

Compare Books to Film

Have your child read a book and then check out the video version. Talk about the similarities and differences in the two mediums. What did s/he like about each form? What didn't s/he like? Did s/he prefer the book or the movie, and why?

Compare Authors' Books

Have your child read two books by the same author. It is a good idea for you to read them too so you can discuss them. Compare how they are similar and how they are different. Which did you and your child like best? Why?

Participate in Library Reading Programmes

Our public libraries offer organized reading programmes. Many of these programs are themed and showcase some of the best works for children. The library staff may host activities based on books and have special events.

Explore Different Forms of Reading Material

Many of the highest rated literature for children is available on tape and in book form. By having your child read along while listening to the book, you are providing excellent reading benefits as your child sees and hears words and phrases together; a good way to reinforce sight-word recognition.

Independent readers

Once your child is able to read independently you should encourage wider reading. Encourage them to read beyond their favourite genres. You can continue to support their development by selecting two or three of the following questions each time they read:

- *If you were in the story, how would you feel? Why?*
- *How could you change the ending of the story?*
- *If you were the main character, what would you do at the end of the book?*
- *Tell me something you liked or disliked about the book.*
- *How would the story feel different if it took place in another setting?*
- *How would you act towards the main character if he/she was one of your friends?*
- *Did the book make you laugh? Cry? Cheer? Explain.*
- *What parts of the book seem most believable? Which parts seemed unbelievable? Why?*
- *How are you like one of the characters?*
- *Is there anything in the book that surprised you? Confused you? Why?*

Can you show me where the author tells you...?

Most importantly, remember to keep your reading activities at home **stress free**. Always speak to your child's teacher if problems arise. If your child gets tired of reading, take turns, or take a break. For most children, about fifteen to twenty minutes of reading at least three days a week is a good place to begin. If your child wants more time, then allow that to happen. If your child becomes frustrated, and has difficulty focusing for that amount of time, shorten the time, but increase the number of times you read together. Aim to establish a cozy and nurturing environment when reading. You could also involve your child in planning your reading sessions. Enjoy your time together.

Rushen Primary School: Reading



Supporting your child's reading

Reading at home can be one of the most important gifts you can share with your child. We ask that you find time to do this regularly. Whilst your child will always value such times with you, we understand how difficult a task it can sometimes be. This leaflet aims to help support you and your child in their continued development of both accomplishing the varied skills in reading and of course, the enjoyment the world of reading can bring.



Learning to read is a developmental process within a programme of progressive skills. From Reception class to the end of compulsory education, to further, then higher education, there are reading skills that need to be practised and learned. Here are some of the "tips" and suggestions we hope you find useful whilst your child is in the primary phase at Rushen Primary School. However, should your child appear to be experiencing problems in any way and at any stage, it is always advisable to speak to your child's teacher for more specific support.

Learning about reading

Learning about reading begins at home, through story telling (from memory, from a given text or simply created), modelling reading from variety of texts (books, leaflets, newspapers, computers, television, etc.) and reading the written word in everyday life (environmental texts such as signs, notices, advertising, etc.); all of which helps children understand that the written word holds meaning. Learning about reading can be both an enjoyable and informative experience. Whilst we aim to re-create in school these real-life opportunities, parents and carers are a child's most significant person and as such, can be far more effective in introducing and reinforcing the value of reading. Reading is an essential, life skill.



Learning to read at home

Learning to read at Rushen Primary School begins in Reception and continues with the same importance, commitment and value throughout our school, in preparation for when our children move into the secondary phase.



In the early stages we begin with the Letters and Sounds programme. Although the English language contains many thousands of words, research has shown that learning by sight the most used word, known as "high frequency words" can give your child a head start in learning to read. The Letters and Sounds programme includes a list of the 45 words to be learnt in Reception onto a further 160 high frequency words or more, in Years 1 and 2. This may seem like an awful lot to learn, but it works out at about 80 words per year, or less than 30 per school term!



We ask that you help your child learn these high frequency / sight words that our teachers send home in small manageable portions known as a "Word Wall." As your child is introduced to these words in school, our teachers create a wide variety of opportunities throughout the school day for your child to learn to read the words on their current list. Lots of support and many techniques are used to help this learning process. However, it is essential that these words are practised at home if your child is to make the expected progress.



Whilst your child is learning the sight words, we also introduce other reading skills that should be practised at home. For example, recognising that in this part of the world we read from left to right and down the page, that books have a cover, a spine and pages, etc. These are some of the skills you could reinforce and practise with your child.

Once your child is ready to begin reading words within a text, reading books are introduced. These are specifically selected to reinforce sight words and to introduce new vocabulary and children's knowledge of phonics such as "ff," "sh," "ch," and blends such as "bl," "fl," and letter strings such as, "str," "ight," "ing," "tch." As a competent reader, these may appear repetitive and uninspiring. However, such reading scheme books are written predominantly with the purpose of developing early reading skills, though they do attempt to build an understanding of character, setting and plot. At this stage, it is essential that you continue to share these books with your child at home so they have the greatest opportunity to practise these early, but essential skills. All children enjoy stories and learning new information (how ever simple it may seem) so any and every opportunity you have to share a book with your child will have a significant affect.



As our children learn their phonics by working through the Letters and Sounds programme, their reading skills will inevitably develop, as will their desire to be challenged, with their ability to tackle more challenging words and texts. Fluency, expression, vocabulary and the context become the learning focus at this stage. This is a very difficult stage for children, moving from the word-level stage to words within sentences in the context of a whole story. It is vital that regular routines and an enjoyment of reading are established at home.

Guided Reading

Guided reading is a short focused, small group learning session in which the teacher works very closely on developing reading skills. Each group follows the same text, chosen specifically to match the children's reading ability and targets for improving. The guided session activities are dependent on the children's needs. The children follow a rotation of activities throughout the week beginning with the teacher-led activity, an independent follow-up activity and other activities directly related to reading. Guided reading sessions are used to not only develop the children's reading skills, but can also be useful in accessing the wider curriculum (e.g. story setting linked to historical studies). Once a child is able to read with some fluency and confidence, it is not



necessary or productive to listen to a child read on a regular basis. More useful activities are provided such as predicting what will happen next, discussing characters, setting, plot, information retrieval, etc. Children may be asked to read short extracts for the purpose of discussion or to reveal the section in the book as evidence for a particular skill (e.g. inference). However, the children will be expected to read the whole book and will be provided with time for silent, independent reading during the guided reading sessions.

Suggestions for how you can help at home

Word walls

You could copy the words onto two different colours of paper, and cut out to make word cards. The first thing you need to do is to limit the number of word cards you use at any one time. For a 4-5 year old, no more than 6 words will avoid overloading them (4 might be even better). Hide the rest away for another day.



Simple matching game

Many young children seem to enjoy straightforward matching activities. Spread out six cards of one colour (face up), reading each word out as you put it down. Give your child the matching cards in the other colour. Read out the first word for them and ask them if they can find the matching word and place their card next to it. It can help to hold the card next to each word in turn to enable easy matching. You can encourage and emphasise the word, e.g. "This word is 'and' - does that say 'and'?" No, let's try this one. Is it 'and'?" etc.

Snap

Shuffle up the cards and share them out. Each player takes turns to turn over their card, put it down and read the word. If it matches the previous card played, the first person to notice shouts 'snap!' and wins the pile. This game is best used to practise words your child knows fairly well, rather than new ones, as it's quite fast-paced.

Reading strategies

Reading is all about getting the meaning from the print. You should praise all efforts, especially if confidence is low. When your child gets to an unknown word, give your child time to work it out. Five to ten seconds is reasonable. Then encourage your child to use these strategies:

- ✓ Say it slowly and think what will make sense, sound right and match the letter it starts with.
- ✓ Look at the first letter and try to make a guess that matches.
- ✓ Look at the picture clues.
- ✓ Look for parts of the word you know.
- ✓ Re-read and think about the story – what could the word be?
- ✓ Read ahead until the end of the sentence and try to think what word would make sense.

Book sharing

It is not essential that your child reads every word in the book. Sometimes it is more fun and constructive to take turns to read a paragraph or a page each. You can model fluency, use of punctuation and expression, such as using a different voice for each character. You can also use questions to support comprehension after each of you have read.