

# Home reading

## Parent/Carer information



### supporting your child at home

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#### Why do we need to do reading at home?

Children need a lot of practice to become fluent and accurate readers. Listening to your child read provides opportunities for demonstration, correction and discussion in a supportive environment. The more your child reads, the better your child's reading will become.

#### How long should my child spend reading to me?

Reading at home should be a successful and positive experience for your child. Ten to fifteen minutes of daily reading at home with a supportive adult can make all the difference. It is best to have your reading session when your child is not tired or hungry! If it is turning into a very stressful time, please do consult your child's class teacher for advice.

#### What kind of readers will my child bring home and why?

If your child is a confident and independent reader, any age- and content-appropriate book, chosen by your child, can be read. Books may be sent home from school or borrowed from the local library. If your child requires more reading support and is not yet reading independently, the teacher will provide suitable reading books based on the needs of your child. This should be a book that has controlled vocabulary to provide more targeted reading practice.

#### How should I support my child when reading at home?

There are procedures set out in the InitialLit Home Reading Diary to guide your reading session. Before reading, set the scene by asking your child to predict what the book may be about and link the book to any prior knowledge. Encourage your child to read carefully and with expression. If a word is read incorrectly or your child gets stuck use the following steps:

- ▶ **Step 1:** Allow your child a couple of seconds to self-correct or work out the unfamiliar word. Don't jump in straightaway.
- ▶ **Step 2:** If your child is unable to work out the word independently, guide his or her attention back to the word. Don't ask your child to guess the word from context or by looking at the picture. Rather, encourage him/her to look carefully at the word and provide a prompt related to the letters and the sounds they make, e.g., point to the letters 'ai' in 'rain' and say, "The letters 'a' and 'i' together say /ay/. Can you read the word now?" Very unusual or irregular words should simply be provided.
- ▶ **Step 3:** If your child is still unable to read the word after prompting, simply tell him or her the word and move on to maintain comprehension and enjoyment of the story.

Remember to praise your child when he or she tries to work out a word, whether or not they are successful.

After each couple of paragraphs or pages, ask questions to check that your child has understood what has been read. Children can practise their reading fluency and expression by rereading a section of text.

At the end of the session, ask your child to summarise the story and discuss any themes arising from the book.

#### Should I still read to my child?

Yes! Reading quality storybooks, chapter books or information books to your child is a valuable way to build vocabulary and comprehension, and to enrich their understanding of the world. It is also a great opportunity to expose your child to literature that they may not be ready to read on their own.

#### How can I encourage my child to read independently?

Some children will naturally find time to read to themselves, while others need a little more encouragement. Setting aside 10 minutes to read independently at bedtime is one way of encouraging your child to read. Children are more likely to be motivated to read if the book is about something that they are interested in. Your local library or bookshop will be a good source of ideas for suitable reading material.

#### How should I use the InitialLit Home Reading Diary?

Each term, your child will be given a new InitialLit Home Reading Diary. Each Home Reading Diary contains helpful information about reading with your child and a few little reading and spelling games at the back of the book. The instructions will help you to engage your child with the book. Keep a record of the books your child has read aloud to you and record any books that you have read to your child or that they have read independently. Provide plenty of praise when a book is completed!

#### What else can I do to support my child at home?

Literacy and oral language are strongly connected. It is highly recommended that you use informal opportunities to develop your child's general language skills at home. Talk to your child, using interesting vocabulary. Explain new words. Record these new words in the back of the Home Reading Diary so that you can revisit them on different occasions. Tell your child stories or ask them to tell you about their day. This work can be done, and is just as beneficial, in English or in your home language. You can also support your child's reading and spelling by playing word games, e.g., I-Spy, hangman, and by practising the tricky words they have learnt. Most importantly, keep anything you do with your child light and playful but purposeful.