

Help your child with reading

A quick guide for busy parents

'Parents are a child's most influential teacher with a hugely important part to play in helping them to learn to read.'

Topmarks Educational Research

Follow our 4 steps to success ...

- Step 1: Know your child's reading strengths
- Step 2: Read and talk
- Step 3: Praise, praise, praise
- Step 4: Be a model



You make a difference ☺

Helping your child learn to read, encouraging them to talk about books and reading stories **to** them makes a **huge** impact on their progress. Research shows that as little as **10 minutes reading with an adult each day makes a big difference** to young readers. But you know this already!

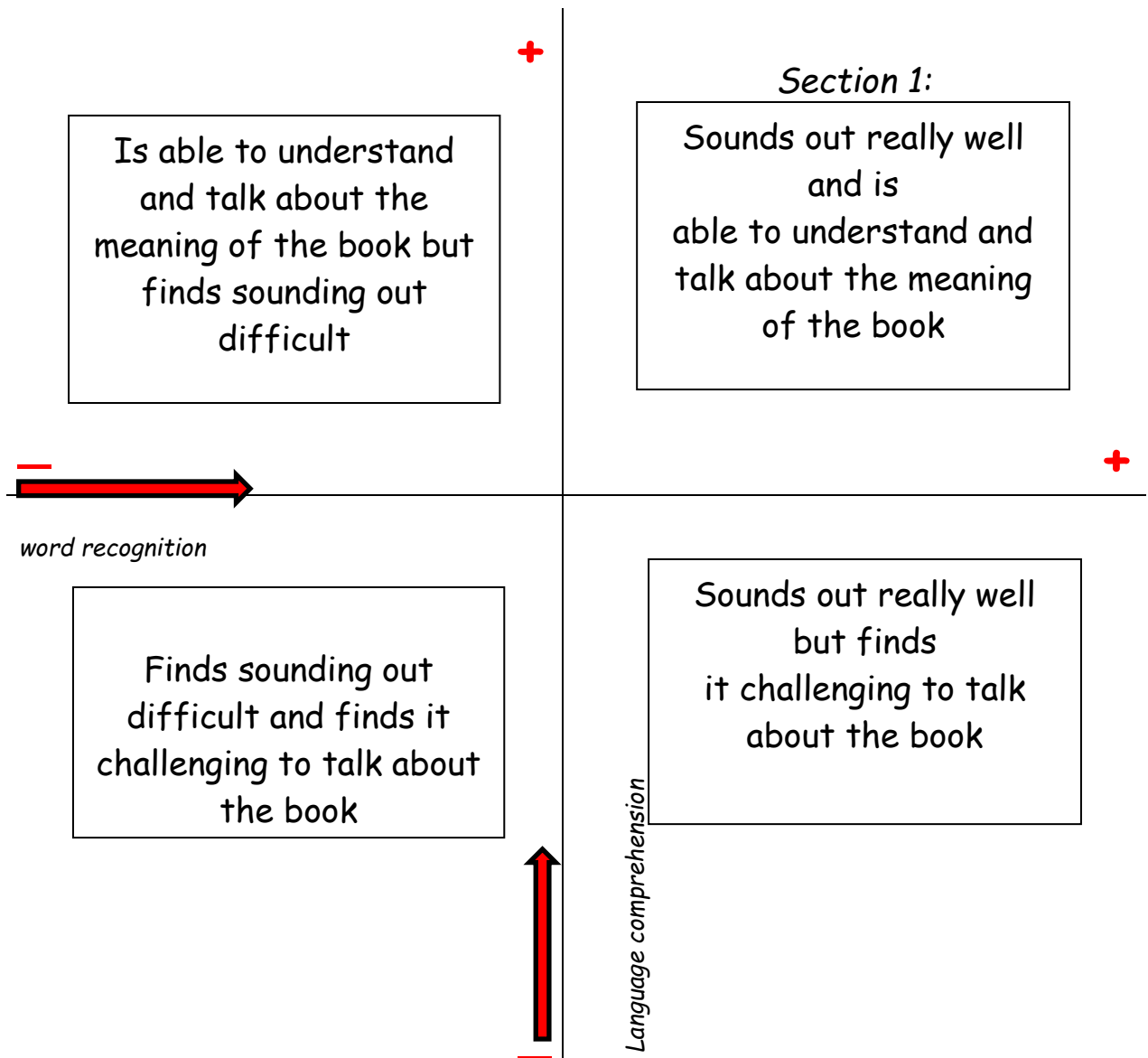
So, in a busy family day, how can you make the most of reading time?

Step 1: Know your child's reading strengths

Your child is *learning to read* so that they can *read to learn*. To be a successful reader they need to:

- decode ('sound out') and recognise words
- understand and evaluate texts
- understand the purpose and structure of texts
- develop confidence, stamina and enjoyment

This chart shows a 'Simple view of reading' as it develops. As your child reads, decide which section best describes their strengths. The place to aim for is **section 1** where decoding and understanding are equally developed.



Step 2: Balance reading time with talk time

Now you know their strengths, focus on developing skills as they work through a reading level.

At the start of a new colour band, focus on decoding strategies. Use the tips for success below to develop 'sounding out' and word recognition.

Develop fluency by re-reading and pre-read parts of the story.

As your child works through the colour band spend more time talking about the text to develop understanding of the story, the text structure and punctuation.

Really encourage an expressive voice for reading aloud and take time to develop higher order reading skills like evaluation and inference through talk.

Step 3: Praise, praise and praise some more

'Nothing breeds success like success'.

This is true for us all! Make reading positive. Find lots of good things to say and their progress (and confidence) will rise.

- 'You read really fluently.'
- 'That was great sounding out / blending.'
- 'I like your effort / concentration.'
- 'You could answer all my questions.'
- 'Your expression really made the story sound good.'

Praise encourages your child to strive - even when it's hard work. It's never too much!

Step 4: Be a model ... of great reading

When **you** read to your child they know what a successful reader sounds like. Re-read or pre read sections to your child so they can feel the flow of the story and hear the great expression.

Read for pleasure together whenever possible - especially books they want to read but can't **yet!**



***All this will take more
than 10 minutes!***

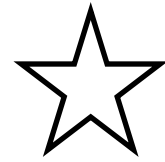


You're right- so don't try to do it all at once.

One approach might be to read each book at least twice. On the first day focus on decoding and the literal meaning of the text. The next day focus on expression, punctuation and vocabulary.

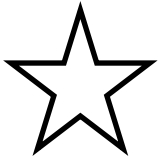
Longer books might take several days to get through and, as your child develops, re-reading can be replaced with reading, talking and evaluating as you go along. Let your child start or finish off a longer book independently and chat about the parts you did not listen to.

Current national statistics show that children are very good at reading and decoding words but that some are struggling with understanding texts, specific vocabulary and the general layout and purpose of a text. Developing a range of reading skills may appear to slow progress through the levels but it builds a firm foundation and a more rounded reader.



Tips for success

Try some of these tips when reading with your child. We have split it up over 2 days to give you an idea of how it could work.



Day 1

Decoding and literal understanding

Read (decode) and talk about the literal meaning of the text on first read through. *Allow time for your child to self-correct an error.*

Phonic knowledge (decoding)

- Say the beginning sound
- Sound out - S-t-r-e-t-c-h out the sounds that the letters represent - bl-en-d them together again
- Look for 'chunks' ... 'ing' 'er'
- split the word into 'sound buttons'
- How many sound buttons? Sh - ar - p = 3 buttons / 5 letters!



Word recognition and graphic knowledge

- How many syllables does this word have?
- Look right through the word and read the ending.
- Is there a little word hiding inside it?
- Do you know a word that looks similar?
- Can you find a word that rhymes with.....?

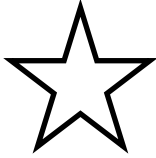
Grammatical Knowledge

- If stuck re- read and talk about which word would make sense?
- Miss the word out and read to the end of the sentence. Can you still understand the sentence without reading the word?
- When talking about the story use the language of the book - *particularly the tense*. If the book says 'He went ...' ask your child, 'Tell me where he went' rather than 'Where does he go?'

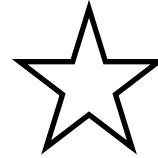
Knowledge of Content

- Talk about the meaning of some words and phrases.
- Don't assume they understand e.g. idioms like '...he was over the moon' or '...he got cold feet'.
- Talk about the meaning or message of the story, poem or text.
- Who are the main characters?
- Use the illustrations for clues.
- After reading: does the picture match what I read?





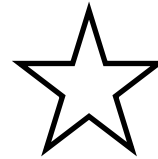
Day 2
Enjoy and understand



Finish the book or, if it is a short one, read it again for pleasure. Find out more about the book, and their understanding of what they are reading, by asking your child *a few* of questions:

Understanding structure and organisation of books

- Who wrote / illustrated the book? What does the title tell us?
- Where do I go next when I finish reading this line?
- Show me how you point and read.
- Point to the word that means the same as
- Find a full stop/capital letter/question mark.
- Why does this picture have a caption?
- Is there a contents / index / glossary? What are they for?

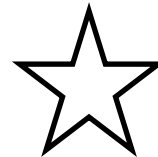


Think about the writer's purpose.

- What did you like/dislike about this book? Your favourite/least favourite bit. Why?
- Who is this book written for? What age child would like this book?
- Make links between the book and the real world.
- Has this ever happened to you before? How did you feel?
- Have you read another book which is similar to this?
- Where does the story take place (setting)? Have you been to somewhere like this?

Exploring the writer's use of language in books

- What does this word mean?
- That's a 'wow' word (an amazing word) - let's remember that and maybe you could use that in your writing one day!
- Why did the author use this word / phrase?
- If the text is repetitive or rhyming, point this out. Find and talk about the repetitive and rhyming language.
- How does this word/ phrase make you feel?
- Can you think of another word / phrase similar to this?
- What's the opposite of this word?
- Find some words that mean the same as 'said'



Understanding the book

- Tell me what happened in the book - re-tell / summarise the main points of the story.
- Why did the character do/say this?
- What have you found out from reading this book?
- Interpret information, events or ideas from books.
- Make a prediction. What do you think will happen next?
- What do you think this means (find meaning hidden in the text - inference)?



Home and school communication

Each term your child will be given a new reading record. Please help us by making a note of progress in reading at home. Give the page number you got up to, whether they finished the book, how they enjoyed reading it or what they found easy / tricky. Include your own positive comments and, if necessary, any concerns or questions you may have. Please make a note of what you read to them too, it really helps us to form a complete picture of your child's preferences and experience. With us all working closely together your child will know that we are totally involved in their progress and just how much we all value reading.

If you would like to talk about any part of the information in this leaflet please contact us and make an appointment to speak to your child's teacher. We would be glad to hear from you.

Finally, if you are interested in helping with reading in school time and would like to know more please talk to one of the staff who will let you know how we can use your skills, time and talents in school.

Thank you for supporting your child.