

What can I do to help my child to read?

When parents and teachers collaborate to assist children's reading and writing, children benefit. Reading with your child should not be taken as a test. Rather, it is an opportunity for you to get to know your child as a learner who is striving to be literate.

Phonics (the relationship between letters and sounds) is one strategy children use when reading unfamiliar words. There are many other effective ways to assist children to identify unfamiliar words. Try saying:

- Do you know a word that looks like that?
- Look for a part of the word you know.
- Stretch the sounds in order.
- Think '*does that make sense?*'

What parents can do?

Reading is not a perfect process and if your child is having difficulty reading a book or feeling stressed, try doing one of the following:

- Read aloud and together -
The child reads slightly behind you as you read in your normal reading voice.
- Take turns –
You read a page, sentence, or paragraph and then your child reads the next one.
- Read and reread –
Read the page, sentence or paragraph and then your child reads it.

Some tips for home reading -

- Establish a home reading routine. Read aloud with your child every day in your home language.
- Before you read a book with your child, talk about the illustrations and the title. Read the blurb and talk about the author.
- If reading time is stressful, find a new location. Instead of sitting at the kitchen bench, move to the lounge room floor or go outside under a tree.
- Ask questions that encourage your children to talk about what they have read. Questions such as: *What was your favourite part? Tell me about the characters. What do you think will happen next? What do you like/dislike about this book?*
- Avoid judging your child's reading with words such as '*good*' and '*excellent*'. Instead say things about the strategies your child uses when reading, such as "*I like how you read on when you came to that difficult word.*"