

Some Handy Hints to Help Your Child to Learn to Read, Write and Spell.

- Here are some suggestions on how to help your child become a better reader. The hints and ideas have been taken from many different sources along with some of our own ideas. These are not meant to replace any reading techniques that you are doing with your teacher or at school. Your first avenue of attack for any academic problem should be via your teacher.
- Try to prepare each night and morning activities. Pick one or two suggestions to try. Some you will find useful, while others will not be suitable for your child.
- As your child achieves in the activity go onto another. The child **MUST** always be achieving. If it is too hard, find an easier activity. Do not let him/her get bored with it. Keep it Light, short and varied.
- Some children (and parents!) are too tired at night to do extra. Make the effort to get up 10-15 minutes earlier in the morning to do the activities before the chaos of the day begins. When you and your child are fresher you will get better results.
- Make a reading or activity time everyday for everyone in the house when the television is **NOT** allowed to be turned on. This will prevent the child rushing through the task and being preoccupied with what the other family members are watching on TV.
- It has been shown in a number of studies that if Dad works with the child, progress is achieved faster, especially if the child is a boy. This, of course, is not always practical but we found by sharing the activities as parents with one working at night and the other in the morning, we achieved the best results with our children.
- As parents we can get very frustrated, tired and even angry with our child because they are not learning, didn't listen or will not concentrate. At these times it is important to remember that our child does not choose to learn, listen or concentrate. Consider how frustrated, tired and angry your child must feel inside because he/she cannot live up to your expectations.
- Of all the people in your child's life you are the one who must be patient, loving and understanding of them and their problems. The chances are that their peers, siblings and teachers are not.

Suggestions for Helping Your Child Learn to Read.

“Children who are not spoken to by live and responsive adults will not learn to speak properly. Children who are not answered will stop asking questions. They will become incurious. Children who are not read to will have few reasons for wanting to learn to read”. “The Read – Aloud Handbook” by Jim Trelease.

A Talking and Listening: Providing the words to read with

The words that we use for talking we use for reading. Talk to your child and have your child talk to you. In this way you will increase your child’s vocabulary, which will help make him interested in, many different books and also show that he understands what he reads.

1. Have your child talk about what they see, hear, smell and feel. By describing what we see, we pay more careful vision attention and improve visual discrimination skills. Play eye spy etc.
2. Have your child tell about past experiences, today’s experiences, and what you plan to be doing in the future. Have him describe what it will be like at different events, e.g. a picnic on the weekend, etc this will help the child develop better time concepts.
3. Dictate stories that your child tells you. This will show your child that reading is talk “written down”.
4. Children enjoy making nonsense words particularly when they get the idea and become competent at it.

◆ Build word groups by changing the vowel involved e.g.

a	e	i	o	u
bat	bet	bit	bot	but

- ◆ Put a sound chart in your kitchen, family room or bedroom and refer to it often. Show the child what the sound looks like. Great resource for all this work is a chalkboard.
- ◆ Say tongue twisters e.g. “Six sausages sitting on a snake” – make up your own it’s good fun.

5. The Alphabet Game: Beginning with “A” each player must think of an object beginning with “A” in turn. It’s good to do this to a rhythm e.g. clap knees three times and the player must take his/her turn on the fourth hand clap or miss out a go.

6. When reading together, and words like “the” or “one” cannot be sounded out. Say to the child: “There are some funny words that you just cannot sound, and you have to remember them and this is one. Look at it and remember it”. You may then have the child write it out on his chalkboard or make up a card to put in his/her bedroom so that he/she can look at this often.

B READING:
Promoting the desire to read.

“RICHER THAN I COULD NEVER BE I HAD A MOTHER WHO READ TO ME”

None of us like doing things we don't do well. If your child isn't particularly good reader or doesn't enjoy it the reading is a boring laborious chore. This is particularly true if we have to sound out and stumble through each word as we read. You can help develop sight word recognition and word attack but predominately that will be the teachers task. As a parent often the best thing we can do is to keep the child motivated and interested in reading.

Here are some suggestions we have found helpful.

- 1.** Read aloud to your child.
We find time for what we value. Regular reading aloud strengthens your child's reading, writing and speaking skills. Let him/her choose the book and you do the reading. As you go point out details and information about the pictures that go with the story and ask your child questions about what's happening. These special reading aloud times will build relationships between your child and parent. Those ten minutes spent reading aloud may be the only time you spend with that particular child all day. Do that every day and your child will be yours forever.
- 2.** Read yourself.
If you read your child will realize that you value reading and he /she will realize that reading is important.
- 3.** Use a tape recorder.
As you read your child's favourite stories put them on to tape so that he/she can have a story to listen to and to help him/her read their favourite books anytime that he/she wants. Your library has many of such tapes available freely for you to borrow.
- 4.** A rating and progress chart.
Each time you read a story to your child have him or her rate how they felt about the book. In this way the child will see that you are reading lots of books together and that some books are better than others. Try and set a goal to read

“X” number of books per week or per month. Make it realistic according to the ability of your child and how enthusiastic he or she is.

5. Children love to receive letters in the post for themselves. Why not go to your local bookstore and enquire if they have a “Kids Club” he/she could join to receive a magazine for them to read. There is a “Kids Club” with Puffin Books on the web. See www.penguin.com.au.
6. Try and build your own library by buying a book each week if you can afford it. A greatly underutilised resource is our own public library. It does not cost anything to join, only the time to go the library and select a book.

C READING
Learning **HOW** to read.

“Six Sausages Sitting on a Snake”

Language forms the basis of reading. Symbols are used to represent sounds so that words become sounds written down. This is not true for all word especially in the English language.

When the child goes to school, he/she is “taught to read”. This means the child is taught to:

- i break words up into sounds (phonic decoding)
- ii recognise written words as having a spoken meaning (sight words).

Hence as a parent we can appreciate the importance of developing good language skills before we expect our child to develop good reading skills.

Here are some suggestions to help these abilities.

Ways to Improve Phonic Decoding.

1. Discuss sounds and play listening games. These games develop confidence in the child to read and write simple stories and words. **Always have the child watch you lips as you say the words.**

- i Tell me a word that sounds like “snake, san and slippery”.
- ii What sound do these words begin with – dog, dolly, dance.
- iii Tell me a word that sounds like these words (RHYMING)
tin, bin, din,
bat, hat, cat,

2. Have the child talk about Mother’s and Father’s activities. His/Her skill in visualisation will determine the number of objects and activities he/she can

classify and he/she will be building the associations between visualisations, articulation and language in this procedure.

3. Show your child an interesting picture. Let him/her hold and handle it first. Encourage him/her to talk about the picture his/her visual inspection of it. Help him to increase the length of his/her sentences, which describe the picture.
4. Encourage your child to imitate the sounds of an aeroplane, train, car, clock, animals etc. The ability to imitate these sounds gives him/her control of the lips, tongue and throat positions for good speech.
5. Have your child give the opposite to words you say, such as **black** when you say **white**; **little** when you say **big** etc.
6. Give your child oral directions involving two activities, then three, four and more as he/she can accomplish them. For example: **pick up the magazine, put it on the table and sit on the chair**. Repeat until your child can do it just as you have said. If difficulty is encountered repeat each direction as he does it until he/she can do them following the instruction. This activity develops auditory span and when the child has learned to hear it completely and comprehensively the first time it is stated, it can save the parents and teachers much time and repetition. Thus, as he/she grows and learns to depend on his/her auditory discriminations his/her judgements and decisions will be speeded. Always make him/her stop and watch your lips as you give instructions. Again this will help reinforce visual-auditory integration.

Ways to Improve Those Words That Should Be Recognised By Sight.

1. Label objects in the house: wall, chair, television etc. It might look strange to some one visiting your house but you will be surprised how quickly it helps you child recognise the words by sight. Sometimes take them down and play matching games.
2. Cut out pictures of every day things, e.g. tree, bird, car, dog and write down separate labels in lower case letters. Have the child then try and match the word with the picture.
3. Make up word-cards with different activities on them and have the child do what the word says, e.g. run, hop, work, play, etc.
4. Make up word-cards for adverbs e.g. walk quickly, slowly, sadly, noisily, quietly, happily, etc.
5. Make up word-cards for prepositions. Have him/her put an object in, on, under, beside, below, above, behind a box etc.

6. Make up word-cards for adjectives. Have him bring you something blue, red, big, little, striped, smooth, hard, soft, fuzzy, etc.

Neurological Impress Method.

A multi-sensory method to help your child become a better reader.

SEE & PERCEIVE

HEAR & LISTEN

SAY & UNDERSTAND

Objectives:

- To promote fluency of reading.
- To train the eyes to move freely across the page.
- To develop rhythm and flow of oral reading.
- To increase confidence and enjoyment of reading

Time Taken: Ten minutes per night for eight weeks.

Material: Reading material slightly below the child's present reading level.

Method:

- i Child sits next to and in front of the parent so that the parent's voice (HEARING) is close to the child's ear.
 - li Together, they read our loud (SIGHT and SPEECH) from the same book with the parent's finger tracing across the page beneath the words as they are reading. The finder MUST coincide with the words read as the child's eye follows the finger, and must look directly at each word as it is HEARD and SPOKEN.
- ◆ Do not correct the words the child doesn't know.
 - ◆ Do not question the child about the text.
 - ◆ Read so that the child can keep up with you.
 - ◆ Tell the child to use the same inflexion, phrasing and emphasis that the parent does.
 - ◆ Avoid material that is too difficult.

- ◆ Do not be tempted to read longer than ten minutes.
- ◆ If the child does not respond after four hours (36, 4 weeks) then the method is perhaps unsuitable for the child. At eight weeks significant improvement should be noticed.

Suggestions to Help Promote Writing Skills.

“That Starting Point of Curiosity About the Written Language is an Interest in Scribbling and Drawing.”

Before your child learnt to walk he had to learn to crawl. The crawling motor skills had to be developed before finer more difficulty walking skills. The same is true for writing. Before your child can learn the fine eye-hand manipulative skills involved in writing he/she must have mastered the gross body, neck and eye-hand skills that form the fundamental basis to those finer writing skills.

Here are some suggested activities to help this.

- i Chalkboard Activities: Let your child scribble with chalk in both hands and encourage him/her to cross the mid-line. You can draw little scribble patterns at the top of the chalkboard and try and get the child to copy the. Butcher’s paper can be used. Other activities such as finger painting, play dough and lego are also good.
- ii Give your child lots of practice on a chalkboard drawing nonsense shapes before attempting to do on paper, symbols such as letters and numbers. If your child doesn’t have the ability to draw a square, triangle, cross, circle or diamond then he is not ready to learn the more complex shapes of letters and numbers.
- iii Always have paper and pencil available for the child. The starting point of curiosity about written language is an interest in scribbling and drawing. From this develops an interest in copying objects, and letters of the alphabet. Display his/her paperwork in the home.
- iv Write stories the child dictates.
- v Write Stories together.
 - ◆ Parents write the beginning or end of a story and have the child write the other part.
 - ◆ Parents write a chapter of a story and the child continues the next chapter. See how far the chapters take you, before you complete the book.
- vi Write letters to friends and relatives.

- vii Write messages for tother members of the family rather than speaking the message.

How to Help Your Child Become a Better Speller.

“I HATE SPELIN”

As a child’s writing develops they constantly look for new words and for new ideas many of which they don’t know how to spell. As the ideas flow into writing, to stop and research the spelling words from dictionaries and other sources will impede the flow of those ideas. Far better initially to guess the spelling of the word and fill in the correct spelling later rather than spoil the flow of writing. You might like to speak to your child’s teacher as how it works.

Here are some things we have found useful to help your child become a better speller.

1. The Look and Write Method.

Look at the word and say it to yourself. Cover it over, close your eyes and see it.

Write down the word; check whether it is spelt correctly. If not repeat the method again.

2. Multi-sensory approach.

Research has shown that the more senses involved in learning to spell the better their attention. Hence if a child has to see, say and do something in regards to learning the word he /she will learn it faster.

3. Ball Method.

Write each spelling word on a separate piece of paper in large, black, small case letters. Hold up one card at a time saying the word to the child. Have the child repeat the word back to you. Have the child then spell the word out while he is bouncing a tennis ball or larger ball if required. The child bounces the ball on bounce each letter e.g.

“CAT” is Cat (bounce); C (bounce); A (bounce); T (bounce); CAT (bounce).

Sometimes vary this method by having the child clap out the word, stamp it out, trampoline, skipping rope or balance board.

This method takes the tension out of the “Spelling Homework” and the child relaxes and the learning takes place almost as if the action of the ball stamps the words into the child’s visual memory.

- ◆ Encourage your child to write at home, as spelling is used constantly. Try to provide a place where writing can be done. “Exhibit” his/her writing. Encourage the child to use a dictionary.
- ◆ Work through other ways such as with scrabble words and magnetic letters. There are several commercial spelling games on the market but these are only good once the child has become a fairly competent speller, e.g. Junior Scrabble, Boggle etc.
- ◆ It’s hard to spell a word you do not know the meaning of. Research shows that children read and spell words they “own”, i.e. boat, mother, sister, dog, etc. Concrete words like these he/she owns and understands. He/She knows the meaning, as they are real to him. He can imagine the meaning. Abstract words which are difficult for the child to understand, e.g. behind, on, under, special; need thorough discussion about the meaning so that the child can understand the word and therefore own it. He has to be able to imagine the meaning of the word.
- ◆ Spell words onto a tape recorder or use your computer or typewriter