reading**

Your child doesn't have to read an entire book in one go! Any time spent sharing or talking about a book is beneficial, even if it's just a couple of minutes at a time. If they have to close the book early because it's time for tea, or they're just losing interest, that's okay. Reading can take a lot of mental energy and taking breaks gives children a chance to slowly build the mental stamina they need, so that soon they will be able to read for longer stretches of time.

**11. Use technology together**

National Literacy Trust research has found that, when used appropriately and with an adult, technology can provide an important route into reading for many children, including those in the early years, and boys. Feel free, at times, to use your mobile phones, tablets, computers, laptops and other devices to engage your child in reading and activities that can help them build their vocabulary. This can include a multitude of activities, such as:

- Telling a story using pictures on your phone
  - Using apps to read e-books or listen to audiobooks
- These activities, or similar ones, can be used with children of all ages. Young children will learn best when doing these activities alongside you, and you can help your older child by showing them how to use the technology appropriately.

Further tips, support and advice for parents can be found on the booktrust link below:

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/tips-and-advice/>