

Beulah Infant School



Helping your child to
learn to read

We hope that you will find this information helpful.
If you would like any help or additional information,
please come and ask your class teacher.

TIPS TO HELP DURING READING TIME

1. Choose a quiet time

Set aside a quiet time with no distractions. Ten to fifteen minutes is usually long enough.

2. Make reading enjoyable

Make reading an enjoyable experience; cuddle up on the sofa and give lots of praise and encouragement. If your child loses interest then do something else.

3. Maintain the flow

If your child mispronounces a word do not interrupt immediately. Instead allow opportunity for self-correction. It is better to tell a child some unknown words to maintain the flow rather than insisting on trying to build them all up from the sounds of the letters. If your child does try to 'sound out' words, encourage the use of letter sounds rather than 'alphabet names'.

4. Be positive

If your child says something nearly right to start with that is fine. Say 'let's read it together' and point to the words as you say them. Boost your child's confidence with constant praise for even the smallest achievement.

5. Success is the key

Try not to make your child read a book that is too difficult. Remember 'nothing succeeds like success'. Until your child has built up his or her confidence, it is better to keep to easier books. Struggling with a book with many unknown words is pointless. Flow is lost, text cannot be understood and children can easily become reluctant readers.

6. Visit the Library

Encourage your child to use the public library regularly. Let them choose the books they want to take, even if it is a book they have had many times before.

7. Regular practice

Try to read with your child as often as you can, every night if this is possible; little and often is best.

8. Communicate

Use the school reading diary. Try to communicate regularly with positive comments and any concerns. Your child will then know that you are interested in their progress and that you value reading.

9. Talk about the books

There is more to being a good reader than just being able to read the words accurately. Just as important is being able to understand what has been read. Always talk to your child about the book; about the pictures, the characters, how they think the story will end, or their favourite part. You will then be able to see how well they have understood and you will help them to develop good comprehension skills.

10. Variety is important

Remember children need to experience a variety of reading materials e.g. picture books, hard backs, comics, magazines, poems, and information books. Books used for reading to young children should be age appropriate and 'real'.

GOOD BOOKS TO READ WITH YOUR CHILD

- Look for books that are predictable with a repetitive pattern.
Children can quickly follow and read along with the book after the first few pages.
- Read books that are about concepts that are very familiar to most early readers.
The children can easily identify with the story line and the characters.
- Ensure there is a good match between the text and its illustrations.
This is an important key in a book's readability. The pictures that accompany the text essentially tell the story for the child after he has become familiar with the pattern.
- Make use of predictable books that have elements of rhyme and rhythm to increase the overall predictability of the book.
Once the child catches the rhythm or the rhyming pattern, it enhances his ability to predict what will come next.
- Read familiar stories.
It is easy for most children to predict what the wolf will say in "The Three Little Pigs" because of their prior experiences with the story.
- Look for familiar sequences are often characteristic of predictable books.
Eric Carle, in his book "The Very Hungry Caterpillar", uses two sequences that are familiar to most young children: numbers and the days of the week:
On Monday he ate through one apple,
But he was still hungry.
On Tuesday he ate through two pears,
but he was still hungry...

THINGS YOU MAY BE CONCERNED ABOUT

My child cannot recognise any words

- Try to help your child to read whole words, concentrating on those that occur frequently in stories and that cannot be read using letter sounds.
- These are words such as I the was to. You could write these words on pieces of card and take turns to pick a card and read the word or by looking for individual words in a book. Keep this activity brief and fast paced. Practice as often as you can.

My child lacks the confidence to try to read

- Talk with your child about how important it is to practise – you had to do this when you were little! Don't forget to praise all their efforts.
- Read as much as you can. Don't push them to read if it makes them uncomfortable – read part of the story to them and encourage them to read a little to you. Remember quality is more important than quantity.

My child mixes up letters like b and d

- This is a visual confusion (they get confused about which was around the tummy of the letter goes) and is common amongst children.
- It is important not to learn or practise these letters together.
- Help your child to learn the correct way to write these letters, each one is written differently.
- Your child may read dog as bog or was as saw. This may mean that they need practise reading from left to right.

When my child reads they seem to be reading from memory

- This is an important part of the process of learning to read – they are developing their role as a reader.
- Help your child to focus on the text but don't cover the pictures – these are important as they provide different things to talk about or provide additional information not mentioned in the writing. However, some children become over-dependent on the picture clues and do not look for clues from the words.
- Read the book with your child so he/she is familiar with the story. Then simply use the first sentence from the reading book and copy it out on a strip of paper. Leave a big space in between each word. Now cut up the sentence into the individual words. For example:

is dog This a

- Ask your child to make the sentence, 'This is a dog' using the individual words. At first you will probably need to help. When he/she has made the sentence ask your child to read it to you and encourage him/her to point to each word with a finger.
- When he/she can sequence one sentence, you can introduce another sentence from the book.

My child is unsure of sounds

- There are 44 sounds that your child needs to learn not just the 26 letters of the alphabet. It is important that your child practises letter sounds regularly. Help them by regularly practising the sounds they can hear in a word. Focus on the sound of the letter rather than the name at first. The reason for this is that sounding out words is practically impossible if you use the alphabet names. **e.g. cat, would sound like: see ay tee**
- It is important for a child to learn lower case or small letters rather than capital letters at first. Most early books and games use lower case letters and your child will learn these first here at school. Obviously you should use a capital letter when required, such as at the beginning of the child's name, e.g.. **Tom**.
- In order to help your child, your own pronunciation must be right. Be careful not to add the uh sound when saying the sound for s (sss not suh) or f (fff not fuh)
- Help them to focus on a small number of letters at first. At school we started with s a t p i n and used these sounds to start reading and spelling simple words like pit and sit.
- Do not teach letters in alphabetical order. Avoid teaching letters of a similar shape such as b and d, or p and q together. Allow time and other letters to come in between such pairs of letters. **c, o, a, d** and **g** is a good order to start with because they are all formed in a similar way when you write them.
- Help your child to be confident with the vowel sounds. These sounds are often the most difficult to hear.
- Help them to know that when they see the long vowel sounds like ai ea ee and oa they need to know that the first letter makes the sound. Other sounds just need to be remembered like oi ou and er. The children have been learning actions to go with each sound to help them to remember them.
- They will also need to learn the sounds made by 2 letters together (called a digraph). E.g. sh ch ph ng th. Make sure you help your child make just one sound when they see these digraphs – sh-o-p not s-h-o-p.



JOLLY PHONICS

Short Sounds:

- a -wiggle fingers above the elbow as if ants are crawling on you
a, a, a short sound
- b -hit a ball with a bat
b, b, b short sound
- c -raise hands and snap fingers as if playing the castanets
c, c, c short sound
- d -beat hands up and down as if playing a drum
d, d, d short sound
- e -crack an egg against a pan with one hand then use both hands to open the shell
e, e, e short sound
- f -hands come together as if something is deflating
ffffff continual sound
- g -spiral hand down as if water gurgling down a drain
g, g, g short sound
- h -hold hand up to mouth, panting
h, h, h short sound
- i - wiggle fingers at the end of your nose like whiskers (as a mouse)
squeak *i, i, i* short sound
- j -wobble like a jelly on a plate
j, j, j short sound
- k -same as 'c' - castanets
(although the Jolly Phonics song is 'Kites are flying in the sky...')
k, k, k short sound
- l -lick a lollipop
llllllll continual sound
- m -rub tummy
mmmmm continual sound

n -put arms out like wings of a plane
nnnnnnnn continual sound

o -move finger as if switching a light switch on and off
o, o, o short sound

p -hold finger as if it is a candle and pretend to puff it out
p, p, p short sound

qu -make a duck's beak with hands
qu, qu, qu short sound

r -pretend to be a puppy, shaking head from side to side as if with a rag in your mouth
rrrrrrrr continual sound

s -weave hand in an 's' shape
sssssss continual sound

t -turn head from side to side as if watching tennis
t, t, t short sound

u -keep one hand still and raise the other as if putting an umbrella up
u, u, u short sound

v -driving
vvvvvvvv continual sound

w -blow onto an open hand as if the wind
wh, wh, wh short sound

x -pretend to take a picture (x-ray)
ks, ks, ks short sound

y -pretend to eat yogurt from a spoon
y, y, y short sound

z -put arms out to your sides and flap like a bee
zzzzzzzz continual sound

Long Sounds:

ai -cup hand over ear as if hard of hearing
ai, ai, ai

oa -put hand over mouth as if something has gone wrong
oh, oh, oh

ie -stand to attention and salute
ie, ie

ee or (together) -put hands on head and flap them up and down like donkey ears

eeyore, eeyore

ou -prick thumb with your finger as if it is a needle

ou, ou, ou

oi -cup hands around mouth

oi, ship ahoy

ue -point to other people

you, you, you

er -roll hands over each other like a mixer

er, er, er

ar -open mouth wide

ah,ah, ah

Other Sounds:

ng -pretend to lift a heavy weight above head

ng, ng, ng

oo (short) OO (long) -move your head back and forth like a cuckoo in a cuckoo clock

oo, OO, oo, OO

ch -move arms in a steam train motion

ch, ch, ch, ch

sh -place index finger over lips

***shshshshsh* continual sound**

th (as in this) th (as in thumb) stick out tongue a little and say, "this" and further and say, "thumb"

USEFUL LINKS

Below you will see a list of useful links to help support your child with phonics and early reading and writing.

www.teachyourmonstertoread.com

www.phonicsplay.co.uk

www.familylearning.org.uk (phonics games)

www.mrthorne.com

www.letters-and-sounds.com

www.readingbear.org

www.starfall.com

www.jollylearning.co.uk

www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/shows/alphablocks