

Frequently asked questions

My child is so absorbed by the pictures that she doesn't concentrate on the text. How will she learn to recognise the words?

There is often a lot to look at in the pictures and the pictures will be adding detail to the story. When you turn to a new page, let your child spend a moment or two looking at the pictures and maybe talk about what is happening. She will then use this information when reading. After this remind your child to look at the words: "Now let's look at the words and read about what is happening."

My child isn't very enthusiastic about reading. What should I do?

This may be temporary, due to tiredness, or it may be because they need a change of books or of routine.

- Read lots of books to your child and encourage him or her to join in with favourite parts.
- Talk about books which have been read at school.
- Return to re-read favourite books.
- Read longer or shorter books or try non-fiction, poetry, plays and taped books.
- Keep reading sessions short and enjoyable and give lots of praise when your child contributes.

How long should we read for?

It's best to be flexible and vary your reading sessions. Sometimes a short read and a long chat about the book is best. Sometimes your child might want to read on to the end of the story to find out what happens next. On some days, we know, children just feel too tired or are distracted by wanting to do other things and it is best to leave it to another day. Five productive, enjoyable minutes together with a good book is time well spent.

How often should we read each book?

There isn't a simple answer to this question, it really depends on what your child is learning from the book and how much he or she enjoys it. Reading it through once is fine. However, with very short books you may feel it's appropriate to read the book twice at the same sitting, especially if your child has enjoyed the story. Sometimes a second read the next day is valuable to consolidate new words which were worked on during the first read, or to build confidence. On a second read, your child may take great pride in reading it fluently and this will be a good springboard to the next book.

If your child is reading a set of books fluently they will have been chosen to consolidate the recognition of key words, encourage expressive, fluent reading and develop comprehension.

He keeps getting stuck on really simple words, like *the, and, was*, which he ought to just know. It's very frustrating. What should I do?

Even very simple words need to be seen many times in different contexts before we recognise them automatically. If your child is having problems remembering a key word make a mental note and return to the word at the end of the book. Sometimes words can look very strange, just because they begin with a capital letter and are seen less often in that form.

The Rigby Star books will give you advice about the key words to focus on in each book. Sometimes it is a good idea, after you have finished the book, to play hunt the word and try to spot and count each time the word is used.

Sometimes the children are given key rings of high frequency words to learn to help their fluency.



Reading at St. Ives Infant School

Reading is one of the most important skills that a child learns. We aim to help children view reading as an enjoyable activity. We hope to foster a love of reading for life. To help the children succeed we like to work in partnership with parents and carers.



Hopefully this leaflet will be helpful and give you some information about reading at our school.

Reading at Home

At school we teach the children to read but they need lots of practice in order to succeed and you can provide this at home.

Reading to Your Child

Listening to stories being read is the perfect introduction to reading. When reading at home make it exciting by:

- Chose a cosy area
- Use different voices for different characters
- Ask children questions about what might happen next
- Look at and talk about the pictures
- Encourage favourites which are read again and again
- Add sound effects or actions
- Don't forget to enjoy books, newspapers and magazines yourself, they like to copy what they see you do!

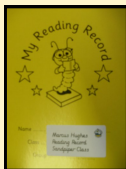
When children are learning to read for themselves it is still essential that you continue to read other stories to them.

Sharing Reading Books at Home

Children are often keen to share their reading books with as many people as they can persuade to listen! Ideally your child should read their reading book to an adult at home at least four times a week. Short regular sessions are best– it is better to do ten minutes a day rather than 40 minutes in one go. Remember to record which pages your child has read and write a brief comment. Please let us know if you feel your child's book is too easy or difficult. We will then hear your child read and change their level if we feel it is appropriate.

Also encourage your child to try out their reading skills on:

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|-----------------|------------------|
| • Sign posts | • Shopping lists |
| • Headlines | • Websites |
| • Comics | • Menus |
| • Library books | • Food labels |



How to help your child when they get stuck

Working out new words is at the heart of learning to read. When your child is stuck, don't let him or her become anxious. Instead encourage him or her to puzzle it out.. "We need to think about this one..." The adult's role is to judge how to offer support. It isn't appropriate to work on every new word. If the word is obscure it's often better just to tell them what it is and see if they can remember later in the book.

Try the following ideas:

- Give them time to think.
- Ask them to identify the first sound of the word, or tell them if they are unable to do this themselves.
- Suggest that they read on to the end of the sentence. This often suggests what the missing word might be.
- Tell them the word and ask them to read from the start of the sentence again.

Understanding

After reading a book together, try to check your child's understanding, perhaps by asking questions about the story and as they get more able to find the evidence in the book for the answer. You could also ask questions such as:

- Which bit did you like best? Why was that?
- Was there anything you didn't like in the story?
- Why do you think__said__?
- I wonder how so and so felt when such and such happened?



Reading at School

Our main approach is teaching reading phonetically (by sounding out). The children learn the 44 sounds (including the alternatives) and practise blending these together to read sounds. We use 'Letters and Sounds' and 'Jolly Phonic' resources to support this. We also learn to read tricky words that can not be read by sounding out e.g. 'said'. As the children progress we encourage them to learn to read on sight high frequency words to help fluency. Some children are given word key rings to help them learn to read certain high frequency on sight. These can be practised at home.



Reading Together

Each Year One and Two class has a weekly 'Reading Together' session at 9-9.30am, to which parents are invited. It is a great chance to watch the teacher demonstrate some phonic teaching and a chance to listen to your child read.

Other Information and Routines

Your child will have an individual reading book which they will have the opportunity to change every day just before lunch. The children get to choose their own book from the colour band they are reading in and need to be responsible for changing their book when they have finished it. Please could you or your child write the title of the book in to their record book. Sometimes they will get the opportunity to read this book to an adult in school.

Your child will also take part in guided reading sessions, usually three a times a week (reading in a small group with an adult). Every day we will be doing some phonic work as a whole class.

