

Reading in the Foundation Stage

Some of the children are taking the first steps in reading, others are already readers, reading at different levels and with different abilities.



There are two aims:

- To encourage and develop the enjoyment of books and reading.
- To help children understand more and therefore gain more from their reading.

Both of these aims are encouraged in school but it is believed that you, the parent, can actively help your child. Parents and teachers need to work together for the benefit of the child.

Where and When?

It is difficult to share reading when the television is on or you are in the middle of making tea! Choose a time when both parents and child can be quiet and undisturbed. It is important to be as relaxed as possible so that both can enjoy the reading. Enjoyment is very important. We are all better at things that we enjoy and reading proves no exception. If your child is tired, do not force them to read, if they really do not feel like it. Have a day off! The aim is to have a relaxed and enjoyable reading time together as often as you can.

When reading with your child try to remember that praise is most important. Encouragement will produce results where criticism will only lead to frustration and a sense of failure. Try to be patient even when your child has made the same mistake several times. Prompting or giving a word is a natural part of the reading process. Later on encourage them to read on for clues and to have a go at the word themselves. We have talked about reading with your child but we hope that time will also be spent discussing the story, thinking about the characters, what might happen next or deciding whether or not it's a good book.

Try reading a book to your child sometimes.



Over the weeks a variety of books will make their way home- books which have been selected, with guidance, by your child. These will include story books and information books. Some favourite ones may be repeated. If your child chooses a book which is too hard then you can help by talking to them about it and perhaps reading it to them. Please encourage your child to join the local Library. Why not go with them and choose a book yourself, it encourages a child when they see Mum and Dad reading too!! Spending pocket money on books also makes them special.

Expectations by the end of KS1

The Government expects the vast majority of children to achieve a Level 2b by the end of Year Two in both reading and writing. Those children working slightly below the national average will work at a 2c and those slightly above the nationally expected levels will be achieving levels 2a.

With this in mind, this booklet is intended to help you understand what is required at each level, key objectives in reading have been subdivided to help illustrate the key skills your child needs to demonstrate in order achieve each level.

These guidelines are merely a list of suggestions in ways of which you can further support your child home.

Many thanks for your support.

Helping your child achieve level 1 in reading



Supporting a level 1c reader.	Supporting a level 1b reader.	Supporting a level 1a reader.
<p>Encourage your child to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">... realise the difference between a word, a letter and a space.... look at the pictures to help them understand the words.... point to words and hear each separate word when sharing a text.... use letter sounds to read new words, encourage them to read CVC words like 'cat', 'dog' and 'pig'.... encourage your child to retell the main points in a story, recall events in order and act out familiar stories.... talk about what is good and bad about the characters and events in a story.... make predictions about what is going to happen in a story.... understand and use the vocabulary 'book; cover; beginning; end; page; word; letter; line, author, illustrator' etc...... read and enjoy favourite books, songs and rhymes.	<p>Encourage your child to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">... read familiar words and blend phonemes to read unfamiliar words.... realise that the stories they read need to make sense.... talk about the main events in different texts and answer questions about the main events and ideas.... make predictions about what might happen in books, predict what might happen to the characters.... talk about the difference between fiction and non-fiction texts.... recognise 'bold', 'italic' and 'capital' prints.... talk about their favourite books.	<p>Encourage your child to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">... blend phonemes in words like <i>string</i> and <i>catch</i> when reading.... read new words by thinking about what would fit or sound right in the sentence.... talk about the main events in a story and share their opinions about the events in a story.... find information in a text.... share their opinions about different characters, think about the characters, who is bad and who is good?... recognise the difference between fiction and non-fiction texts.... find information in a non-fiction text, using the layout, headings, captions etc. to help them.... understand the order that events happen in a story.... choose a favourite book from a selection and talk about it.

Helping your child achieve Level 1 in writing...



Encourage your child to...

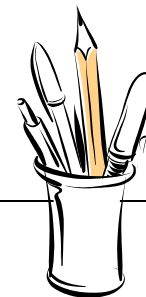
- ... to write their own name using a capital letter.
- ... to share their ideas before writing.
- ... to use clearly defined finger spaces between each word.
- ... to think about their spellings. (Ask your child to say the word, then segment the word into sounds before recalling the corresponding graphemes to help them write each word).
- ... to begin to show an awareness of full stops and capital letters.
- ... to form all letters correctly, keeping them consistent in size and orientation and remember not to mix upper and lower case letters in words.
- ... to compose their ideas into sentences and begin to write using simple words and phrases to communicate their ideas.

Helping your child achieve level 2 in reading...



Supporting a level 2c reader.	Supporting a level 2b reader.	Supporting a level 2a reader.
<p>Encourage your child to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... use different strategies to work out words they don't know e.g. phonic skills, reading on, contextual clues, grammatical skills. ... blend phonemes in words like 'train' and 'scared' in reading. ... blend sounds in words with consonants clusters e.g. 'cry', 'brown', 'scratch'. ... find and talk about the main events in a story. ... find the answers to simple questions in a text. ... predict what might happen in a story by thinking about what has already happened. ... compare settings and events to their own experiences. ... compare stories and say why they are similar and different. ... show that they understand the way information texts are organised and use this to help them when reading. ... describe the main plot in a story. 	<p>Encourage your child to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... use punctuation to help them make their reading more fluent and interesting. ... split words into syllables to read longer words. ... blend words with long vowel phonemes such as 'played', 'skate' and 'moon'. ... use different strategies to work out and read unknown words. ... spot own mistakes in reading and make changes, re-reading to establish some fluency. ... predict what might happen in a text by comparing the plot to others they have read by the same author. ... think of questions about a topic and find their own information in their books. ... predict the content of information texts and explanations, say what they think and find information to support their ideas. ... talk about what characters might be thinking or feeling using clues in the text. ... use the alphabet to help them find information / words in alphabetically ordered texts. ... talk about the structure of a story. ... talk about how the words that the author has chosen affects the meaning. 	<p>Encourage your child to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... read words with prefixes and suffixes and know what they mean in a text. ... read out loud using punctuation to help the listener engage and understand the text. ... read fluently, using different voices and tones to give expression. ... retell a story and use details to make it clear. ... find information in a text and discuss it by referring to the text. ... talk about the theme of a story and discuss the reasons for events in different stories. ... understand how certain words and phrases make texts funny, spooky or create moods. ... compare the layout, characters, settings and themes of different books. ... predict what a book might be about by skim reading, the title, contents and illustrations. ... find and talk about the vocabulary and writer's knowledge the author has used.

Helping your child achieve Level 2 in writing...



Encourage your child to...

- ... communicate their ideas in sentences.
- ... link ideas using strategies to create 'flow' (eg after that... then... soon... last time...).
- ... punctuate sentences using full stops and capital letters.
- ... use words like 'and', 'then', 'but', 'because', 'so', to join sentences.
- ... spell monosyllabic words correctly.
- ... use phonic skills to attempt to spell unknown polysyllabic words.
- ... vary sentence openers, eg 'It was a dark and windy night. Despite the bitterly cold wind the dog needed walking.' 'Before he could move the dog ran off'.
- ... vary sentence structure to interest the reader.
- ... use adjectives and descriptive phrases to add detail and emphasis.
- ... at minimum to form all letters correctly using clearly defined ascenders and descenders.
- ... to begin to join handwriting.

Helping your child achieve Level 3-Level 4 in...



Reading

- ✓ Encourage reading in all forms: magazines and newspapers, web pages, books, etc.
- ✓ Keep sharing books with your child.
- ✓ Encourage your child to be a detective - ask your child to predict what will happen next or say what they think of a character or their motives. However, like a detective, they need evidence - they have to justify their ideas by referring to key parts of the text.
- ✓ When your child is reading to you and stumbles on a word, avoid correcting them straight away - allow him/her to work out unfamiliar words by 'sounding them out' or seeing what the word could be, based on the rest of the sentence.

Helping your child achieve Level 3-Level 4 in...



Writing

- ✓ The two main things that stop children progressing past Level 4 are writing accurate sentences and breaking their work into paragraphs.
- ✓ Encourage your child to read aloud to listen for the pauses where there should be a full stop.
- ✓ Remind your child that all sentences start with a capital letter and to use capital letters for names.
- ✓ Encourage them to break their work into paragraphs by using TIPTOP – change the paragraph when you change the time, place, topic or person who is being written about.

Helping your child achieve Level 5 in...



Reading

- ✓ Try to encourage a mixture of fiction and non-fiction reading. Ask your child to identify the GAP of each text: Genre (type of text, e.g. article, letter, biography), Audience (who is the text aimed at) and Purpose (what is the writer's purpose – e.g. to entertain, persuade, inform, etc).
- ✓ Encourage your child to start 'reading between the lines' and looking for the *implied* meaning in texts.
- ✓ To progress, children need to be able to suggest why writers have chosen particular words or techniques to achieve their purpose and explain their ideas, e.g. 'Dickens used the simile 'as hard and sharp as flint' to describe

Scrooge to emphasise how harshly he treats others’.

- ✓ Students need to use quotations from the text to support their ideas. You can help by reminding your child to include quotation marks around the quote they choose. Get them to check that every time they have made a point, they have included a quote and tried to explain why it is effective.
- ✓ When your child comes across a new word, get them to make a note of it and to put it in a sentence of their own to ensure they have understood the meaning.



Helping your child achieve Level 5 in...

Writing

- ✓ Structure is increasingly important when working at level 5 but many children are still reluctant to plan their work. Encourage your child to do a brief plan for every piece of written work. Aim for an introduction and conclusion that link in some way and three well-developed paragraphs.
- ✓ The children need to use a variety of sentences but many struggle with complex sentences, often because they forget the comma.
- ✓ They can create complex sentences by starting with an ‘ing’ word – e.g. ‘Having finished his homework, Tom decided to watch TV’.
- ✓ They could also use the word ‘although’ – e.g. ‘Although she was shaking violently, Katie pretended that she wasn’t scared’.
- ✓ They can add information by using ‘who’ or ‘whose’, e.g. ‘Sam, who was the captain of the football team, hated rugby’.
- ✓ Even though children are capable of writing at Level 5, many do not achieve that level due to silly errors. Remind them that ALL written work should be checked and improved before it is handed in. This checking should also include trying to improve vocabulary so a Thesaurus would be very useful.

Helping your child achieve Level 6 in...



Reading

- ✓ The children should be able to recognise bias in texts and say how it is achieved.
- ✓ An easy way for them to do this is to read an article about the same event in different newspapers or on the internet. Encourage them to discuss what differences they notice in both the language and layout of the articles.
- ✓ Look for ambiguities in texts and encourage your child to suggest alternative interpretations.
- ✓ When your child is completing a research task, get them to read two or three sources, make brief notes and summarise what they have learned in 50 words. If they find this too challenging, start with 100 words and decrease the word limit as their summaries become more succinct.
- ✓ Start discussing how the headlines and images link to the content of the text.
- ✓ When your child is writing about texts, they need to start picking out the writer's choices and explaining them, e.g. The poet chose to use a Jamaican dialect alongside Standard English to show how he has embraced his life in England but has not abandoned his Caribbean culture.

Helping your child achieve Level 6 in...



Writing

- ✓ The children should be using a range of sentence types and lengths. Your child can probably tell you that short sentences can be used to create tension but may forget to use them. Short sentences are also very useful for opening and closing paragraphs.
- ✓ Planning should be more detailed. If your child is writing a persuasive piece, they should allocate a persuasive technique to each paragraph before they start writing.
- ✓ The children need to vary paragraph lengths. The opening and closing paragraphs should be short and really engage or 'hook' the reader.
- ✓ The more sophisticated writers could start to use a one sentence paragraph. Look out for examples in magazines and newspapers.
- ✓ The children need to use a range of punctuation like colons, semi-colons, dashes and brackets.

Dear Parents,

You may remember that at the start of the year, the children made a VCOP pyramid to keep at home to assist them with their homework.

The VCOP pyramid reminds the children that there are four key elements of writing that ALL creative writing should aim to use and which are applicable to many non-fiction areas of writing also.

These are:

- Vocabulary (V) – the words that we use.
- Connectives (C) – the words we use to link phrases into longer sentences and to link one sentence to the next.
- Openers (O) – how we start our sentences.
- Punctuation (P) – the range of punctuation used.

The top of the pyramid is the most basic level and the further down each side you go, the greater the complexity of the VCOP.

Ask your child to consider their use of VCOP within each piece of writing that they do – they may like to highlight the different elements of each. They could then consider what level they are at for each element and how to uplevel/improve each aspect.

Expectations by the end of KS2

The Government expects the vast majority of children to achieve a Level 4 by the end of Year Six in both reading and writing. Some children may be capable of achieving a Level 5 and a small number a Level 6 in either reading, writing or both. With this in mind, this booklet is intended to help you understand what is required at each level and how you can further support your child at home.

Many thanks for your support.

