Developing fluent, independent readers

Hints for parents – helping at home.

READ EVERY DAY – make it a fun, happy time you share with your child.

Children begin to follow text with their eyes rather than their finger.

There is a story line and the children begin to read text using the following strategies

1. Visual clues – letters/sounds in a word – did it look right?
2. Structure – grammar – did it sound right?
3. Meaning – text and picture - did it make sense?

Look at the front cover and title of the book, predict what you think the story might be about. Relate it to your child’s experiences.

Look at the picture briefly before your child reads the page.

Tell your child any names or unusual words before they read the page.

Strategies for working out unknown words …

- use sounds – d ow n – you may need to help with the sound some letters make, but have your child say the sounds to get the word. Go back to the beginning of the sentence or line and reread to make sure the new word sounds right and makes sense. If it doesn’t, go back and try again. Eventually your child won’t need to go back to the beginning of the sentence, he/she will be able to read on as he/she can maintain the sense of the story.
- read the next word few words in the sentence, then go back to the beginning of the sentence/line and reread and see if you can think of a word the has the same sounds (looks right) that would sound right and make sense.

Please help your child use these strategies to work out the word – the aim is independence.
Errors
Let your child read to the end of the sentence or line and see if he/she realises the error.
He/she should stop and reread the sentence or line and fix the error (self-correcting).
If your child doesn’t realise he/she has made an error, ask one of the following

- Did that look right?
- Did that sound right?
- Did that make sense?

Go back and fix it.

Good readers make mistakes and then fix them.

Children are encouraged to ...

- phrase words (put words together) when reading (e.g. said Mum, to the park, up the tree)
- use expression for bold print and talking marks.
- take note of punctuation marks – they can change the meaning of the story.
  - stop or have a rest at commas, full stops, question marks and exclamation marks
  - use an excited voice for exclamation marks
  - use an appropriate voice for talking marks

Meaning

- After reading the story talk about your favourite character/parts of the story.
- Retell the story saying what happened in the beginning, middle and end.

If the take home reader is easy

- encourage expression – take note of exclamation marks, talking marks, bold print
- use phrasing

If the take home reader is hard

- Talk about the picture before reading each page
- Help your child use strategies to work out words
- Read alternate pages with your child to help keep the meaning and flow of the story
- Read the book over 2 shorter sessions
- Read the book several times, it will get easier

Make sure it is fun and enjoyable experience to share with your child.

Please read library books to your child as it fosters a love of books and develops language skills.
Let your child see you enjoy reading for pleasure as it will help develop a life long love for reading.