

Reading

Learning about reading begins at home, through story telling (from memory, from a given text or simply created), modelling reading from a 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 these real-life opportunities in school, **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.

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 the most used words by sight, words known as "**high frequency words**" (Word Walls), 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 and a further 160 high frequency words or more, in Years 1 and 2. This may seem like a lot to learn, but it works out at about 80 words per year, or less than 30 per school term!












































Phonemes

Despite there being just 26 letters in the English language there are approximately 44 unique sounds, also known as **phonemes**. A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a **word** that makes a difference in its pronunciation, as well as its meaning. The 44 sounds help distinguish one word or meaning from another.

Graphemes

A **grapheme** is a **written symbol** that represents a sound (phoneme). This can be a single letter, or could be a sequence of letters, such as *ai, sh, igh, tch* etc. So, when a child says the sound /t/ this is a phoneme, but when they write the letter 't' this is a grapheme.

These are all the phonemes in the English language and some of the graphemes used to represent them:

s 	t 	p 	n 	m 	a 	e 	i 	o 
g 	d 	ck 	r 	h 	u 	ai 	ee 	igh 
b 	f 	l 	j 	v 	oa 	oo 	oo 	ar 
w 	x 	y 	z 	qu 	or 	ur 	ow 	oi 
ch 	sh 	th 	th the	ng 	ear 	air 	ure pure	er 



Beginning reading

Basic reading skills include phonemic awareness, sight word recognition, phonics, and word analysis. Essential skills include **identification of individual sounds** and the ability to manipulate them; **identification of printed letters** and sounds associated with letters; and decoding of written language.

Phonics blending is the ability to string together the sounds that each letter stands for in a word.

Decoding is the ability to apply the knowledge of letter-sound relationships, including knowledge of letter patterns, to correctly pronounce written **words**. Understanding these relationships gives children the ability to recognize familiar **words** quickly and to figure out words they haven't seen before.

It is essential that we **model the correct sounds** (phonemes) when we teach reading. You can listen to the phonemes and corresponding graphemes here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6gxxLnfS5Ts>

Reading for Meaning

Reading consists of **two** related processes: word recognition and comprehension. **Word recognition** refers to the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to the spoken language (as explained above). **Comprehension** is the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected text.

As children learn their phonics, 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 important that regular routines and an enjoyment of reading are established at home.

Developing Reading Strategies

Reading is all about getting meaning from 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 (5-10 seconds is reasonable) then encourage your child to use these strategies:



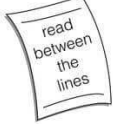


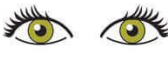
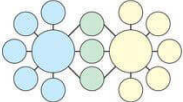

- ✓ *Say it slowly and think what will make sense, sound right, and match the letter it starts with.*
- ✓ *Look at the first letter and try to make a guess that matches.*
- ✓ *Look at the picture clues.*
- ✓ *Look for parts of the word you know.*
- ✓ *Re-read and think about the story – what could the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

Independent readers

Once your child is able to read independently, you should encourage wider reading, reading beyond their favourite genres. You can continue to support their development when reading a story, for example, 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?*
- *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 summarise the story?*
- *Can you show me where the author tells you...? (finding evidence)*

Reading Comprehension Strategies

<p>Re-read the Text</p> <p>more information = more understanding</p>	<p>Activate Prior Knowledge</p> 	<p>Use Context Clues</p> 
<p>Infer Meaning</p> 	<p>Think Aloud</p> 	<p>Summarize the Story</p> <p>Characters</p> <p>↳ Setting</p> <p>↳ Problem</p> <p>↳ Solution</p>
<p>Locate Key Words</p> 	<p>Make Predictions</p> <p>think → pair → share</p>	<p>Use Word Attack Strategies</p> <p>rereading</p> <p>re · read · ing</p> <p>prefix root suffix</p>
<p>Visualize</p> 	<p>Use Graphic Organizers</p> 	<p>Evaluate Understanding</p> <p>what did I learn?</p> 

The most competent readers consider and enjoy the complexities and subtleties of language when they read and develop **higher order thinking skills**. These skills can also be learnt, often through effective questioning. One strategy is P.E.E. So, what does **P.E.E.** stand for? Very simply, when answering comprehension questions, children need to assert the **point** they are making. The **evidence** is the quote or quotes from the **text** that they use to support their point and the **explanation** is where they expand on their point and if possible, give a personal opinion:

<h1>P</h1> <p>Point</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Sum up the main idea in your paragraph.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In my opinion... • Arguably... • The writer uses... • Similarly • Firstly... • Secondly... • Both... • In contrast... • One of the language features used is...
<h1>E</h1> <p>Evidence</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Provide Evidence for the point you are making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For example... • An example of this is... • This is shown... • This can be seen... • This is demonstrated when... • We know this because... • The evidence for this is...
<h1>E</h1> <p>Explanation</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Why is the quotation significant? What effect does the quotation have on the reader? Why has the writer used this technique?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This shows • This suggests... • This implies... • This is effective because... • The writer has chosen this technique because... • This would make the reader feel... • This has been used because...

Most importantly, aim to keep your reading activities at home **stress free**. 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 or has difficulty focusing for that amount of time, shorten the time, but increase the number of times you read together. You could also involve your child in planning your reading sessions. Aim to establish a cozy and nurturing environment when reading and enjoy your time together.