

# How to help develop reading and vocabulary

Information for parents and carers

## Did you know?

Research shows that reading for pleasure has the most impact on the frequency at which young people read, their educational achievement and their personal development.



Renaissance Learning's report for 2018 showed that in primary school, children are generally reading books that are of a level exceeding their age and ability. Unfortunately, this changes at secondary school; children in Year 7 generally read books which are levelled at a year below their age and this gap either plateaus or continues to widen throughout the remainder of their time at secondary school.

Research has shown that as they grow older, children find reading less enjoyable and they also read less frequently. We also know from research that, in general, boys enjoy reading less than girls.

## What can you do?

### 3 things to do if your child is at Key Stage 3:

Encourage your child to find texts they enjoy; choice and interest in reading is key. Spend some time at the library or a local book store and ask someone who works there to give suggestions based on your child's interests, films or books they've enjoyed or any new and popular books other children have enjoyed. Some research has shown that children who have books of their own enjoy reading more, but it is often worth ensuring that they're confident they'll enjoy the authors/texts they are choosing before investing!

Encourage your child to read for 15-30 minutes every day. This doesn't have to be novels - it could be short stories or even non-fiction. If your child is willing, sit with them and read together so that you can discuss and tease out some of the issues that crop up.

If your child has shown an interest in a recent issue in the news, or a particular topic at school, look into non-fiction articles or books related to it and help them see how they can follow their own interests and develop their knowledge of different areas they find engaging.

### 3 things to do if your child is at Key Stage 4:

By this age, young people can sometimes be harder to inspire in areas like reading. It can sometimes be worth

having a discussion about what your child dislikes, or finds difficult, about reading; be open-minded about their views and try to discuss ways around these together. It's fine to have dislikes, but what might they enjoy reading? Where could they make a start?

Encourage your child to find texts they enjoy; choice and interest in reading is key. This doesn't have to be fiction, it could be non-fiction extracts or whole texts too. You may find text ideas together, from your child's own selection or seek advice from their teachers at school. Due to the nature of GCSE English Language, you may find that your child's school library or English department have banks of fiction and non-fiction extracts for them to explore. This can help them, and you, to get a feel for what may interest them before widening your search to whole texts.

Consider, with your child, what subjects or topics they are particularly enjoying and seek out fiction and/or non-fiction linked to those. For example, some young people who like science enjoy biographies of well-known scientists from across the ages, those interested in history have a whole wealth of fiction and non-fiction available to them in their chosen areas of interest and those who enjoy maths may find books about topics like Alan Turing's Enigma machine of interest.

