

# Helping Your Child at Home

An activity guide to support reading and phonics



## September 2020

### Getting Started

The most important thing that you can do is to create a reading environment in your home and in your life. Have books in your home and make sure that your child sees that books and reading are an important part of your life. Books are cheaply available from charity shops and boot sales, and a library ticket from Coundon Library costs nothing at all.

**Phonics** - We teach phonics to help our children learn to read and write and in order to do this successfully they need to love books!

The best way to help your child is to read as many books as possible. Read anything that your child is interested in (including magazines, menus, etc). You don't have to read all (or any) of the words each time. Remember to use silly voices, make sound effects, pull faces, act things out, talk about what you can see, talk about what you both think and feel and have fun!

**Homework** - Encourage your child to tell you what they have done at school today. Look in your child's book bag and share the work and books that they have been given. Working with your child daily for just five minutes every day is a great start!

### General tips to support reading

**Little and often** - young children have a short attention span and it is difficult for them to concentrate for long periods of time. Listening to your child read for 5-10 minutes daily is the best way to help them learn to read.

**Once is never enough!** - Encourage your child to re-read favorite books and poems as well as their school reading book. Re-reading helps children read more quickly and accurately.

**Dig deeper into the story** - Ask your child questions about the story you have just read. Say something like, "Why do you think he did that?". Please use the questions in the cover of your child's book to discuss the story.

**Take control of electronics** - It's difficult for reading to compete with TV and computer games. Encourage reading as a distraction free activity.

**Be patient** - When your child is trying to sound out an unfamiliar word, give him or her time to do so. Remind your child to look closely at the first letter or letters of the word. Encourage your child to use their knowledge of phonics to segment and blend a word.

**I read to you, you read to me** - Take turns reading aloud at bedtime. Children enjoy this special time with their parents.

**One more time with feeling** - When your child has sounded out an unfamiliar word, have him or her re-read that sentence. Often children are so busy working out a word they lose the meaning of what they've just read.

## Phonic games to play with your child

### Oral Blending games

**Robotic talking** - Words are made up from sounds and children need to be able to hear these sounds individually. Sometimes when you are playing you can say words as if you were a robot (saying the sounds separately) and see if your child can work out what you are saying. Stick to short simple words that only have a few sounds in them. Make sure you are saying the letter sounds (p-i-g) **not** the letter names (pee-eye-gee). E.g.

Pass that p-i-g to me.

Sit d-ow-n.

Point to your t-ee-th.

Hop like a f-r-o-g.

As your child becomes familiar with this robot talking, see if they can say words in robot talk themselves?

**I spy** - Say the rhyme 'I spy with my little eye something beginning with \_\_\_\_\_' allow your child plenty of opportunities to guess what you have chosen, for example, 'something beginning with t' could be a tree, toy, tent or train. Again, make sure you use the letter sound and not its name i.e. t not tee

**Point out print everywhere** - Talk about the written words you see in the world around you. Ask your child to find familiar words on each outing such as 'McDonald's'; 'Coke' or 'Tesco'. 'Co-op' etc.

### Phoneme recognition games

**Looking for letters** - Ask your child to look for letters whilst you are out and about. Can they find letters from their own name, letters they have learnt in school or letters that specific words begin with?

**Letter discrimination** You will need: A 3x3 grid

Write the letter you are learning with your child onto half of the spaces (for example **c**). Fill the rest with other letters. Ask your child to cover all the **c**'s with a counter as quick as they can.

**Letter sound bingo.** You will need: A 3x3 grid for each player and counters or coins.

Write some of the letters into the spaces on each card, making each card slightly different. The 'bingo caller' says each letter in turn and the players cover the letter up. The winner is first to fill their board. To make this game easier for new readers, show them the letter for them to match.

### 'Tricky word' games

**Bingo** - You will need: A board for each player and counters or coins

The list of words your child is currently learning, for example their spelling list or tricky words.

Write some of the words into the spaces on each card, making each card slightly different. The 'bingo caller' says each word in turn and the players cover the words up. The winner is first to fill their board. To make this game easier for new readers, show them the word for them to match.

**Matching pairs** - You will need: Small pieces of card or paper with the words your child is currently learning written on each. Each word will need to be written twice so you can search for a matching pair. Turn all the cards face down on the table. And take turns to turn over two. When a matching pair is found that player can keep them. The winner is the person with the most pairs at the end of the game.

**Snap** - Make a set of cards with words your child is learning written on. Ensure that each word is written on two separate cards. Shuffle up the cards and share them out. Each player takes turns to turn over their card, put it down and read the word. If it matches the previous card played, the first person to notice shouts 'snap!' and wins the pile. This game is best used to practise words your child knows fairly well, rather than new ones, as it's quite fast-paced.

Once your child knows a word reliably, you can take it out of the current pack of cards and bring in a new word. Every so often, play a game with the 'old' cards, so that your child doesn't forget them. It's a good idea to try and discard a known word and add a new word every day, once your child is getting the hang of learning new words.

**Make up stories on the go** - Take turns adding to a story the two of you make up while riding in a car or bus. Try making the story funny or spooky

### **Links to good websites for phonics activities**

<https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/>

[www.ictgames.com/literacy.html](http://www.ictgames.com/literacy.html)

<https://www.youtube.com/user/breakthruChris>

(MrThorne does Phonics - great set of youtube videos to help children learn their letter sounds)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCI2mu7URBc>

(this video shows you how to pronounce phonics sounds correctly)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h3sCFasiJ7w&list=PLV5E\\_EC-wNdjn1acTqEmsthWLY55q6tCs&index=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h3sCFasiJ7w&list=PLV5E_EC-wNdjn1acTqEmsthWLY55q6tCs&index=1)

(an example of the phonic fairy telling a story)