

Helping Your Child with Reading Comprehension

Reading the words is only a small part of learning to read. Understanding what has been read is just as important; this is known as comprehension. When teachers assess which colour book band children are working at, they look at how well children read the words and how well they understand what has been read. Children develop comprehension skills overtime, as they get better at reading the words; they should also be getting better at understanding what they read. Children don't always need to read a book themselves to practise their comprehension skills, sharing books and listening to stories is just as important.

Ideas to support your child in developing reading comprehension skills are broadly matched to the reading book colour band.

Foundation Stage	Pink	<p>Enjoy some favourite stories over and over again.</p> <p>Talk about characters in familiar books, <i>The Gruffalo</i>, <i>Cinderella</i>, <i>Charlie & Lola</i>.</p> <p>Retell familiar stories together, encourage children to sequence events in their own words. You can support your child with this through questioning;</p> <p><i>What happened when Goldilocks sat on baby Bears Chair? What does the Gruffalo look like?</i></p>
	Red	<p>Read a wider range of stories.</p> <p>Retell stories and encourage children to use language patterns from familiar books - <i>The Big Bad Wolf said, "I will Huff and puff and blow your house down". The Little Billy Goat Gruff, went trip, trap, trip, trap across the bridge. "Not I" said the Cat, "Not I" said the dog..</i></p> <p>Use non-fiction books together to find answers to questions about, where, who, why and how.</p>
	Yellow	<p>Re-enact and retell stories in sequence. Talk about the events that happen in the beginning, middle and end of stories.</p> <p>Make predictions about what is going to happen in stories and ask your child to explain their predictions. <i>"I wonder what's going to happen?"</i></p>
Year One	Blue	<p>Read books with rhyming words and patterned language and use the rhymes and patterns to retell - <i>Each Peach Pear Plumb I spy Tom Thumb</i></p> <p><i>Run, run, as fast as you can, you can't catch me I'm the Gingerbread man</i></p> <p><i>I do not like green eggs and ham, Sam I am.</i></p>
	Green	<p>Let children choose their own books and talk about their choices. (The library at Crystal Peaks is free to join and use.)</p> <p>Ask your child to predict what a story might be about, based on the title, front cover and blurb.</p> <p>Ask your child to identify the main points and characters in a story.</p> <p>Encourage your child to ask about any words they don't understand.</p>
	Orange	<p>Ask your child simple questions about the story, questions they can answer from reading the text - <i>"Where did the boy go in the story?" "What is the dog's name?" "What happened in the end of the story?"</i> Can they locate the words in the text which answer simple questions?</p> <p>Ask your child to make predictions about stories - <i>"What do you think will happen to the cat?" "What do you think mum will do now?"</i></p>
	Turquoise	<p>Read and share a range of fiction and non-fiction book. Talk about the differences.</p> <p>Talk about how your child's experience relates to the story. Have they been to a party or do they have a pet?</p> <p>Talk about how to read with emphasis using the bold print or capitalisation in the text, e.g. STOP!</p> <p>Ask your child to talk about which books and stories they like and why.</p>

Year Two	Purple	<p>Talk about the characters and setting in stories.</p> <p>Ask your child to retell stories they have read. They should include the main points and not be over long or over short. Encourage them to use story language such as 'once upon a time, first, next, last.'</p> <p>Ask your child to compare books they have read. Can they identify similarities in characters and themes.</p> <p>Talk about the words in stories and how these have been used and why e.g. '<i>spooky, slimy, gloomy</i>.'</p> <p>Ask your child to locate particular words in the text. "<i>What word does the author use to describe the sky?</i>" "<i>Why does the author say the grass was crisp?</i>"</p> <p>Encourage your child to read non-fiction books and find answers to simple questions using the contents and index.</p>
	Gold	<p>Encourage your child to choose their own books to read based on what they have read and enjoyed before. Talk about why they like or dislike a book.</p> <p>Ask your child to identify certain words and phrases in the text that create humour or help them to create an image in their mind, "<i>What words does the author use to tell us the castle was a scary place?</i>" "<i>Why does the author say the mouse was terrifying?</i>"</p> <p>After reading a story, ask your child to suggest alternative events or endings that might have happened.</p> <p>Encourage your child to make comments about what they are reading and to express their own opinions on events and characters in the story. "<i>What do you think about how the boy behaves?</i>" "<i>What would you do if that happened?</i>"</p> <p>Ask your child to find specific information using the index and contents pages of non-fiction books, "<i>What are baby hamsters called?</i>" "<i>How high is Blackpool Tower?</i>"</p>
	White	<p>Encourage your child to make choices about which books to read by looking at the title, contents, illustrations and skim reading, ask them to explain why they have chosen a book.</p> <p>Encourage your child to read books set in different times and places and talk about these differences.</p> <p>Ask your child to explain the reasons for a characters actions or feelings, these might be things that are not be explicitly explained in the text. "<i>Why is the boy laughing?</i>" "<i>Why didn't the girl put her shoes on when she ran out?</i>"</p> <p>Encourage your child to use a dictionary and information texts to find answers to questions.</p>
	Lime	<p>Ask your child to write a book review; they should summarise what they have read and give their opinion on the book.</p> <p>Ask your child questions about the characters actions feelings and encourage them to answer using the word 'because' drawing on evidence from the text e.g. '<i>The boy was feeling lonely because he had lost his dog.</i>'</p> <p>Ask your child to use a range of non-fiction texts to find answers and decide which books are not useful. For example, read different books on sea creatures to find out what seahorses eat. This information may only be available in some of the books they use.</p> <p>Ask your child to identify words in a text which help create a mood or build tension.</p>