

Developing Reading

At Home



Reading

The skill of reading is made up of two parts – decoding words (finding out what has been written) and comprehension (understanding what has been written). Decoding is often given the most focus as it is the easiest part of reading for children to demonstrate. This focus is often on developing children's sight vocabulary, ability to decode unknown words (primarily through the use of phonics) and ability to read with expression out loud to a range of audience. However, decoding is only part of the story and what we are trying to avoid is children who "bark at text" but do not understand what they are reading. It is therefore equally important that children are able to answer questions about what they have read. These questions should cover a range of skills: clarifying information; summarising information; selecting and retrieving information; responding to texts and explaining what they have read; inferring information that is not explicit in the text; discussing language choice; and looking at themes and textual conventions. We have included some information on the different sentence types at the back of this booklet.

Rereading and memorising texts

Re-reading the same book over and over again is an important way that children learn to read. It helps them to understand language patterns and the way that texts and sentences are structured. In a similar way, memorising words, phrases and sentences is part of a child's natural reading development. Whilst it can be tempting to think that a child is not developing as a reader when they are re-reading or reading by memorising this is actually incorrect. It also provides a good opportunity to help develop children's understanding of what they have read, particularly the more complicated inferential questions as children need a good knowledge of texts before they can answer these questions successfully.

Reluctant readers

Children sometimes go through phases where they are reluctant to read. It is important when this happens to remember that enthusiasm for reading is as important as the skills for reading. These are often opportunities to encourage children to see reading as a wider skill than reading their school reading book – it does not matter what the children are reading, as long as they are reading and enjoying it. This could be a good opportunity to broaden their reading diet (the range of books they are interested in) and to follow their interests in the selection of texts (for example, if they are interested in sport, visit the library and choose some well written sport books – librarians are a great resource for this). A good technique in these situations is paired reading, which is recommended for children of all ages (see below). By combining these two approaches, children will usually be encouraged to begin reading on their own again.

Paired reading

Paired reading is an approach that focuses on making reading a positive experience for children. It takes about ten minutes a day and is recommended by the Educational Psychology service as a way of increasing reading fluency. It involves the child choosing the text and you and your child taking it in turns to read. For further information on this approach, please ask your child's teacher for a copy of the booklet prepared by the Educational Psychology Service.

What should my child be reading?

Anything and everything! The reading books at Hyde CE Primary School provides a starting point and focuses on teaching the skills of decoding and comprehension. All of the school books are colour coded so that the children can know when they are selecting a book whether it is one they can read easily, with a little help or listen to whilst someone else reads to them. We also recommend that children read a range of books outside of school, either books they own or books they borrow from others. As well as books, children could be reading environmental print (road names, street signs, maps, cereal boxes...), leaflets about activities they are doing, instructions for games they are playing or things they are doing, recipes and food labels, menus and so on. Children need to have reading modelled to them in the real world so that they can see the purpose behind the skill and begin to evaluate the content of what they read. They could also read books that tie in with films and television programmes they like, although it is often a good idea to read these first.

A note of caution – just because a child is capable of decoding a text does not mean that it is suitable for them to read! Some of the ideas contained in texts aimed at teenagers, for example, contain themes that you may not want to expose your child to in the juniors, so if you are in any doubt read the book first. If nothing else, it will provide ideas of questions to ask them when they have finished – or prepare you for the questions they will ask.

Reading together

The importance of reading together cannot be overstated. Bedtime stories are often seen as being for younger children, but sharing a daily story is a great way to bond with your child and to introduce them to texts that they may not be able to access themselves. There are some great chapter books available for children from Key Stage One to the end of Key Stage Two that will help children to develop their love of reading. At Hyde CE School we share texts with the children every day for pleasure – in the junior classes these tend to be chapter books are shared over a period of weeks – and the children often report that this is the aspect of the day they least want to miss. Helping your child to read is not just about teaching them the skills of decoding and comprehension but also about sharing your enthusiasm for reading so that they develop a love of reading that will last for their life time.

Knowledge	What do these words mean? - clarity Observe and recall something previously learned Can you list the parts...? What has happened? What are the main ideas? Who was the key character? What are the meanings of these words?...? List three words to describe... What do you think was meant by...? Why is... significant?	monologue & summarise What happened...? first, before, after? What do you know about...? Can you resequence the main events? Can you list the parts...? What has happened? What were the main ideas? Who was the key character? What are the meanings of these words?...? List three words to describe... What do you think was meant by...? Why is... significant?	comprehension What's related to...? In this similar / different to a fact you know? Who was it that...? Can you name the...? Can you resequence the main events? Who wrote to...? Can you select...? How does... reflect to... and why? Describe the relationship between...? What do you know about (choose) characters? What do we learn about...? How did... happen?	inference Based on what you know, what is your view of the character? How would you have acted...? How would you have acted...? What approach would you take to...? What would you select to show...? Can you use ... from the text to...? What did X make you think of? How did X make you feel? What would you have said to...? Do you know another instance where...? Could this have happened in...? How would you organise... to above...?	language for effect How does the phraseword... make you feel about? What does the writer want us to think about...? What does the structure of the text/paragraph/sentence suggest? Can you predict the outcome of...? How would you feel about...? You're brilliant...? In the text, the writer uses... Can you use... to...? Could this have happened in...? How would you organise... to above...? How is... related to...? Can you make connections to...? Invent your own words to describe the character. Can you describe the character in your own words?	themes and conventions What big ideas are there in the story? What is the writer suggesting about...? Can you find extracts that deal with the theme of...? What conventions of that genre has the writer used? What big ideas are there in the story? What is the writer suggesting about...? Can you find extracts that deal with the theme of...? What conventions of that genre has the writer used?
Application	Use knowledge to solve problems					
Analysis	See patterns, recognise and articulate identity components					
Evaluation	Make a judgement and assess the value of something					
Creativity		Does creating more story teller questions help?				