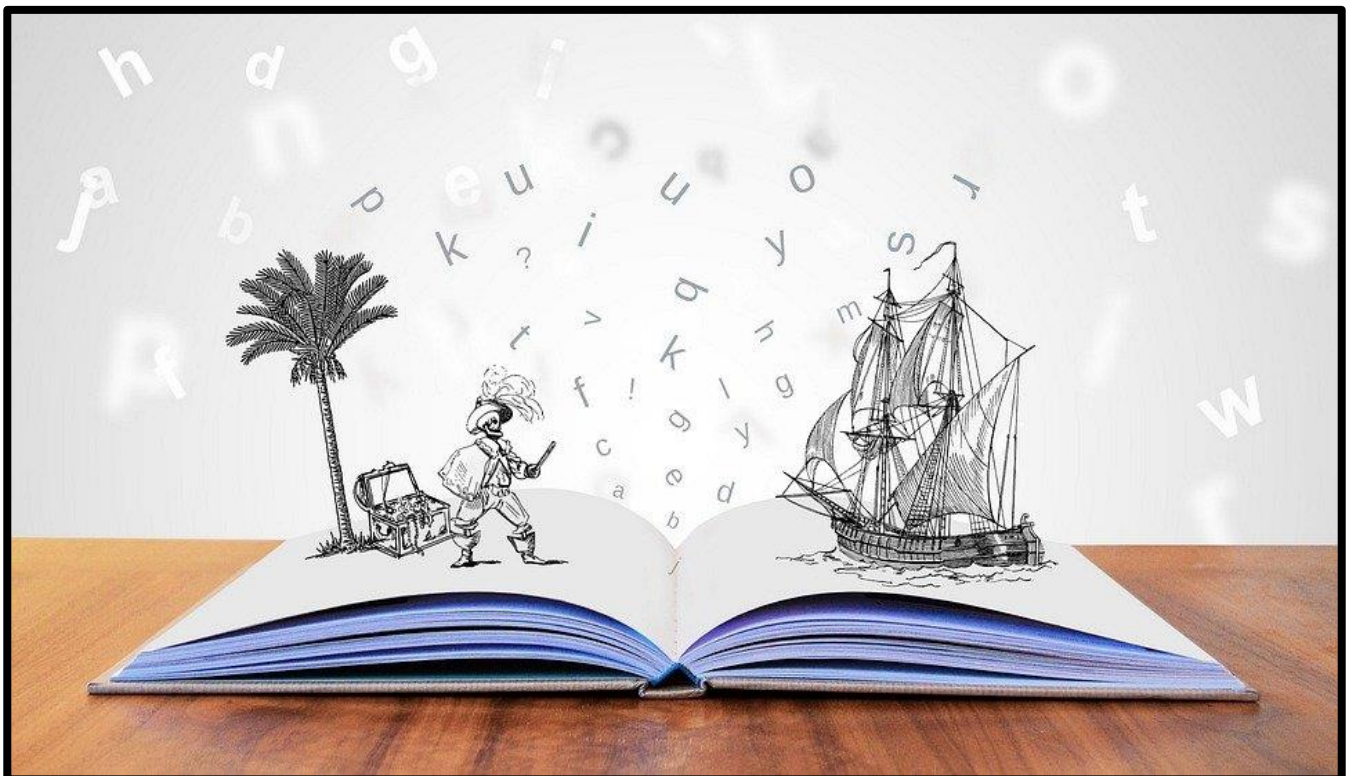


Reading is a passport to countless adventures.

Mary Pope Osbourne



How to help your child learn to read and develop a love of reading



A guide for parents

Reading should not be presented as a chore or a duty. It should be offered as a gift.
Kate Dicamillo

One of the most important gifts we can give our children is to help them learn to read and write so that they can succeed in school and beyond. Confident, active readers are able to use their reading skills to enable them to successfully participate in the world around them. We all read for a purpose: to be entertained, to take a journey of the imagination, to connect with others, to figure out how to do something, and to build on our knowledge of history, science, the arts, and the world.

Learning to read is an intricate process. Children need to master many skills at the same time: decoding, reading fluently, grasping new vocabulary, comprehending what the text says as well as discovering that reading can be enjoyable. Research shows that children do not learn one reading-related skill at a time: these skills are interwoven throughout a child's reading journey and often develop at different paces.



Understanding what print is and the parts of a book

Print awareness is the understanding that print carries meaning and that in English it reads from left to right. It also means learning that books contain letters and words, have front and back covers, and are handled in a certain way.



Recognizing the sounds in spoken words

Phonological and phonemic awareness is the ability to hear, identify, and play with the sounds in spoken language — including rhymes, syllables, and the smallest units of sound (phonemes).



Connecting the sounds of speech with letters

Phonics is a systematic way to teach the alphabetic principle — the idea that letters represent the sounds of spoken language — and that there is a predictable relationship between letters and sounds.



Reading with accuracy and expression

Fluency is a child's ability to read a book or other text with accuracy, at a reasonable rate, and with appropriate expression. A fluent reader doesn't have to stop and "decode" each word.



Knowing what each word means

Vocabulary is word knowledge. Word learning is an ongoing process. Children are always adding to their "word banks" in order to recognize and understand the meaning of spoken and written words.



Understanding what you read

Comprehension is the goal of reading! It is the thinking process readers use to understand what they read. Strong vocabulary, background knowledge, and an understanding of how language works are keys to comprehension.

Reading at Home

Parents and carers are by far the most important educators in a child's life and research shows that reading to and with your child is essential for your child's education. At Nunney First School, we expect children to read their school book daily at home. It is best to read little and often – five minutes of quality time, when you can give your full attention to your child, is better than longer periods when neither of you are fully concentrating.



Every child will have at least one book to take home each week.

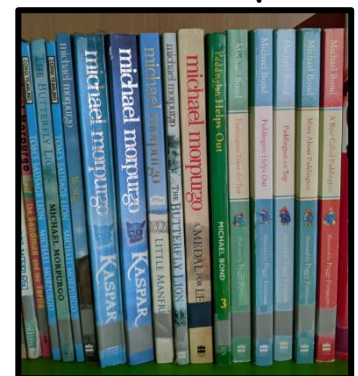


In KS1, children keep their book for at least two days. Repetitive reading builds confidence and fluency as it enables a child to read without stumbling and stopping. As a result, reading time becomes more enjoyable for everyone. All children should read aloud to an adult, ensuring that the text is visible to everyone,

and point to each word in turn. Our new RWI book bag books also include their own comprehension questions related to the text. These should only be used once the child is fluently reading the text. A child has mastered a book when they can read it accurately with increasing speed.

Children in KS2 are often at different stages of development, but even the most fluent readers need parental support. Reading aloud is still as important as it is in Reception.

Research shows that reading accuracy and speed can decline as children get older. For those children on Dark Blue book band, two or three of their daily reading sessions could be reading silently to him/herself followed by a discussion about the book. The other days are an opportunity for your child to read aloud to you.



Taking the time to talk to your children about the books they choose and listening to them reading aloud regularly can make all the difference. Children need to understand why we read.

Book Band Reading Cards



At Nunney First School, we have created book band reading cards to support you at home. These provide questions for you to ask and discuss with your child to develop their **in-depth understanding** of a text. We suggest choosing three or four per reading session. Although these are related to each book band colour, they can be used for other texts you have in your house or those borrowed from the library.

You may need to model answers to begin with. For example:

Parent asks a question: *How do you know the character is feeling sad?*

Parent: *I'm going to think about my answer out loud. I wonder if the phrase, 'he sat down slowly on the step with his head in his hands' is a clue to tell me the character is sad.*

What do you think?

As your child becomes more familiar with this they will be able to answer more independently.

Reading for pleasure

Bestselling author Jeremy Strong's top tip is to keep 'helping your child learn to read' quite separate from 'reading for pleasure'. Eventually the two will become one of their own accord as your child becomes a more confident reader and the great thing about this is that the vast majority of children can learn a lot about reading without even realising that that is what is happening.

The more you can read to your child, the better, but the evening bedtime story is often the most appropriate, easiest and most enjoyable moment. Ten minutes is enough with a young child but if you can manage fifteen that would be even better. This is the time to settle on the bed with the child, cuddle up and enjoy whatever book has been chosen. Bedtime reading is a time for complete relaxation and preparation for sleep, do not mix learning to read with bedtime reading or reading for pleasure.

Reading for pleasure should be exactly that. Show how much you enjoy books. Make sure your child sees you and your family reading.



Book Bands Chart

Reading books are graded into reading levels known as Book Bands. Each Book Band has its own colour. The chart below gives an indication of the range of Book Band Levels at which most children will be reading as they progress through school.

The chart shows the progress of an 'average' band of a child – but no individual child is 'average', so no child makes smooth progress precisely in this way. Children tend to learn in fits and starts – periods of growth followed by periods of consolidation when their progress seems to halt for a while. The periods where you don't see rapid progress may be worrying, especially after a 'growth spurt', but they are important as your child develops confidence in using and applying their newly acquired skills.

If you are ever worried about your child's progress, talk to their teacher.

Book Band Colour	RWI books (a rough guide to where they match)	Age related expectation
Pink	Learning individual sounds and building words	Reception
Red	Red Ditty stage	
Yellow	Green Stage	
Blue	Purple Stage	Year 1
Green	Pink Stage	
Orange	Orange Stage	
Turquoise	Yellow Stage	Year 2
Purple	Blue Stage	
Gold	Grey Stage	
White	Literacy and Language Activities (no longer on RWI books)	
Lime		Year 3
Brown		
Grey		
Dark Blue (KS2)		Year 4
Dark Red (KS2)		

