

READING IDEAS: AGE 3-4



Reading together

1: Read together every day

Children need to read little and often, so snuggle up with a book or sit at the screen together at a time that works for you both (or all!). Also try to keep a regular slot each day for a special relaxing reading time if possible - we all need that!

2: Read everywhere you go

Read at every opportunity, just look around and show your child how you read words everywhere you go too. Point out words they might recognise, including signs and logos in the street or on labels.

3: Find your favourites and add to them

Children love to listen to and read their favourite books over and over again and to remember some parts by heart. That's fine as enjoyment and memory play a key part in learning to read. Add to their list of favourites by reading stories of all kinds, rhymes, poetry and information books too.

4: All join in

Start asking your child to join in with bits that are repeated in stories, e.g. '*Run run as fast as you can! You can't catch me I'm the gingerbread man!*'. Traditional stories, like The Gingerbread Man, are really good for this and children will love doing the voices!

5: Talk about books, words and pictures

Before you start reading a book, do judge a book by the cover, talk about the title, the pictures on the cover (front and back). Look through the pictures together and ask your child what they think the story might be about.

6: Talk about stories and events

As you read and when you've finished, sometimes ask questions about the story. *What was your favourite bit? What do you think about that? What would you do?* Get your child to ask you questions too. Don't overdo it though - otherwise you can lose the thread of the plot.

7: Retell stories

Sometimes after you have shared a story, ask your child to retell it to you. Help by asking *What happened first? What next? And then what?* Can you remember what happened at the end?! Encourage them to use plenty of expression.

8: Listen to and sing songs and rhymes

Singing lots of songs and nursery rhymes helps your child to hear the sounds in words and build up a bank of known favourites. Play with words and sounds and make up nonsense rhymes in songs or nursery rhymes they know. Encourage them to join in.

Early reading skills

1: Talk about letters and sounds

If you draw attention to letters and sounds, your child will begin to notice them as well. Knowing the letter sounds is a very important first step in early phonics teaching so start talking about these at the earliest opportunity.

2: Signs that your child may be ready to begin learning early reading skills

There are no hard and fast rules about this but if your child can do these things then it may be that they are ready to begin learning early reading skills:

- listen to a story and retell bits of it
- recognise some letter sounds (like the first sound in their name)
- recognise his or her own name in writing
- match some words (like Mum) when they see them in different places
- concentrate for 5-10 minutes.

