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to bring out 'the best in everyone'**

## **How to support your child with reading at home in Key Stage 2**



Parents often ask how they can help to develop the reading skills of children who are already fluent readers. The best way is to:

- continue to share books,
- regularly listen to your child read, sometimes reading to or with them,
- discussing the content of the text with increasing depth.

To become good readers children need to develop skills in seven key areas.

**Decoding:** this is the skill that parents are generally most familiar with, and deals with the varying strategies used by children to make sense of the words on the page. Even fluent readers can be stumped by an unfamiliar word, and it is useful at these times to discuss the range of strategies used to make a sensible guess.

**Retrieval and recall:** Readers need to develop this skill, in order to locate important information and to retell stories and describe events.

**Inference:** reading between the lines. Encouraging children to make inferences based on clues in the text and their understanding of the context of the book, will help them to develop this important skill.

**Structure and organisation:** as children read a wider range of text types, they need to be able to comment on the features of each and how they are organised. Discussing the presentation of the text, e.g. the use of subtitles to assist reading of a non-fiction text, and the author's reason for organising the text in this way, will support children's development in this area. Making links between the purpose of the text and its organisation is a useful place to start.

**Language:** specifically, thinking about the language choices made by writers, their possible reasons for making those choices and the effect the choices have on the reader. Discussing alternative choices and their effects can be a good way to begin discussion about the author's language and an opportunity to develop vocabulary generally.

**Purpose and viewpoint:** Who is the narrator of this story? What does the writer of this biography feel about his/her subject? Children need to understand that writers write for a purpose, and to be able to recognise that this will have an impact on the way a text is written. Newspapers and advertisements are perfect examples of this and can lead to lots of lively discussions.



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**Making links:** as adults, we are constantly making links between ideas and experiences. Good readers connect the book they are reading with real life experiences; with other books read and stories heard; with films; and with the context in which they were written. A child reading 'Goodnight Mister Tom', for example, will need to place the story within the context that it was written to fully understand it. They might also link it with other stories read, such as 'Friend or Foe' or 'Carrie's War'. Overleaf are some questions linked to the above points, which I hope you will find useful. It is not necessary to ask every question each time your child reads, of course, but they may prove to be useful prompts to start a more focused discussion.

### **Reading KS2 question starters**

The reading question prompts below can be applied to most books that children will be reading at home [both fiction and non-fiction]

**Vocabulary:** Explaining the meaning of words in context

- 1] Find one word in the passage which means the same as..... Example: Find one word in the passage which means the same as angry [furious, livid] Find one word in the passage that means the same as delicious [succulent]
- 2] Find one word/phrase that suggests/shows that ... Example: Find one phrase that the suggests that the weather was bad. [e.g. the wind howled through the trees]. Find one word which suggests that the place was busy [bustling]
- 3] Which word most closely matches the meaning of the word X ? Example: Find one word on the page that most closely matches the meaning of the word disappointed. [e.g. downhearted, discouraged, despondent]
- 4] Can you think of another word that means the same as.....?
- 5] What does the word X suggest about character X?
- 6] Give the meaning of the word X in this sentence. Example: Jason snarled as he put the envelope on the table." What impression does this word give you?
- 7] Why did the author choose this word? [e.g. to give the reader a certain impression of the character]

### **Retrieve information / identify key details from fiction and non-fiction**

- 1] Tell me three things you are told about X Example: Tell me three things you are told about life in Mozambique in this section. Tell me three things you have learned about the character from the first paragraph.
- 2] What was revealed at X place in the story?
- 3] Ask true/false questions related to the text. Example: Bill gave the children some money because they could not afford anything to eat. True or false?
- 4] Give two reasons why ... Example: Give two reasons why Mr Briggs no longer wanted to live at Hillside Farm



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**Summarise main ideas from more than one paragraph**

- 1] Can you tell me what happened in chapter 1? [in summary form]
- 2] Can you tell me what has happened so far in the story? [in summary form]
- 3] Below are some summaries of different paragraphs from this text [summarised in one sentence]. Number them 1-6 to show the order in which they appear in the text.

**Make inferences from the text /read between the lines/ explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text**

- 1] How can you tell that ...? Example: How can you tell that Anton was cold? [His feet were numb and his breath rasped]. Example: How can you tell Rubina was getting thinner? [Her plump apple cheeks withered]
- 2] What impressions of Character X do you get from these two paragraphs?
- 3] Why did X happen?
- 4] How can you tell that ..... What makes you think that? Give two points. Example: How can you tell that Mr Smith was disappointed with the gift he received? [Mr Smith looked crestfallen. His shoulders slumped and he sighed a heavy sigh].
- 5] Do you think the author intended you to like / dislike this character? How do you know? Find two things the author wrote about this character that made him / her likeable/dislikeable?
- 6] Does your opinion of this character change during the story? How? Why?

**Predict what might happen from details stated and implied**

- 1] Do you think that X happen? Yes, no, maybe. Explain your choice fully, using evidence from the text.

**Identify / explain how meaning is enhanced through the author's choice of words and phrases**

- 1] [Provide a group of words from the text] Give two impressions this gives you of x....
- 2] Do you think the author made a good choice with the title of the book? What alternative titles could he/she have chosen?

**Explaining the message or moral of the story.**

- 1] What is the author trying to teach us? What message is he trying to convey?