



Research has shown that children who enjoy reading and spend more time reading for pleasure have better reading and writing skills, a broader vocabulary, and an increased general knowledge and understanding of other cultures.

Below is a link to a fabulous clip of Julia Donaldson offering advice on how to read with your child:

<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/reading-owl/top-tips-3/julia-donaldsons-top-tips>

Another great website for parents is:

<http://www.booktrust.org.uk/books/children/how-to-share-books/top-tips-on-sharing-books/>

Here are some tips for encouraging reading in your home with older children:

- **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!
- **Encourage children to join in** - ask a child to read out a recipe for you as you cook, or the TV listings when you are watching TV
- **Give books or book tokens as presents**, and encourage others to do so
- **Visit the local library together** on a regular basis, and enjoy spending time choosing new books
- **Encourage children to carry a book at all times** so they can read on journeys or in spare moments – you can do this, too!
- **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
- **Go to libraries or bookshops when authors are visiting.** Children and teenagers love meeting their favourite writers - Jacqueline Wilson and Anthony Horowitz always have signing queues that are miles long!
- **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 - 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



**"WRITING
IS THE
PAINTING
OF THE
VOICE!"**
VOLTAIRE

If your child is struggling with their writing at home:

- Make sure there are no distractions such as the TV.
- Try to pick a time when your child is not tired and you are able to sit together.
- Always talk through their writing first – we encourage a think, say, write approach where your child thinks of a sentence, says it out loud to check it makes sense and then attempts to write it down.
- Help your child to sound out the words in their sentence and use their phonics to spell unfamiliar words. If we constantly correct their spellings they will lose confidence in their own abilities and lose the 'have a go' mentality that we nurture in school.
- Value their efforts – it may not be the neatest piece of work but if they are concentrating hard on the content and working independently it is inevitable that the presentation may not be perfect. They can always go back and re-write it neatly after they have completed the work.
- If a lengthier piece of work is required, split the task into manageable chunks so that your child will not lose concentration.
- Talk through the completed work with your child. Always begin with the positive elements of the work and then suggest ways in which it may be improved such as punctuation, adding adjectives, using different sentence starters etc.
- **ENJOY!** Always speak about writing positively so that your child understands that it isn't something to be dreaded! Let your child see you writing so that they recognise the value of it; shopping lists, postcards, letters etc.



If your child is keen to write and you are looking for some inspiration for additional tasks, see below

*Encourage your child to look out for story ideas in everyday life.

*Give your child a creative space that's their own – a notebook or journal for them to scribble down story ideas, invent incredible characters or even draw pictures of the places where they want to set their story.

*Every writer is a reader and every reader can be a writer too. Talk to your child about the books they are reading. What are the best bits? What are the worst? Who's their favourite character and why? Encourage them to write down favourite lines and think about how the books they are reading could inspire their own spin-off stories and sequels.

*Making a mash-up story that mixes together characters from different books, films and TV shows can be a lot of fun. Get your child to choose a favourite character from a book and create a story that puts them into their favourite TV show or videogame. How would Sherlock Holmes solve a Minecraft mystery? What would happen if Mr Gum entered *The X Factor*? Encourage your child to let their imagination run wild as they write their mash-up story.

* Looking at photos in a magazine can inspire a story. Encourage children to ask questions about the pictures they see – thinking about characters, settings and situations they can turn into a story.

*If your child is a big fantasy fan and loves stories about dragons, wizards and monsters, encourage them to create their own magical land. Look at maps of other fantasy lands such as Middle Earth and Narnia and think about the stories that are set there. Making a map can help to inspire fantastic adventures.

