How can I engage with my child as they learn to read?

St Bernard’s Catholic Primary School

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What is Reading & Comprehension?

- Reading is a complex cognitive process of decoding symbols for the intention of constructing or deriving meaning.

  Wikipedia

- “Comprehension is the reason for reading. If readers can read the words but do not understand what they are reading, they are not really reading.” (p. 48)

  Marie Clay
Why we should read to our children;

- Models what good readers do – fluency, expression
- Engages children in books for enjoyment
- Helps them understand that reading has a purpose – gives us a message, tells us a story or provides us with information
- Promotes discussion
- Provides a special, regular one on one time
How to engage with our children when they are reading to us;

- Always make it a positive experience
- Let them know that you are interested
- Set aside a special time when you can focus and not rush the experience
- Provide support when needed
- Promote enjoyment and happy times with books
Set your child up for success by:

- Discussing any tricky words in the book prior to reading – set them up for success
- Talking about the meaning of unfamiliar words and concepts
- Reading to them if the book appears too hard
Build interest with predictions;

- Making predictions helps to encourage interest and purpose
- Talk about what the story may be about before reading
- Predict what may happen next throughout the book
- Check and confirm predictions both during and after reading
If your child gets stuck on a word, encourage a variety of strategies:

- Encourage them to have a go – ‘You try’
- ‘Are there any clues in the picture that can help you?’
- ‘What does it start with?’
- ‘Can you see a smaller word in that big word?’
- ‘Can you break up the word into smaller chunks?’
- ‘Read on and come back to the word’
Avoid asking your child to ‘sound out’ a word. Ask them to break up a word into sounds or smaller words. You can use your fingers as ‘goal posts’.

- c-at
- s-it
- h-is
- h-er

- l-and
- s-ent
- spr-ing
- cr-ash

- go-ing
- land-ed
- hol-i-day
- par-ty
What to do when your child makes a mistake;

Prompt them to recognise the error:

• ‘Did that make sense?’
• ‘Does that sound right?’
• ‘Does it look right?’
• Don’t interrupt your child mid-sentence to make a correction.
• As they read on, they may realise the error and self-correct.
How to help them fix their mistake:

- ‘Let’s try that again’
- ‘What would make more sense?’
- ‘Try that again and get ready to say the first sound?’
- ‘What word do you think might fit in there?’
Using the Pictures

- Pictures can bring a lot of meaning and understanding
- Pictures may assist with unknown words
- Never cover them up
- Using pictures is one of many strategies we encourage children to use as a cue when reading
When to step in;

- If the word is beyond their ability, jump in and give it to them so meaning isn’t lost
- Don’t waste time prompting a child to try and problem solve on a word that is beyond their capacity
Developing Fluency

- ‘Did that sound like a good reader?’
- ‘Try that again and make the reading sound smooth, like talking’
- ‘Listen to yourself read to see if you like the way it sounds’ (Whisper phones are great for this)
- ‘Let’s put it together so that it sounds like talking’
- Model fluent reading and ask your child to try it the same way
Make Connections

• Relate the reading to own personal experiences
• Draw on prior knowledge of the topic / events
Questioning

“Readers purposefully and spontaneously ask questions before, during and after reading”.

I wonder...
What if...
Why.....
Inferring

- ‘Something that the author wants you to know but may not tell you.’
- ‘Reading between the lines.’
- Students use clues in the story, prior knowledge and visualising to infer meaning.
Re-reading

- Re-reading a text a number of times promotes fluency, expression and confidence, hence, comprehension.
Helpful hints:

- Have meaningful conversations about the text
- Provide a variety of texts that match your child’s ability and interest level
- Pushing a child beyond their ability level can cause them to be reluctant readers
- If your child is too tired, read to them
- All children develop their reading skills at their own pace
- Keep it positive
- It needs to be enjoyable and achievable!