

Advice for parents - Reading at home- Developing confidence as a reader (Age 6-7)

Your child will now be building on those early reading skills and developing confidence in reading more broadly and fluently. These ideas will help you to keep a good balance between reading for enjoyment across a range of interests and developing the skills to help your child read with even more confidence and efficiency.

Things to try with your child

Sharing reading

1. It's still good to share

Don't give up on talking about picture books, short chapter books and even sharing bedtime stories and information books with your child. Choose what to read together and exchange views. Sharing a love of reading will rub off on them!

2. Take the lead

Try reading slightly more difficult books together – you read one page and your child reads the next, or you read the main information and they read the captions. Hearing you read fluently and seeing you read for information will help them to see what reading can be.

3. Encourage an opinion

Talk about books when you've finished reading together. Talk about the characters and what happens in a story, or what specific bit of information was most useful, but also get them to give you their opinions too. Let them tell you if they don't like a book, and why. Part of growing as a reader is learning that it's OK not to like some books or to prefer reading on-screen sometimes!

4. Make links

As well as talking about the book itself, make links between events or information in the book and your child's own experiences: 'Do you remember when we did that ...?'. Get them to ask questions too: 'Is that how Grandad does it too?'

Practising developing reading skills

1. It's still important to listen

Your child may be bringing home slightly longer books from school now, but they are still likely to be part of a reading programme and levelled in difficulty so teachers can match the best books to your child's skills. It should be a comfortable read – endless struggling is no fun and can put children off! Enjoy talking about it together too.

2. Still phonics first

It's still good to try sounding out and blending a word your child gets stuck on. But now you may also try different tactics too. For example, get them to say the first sound of the word, or break it into chunks or syllables, for example camp-ing or butt-er-fly. Alternatively, ask them to read the whole sentence again, focusing on the meaning.

3. Spot letter patterns in words

Ask your child to point out words that look like they should rhyme but don't: home and come; do and no. And words which do rhyme even though they look different: come and sum; there, bear, hair. This will help with their writing too.

4. Get your child to perform

When your child reads aloud encourage lots of expression and get them to use different voices for the different characters or to use different volume or pace. Reading to a younger sibling might demand this and is great practice! Or get them to try learning a poem off by heart. And making a sound recording is fun too.

5. Quiet time and silent reading

As well as reading books aloud together, encourage your child to sometimes read alone and sometimes silently. This isn't as easy as it sounds, but it shows that your child is reading more effortlessly. Show how you read your own book or newspaper silently.