

Learning to Read

Reading to children every day builds early literacy skills and can nurture a lifelong love of reading. It also increases understanding about the world and about how books 'work' (concepts about print).



What to read:

A variety of texts, which may include:

- Books - factual books, fairy tales / traditional stories, adventure stories, make-believe books, diaries, counting books, alphabet books, rhyming stories, instructional books, (e.g. how to make ...)
- Other texts - recipes, letters, invitations, postcards, signs, poems/rhymes, news/magazine headlines, comic strips, telephone books, web pages, brochures, maps and labels).
- 'Read' the pictures/symbols/logos as well as the print.

Developing a love of reading:

- Read books/texts/topics that interest the students (e.g. comics or instructions to make things, books about topics of interest, poems/rhymes/songs).
- View a variety of books that are presented in different ways (e.g. CDs/recordings/DVD stories, picture books with no words, books on websites, pop-up books).
- Encourage other important people to read to your child (e.g. grandparents, older siblings).
- Re-read enjoyable, familiar texts so they can join in the reading
- Encourage students to look through and pretend to read or read from memory familiar books for at least 10 minutes each day, from an early age.
- Show your child that you value reading, and enjoy the time you spend reading with them each day.
- Let them see you read every day for real-life purposes (e.g. signs, lists, recipes, letters, websites, labels, packaging, CDs, DVDs and words on clothing)



What to do as you read:

- Talk about the front cover, illustrations, storyline, characters, problem to be solved in the story, rhyming words, favourite part of the story.
- Demonstrate the "flow" of reading – reading left to right, top to bottom, pointing to the words.
- Talk about the pictures, ideas and words (print) in the book as you read.
- Guess what might come next at important points in the story (predicting)
- Talk about connections you and your child can make with the story and their own real life experiences, e.g. "this story reminds me of when **we** went camping and caught some fish".
- Ask questions as you read about the ideas in the book, the pictures and print (e.g. Why would she need crutches to walk? What is that whale doing? What does that word say? Why is this bit of writing so big?)
- Point out and talk about letters and words in books/at home/in the environment – e.g. cereal boxes, number plates, signs, advertising...words are all around us!