

# *Helping Your Child With Reading*

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Reading is a complex active process during which we decipher signs and symbols in order to make meaning. It involves cracking a code of letters, words, sentences and texts and is an integrated problem solving process of making sense of texts.

The demands of our multimedia society mean that children require a toolkit of specific skills and strategies to interpret and understand a variety of texts. Children now are exposed to a wide variety of written and visual texts which require different skills and strategies. While the emphasis of this information focuses on helping with written text, children are specifically taught strategies to assist them with decoding and most importantly comprehension of a range of text types.

Outlined below are some suggestions which you may use to support oral reading and over the page an overview of comprehension strategies and sentence stems to aid their practice. These strategies are intended for use before, during and after reading although some strategies are more appropriately used at specific points in the reading.

## *How to help your child during reading:*

### **Meaning Prompts:**

#### **Does it make sense?**

Can you see something in the picture that might help you?  
You said.... Does this make sense?  
Read on. Does this give you any clues?  
Read that again. What would make sense?

### **Sound and Visual Prompts:**

#### **Does it sound right?**

#### **Does it look right?**

What sound does the first letter make?  
Sound out the word i.e. blend the letter-sounds.  
Break the word into syllables.  
Does the word have smaller words inside it that you already know?

Can you take off a prefix or suffix and read the base word?

Does the word look like another word that you know?

Go back to the start of the sentence and try again. Think about what would sound right?



*Congratulate and celebrate success!*

# Reading Comprehension Strategies

## Activating Prior Knowledge

Readers make links with their own life and prior knowledge. (What do I already know about the topic?)

- ◆ I already know ... about ...

## Visualising

Readers create pictures or images in their minds as they read.

- ◆ The character looks like...
- ◆ I imagine that ...
- ◆ In my mind I can see, hear, smell, feel ...

## Questioning

Readers ask questions before, during and after reading to help clarify specifics of the text.

- ◆ I wonder.....
- ◆ What do I know about this?
- ◆ Are there questions I need to have answered?

## Predicting

Readers think about what they expect to happen.

- ◆ From the picture on the cover I think the story will be about...

## Inferring

Readers take clues from the text and add their own ideas to make inferences. They go beyond the literal text.

- ◆ I think the boy is lonely because...
- ◆ I think it must have been raining because...
- ◆ I think the family is rich because the text mentions silk and leather materials.

We need to provide children with a toolkit of strategies to assist them with their engagement and comprehension of texts. Guided Reading sessions provide learners with experiences in using these strategies at school. At home you can assist by encouraging your child to think about a strategy they may need to use and then help them to apply it.

## Summarising

Readers identify the main idea and key information e.g. words, facts and phrases.

- ◆ I can retell a shortened version of the original text.
- ◆ The main message or big idea is...
- ◆ The purpose of this text is...

## Synthesising

Readers combine new information from the text with prior knowledge. Readers create a new thought, idea or opinion.

- ◆ Now I think that...

## Making Connections

Readers make links between their prior knowledge and texts.

**Text to self** - a connection to their own experiences

**Text to text** - a connection to another book or story

**Text to world** - a connection to world events and issues

- ◆ This reminds me when I ...
- ◆ This story is similar to ...
- ◆ This is like what is happening in ... at the moment.

## Self-Monitoring

Readers continually reassess their thinking and understanding while reading. (Do I understand what I am reading?)

- ◆ Does this make sense?
- ◆ What's confusing me?
- ◆ What fix-up strategies can I use?
- ◆ What was this about?
- ◆ What else do I need to know?
- ◆ What does this word mean?

For further information, talk to your child's teacher about the strategies they are teaching.

Key resource: [Teaching Reading Comprehension Strategies](#):  
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