

Guidance for Schoolreaders Volunteers

Supporting in the early stages of reading

When reading with a child: give them time, let them attempt unknown words, help them sound the first letters, use the pictures for clues, ask lots of questions about the story.

When you hear the child read:

- Let the child hold the book.
- Point to the words as they read them.
- Talk about the pictures.
- Allow plenty of time for discussion before you turn over the page. 'What do you think will happen next?' etc.
- Let the child retell the story to you. Don't worry if they decide to make an alternative ending
- Make reading fun and make sure you praise the child's efforts.

Helping the child read a word

- Which letter sounds (phonemes) do you recognise? Can you say them?
- Can you blend the different sounds together?
- Does the word make sense? Read the sentence again to check.
- Have you read the word before? Can you find it on another page?
- Are there any bits of the word you recognise? Miss out the word you are finding tricky and finish the sentence. Then go back and work out what the word is.
- The same strategies apply for helping the child attempt new words, but at this stage their phonic knowledge and fluency has developed.
- Encourage the child to look carefully at punctuation and how this affects their expression as they read.

At this stage it is useful to ask more specific questions about what they are reading.

Useful questions give different ways to check and clarify understanding

- What does this word mean?
- Can this word have more than one meaning?
- What happened at the beginning?
- What did the.....do?
- Which word told you that.....?
- Describe.....
- Which paragraph tells you.....?
- Why do.....?
- What type of book is it?
- Who is the author/illustrator?
- Could you tell anything about the book before you started reading it? What were the clues?
- Who are the characters? Who do you like/dislike? Why?
- What was your favourite part? Why?
- Would you recommend the story to a friend? What would you say to your friend about the book?

Interpreting

These questions encourage the child to infer and interpret information, events or ideas in a book and make links with their own experience and knowledge:

- Why did.....?
- What does the author think about.....?
- How did.....react?
- How did.....?
- What ideas are we given about.....?

Predicting

These questions encourage the children to look at the structure and organisation of the text they are reading and think ahead and predict what might happen next:

- What is the purpose of.....?
- How does the layout help.....?
- Why are.....used?
- Why are the words in bold print?

Language

These questions focus on the type of language the author uses and imagine themselves in the world of the text:

- How has the choice of words created a feeling of.....?
- What do phrases such as.....tell you?
- Why are.....used?

What do I write in the reading record? (if you are asked to fill it out)

Comments in the reading record are extremely helpful for the teacher and also as a link between the Schoolreader and school.

The following list is not exhaustive but offers suggestions that may be appropriate:

- How enthusiastic is the child about the choice of book?
- Does the child read with fluency and expression?
- Does the child understand the words used in the text?
- Is the child confident to attempt new words?
- What reading strategies is the child using? Sounding out, using picture clues, use of the context?
- Is the child aware of punctuation?
- Can the child retell parts or all of the story?
- It is very important to remember that the 'enjoyment factor' is always worth commenting on!