

Hints and Tips for reading with your child / children

It is never too early or too late to start reading to or with your child.

There is no right or wrong way, it's what you feel comfortable with, but the following tips might help.

Reading to and with your child is important to:

- stimulate their imagination;
- help them understand the world around them;
- help them develop language and listening skills;
- develop an enjoyment of books and reading;
- improve educational achievement and job prospects.

How can you help?

- Set aside some time / develop a reading routine
- Ask your child to choose a book – show you respect their opinion. They are also more likely to enjoy reading books they have chosen.
- There are lots of different types of books you can try; funny, scary, jokes, puzzle books, graphic or comic, picture, traditional stories, rhymes and poetry. All these are available free through Libraries. You could also encourage reading by reading signs, cereal packets, etc.
- Don't make them read a book just because you liked it as a child.
- Sit close together and cuddle up to share a book.
- Point to the pictures, use them for discussion and learning.
- Encourage your child to talk about the book – see our hints and tips sheet on discussion points.
- Use your finger to follow the words so that your child can follow them too.
- Familiarity increases confidence so be prepared to read the same book over and over again or to read easier things than you think they should.
- Don't stop reading to your child just because they can now read for themselves – listening to stories encourages a love of books and can give access to interesting content above their reading level.
- As they grow older take it in turn to read.
- **Last but not least – have fun!** It doesn't matter how you read as long as you are both enjoying the time together.

Hints and Tips for talking to your child about the books they are reading.

Here are some sample questions you can ask to encourage discussion.

Keep the questions open ended. Don't just ask whether they enjoyed the book!

Talking about fiction:

Why did you enjoy the book?

Describe your favourite part of the book

What didn't you like about the book?

Who was your favourite character and why?

If one of the characters could come to your house for tea, who would you like to have visit?

If you had to describe this book in one word, what word would you chose?

Have you read any other books by this author? Was this one better and why?

Talking about picture books:

Describe your favourite part of the book

Describe (or show me) your favourite picture in the book

What do you like about the pictures?

Who was your favourite character and why?

Why did you enjoy the book?

Which character would you like to be? Why?

Talking about non-fiction / information books:

What was your favourite fact from the book?

Why did you enjoy the book?

Tell me one fact that you learnt about that you didn't know before

Filler questions:

Seriously? Then what happened?

Interesting! What else can you tell me about?