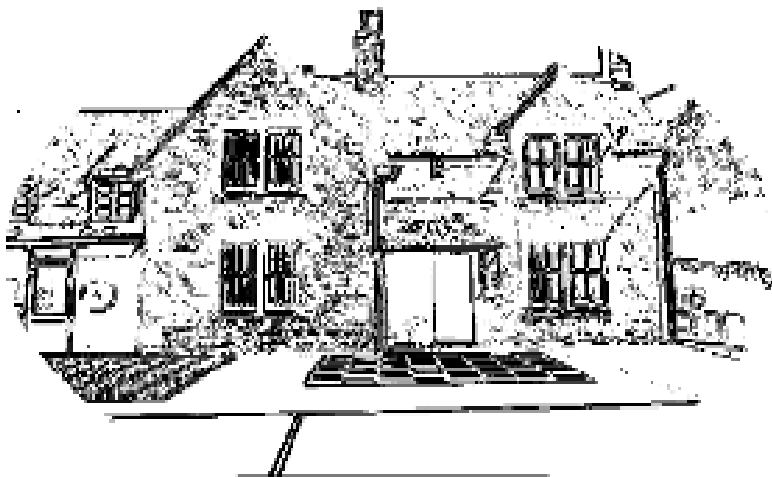


# **A Guide to Helping your Child with Reading**



**Horspath C.E.  
Primary**

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## INTRODUCTION

Children are natural learners. They are constantly learning about their environment through interaction, exploration, trial and error, and “having a go” at things. Children watch what adults do and then act out what they have seen. This role-play of adult behaviour is an intrinsic component of childhood learning. As a child’s world of experience expands, so deeper understandings are constructed. New learning is always built upon existing foundations, and existing structures are constantly being adapted to accommodate fresh insights.

From a very early age children can be encouraged to enjoy books by sharing them with adults. The six-month old child who turns the pages of a board book is beginning to behave like a reader.

The adult can build upon this by giving support and encouragement. By demonstrating how books work, talking about the illustrations and indicating how they relate to print, the adult is showing the child the meaning and purposes for reading.

Children need to understand this so that they will be motivated to read. Children can be encouraged to retell stories and by valuing their attempts to make sense of the print, the adult can foster an enthusiasm for and a positive attitude to reading. Children also learn from their environment and their interaction with others. In our literate society, environmental print demonstrates the many purposes for reading and encourages children to develop an understanding to the written word.

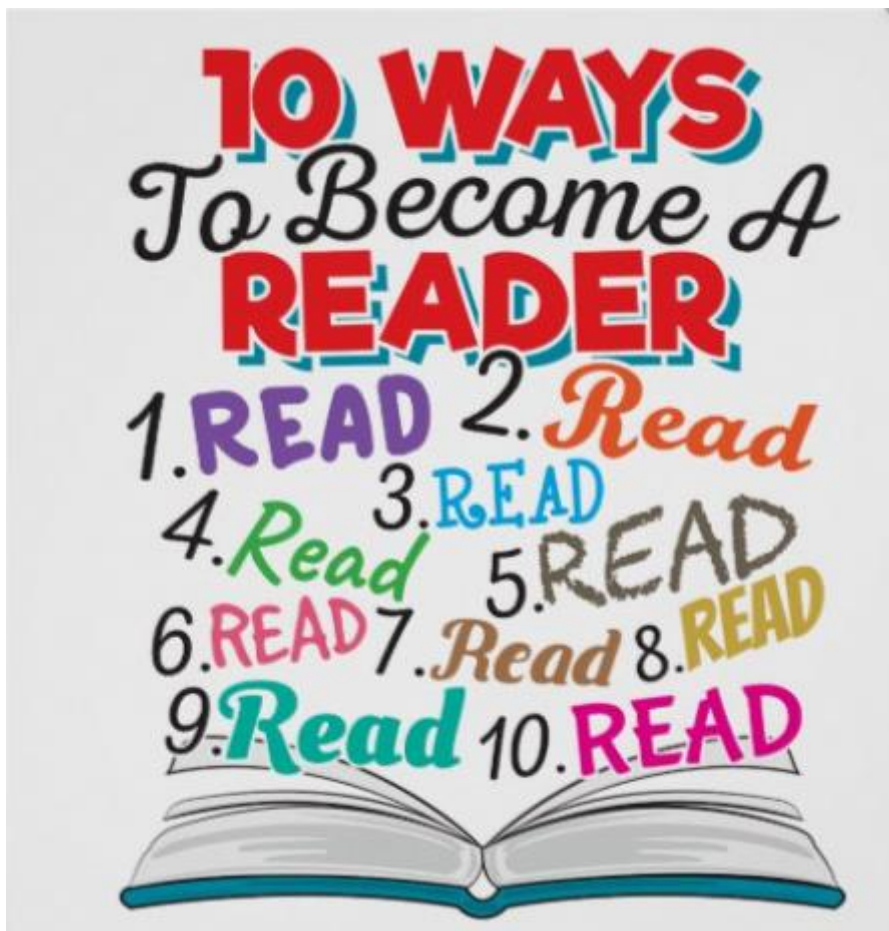
Children, therefore, become literate in the same way as they learn to speak their home language. By experimenting, taking risks and interacting with more skilled language users, children are reading for real purposes in meaningful context.

Your child’s reading development is based on a partnership between you, your child and Horspath School. Your child’s class teacher is always available to give support.

**Michelle Bailey**  
**Literacy subject leader**



**CHILDREN LEARN TO READ BY READING**



# CONTEXT

## THE LITERATE ENVIRONMENT

Children need to understand that there are many different purposes for reading e.g. information, pleasure and instruction. They are surrounded by print from their earliest days, at home, and in the wider community.

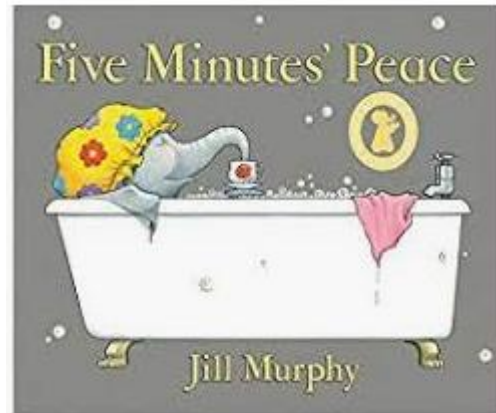
Teachers and parents can inspire this interest by taking children on a “print walk” around the neighbourhood; collecting examples of notices, signs, advertisements, and labels etc including non-written symbols and in some areas printed in different language, scripts and visual texts.



Within the home there are often newspapers, magazines, books, letters, forms, circulars and food packages. Television advertisements, with the spoken and written word and supporting visual images also have a powerful influence and are assimilated easily by children.

Within the community there are many examples of environmental print e.g. street names, large advertisements, hoardings, shop signs, notice boards etc. In the shops and supermarkets children soon learn to recognise foods, sweets, crisps by their distinctive labels.

Children’s awareness of print must be acknowledged and valued. Building on their knowledge and experience, adults and children can work together to create a print rich environment. In this process, opportunities will arise for adults to model, read and share the meaning of the written word.



Creating a love of reading in children is potentially one of the most powerful ways of improving academic standards.

There can be few better ways to improve pupils chances in school, or beyond in the wider world than to enable them to become truly independent readers.



## WORKING TOGETHER

We believe that parents play a vital role in helping their child learn to read. After all they taught the child to talk.

We appreciate that parents have many commitments and not much time, but if we work together we can help children become confident readers.

## CHOOSING BOOKS

At Horspath School we use the Read Write Inc. phonics books to develop early reading. We also have a large bank of colour coded fiction and non-fiction books for children to choose from.

As the children are encouraged to choose, they may bring home books which they cannot read alone and favourite books which they have read repeatedly (you may find that a very well loved story like this is the first one that your child learns to read independently).

We will help your child to select books.

We believe that children should:

- Behave like readers
- Be confident
- Enjoy books
- Talk about books they have read
- Acquire a skill, which they will use throughout life



## **SUPPORTING THE INITIAL STAGES OF READING DEVELOPMENT**

### **WHAT CAN A PARENT DO TO HELP AT HOME?**

- Try to choose a quiet time every day with your child, and make yourselves comfortable.
- Let your child hold the book.
- Point to the words as you read them.
- Use the pictures as well; there is often an additional story in them.
- Allow plenty of time for discussion before you turn over a page. A valuable question is: "What do you think will happen next?"
- Let your child read the story to you afterwards, even if this is reciting by heart, or making the story up from the pictures. This is a very important stage.
- Memorising is not cheating. Make reading fun!
- Children learn to behave like readers by these activities. Praise all their attempts.
- If your child is too tired or reluctant to join in, just make it an opportunity for you to read in a relaxed and enjoyable way. Do not force participation.

### **READING ALL THE TIME**

Take every opportunity to read with your child. A wide variety of books/texts are available from:

- School
- The local library
- Shops including charity shops
- The Internet
- Book swaps with friends

### **REMEMBER**

Print is all around us. Even when time is scarce, you can read with your child e.g. signs in the street, labels in the supermarket, the TV page in the newspaper.

**ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO READ EVERYTHING!**



## **AS THE CHILD BECOMES A MORE CONFIDENT READER**

It is still important to read with your child even when they have become a more confident reader.

### **CONTINUE TO SUPPORT AND GUIDE YOUR CHILD**

Do not worry if your child's reading is not word perfect. If they are making sense of the text, this does not matter e.g. "house" instead of "home", "Good dog, Spot" instead of "Good boy, Spot". It would matter, however, if they read: "He got on his house and rode away", as this would have changed the meaning.

Developing a child's vocabulary is extremely important. In school we have focused vocabulary displays linked to the books we are reading. If there are any words that your child does not understand, explain the meaning to them or demonstrate how to use a dictionary if you have one at home.

Always be ready to take over if your child is struggling. With your help they will succeed and will want to read more and more as a result.



## **SUPPORTING THE CONFIDENT READER**

Confident readers have reached the stage where they no longer wish to read to an adult and want to read silently to themselves. The interaction between the parent and child changes at this stage. To ensure that the child's reading development continues to move forward, we would encourage parents to question the child about what they are reading, at an appropriate time, to extend their reading and share their enjoyment of the book.

Below there are some further ideas to support a confident reader:

- Encourage your child to read or tell stories to younger member of the family. This is a great opportunity to develop story telling skills.
- Value your own reading and be informed by that of your child. Widen each other's horizons.
- Recognise that both you and your child may have quite different ideas about what you want to read and respect choices made. Broaden reading experiences by exchanging books.

## **QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN YOUR CHILD HAS CHOSEN A BOOK**

- What is the title of the book?
- What kind of book is it? (Fiction, non fiction, poetry, short story etc)
- Who is the author/illustrator?
- Have you read any other books by the same author?
- What made you choose this book? (Author, cover, illustration, recommendation etc)
- Did you read the blurb before selecting the book?
- Could you tell anything about the book before you started reading it? What were the clues?
- Have you read this book before? Why have you chosen it again?



## **QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE THE CHILD BEGINS OR RESUMES THE BOOK**

- What has happened so far?
- What do you think will happen next?
- What are the clues that make you think this?
- How would you like the story to end?
- Are you involved in the story? Why?
- Where is the story set? Is there a description?
- When is the story set? (Past, present, future)
- Who are the characters in the story? Who do you like/dislike? Why?
- Do you feel similar to any of the characters? Tell me what is similar?

## QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN YOUR CHILD HAS FINISHED READING THE BOOK

- Was the book as you expected?
- Was there anything you disliked about the story?
- At what point did you decide you liked/disliked the story?
- If you have read this book before, did you enjoy it more this time?
- Did you notice anything special about the way language is used in this book?
- Dialect, descriptive writing etc
- If you had written this book, how would you have made it better?
- Has anything that happens in this book ever happened to you?
- Can you describe an exciting moment or favourite part of the story?
- Is the story straightforward? Is there more than one story happening at the same time?
- Who was telling the story?
- Was this the most important character in the story?
- Do we get to know the characters quickly or do they build up slowly through the book?
- Was the ending as you expected? Did you like the way the story ended?
- Do you like the illustrations? Do you have a favourite?
- Would you recommend this book to your friends? Tell me what you would say to a friend?



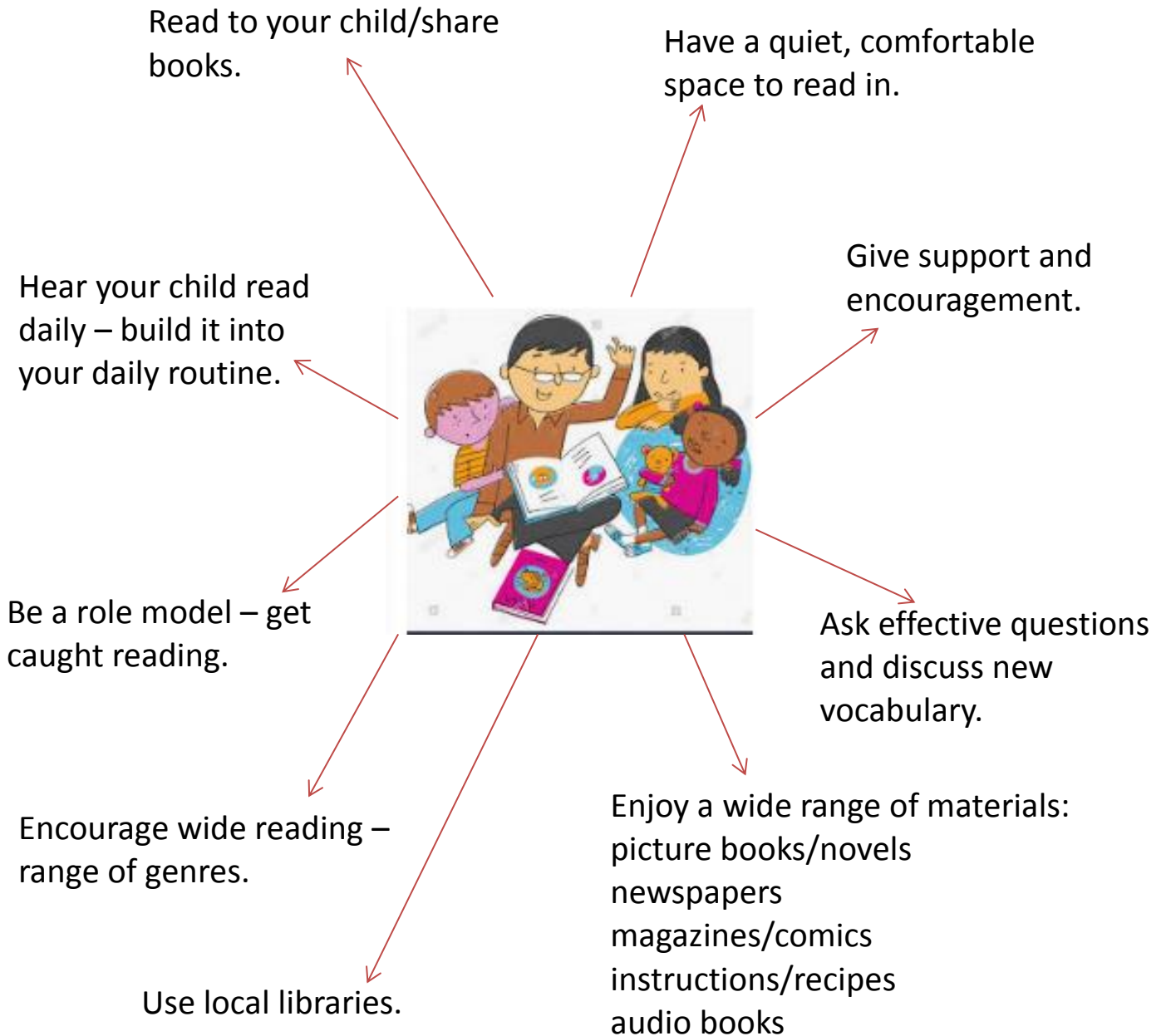
## IF READING BECOMES DIFFICULT AT HOME ADVICE FOR PARENTS

Reading must be enjoyed to gain maximum benefit:

- Avoid confrontation.
- Offer alternative reading material e.g. internet access, magazines that the children have an interest in, non-fiction often appeals to boys more than fiction etc.
- Encourage reading at different times of the day or week.
- Buy/borrow book tapes from the library to encourage a love of language e.g. listen to tapes on journeys, at bedtime etc.
- Share reading activities and interact with the text together e.g. work together on the internet to book a holiday, explore a football team website etc.
- Share the problem with the teacher and ask for ideas.



## Summary



**Your child is never too old to read to you or for you to read to them.  
Make it a pleasure! Make it fun!**