

# Supporting your Child at Home

## Supporting your Child in learning to read

Reading should be enjoyable for you and your child. If your child becomes distressed or loses interest when reading at home, take a break from reading and try again later.

All children, regardless of age, like to be read to. Make a special time whenever possible for reading with your child away from interruptions. You can help your child in reading when you:

- show your child that you value reading by reading whenever you can
- provide a variety of texts for your child to read to you, eg stories, comics, poems, plays, cartoons, reference books, magazines, children's recipe books
- point out words on street signs, packets and labels
- encourage your child to predict what a book is about from the cover and illustrations
- reread favourite books
- talk about the different purposes for reading a picture book, a novel, a TV guide, a newspaper, a telephone directory, a recipe book, an encyclopedia
- point out the different size and shape of words
- point out the first sound of a word and encourage your child to think of other words that begin with the same sound
- encourage your child to read books for enjoyment as well as for information
- praise your child when they are reading, eg 'well done - that was a difficult word'
- encourage a positive attitude to books
- encourage your child to talk about characters and events in texts
- encourage your child to make sound effects for the characters and events
- ask your child to think of possible beginnings and endings for stories read and heard
- praise your child when they are reading
- 'sound out' difficult words and/or give clues to the meaning of difficult words
- encourage your child to have a go at reading words that are unfamiliar
- ask your child to read on past the unknown word to gain clues from the rest of the sentence
- show your child how to find the meanings of unfamiliar words in dictionaries
- encourage your child to watch films and videos of books they have read
- talk about the ways in which a film version of a book compares with the print version
- encourage your child to borrow books from the library.

## Supporting your child in learning to write

When children begin to write they enjoy making marks and scribbles on paper. After a while they start to write some of the letters and sounds of the alphabet. They learn to write words. Eventually they learn to write sentences and are able to create a variety of texts. How can you help your child at home?

*Make writing experiences at home fun for you and your child:*

- write in front of your child and discuss what you are writing, eg shopping lists, cards, letters and notes
- talk about the different purposes and audiences for writing
- encourage your child to use a variety of paper for drawing and writing
- encourage your child to use pens, pencils, crayons, chalk and textas for writing
- encourage your child to draw and to write about their drawing
- praise your child for 'having a go' at writing words that are new to them
- encourage your child to write messages for you and other family members
- help your child to find little words in big words and to write them, eg carpet: car, pet, are, care, tar
- encourage your child to write cards and invitations, and letters to friends, relatives, neighbours, school teachers
- encourage your child to write signs, poems, favourite recipes and instructions
- encourage your child to label things that they design and make
- play word games such as 'I Spy', 'Scrabble', 'Boggle', 'Scattagories', 'Junior Pictionary'
- encourage your child to use a word processor or typewriter if available
- display paintings, drawings and writing that your child brings home from school
- encourage your child to develop their own photo album and encourage them to write labels for their photos
- encourage your child to keep a scrap book or photo album for putting in pictures and writing
- encourage your child to keep a diary and to write in it whenever possible
- encourage your child to write in the NSW Foundation Style Writing:

If your child is having difficulty with their handwriting, spelling or writing, ask your child's teacher for help.

If your child is having difficulty with reading, or not enjoying reading, ask your child's teacher for help.

## Supporting your child in learning to spell.

- say speech rhymes and tongue twisters together
- play 'detective' games with words. Ask your child to be a detective and find:
  - words that rhyme, eg can, fan, man, tan
  - words that begin with the same sound, eg sun, sausage, sea
  - words that end with the same sound, eg hat, street
  - little words in big words, eg 'am' in 'jam'
  - words that sound the same but are spelt differently, eg ate - eight, to - two - too, their - there
- play word games that focus on the sounds of words, eg *Junior Scrabble, Boggle, Word Snap, Wonderwords, Junior Crosswords, I Spy, Hangman*
- encourage your child to write words that start with a particular sound
- encourage your child to write words with three letters, five letters and so on
- try to make spelling activities enjoyable
- encourage your child to 'have a go' at spelling words
- encourage your child to 'sound out' words, eg h-i-t, s-a-n-d
- ask your child to write words that are not easily 'sounded out', eg home, watch, after
- encourage your child to develop memory tricks such as 'a piece of pie', 'hear with your ear'
- encourage your child to use the LOOK SAY COVER WRITE CHECK method to spell a variety of words, eg ask your child to:
  - LOOK closely at the word
  - SAY the word and then
  - COVER it
  - WRITE the word and then
  - CHECK to see if it is correct!
- 'hear' your child's personal spelling lists
- show your child how to use dictionaries, encyclopedias and thesauruses

Provide positive feedback when your child attempts to spell a word and/or spells a word correctly. See your child's class teacher for information about the spelling strategies your child

## Supporting your child in learning to talk.

Your child has learned to talk and listen with your help and encouragement. You can continue to support your child's language development at school by doing some of the following:

- actively listen and respond to your child's talk
- encourage your child to talk about their interests, friends, pets, favourite books and favourite movies
- show your child ways of talking for different purposes, eg using the telephone, inviting a friend to play, giving a message
- encourage your child to talk about television, video and radio programs
- give your child a series of instructions to follow
- encourage your child to give messages to other family members
- encourage your child to play a variety of games such as 'The Shopping Game' (one child begins by saying 'I went shopping and bought an apple'. Each child has to remember what has been said before and add a new shopping item)
- encourage your child to talk about things they have made using blocks, plasticine, cardboard and/or junk material
- encourage your child to listen to stories being read by family members
- have your child listen to stories and retell them to friends and family
- encourage your child to talk about drawings, paintings and models that they bring home from school
- encourage your child to read a variety of books and to retell the story in their own words
- encourage your child to read a variety of non-fiction (factual texts) and talk about the information presented in these
- encourage your child to talk about their imaginary play
- encourage your child to talk to known adults as well as other children
- plan and discuss family outings, eg going to the beach, park, friend's place, movie, zoo, museum, art gallery, sports events
- encourage your child to discuss and debate issues in the news and newspapers

Source: K-6 Educational Resources, NSW Board of Studies