How can you help develop your child's reading skills?

DECODING

This is an important first step! Children use decoding skills to sound out words they have heard before but haven't seen written out.

Use a range of strategies, including accurate decoding of text, to read for meaning.

Can children:
- Read on sight
- Use phonic strategies
- Use textual and grammatical knowledge self-correct
- Show awareness of punctuation marks
- Show accurate and fluent decoding skills
- Demonstrate understanding in prepared reading?

Question prompts to develop decoding skills:

- Do you see a word you know?
- Check the picture
- What would make sense/ sound right?
- What would you expect to see at the beginning of .....?
- Is it like a word you already know?
- Can you see a word inside the word?
- Blend this part of the word.

RETRIEVAL

Children must have a good understanding of a text to allow them to correctly and accurately *retrieve* information from it. The skill is to find 'literal' information from the text or images. The answer will always be within the text or picture.

Understand, describe, select or retrieve information, events or ideas from text, and use quotations and reference to the text.

Question prompts to develop retrieval skills:

- Where and when did the story take place?
- What did .... look like?
- Who was ....? Can you name the....?
- Where did ..... live?
- Who are the characters in the book?
- What happened after?
- How many....?
- Describe what happened at....?
- Who spoke to ....? Identify who....?
- Can you tell me why?
- Which is true or false.....?
- Find the meaning of....?
- What is. ... ?
- What did ... say to ...?
- Where did it say you would find a ....?
- What colour was ....?

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INFERENCE AND DEDUCTION

Deduction is more fact-based, whereas **inference** has an element of guesswork but both are 'reading between the lines'. For example, if the police found a smashed window, the deduction would be that someone had broken in. The inference would be that there was something precious inside that someone wanted.

Draw inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying these with evidence.

Question prompts to develop inference and deduction skills:

- How did .... feel?
- Why did ....feel / think .....?
- Why is ....important?
- Comment on a quotation
- Describe reaction / feeling – why do you think ... did that?
- In what ways does .....
- Explain...
- Agree or disagree with an opinion and justify.
- How do we know ......?
- What does this tell us about how ..... is feeling / thinking?
- Have you ever had a similar experience? How did you feel?
- What do you think is happening here? (interpret)
- What happened in this part of the story? What might this mean? (interpret)
- Through whose eyes is the story told? (deduce)
- Do you know what might happen next? (deduce)
- What do we know about....? (deduce/infer) e.g. Sarah was up the tree in her best frock. What do we know about Sarah? (deduce)

- Describe in your own words .... (interpret)
- What do you think will happen because of...(infer/deduce depending on text evidence)
- If this was you – how would your friends react? (interpret and deduce)
- How do we know that ....?(deduce/ infer- depending on text)
- If you were in ____'s shoes what would you do now? (interpret)
- Look at the text and find.... What do you think...?(infer)
- What was_____ thinking as he...? How do you know? (could be any depending on the text)
- From the information, can you devise a set of instructions for...
- Could this have happened in ....? Why, what are your reasons?
- Which events could not have happened?
- If_____ happened, what might the ending have been?
- How was this similar to....?
- What do you see as possible other outcomes?
- Can you explain what must have happened when....?
- What were the motives behind...?
- What was the problem with...?
- What assumptions have you made and why?

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TEXT STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION

Every text has a structure—it's not just a random collection of sentences. The parts that make up the text are related in a meaningful way to each other. Recognising the way that a text is organised, will help you understand it. Understanding the text organisation will help you understand what the writer is trying to do.

Identify and comment on the structure and organisation of texts, including grammatical and presentational features at text level.

Question prompts to develop understanding of text structure and organisation:

- Where could you find out about... in this book? (use contents page)

- Is there another way? What's the quickest way?

- How many levels of headings and subheadings does this book have?

- Are they statements or do they ask questions?

- Why have these words been put in bold? (they are in the glossary)

- How do headings help you when you scan the text?

- What's the difference between the index and the contents?

- If you want to find out about... how could you do it?

- Who would this information be most useful for?

- If there isn't an entry in the index, what might you do to find out about...?

- Which words indicate that some people think differently about this issue? (E.g. however, although, on the other hand)

- Can you distinguish between formal and informal style? Which words are informal? Formal?

- Is it written in the 1st or 3rd person? Does it remain the same throughout? If not, why?

- Can you identify different types of sentences in this text and comment why they are used?

- Highlight the words that tell you which order to follow – e.g. first, then, after, finally.

- Why is this in bold / italic etc.?
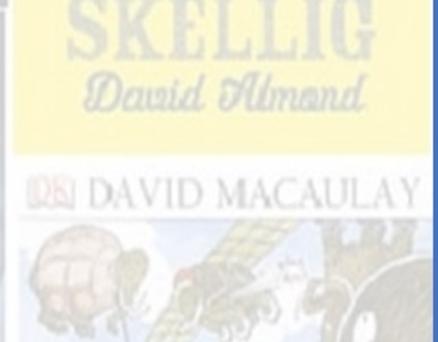
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Writers use language to establish tone, the 'mood' of a piece of writing. Words are chosen carefully for specific effects. A writer crafts an effect or emotion in the reader through careful language selection.

Explain and comment on the writer's use of language, including grammatical and literary features.

Question prompts to develop understanding of use of language:

- What does (word/phrase) mean?

- Why has the author used this phrase/feature? E.g. italics, bold, repetition, simile, exclamation marks, headings, bullet points, captions etc. Comment on the effect.

- What has the author used in the text to make this character funny/sad/angry/tense? How effective is this?

- How has the author used the text to make the situation or event angry/tense? Comment on the effect.

- Think of another more/less emotive word you can substitute here. What different effect would your word have?

- As a reader, how do you feel about…? How has the author created this feeling?

- What words/phrases indicate the author's attitude?

- How does the author show that… is important?

- Why has the author used repetition? What effect does it have?

- Why have exclamation marks/italics/ capitals been used? How does this affect the way you read it? What effect does this create?

- What words give you that impression?

- How has the author been humorous?

- What words, phrases or features make you think that?

- How does the metaphor/simile/ adjectives/adverbs… help you to understand this text? What makes it effective?

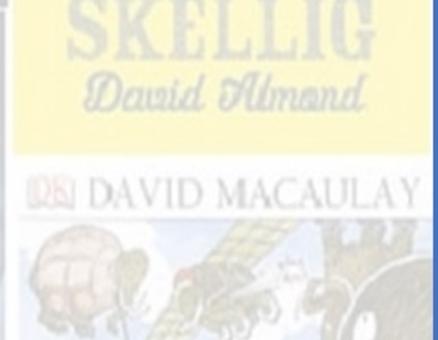# How can you help develop your child's reading skills?

PURPOSE AND VIEWPOINT

In general, there are 3 basic reasons for an author to write something: to persuade their reader, to inform their reader, or to entertain their reader. Identifying the author's purpose is an important part of reading comprehension.

Identify and comment on the writers' purposes and viewpoints, and the overall effect

Question prompts to develop understanding of purpose and viewpoint:

- Why did the author choose this setting?

- What do you think the writer's purpose is? How do you know?

- What did the writer intend by…. (phrase /sentence)

- Why has the author used humour at this point?

- Look at the caption and diagram. What does it explain to you? Why does the writer choose to include them?

- What impression do you think the writer wants to give of this character? Why? What effect does this have on other characters?

- In this paragraph, what effect does the author want to have on the reader?

- What is the author's purpose in this piece of text?

- From the opening section of the text, what is the writer's opinion of school/the war/animals etc? How does this affect the story/plot/ characters/setting etc?

- Which other author handles time in this way e.g. flashbacks; dreams? Which stories have openings like this?

- Would this persuade you? How?

- By using these words/phrases (…………………) what effect has the author had on the reader?

- Whose viewpoint is being presented here?

- What does the writer want to persuade you to do/think/believe?

- Who is the advert trying to persuade?

- Can you tell what the author thinks?

PURPOSE AND VIEWPOINT

In order to interpret a text in the way the author has intended, readers need to develop knowledge of the author's cultural and historical contexts. Different contexts can hugely influence a story/ text.

Relate texts to their cultural and historical contexts and literary traditions

Question prompts to develop understanding of context:

- Can you think of another story that has a similar theme; e.g. good over evil; weak over strong; wise over foolish?

- Where there is a different cultural setting – where is the story set? What are the features of this setting e.g. language, environment, attitudes?

- What difference does the culture make to how the characters act/react in the story? What does this tell us about the way of life within this different culture?

- What do you know about this period in history that helps you to understand the writer's second paragraph/ the author's meaning/ the character's feelings etc.?

- How is the heroine/hero in this story similar to others you have read about?

Evaluation Questions:

- In the fairy stories that you know, who are the heroes/ villains? What do they have in common and how are they different?

- How is this setting similar to settings in other traditional tales you have read?

- How would this text work in a different cultural/ historical setting?

- How is this text similar to...? How is it different from...?