

## Did you know?

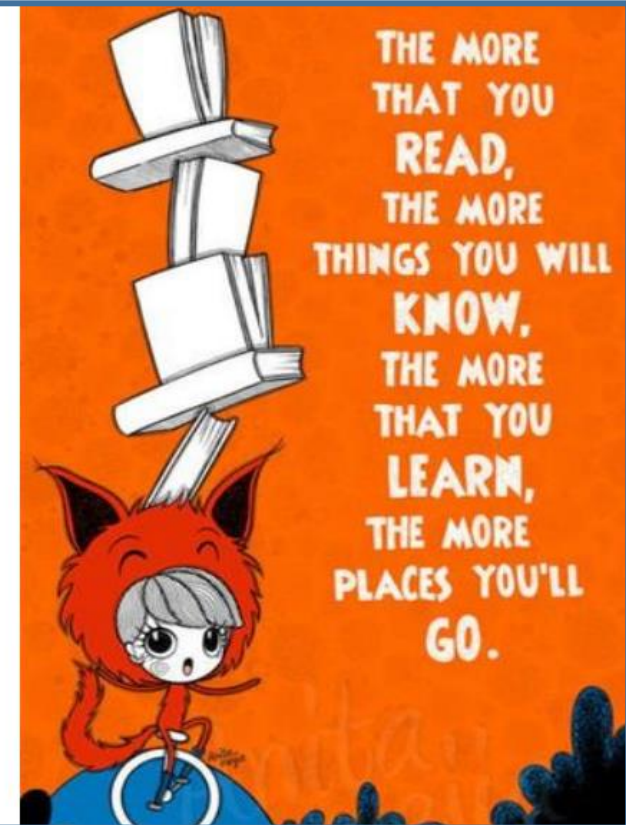
Researchers looking at parental involvement in reading at home found how many words children will have heard by the time they are 5 years old:

- ▶ Never read to, 4,662 words;
- ▶ 1–2 times per week, 63,570 words;
- ▶ 3–5 times per week, 169,520 words;
- ▶ daily, 296,660 words;
- ▶ Five books a day, 1,483,300 words



Plumcroft Primary School

Learning to read is the most important skill children will learn during their early schooling and has far-reaching implications for life-long confidence and well-being.



# How can I support my child's reading at home?



## 1. Build reading into your child's daily routine

Find a regular time for reading in your child's day, so that they can begin to expect it as part of their routine. This can be any time of day. Some children enjoy reading before bed, but others can just be too exhausted at night. It might be better for some children to read just after dinner, or in the morning after breakfast, when they have more energy. You can encourage your child to track their reading using a weekly reading chart. This will help them celebrate their progress.

## 2. Read every day.

Reading regularly at home provides children with the practice they need to become great readers. Remember, "The more kids read, the better they read," and the same holds true for the opposite effect, "the less kids read, the poorer they'll read." Beyond practice time, reading at home reinforces a positive attitude around reading—children start to enjoy reading! The best way to incorporate reading in the household is to devote 20 to 40 minutes, at the same time every evening, to family reading time. Make it part of a routine, as discussed in tip #1. Another fun idea is to have children read to their pets, siblings, or stuffed animals, like a game.

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## 3. Make a special reading spot.

Designating a special reading spot for children to read with their parents guardians is not only fun, but is also a great way to create a distraction-free zone where children can concentrate. The reading spot should be rid of any extraneous noise, toys, etc. Putting some pillows or a comfy chair in the corner of a living room and surrounding the area with books is a great way to go.

## 4. Encourage your child to follow their interests

Let your young children choose the books they read. You can do this by keeping books on a shelf they have regular access to, or presenting them with two to three books and letting them choose. Let them read the same book, or same genre of reading material (such as football magazines!), over and over again. Repetition will help younger children learn words and understand how language is structured. Following their interests is also the best way to keep them engaged and make reading fun, which will make them more likely to want to read more widely going forward.

Finally, if you are reading the book to them, let them turn the pages, skip pages, return to pages and let them interrupt you – even if it feels like they are getting off track. Talking about the book helps them makes sense of what they are reading.

# How can I support my child's reading at home?



## 5. Be a great reading partner!

It's no fun to read when you're forced to or feel embarrassed to read. Building trust and supporting a child reader is crucial as a reading partner. Here are some tips for becoming a great reading partner:

- Be patient and encouraging.
- Read aloud and track the words with your finger as you are reading.
- Read the same stories over and over. Try reading the same stories in different ways, with different voices to make it fun and interesting.
- Ask questions about the story while you're reading to gauge comprehension.
- Pick books that are at the right level for your young reader—5+ mistakes on one page is too hard. No mistakes or only one mistake per page is too easy.
- Gently correct mistakes and re-read the entire sentence.
- Give positive feedback and tell the reader he or she is doing a great job.

## 6. Surround your child with books.

When children have access to books in their home, they become familiar with books and the act of reading, effectively giving them a head start in learning. A child who looks at books and reads with his or her parents/guardians everyday has a major advantage compared to children who never read at home and who have never been introduced to the concept of reading. Simply interacting with books on a regular basis makes a huge difference in a child's development.

# How can I support my child's reading at home?



## 7. Bring books everywhere.

Incorporating books into everyday activities will continue to help children become more familiar with books and will encourage everyday reading. Place books in every room of the house, in the car, and take books everywhere.

## 8. Set a good example; be caught in the act!

Children are a product of their upbringing and mimic the behavior they see at home, repeating the actions they observe from their parents or guardians. If a child observes his or her parent/guardian reading every night, then that child will emulate the same behaviour.

## 9. Be enthusiastic!

Positive attitudes are very important to a child's [reading development](#) and generate a desire to read. Showing genuine excitement for children's' reading skills will encourage them to become great readers. Struggling readers may start to develop a negative attitude towards reading, but showing them that reading can be fun will get them excited about reading time. Great times to praise a child when he or she is reading include, when he or she sounds out a difficult word, self-corrects and re-reads a sentence, or asks questions as he or she is reading.

# How can I support my child's reading at home?



## 10. Take breaks while reading

**Your child doesn't have to read an entire book in one go!** Any time spent sharing or talking about a book is beneficial, even if it's just a couple of minutes at a time. If they have to close the book early because it's time for tea, or they're just losing interest, that's okay. Reading can take a lot of mental energy and taking breaks gives children a chance to slowly build the mental stamina they need, so that soon they will be able to read for longer stretches of time.

## 11. Use technology together

National Literacy Trust research has found that, when used appropriately and with an adult, technology can provide an important route into reading for many children, including those in the early years, and boys. Feel free, at times, to use your mobile phones, tablets, computers, laptops and other devices to engage your child in reading and activities that can help them build their vocabulary.

This can include a multitude of activities, such as:

- Telling a story using pictures on your phone
- Using apps to read e-books or listen to audiobooks

These activities, or similar ones, can be used with children of all ages. Young children will learn best when doing these activities alongside you, and you can help your older child by showing them how to use the technology appropriately.