

Reading Tips



Since your child has been at school last you have probably been reading a lot with your child. All of your children are at very different stages of reading right now - here are some tips to help your child progress at **their** pace.

Your child needs to listen to stories, songs and rhymes regularly - there are millions of websites with songs and rhymes but the one we particularly love is www.supersimplesongs.com - it has all the old favourites as well as lots of new rhymes and songs.

Your child needs lots of experience handling books and sharing stories with you. Your child probably has a favourite story book and it is fine to re-read treasured stories over and over again. Remember memory is a key skill for reading so it doesn't matter one little bit if your child is memorising whole chunks of text - in fact it is a very important stage in learning to read independently.

When you read to your child try to point to the words as you read, matching one spoken word to one written word, if the text allows. Don't stop to talk on the first read through, share the book for pleasure alone. When you re-read the book at another time encourage your child to join in any repeated phrases and ask questions like - What was your favourite bit? Has this ever happened to you?



At this stage of the year in Junior Infants many of your children are reading simple texts themselves because they have a store of sight words and high frequency words which are the words that turn up over and over again as they read - (in, the, can

,and...etc.) Your child also uses tricks like looking at the picture for cues, as well as leaning on their phonics knowledge to decode what they are reading.

At this stage you can support your child by reading the new book first so that they can understand the story and hear the words and language pattern. Again point to the words as you read for your child matching one spoken word to one written word. Talk about what is happening in the story and ask your child to predict what might happen next.



As your child becomes more confident as an independent reader listen to them as they read simple texts, helping them with difficult words. If your child loses the meaning of what they are reading ask them to stop and think about what the word or sentence might mean by using one of the following strategies:

- Read to the end of the sentence and then decide on a sensible word to fill the gap
- Re-read the sentence
- Use the picture
- Use the letter sounds to break the word down
- Or read the tricky word for your child

You could also try sharing a book together at this stage - your child reads one page, you read the next. When you do this you are modelling fluent reading for your child and if your child loses the meaning of the story they can pick it up again while you are reading your part. Encourage your child to use expression and to change voices when they are reading at this stage.

As your child becomes a more fluent and confident reader encourage them to self-correct any errors they might make. Also ask them to express opinions about the books they are reading - Do they like the characters/plot/setting? Why? Why not? Explain it is ok not to like a book too!

Children develop at different speeds when they are learning to read - don't force them onto a stage when they are not ready. Here are some simple games and ideas for you to play with your child as they progress along their reading journey!

Understanding print



Stage 1:

- Check your child remembers that print is read from left to right
- Look at the beginning sound of a word - can they find another word beginning with the same sound

Stage 2:

- Look at the cover of the book - look at the picture, read the title, predict what the story might be about
- Talk about what's happening and what might happen next.

Stage 3:

- Talk about events in a story - what happened first? What happened next? What happened in the end?
- Look at speech marks and punctuation.

Stage 4:

- Decode tricky words
- Make links between events in the book and their own lives
- Use expression when reading
- Look at chunks in words rather than individual letters - jump/ing

Stage 5:

- Sound out longer and more difficult words
- Self correct as they read

Games and activities



Stage 1:

- Retell favourite stories
- Make choices about books they want to read
- Develop observational skills - some books have hidden icons in the pictures (Farmyard Tales) or challenge your child with Where's Wally? type books
- Look for signs and logos in the world around you - on cereal packets, appliances, shopping bags

Stage 2:

- Use magnetic letters to make words
- Recite rhymes together
- Teach your child to read and write their own name (remember the first letter is the only capital - all the others are lower case letters)
- Invent new stories for the characters in a book - you could act as scribe and your child could illustrate the story
- Play memory games with your word wallet
- Play I spy
- Sing the Alphabet song
- Use playdoh to make letter shapes

Stage 3:

- Introduce simple non-fiction books

- Make your own story to go with wordless stories (The Snowman)
- Use your word wallet to build sentences
- Ask your child to circle word they can read in a page taken from a magazine
- Ask your child to give you words that rhyme with *bat* or *car* or *fan* or *get* (you are asking them to identify the rhyming patterns)

Stage 4:

- Ask your child how you think a character might feel at different points in a story
- Encourage your child to read the pictures in a book where the text might be too difficult for them to decode yet
- Make jumbled words - cut out the letters from familiar words (*he/the/can/some*) and ask them to assemble the word correctly
- Make jumbled sentences using the word wallet - ask your child to assemble it correctly.

Stage 5:

- Read as many books as you can and play games from the selection above.

