

Reading Engagement Strategies for Parents

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If you're struggling to get your child to engage with reading at home, want to help your child progress in their reading ability, or simply want to make reading a bigger part of family life, this guide should provide some helpful tips to get you started.

Did you know:

- Reading increases intellect – FACT
- Children who enjoy reading are more academically successful – FACT
- Reading increases vocabulary – FACT
- Children who read more produce better pieces of writing – FACT
- Reading improves spelling – FACT

In school time, students receive, on average, 120 minutes per week of reading practice at school. Compare this with a student who reads at home as well, for 30 minutes a day, or 210 minutes per week. This works out at roughly 76,000 minutes more reading practice a year! Which do you think would produce a confident, mature and happy reader?

So, how can you include reading more easily at home?

- Ensure that your children see you reading. It doesn't matter if it's the newspaper, a cookery book, romantic novel, detective mystery, short stories, computer manual, magazine – anything!
- Give books or book tokens as presents (and encourage others to do so!)
- Limit screentime to make way for reading time – this promotes better sleep in the evenings too.
- Perhaps you could all listen to an audio book in the car on the way to holidays and trips this summer?
- Encourage children to carry a book at all times so they can read on journeys or in spare moments – you can do this too!

- YouTube has lots of audio books on it to encourage even the most reluctant readers to at least listen to books being read.
- Check out the Suggested Reading lists for KS3 and 4 (also available on the Pittville Website)
- Purchase a Reading Ruler for your child - Reading Rulers are a colored transparent ruler that is placed over text that a person is reading, changing the background colour of the white page to that of the coloured ruler. It also has the additional benefit of providing a guideline of what part of the page a person is reading. These are both helpful for children with Dyslexia especially.
- Reading doesn't just have to be about books. Words are everywhere! What about reading signs (such as shop signs, road signs) and notices (or spotting letters) when out and about or around the home, or sharing the menu with your child when out for a meal, looking at a magazine together, reading information leaflets about places or information boards on daytrips.
- Cheltenham Literature Festival has lots of events – both free and paid – including meet-and-greet author events in the beautiful book tents, and fun workshops.
- Access Accelerated Reader to check how your child is doing.
- Keep reading together. There are lots of books that both adults and young people can enjoy. Try *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by Mark Haddon, the *Harry Potter* series, or *The Life of Pi* by Yann Martel. Read books you can all talk about but make the talk light-hearted, not testing or over-questioning.
- Make sure your home is a reading home - have a family bookshelf and make sure there are shelves in your children's bedrooms as well.
- Don't panic if your child reads the same book over and over again - let's be honest, we've probably all done it!

- Encourage your children and their friends to swap books with each other. This will encourage them to talk and think about the books they are reading.
- Join the local library! The local library can be an invaluable resource that is often under used. Going to the library can be a fun way to spend a few hours on the weekend and dedicate some time to reading. Most libraries have a wide variety of books to explore and a cosy environment. Libraries usually have free internet access to explore e-books or author websites too. They may have audio books that can be borrowed or listened to also.