

Reading Activities



Help your child to achieve the
Early Learning Goal for reading.

Picture books

At Victoria Dock School, the first books your child will bring home from school are picture books. These are very important, as they build confidence and develop basic skills for story telling. The Early Years Outcomes show which skills children will be gaining by sharing a picture book with others.

Children should be able to :

- * Describe main story settings, events and characters.
- * Begin to use more complex sentences.
- * Use a widening range of words to express or elaborate on ideas.
- * Consistently develop a simple story or explanation .
- * Use talk to connect ideas, explain what is happening and anticipate what might happen next.
- * Discuss emotions and talk about how people are feeling and why they feel that way.

Early Learning Goal– Speaking

'Use talk to organise, sequence and clarify thinking, ideas, feelings and events.

Show an understanding of the elements of stories, such as main character, sequence of events and openings.'

- When looking at a picture book, start with the front cover. Use the terms 'cover', 'title' and 'picture'. Ask your child if they could guess what the book might be about.
- You could explain to your child that the author has not written any words in this book, so it is their job to make up the words for the story. On each page, encourage your child to talk about what is happening in the pictures.
- Try to guess what the characters are thinking or feeling.
- Always guess what might happen on the next page and think why that might happen.
- At the end of the book, try to think of an alternative ending or something else that could happen. For example, ask 'what if?' Talk about a favourite part of the story and ask your child why they liked it.

Books with words

There is more to being a good reader than just being able to read the words accurately. It is just as important to be able to understand what has been read. Always talk to your child about the pictures, the characters, how they think the story will end and their favourite part. You will then be able to see how well they have understood the story and you will help them to develop good comprehension skills.

Early Learning Goal– Reading.

Know that print carries meaning and, in English, is read from left to right and top to bottom.

Show an understanding of the elements of stories, such as main character, sequence of events and openings.

Recognise sounds in words and blend these sounds together to read new words.

Read a range of familiar and common words and simple sentences independently.

- Encourage your child to follow the words with their finger.
- For Pink books, the key is repetition! The children might not be able to ‘sound out’ all of the words but can use picture clues and words they have seen on the previous page to help.
- Spotting given letters within books may also help while your child is beginning to blend. You can ask “Can you see a s on this page?”
- Before blending we learn to oral blend. You could say “Can you see the s-u-n?” (saying letters sounds individually) and children blend together in their head and point to the named object).
- For Pink Phonics books we would expect children to use their phonic knowledge of letter sounds to blend and read the words. We use ‘Robot Hands’ to support this.
- Ask lots of questions and encourage the use of the pictures to explain what is happening. How did . . . feel? How do you know? Why did . . . ? What do you think will happen next? Why?
- At the end of the book, ask your child to be a ‘word detective’. Pick a word from the story and your child has to find it as fast as they can. You could also be a ‘sound detective’ and find words beginning with the same sound.

Other Activities

Children need to experience a variety of reading materials, not just the books they receive from school. In addition to looking at a school reading book, please try to take time to look at picture books, hard backs, comics, magazines, poems and information books.

Here are some ideas of additional activities linked to school reading books or books that you have at home:

- After a bedtime story, provide props to help your child act it out.
- Draw some story characters with a speech bubble or a thinking bubble and write or draw inside the bubble.
- Make puppets out of card or socks and use these as props for your story.
- Draw a picture of a favourite part of your story and write a label or sentence to match the picture.
- Make another page for the end of the story to show what could happen next.
- Retell the story orally or by ordering pictures.
- Your child could take on the role of the character and you could role play by asking them questions about what they did during the story and what they would do next.
- Choose words or letters from the text. Make two sets of each word or letter and play games such as snap or matching pairs.
- Play a memory game. Say two things that you can see in the picture. Your child has to repeat in the same order. Then slowly increase the number of objects to be remembered.
- Play "I Spy" on the way to school with car registration numbers... what letters can you spot.
- In shops and around the home try to read labels and signs.
- Read in front of your children so they see 'good role' models.
- Write shopping lists together using phonics to write the words. Take the list with you and read as you shop.

Playing with words

When your child is progressing well and can blend words, you can make sentences of your own to read. Think of a simple sentence and copy it out on a strip of paper. Either write it out or if you use a word processor use a font such as Century Gothic (font size 36 at least). Leave a double space in between each word. Then, cut up the sentence into individual word cards. For example:



Ask your child to make the sentence, "This is a dog.", using the individual words. At first, they may need some help. When he/she has made the sentence, ask your child to read it to you and encourage him/her to point to each word with a finger.

Out and about

It is also important to:

- Take a trip to the library.
- Recite Nursery Rhymes (the rhythm of the rhyme helps reading skills).
- Use environmental print (eg. supermarket signs, packaging).
- Read to your child as often as you can. Children learn from adults modelling reading.
- Go with your child's interest, even if it is not your favourite topic!

