

Helping Your Child to Read at Home

Home reading should be an opportunity to promote enjoyment for reading. All reading material sent home should be below the instructional reading level for a child, or at their independent reading level.

Before Reading

- Look through the book prior to reading with your child.
- Sit beside the child, with the child always holding the book and turning the pages.
- Read the title and discuss the cover.
- Discuss what the child thinks the book is about.
- Ask the child to turn the page and discuss the pictures (this part is not the child reading but is crucial to building of the child's prior knowledge and also developing language skills).
- Ask the child to predict what they think might come next before turning each page.
- Mention new or difficult words that the child may come across.
- Discuss the characters, places and things relevant to the story.
- Keep it simple, keep it moving and keep it short.

During Reading

- Support and offer positive response to the reader.
- Discuss characters, events and pictures as you read.
- Predictions are important because it draws upon the child's prior knowledge base and helps with the comprehension of the story. Stop occasionally and ask the child what might happen next.
- Use the **Pause, Prompt and Praise** technique.
- Re-reading and self correction should be encouraged as these are important reading strategies.

After Reading

This is a very important stage in listening to children read as it is a vital step in improving comprehension.

- Ask the child to retell the story in their own words.
- Encourage the child to retell the story in sequence e.g. what happened at the beginning and what happened then, and then etc
- How did the story end?
- If child is having difficulty in retelling the story, prompt by asking questions: **Who? What? Where? When? How?**

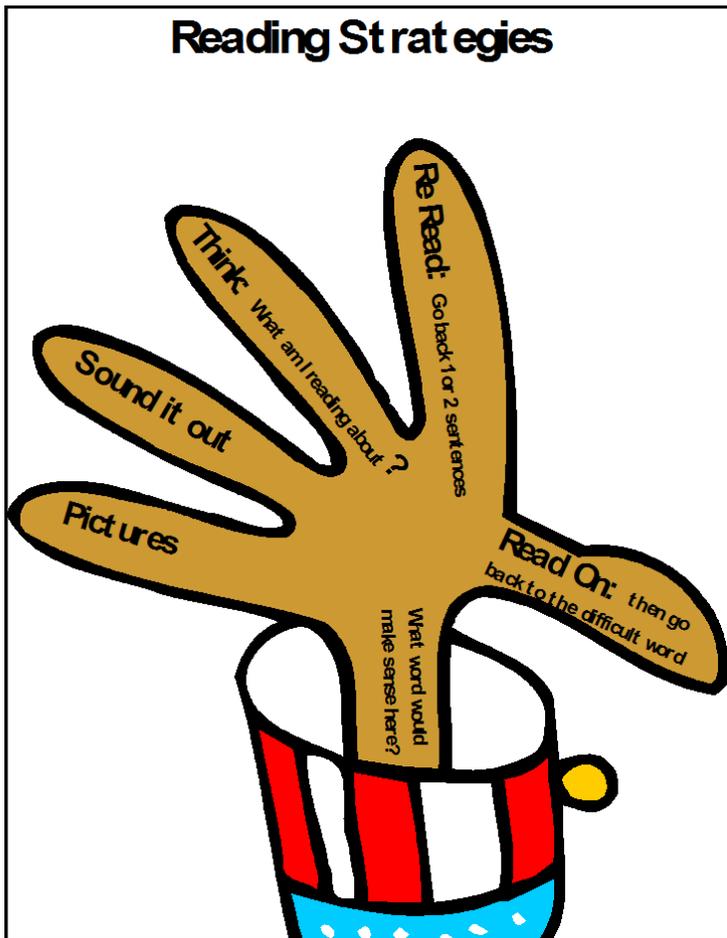
Pause, Prompt, Praise

This technique advocates that when a child makes a mistake:

- We pause for at least 5 seconds (count to 5 in our head). This gives the child time to work out the word.
- Give the child a suitable prompt depending on their mistake e.g. 'Don't just, say, sound it out.'
- Praise the child for their reading. This praise will depend on the particular reading behaviour e.g. 'That was good, you corrected that word by yourself'; 'Good, you read that sentence again and fixed up your mistake'.



How can you help at home?



Reading and writing activities

- Read to your child as often as possible.
- Encourage your child to read with you.
- Share the reading of labels, signs and posters with your child.
- Talk about books – the cover, the illustrations, information, characters, settings and events.
- Make links between your child's experiences and the texts you read.
- Give your child plenty of paper and a variety of pens, pencils, Textas, crayons and pens for drawing and writing.
- Write notes for each other and put them on the fridge, in the letterbox or in lunch boxes.
- Encourage your child to write notes and cards to friends and relatives.
- Encourage your child to write stories, recipes and poems and to illustrate them.
- Talk about your child's favourite authors, poets and illustrators.
- Read magazines, newspapers and television guides together.
- Help your child to use dictionaries, thesauruses, encyclopaedias and CD-ROMs.
- Encourage your child to visit the library and borrow books.
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Talking and listening activities

- Listen to your child.
- Continue to use your first language at home.
- Encourage your child to say the sounds as well as the names of the letters of the alphabet
- Ask your child to recount school events to family members.
- Provide opportunities for your child to participate in discussions with family members, relatives and friends.
- Encourage your child to say raps, rhymes, jingles, chants and poems.
- Play games such as *I Spy*, *Scrabble* and *Wonderword*.
- Tell your child stories from your own and other cultures.
- Encourage your child to listen to books being read.
- Have your child retell stories.
- Encourage your child to ask and answer questions.
- Encourage your child to talk about their own and others' ideas, feelings, opinions and issues.
- Encourage your child to talk about current affairs.

Playing An Active Role

- Ensure there are suitable, quiet surroundings where your child can concentrate on the task.
- Promote the importance of homework and explain how it can help your child's learning.
- Give due importance to non-written tasks such as listening to your child read on a regular basis.
- Assist with the learning of spelling and recall of mathematics facts.
- Keep your child's teacher informed of any changes in your child's learning circumstances which may affect their learning.
- Provide feedback to the class teacher if there are any difficulties with homework.

