



## Reading

### **Choosing What to Read**

Choose any books that appeal to your child, for example, stories or information books on hobbies/interests such as football or animals. Vary your reading together. It doesn't have to be school books. Newspapers, magazines, recipes, games instructions, shopping lists and signs, can be read together and still be part of the process of learning to read with enjoyment. Children can also that you borrow books from the school library weekly and from the local library to read together. Your child may keep choosing the same book because it is a favourite. This is all part of learning to read. Children enjoy being read to even when they are fluent readers and revisiting old favourites develops confidence and an understanding of different genres.

### **How Can I Help My Child?**

As a parent, you can play an important role in helping your child learn to read. Research shows that children who are helped at home make better progress in school.

Reading with your child can be fun and very rewarding. It also shows that you value his/her efforts. If children enjoy reading, it will benefit their whole education. They are also more likely to carry on reading as adults. Reading aloud to children is the best way to get them interested in reading. Spending time with word games, stories, and books will help your child not only improve with their reading, but also their writing.

### **Reading at Home**

- Find a quiet, relaxing place away from distractions such as TV
- Sit comfortably in good light and talk to your child about their book
- Read for about 10 minutes; a regular short time of quality is better than a long session which happens only occasionally
- Ask why they have chosen the book
- Talk about the cover and title and what the story might be about
- Ask them to tell you who wrote the book or point to the author
- Look at the pictures and ask them to tell you where the story takes place
- Ask who they can see in the pictures (especially in simple caption books)
- Try to be supportive and positive during the reading time - if you are relaxed, your child will be too
- Encourage your children to look closely at the print
- Read the first page or two together until your child is ready to continue alone
- Encourage your child to point to each word as they read aloud
- Where possible wait for your child to decode words
- Encourage the use of clues such as the look/sound of the letters, what would make sense and the illustrations
- If they get stuck on a word, you could:
  - let them read on so they can work out the word themselves from the context





- point to a picture if it will help them guess the meaning
  - give them the first or last sounds to help them
  - read along with them then pause, prompt, praise if they get it right
  - when they are confident with sounds, let them sound out unknown words - break longer words down in to syllables
- Encourage expressive reading by drawing attention to punctuation and changing your voice for different characters
  - Help understanding by talking about the story or text - the setting, the plot, the characters
  - Discuss the kind of people the characters are and the way they behave
  - Talk about the kind of story it is (adventure, fantasy, science fiction, myth etc)
  - Encourage your child to refer to words and passages in the text to justify opinions
  - If your child is finding a book difficult, help out by reading it together.

## Useful Questions Reception & Key Stage One

(A simple who, what, why, where, when, how.)

- Who is in the story?
- Where is the story set?
- Can you use the pictures to tell part of the story?
- How do you think the story will end?
- What will happen next?
- Do you like the characters? Why?
- What happens in the story?
- What did the characters say? Why?
- How did a character scare, upset or help another character? Has this ever happened to you? How did you feel?
- Did the story make you think of something that has happened to you or someone you know?
- Can you put the main events in order?
- How would you feel at this point in the story?
- What would you do?
- How do you think a character feels?
- Why did a character do/say something in the text?
- How did a character in the book help/upset another in the story? Why?
- What advice would you give the characters?

## Lower Key Stage Two

- Can you explain why you think a character did that in the story?
- What does this word/phrase tell you about the character or setting?
- What does the word 'X' tell us about 'Y'?
- Fine two ways in which the writer tells you about an event/setting/character/theme?





- Which words did you like the most? Why?
- In the story 'X' is mentioned a lot. Why?
- What other words/phrases could the writer have used?
- What do you think the writer meant by writing 'X'?
- Which words do you think are the most important in this sentence/paragraph/page? Why?

## Upper Key Stage 2

- What did that character mean when they said 'X'?
- Are the character's actions a surprise or what you expected?
- Why is that character surprised/scared/excited/angry?
- Explain the character's actions or reactions to events in the story?
- What clues are there in the story to show that that character is happy/angry/sad/excited etc?
- What do you think this character thinks or another character? Why?
- How did the writer make you think this?
- Has the writer been successful in creating a setting/mood/character/theme? What else could they have done?
- Choose a passage from the text describing a particular event and question the children on the atmosphere before and after the event.
- Describe different character's reactions to the same event?
- Who is the 'voice' in the text?
- Which character does the writer want you to like or dislike? How have they done this?
- What do you think will happen because of a character's actions/dialogue/thoughts?

## Writing

### Spelling

At Pinner Wood School, spelling is taught in Reception and KS1 through the 'Read Write Inc' programme linked to phonics. In year 2 and KS2 children build on this phonic knowledge and learn spellings linked to the targets for that year group. There are also 'common exception words' for year groups which are words that have exceptions to specific spelling rules/aren't phonetically correct.

### How can I help my child?

Support your child by discussing their weekly spellings as well as helping them to learn the words. What sound, letter pattern or rule are they learning this week? If unsure, please speak to your child's class teacher.





## **Handwriting**

At Pinner Wood School, our aim in teaching handwriting is that every pupil should have the opportunity to develop a fluent, legible and consistent style of handwriting. At the same time, we aim to teach good writing habits and to encourage pupils to take a pride in achieving high standards of presentation in their work. In reception children learn rhymes to help them form each individual letter linked to the 'Read Write Inc' phonics sounds. When children begin year 1 they will have weekly handwriting lessons where they will follow the 'Magic Link' scheme. We have been using the scheme for 2 years now and seen a great improvement. In year 2 children begin the 'Magic Link Joined' handwriting scheme and will continue this throughout KS2.

### **How can I help my child?**

Prompt and encourage him/her to use the correct style when writing at home. Use the handwriting advice given out at parents evenings to model that handwriting. Encourage your child to concentrate on the formation of the letters, ensuring they are the correct way round. You could do some extra handwriting practice; you'll be amazed how quickly your child's handwriting and speed improves! (Remember regular but short amount of time)

## **Writing**

### **Making writing purposeful and valuable**

Children need to see that there is a reason for them to write. Both at school and at home, we need to be providing purposes for 'real writing'. Writing is a 'life skill', and whether this is composing on a computer or on paper, children need to see the value of putting the effort into producing the writing in the first place. Engaging in writing about interests and/or hobbies, is often a good starting point. At Pinner Wood School, children complete units of writing using a range of text types and genres.

### **How can I help my child?**

Think about situations at home that require something to be written and encourage your child to write it for you:

- Shopping lists
- Invitations
- Thank You Cards / Letters
- Letters to relations /pen-friends

You could also make a 'Daily Diary' with your child and encourage them to write a sentence each day, where they can focus on sentence formation, handwriting and composition.

You could build your child's vocabulary by giving them alternative words/synonyms for common words such as 'hungry' you could say 'ravenous, starving' instead of "I ate my





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lunch" you could say "I devoured my lunch". Building your child's vocabulary will enhance their writing and their spoken language and deepen their understanding when reading.

