

Reading With Your Child (Lisa Canty)

Parents play a crucial role in fostering a love of reading (and writing). Reading together increases vocabulary, develops understanding of the world, develops confidence when using language as well creating links between spoken and written words.

DEVELOPING READING SKILLS

Read real books to your child. Create a special space and time to read every day. Make it part of a routine.

In our very busy lives, carve out a small chunk of time that is just for your child. This reinforces to the child that reading is important (and so are they for that matter). Make sure you both can see the text.

Engaging literature will develop vocabulary and oral language AND a love of reading. Before you even start a new book, talk about the cover, discuss content, build "the field". This is setting up the brain to be totally engaged in the book, therefore will have all the synapses firing ready to absorb the story or information.

Eg: "The Lighthouse Keeper" Before you even start, chat about what the purpose of a lighthouse is, what they look like, have you ever seen one or been in a lighthouse? Some are on land, some are offshore, most are white, etc

SEPARATE TIME FOR CHILD PRACTICE

The home "*reader*" is for the child to **practice** in a SAFE and SUPPORTIVE environment. 2-5 mins for Juniors to review skills. It is not an expectation for the parent to become the teacher. Be a parent, help your child.

IF they are struggling, you read, they might echo using tracking techniques. I do, we do, you do.

Good fingers and eyes make good readers.

OR you can read and when you stop they read the next word. OR if they are stuck on a word, tell them the word.

Maybe little gentle reminders about thinking about the sounds the letter make, but not every single word. For example what sound does S make?

This will help develop solid reading habits like tracking, fluency and most importantly comprehension. (That's the whole point of reading)

Don't limit your child to decodables only. They are **one** resource to help support **one** skill. By all means use a decodable, but please ensure it is alongside a variety of books. If using a decodable, build the field by brainstorming all the words you know with that sound. EG: Big Bob What sound can you hear most? What "b" words do you know?

Learning to Read The Big Six Components of Reading

Thanks to Marian Nicolazzo. I have used some of her info from the parents' presentation in 2025.

Oral language	
•Provides strong foundation for all long-term language and literacy outcomes •Children surrounded by, and included in, rich and increasing complex conversations •learn more vocabulary • understand how language is structured •tune into the sounds of English	AT HOME •Engage in conversations about daily activities •Talk about what you read together •Ask open-ended questions to encourage your child to explain and describe. Why...? How..? •Share family stories and experiences to build story skills TALK TALK TALK

Phonemic awareness – focus on sounds of spoken language	
•Includes the rhythm, patterns of intonation and the individual sounds (phonemes) that make up words •Understanding that speech can be separated into individual words, words into beats or syllables, syllables into separate single sounds – once upon a time... •Need this understanding to then make the link between individual sounds and letters when reading and writing	AT HOME •Best learned through oral language! •Say and clap out nursery rhymes •Sing songs together •Play games like "I Spy" •Have fun with words

Vocabulary

- Important for comprehension
- Learned through repeated exposures to new words in conversations, by listening to stories and through media.
- An unconstrained skill (Paris, 2005) – developed over a lifetime, 170,000 words in Oxford English Dictionary

AT HOME

- Introduce new words during daily conversations
- Use descriptive language when talking about objects or activities
- Read a variety of books that include rich and diverse vocabulary
- Talk about new and unusual words and discuss their meanings

Phonics – letter-sound knowledge

- “Necessary but not sufficient” (Konza, 2014:160)
- Enable children to decode, that is, map sounds onto letters
- Includes knowledge of spelling rules, and the history and structure of words

AT HOME

- Play games – Scrabble, Boggle
- Alphabet puzzles
- Magnetic letters on the fridge
- Recite tongue twisters
- Notice print in the environment

Fluency

- Involves the ability to read words correctly, read at an appropriate pace and read with expression
- Supports comprehension

AT HOME

- Allow children to reread familiar books and poems
- Listen to audiobooks
- Read aloud to children
- Echo reading – children repeat reading after you

Comprehension

- The ultimate goal – to make meaning !!
- Not just understanding the words and sentences but also the purpose of the text and the author's message
- Requires all the other component parts to be in place

AT HOME

- Ask questions about the story/ text: Who? What? Where? When? Why? before during and after reading
- Encourage your child to predict what will happen next.
- Discuss the characters' feelings and decisions.
- Talk about what you have learned from the text.
- Relate the story to real-life experiences.

READING FOR ENJOYMENT

- Relationship between strong engagement and enjoyment and high levels of reading achievement
- Engagement in reading linked to the development of empathy and imagination
- Engaged readers of fiction who read frequently write more coherent narratives, better spelling, punctuation and wider vocabulary

AT HOME

- Let your child choose books they enjoy
- Create a cozy reading space
- Listen to audiobooks during car rides
- Read aloud together, even if your child can read independently
- Visit the local library together and discover new books
- Model enthusiasm for reading by sharing your own favourite stories

