



Hearing Children Read



Initially children will need to learn to decode words.

Unfamiliar Words

When a child comes across an unfamiliar word, encourage them to use their phonic knowledge; sound out the word and then blend it together. Obviously this doesn't work for all words so encourage them to use the picture clues and 'read on - read back'. (This is reading the sentence without the missing word and using their knowledge of context to help them supply a likely word). Give the child time to work out the word (this can take some time) and encourage them to use the above strategies. If they cannot work out the word, give it to them and then check that they understand that word.

Checking Understanding

We want children to understand what they are reading. Questioning a child about what they have read will promote their thinking. We do this on 3 levels:

Literal questions ask children to recall information that is directly stated in the text.

Deductive or inferential questions ask children to work out answers by reading between the lines, by combining information found in different parts of the text and by going beyond the information given by drawing on their 'world view'.

Applied knowledge questions ask children to go beyond the text by, for example, thinking whether the text achieves its purpose, or making connections with other texts.

Open questions will allow children to use inference and deductions and engage closely with what they have read.

Examples of questions are:

Who is the main character? How do you know? What does he/she look like? What is he/she like?

Who is your favourite character? Tell me why.

What happened at the start of the story?

What do you think is going to happen next?

What clues are there that make you think that?

What do you think and feel about what you have read?

Who is this writing intended for?

What is the purpose of this writing?

Have you read any other books/texts like this one?

Did anything puzzle you?

Encourage the child to talk about the book they have read. If they have chosen a new book ask them to explain why they chose it.

Remember to give children thinking time before reiterating or rephrasing the question.