

Summersseat Methodist Primary School



Hearing your child read

A guide for parents and carers

Introduction

Listening to your child regularly at home has a huge impact on their academic achievement. A recent study by the National Literacy Trust entitled 'Children and Young People's Reading Today' has called for families to take 10 minutes per day to read with their children. The report stated that it was 'essential' for children to make time to read outside lessons because it is closely linked to academic achievements. It added that children who read outside the classroom on a daily basis were 13 times more likely to read at the expected level for their age.

At Summerseat Methodist Primary School, we aim for all children to have a love for reading and therefore read for enjoyment as they progress through school.

This love of reading will develop as your child engages with the text on many different levels, not just the simple decoding of words for their meaning. We would therefore encourage you to talk to your child and question them about what it is they are reading. It is important that this should continue even when your child has developed the ability to read independently.

The purpose of this booklet is to provide an overview of the different skills you're your child needs to develop - and the questions that you could ask to assist their development.

If you would like any further help or guidance, please do not hesitate to contact their class teacher.

March 2013

The Assessment Focuses for Reading

The government has prescribed seven assessment focuses (AFs) for reading. These AFs describe the **key elements of performance in reading**. Therefore, when listening to children read, we should work on all of the AFs to ensure that we are developing children's reading skills fully.

How to use this booklet

The following pages look at the assessment focuses in turn and explain how they are used. There is also an explanation about the AFs and list of questions which can be asked.

Please do not try to work on every AF every time you read with your child. Instead choose one or two AFs to work on.

It is perhaps worth reiterating that many of the reading books we have in school have specific questions printed on the inside cover.

Helpful Hints

- Although it can be difficult, try to find a time when neither you nor your child are in a rush.
- Try to find a quiet place without any distractions.
- Make a reading time a maximum of 10 minutes, this time needs to include questioning about what you and your child have read.
- Try to make the reading session fun! If your child thinks every reading session is going to involve hard questioning, they may resist reading.
- Sometimes read to your child or share the reading with your child.

Assessment Focus 1

Use a range of strategies, including accurate decoding of text, to read for meaning.

Can the child use a range of strategies to actually read the text? For example: can the child use the visual clues (phonics), the meaning of the sentence and the correct grammar to make their reading look and sound right?

Prompts to help

If your child cannot read the word:

- Get your mouth ready.
- What could that say?
- Read the sentence from the start.
- Use the picture to help you.

If your child reads an incorrect word

- Does that make sense?
- You said 'went'. Would that word fit here?
- Can you fix that?
- Repeat the sentence to your child. Ask: what was wrong?

Assessment Focus 2

Understand, describe, select or retrieve information, events or ideas from texts and use quotation and reference to text.

Can the child find information which is clearly stated in the text?

Questions to ask:

- Where did the story take place?
- When did the story take place?
- What did he/she look like?
- Who are the key characters in the story?
- What happened first/next/at the end of the story?
- What kinds of people are in the story?
- Read the part that tells me.....?
- Can you find the part when?

Assessment Focus 3

Deduce, infer or interpret information, events or ideas from texts

Can the child 'read between the lines' to work out information that might not be fully stated, but is hinted or suggested? For example, if the child reads that a character slumped their shoulders and dragged their feet along the ground, can the child deduce that the character feel sad?

Questions to ask:

- What words tell you that?
- How do you feel about that?
- What sort of person do you think ... is? What words tell you that?
- What does this tell you about how ... is feeling? If it were you, what would you be thinking? Why?
- Predict what you think is going to happen? Why do you think that?
- What do you think about ... ? What in the text makes you think that?
- How did one of the characters change in the story?

Assessment Focus 4

Identify and comment on the structure and organisation of texts, including grammatical and presentational features at text level.

Can the child explain why the text has been set out on the page in a certain way? For example, why has the author used numbered points in a set of instructions?

Questions to ask:

- What kind of text is this? How do you know?
- What would you expect in a text of this type?
- Tell me the words that tell you there is an order to be followed in this text?
- What is the main event in this story?
- Why has this picture been used here?
- How do you know the order to follow in this text?
- Why have these words been made to stand out?
- Why are these words in italics?
- What are some parts of the text in boxes?
- What are the sub-headings for?
- What do the arrows on the text tell you?
- What would happen if the event in the text were changed?

Assessment Focus 5

Explain and comment on writers' uses of language, including grammatical and literary features at word and sentence level.

Can the child explain why the author has chosen particular words? For example, if the author has described the sea as a 'furious monster' can the child say that the author has done so to make the sea sound alive and threatening?

Questions to ask:

- I wonder why the author used those words to describe the sea? Why do you think?
- What do these words mean? Why did the author choose to use them?
- How has the author used adjectives to make this character sound funny?
- What does this description of this character tell us about how they are feeling?
- What do these words tell you about?
- Why do you think the author has mentioned ... a lot in the story?
- Why do you think the author has chosen those words to describe ... ?
- Why do you think the author has written this sentence in this way?

Assessment Focus 6

Identify and comment on writers' purposes and viewpoints and the overall effect of the text on the reader.

Can the child identify the overall effect that the author has created, the message that the author wanted to convey?

Questions to ask:

- I wonder why the author has decided to ...? What do you think?
- What was on the authors mind when?
- Why did the author choose this setting?
- What makes this a good story?
- How does this story make you feel?
- Why do you think the writer wrote that description in this way?
- What is the author trying to tell you about... ?

Assessment Focus 7

Relate texts to their social, cultural and historical contexts and literary traditions.

Can the child identify texts which are from a similar tradition? For example fairy tale. Can they identify a story that is set in the past?

Questions to ask:

- Can you think of another story that has the same theme e.g. good triumphs over evil, weak over strong, wise over foolish?
- Do you know another story where the characters have the same issues?
- What does this story remind you of?
- How would you feel if you were treated like this?
- Have you heard this story before? Was it different in any parts? What was the same about the two versions of this story?