

# Reading at Home

September 2006

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## *Revised Curriculum in the Primary School*

“Parents have a crucial role to play in children’s language development ..... Talking to adults, hearing them talk, hearing stories read and told and being encouraged to read, all have an influence on children’s language development that supports and complements school experience.”

## *Key Reading Comprehension skills*

- Understanding
- Analysis
- Deduction
- Summarisation
- Inference
- Prediction
- Confirmation
- Evaluation

## *Do’s*

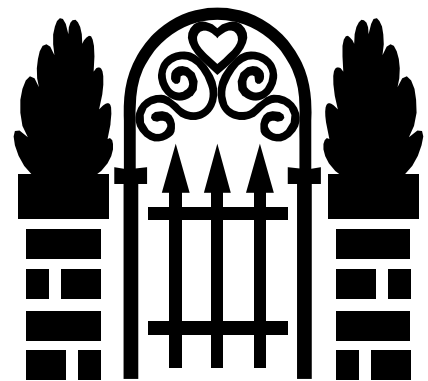
- Try to enjoy reading time
- Praise and encourage the child’s reading
- Show example by reading yourself
- Provide a variety of books at home
- Visit the library/ bookshop regularly
- Read to your child as often as possible
- Ask some questions that allow the child to show they have understood what they have read

## Importance of Reading

**I**t cannot be underestimated the influence that children’s ability to read has on their experience of school. Children’s success in reading positively influences all other aspects of the curriculum as it is the basis of many other curricular areas.

It is natural for parents to be enthusiastic about children’s reading as they make the first tentative steps to master the printed word. In general, parents of children in junior classes tend to read more to their children and listen more to their children’s reading.

However, the need to listen to children reading does not diminish as the child advances through the school. Just because a child “can” read does not mean that every opportunity should not be taken to allow the child to read aloud. Reading to an adult at home allows the child to consolidate what the child is practising at school. It also allows the child to consolidate the key reading skills of fluency, clarity and reading with meaning. Reading a little, but often, is much more beneficial than reading a lot, but rarely. Children should develop the habit of reading **aloud** to an adult at home each night for 8-10 minutes whether reading homework is given or not.



Reading opens the gate to learning

## Variety of Reading Material

Children should be exposed to as wide a variety of texts as possible. It is important that children have the opportunity to experience a wide variety of forms of text: fiction, non-fiction (fact books), comics, magazines, cookery books, manuals, joke books, pop-up books, puzzle books, poetry books. Variety is much more beneficial to the child as it exposes them to different

forms of text and different contexts. Children can read from their class reader, class novel, parallel/ supplementary reader, library book or any other book they may have at home. The aim is to encourage the child to become an independent reader but again it is important to recognise that a little reading done regularly is what develops the habit.

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## *Suggested Websites*

kidsreads.com  
reading.ie/tips/parents.php  
dyslexia.ie/paired.htm  
childrensbooksireland.com  
cool-reads.co.uk  
bookadventure.org  
talaris.org/research\_sharedbook.htm  
rif.org  
nea.org/parents/index.html  
nea.org/parents/learningtoread.html  
bbc.co.uk/schools/parents/work/primary/literacy/reading\_confidence.shtml  
caringforkids.cps.ca/behaviour/Reading2kids.htm

## *Word Games*

Don't forget to play word games at home. They have a role to play in language development.

- Wordsearches
- Puzzles
- Scrabble
- Crosswords

## **Approaches to Reading at Home**

- Read little and often—don't overdo it
- Find a quiet place—away from distractions like TV, computer
- Make sure the table/chair are comfortable
- Be enthusiastic and interested
- Be patient
- Make the reading session fun and enjoyable
- Talk together about the book
- Talk before you start, while reading and at the end
- Ask some pertinent questions to aid comprehension skills
- Avoid criticising, telling off or threats
- Praise success—say “Well Done!” or “Good!” regularly (and sound as if you mean it!)
- Stop and encourage prediction skills by asking “What do you think will happen next?”
- Always end the reading session on a positive note
- Encourage the child to read ahead quietly in their spare time

## **Parents as Role Models**

Children, when they start school, need as much positive interest and encouragement as possible from parents. The teacher develops the necessary reading skills at school. However, the teaching of reading is a partnership between home and school. The reading climate in the home is crucial. Parents are role models. If children see parents enjoying books, they will want to explore books themselves. It is widely acknowledged that the single most important factor

in determining the child's success in reading is parental attitude. If parents provide suitable reading material, if they encourage children to join the library, if they listen with enthusiasm to their child's reading, if they buy books as presents, they are supplementing the work of the teacher in the area of reading development in a real and meaningful way. A happy and secure reading environment in the home will give the child a positive attitude towards reading.