

Ways of Supporting Reading Skills at Home

The following are suggestions for ways of supporting your child's reading skills at home. These can be considered in addition to any suggestions made by your child's school, and any particular homework requirements.

1. Have something to read in all rooms in the home. Think about all the reading opportunities there are in a family home. Set aside 5 minutes a day as a word awareness time.

Kitchen

Cookbooks, information and offers on cereal packets and labels on all food and drink.

Sitting room

Magazines, weekend newspapers, free local newspapers, books, comics, TV guides, special interest magazines, birthday cards or special occasion cards

Bathroom

Shampoo and bubble bath or shower gel labels

Bedrooms

Books, comics, magazines, videos and computer or playstation games, party invites, homework books

2. Visit the library with your child at least once a month. Allow some time for your child to find a few books and to use the desk or sitting area to look through books and select a few to take out.
3. Visit the discount book stores that are in most towns.
4. Spend time sharing books or magazines or comics with your child as often as possible.
5. Encourage your child to enter simple newspaper competitions that involve filling in forms or writing an address on a postcard. Keep a pack of postcards available just for that purpose with a book of 2nd class stamps. This is excellent handwriting and presentation practice and also helps your child remember your home address and postcode.
6. Point out labels, or words, or captions on tv and on posters and bill boards in the street, on the way to school, or at any place you visit. It may be a sign at the park, or a street name – encourage your child to be 'word aware' and to have a guess.
7. Encourage your child to look at simple menus if eating out and use the pictures to give clues to the words. Try to make the task as easy as possible by giving many clues, and then asking for the word – often chips and nuggets will have a wonderful glossy picture – so encourage your child to make the association with the words.