

# School Library Service

## Reading begins at home

### Why do we need to engage parents?

Although we intuitively know that parents have a major role in their child's development as a reader, the research clearly shows that they are the most influential factor in their child's attitude to reading. The time available during the school day for children to read is limited so it is vital that children want to read in their own time and so attitude matters!



Highlighted below are some of the key research findings in this area:

- “Parents play an important role in developing pupils’ attitudes and supporting their reading at home. Pupils with positive attitudes almost always spoke with enthusiasm about reading at home, buying books regularly and visiting the local library. They were proud of the amount of books and audio-visual materials they had built up at home. They enjoyed talking about reading with members of their family and were encouraged and motivated by this personal attention.  
“ OFSTED survey on *Reading for purpose and pleasure* 2004: an evaluation of the teaching of reading in primary schools
- “Being more enthusiastic about reading, and a frequent reader, was more of an advantage on its own than having well educated parents in good jobs.”  
The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) report .This data was based on the literacy skills of 15 years olds across 32 countries.

- PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) highlights:
  - that the amount of reading overall outside school has fallen;
  - that 37 per cent of our ten year olds play computer games for more than three hours a day. This has increased since 2001 and is one of the highest proportions internationally;
  - the link between high use of computer games and lower attainment in PIRLS; and
  - that children in England read for pleasure less often than their peers in other countries. There is a strong link between the amount of reading for pleasure and their achievement in PIRLS tests.

PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) 2006, and the PIRLS report for England, *Readers and reading: the national report from England*, by the independent National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER)

- Students whose parents reported that they had read a book with their child “every day or almost every day” or “once or twice a week” during the first year of primary school have markedly higher scores in PISA 2009 than students whose parents reported that they had read a book with their child “never or almost never” or only “once or twice a month”.

PISA OECD 2009 *Overcoming social background: equity in learning opportunities and outcomes volume II*

<http://www.pisa.oecd.org/dataoecd/4/1/49012097.pdf>

- “Children whose early encounters with literacy are enjoyable are more likely to develop a predisposition to read frequently and broadly in subsequent years. Shared storybook reading plays an important role in promoting reading motivations; when the socio-emotional climate is positive, children are more interested in reading and more likely to view it as enjoyable. Parents who believe that reading is a source of entertainment have children with more positive views about reading than do parents who emphasize the skills aspect of reading development. These findings have important implications for offering guidance to parents and for the development of family literacy intervention programs.” Baker, L., Scher, D. & Mackler, K. (1997). *Home and family influences on motivations for reading*. Educational Psychologist, vol. 32, 69-82.
- This study found that 78% of children and young people have a reading role model. These come predominantly from within the immediate family. Programmes that aim to work with the already powerful influence of parents, especially on younger children, should therefore work alongside

parents and work from a position of parents as knowledgeable partners in the process.

Christina Clark, Sarah Osborne and George Dugdale. *Reaching out with role models: Role models and young people's reading*. National Literacy Trust

## **How do we engage parents?**

### **When is the best time?**

When is a good time to get reading messages across to parents, especially those you most want to reach? Experience shows that you are most likely to engage with the very youngest which is great because this is when you want them. Ideally the school wants to plan an approach that will begin before the children come to school e.g. the children will come into school for sample sessions – while the children are in the classroom this is an ideal time to do a session with the parents on reading and other aspects of the curriculum.

Audit your parents to find out when the best time would be for them. Try having sessions just after parents have dropped their children to school in the morning or invite them in for a session before the end of the school day so that they collect their children at the end of the event.

Parents are more likely to come in if children are involved. Involve the children in writing/drawing personal invitations to their parents/carers. Involve the children in “taster” sessions where they are modelling a guided reading session or reciprocal reading session for example. Have the children showing examples of books they have made. Have the parents' talk as part of Children's book week/World Book Day activities. Invite parents in to see their children dressed up as a favourite book character and to see and hear about the activities they have enjoyed during Book Week.

Consider running 2 sessions on the same day or consecutive days with one in the daytime and one in the evening to allow working parents to be included. Providing advance notice with a reminder closer to the time is helpful for working parents/carers to plan ahead.

Consider providing a crèche, possibly with some of the Year 6 children to help keep the little ones entertained.

### **What do parents need to know?**

Explanation of *Letters and sounds*

<http://www.letters-and-sounds.com/> lots of free resources for parents to use.

What is the school's policy on teaching reading – explain guided reading

Home - school diary/journals

Policy on books going home

If possible part of the session could be held in the library with a member of staff showing parents how to help children choose books appropriately.

Making the most of environmental reading opportunities – shopping, fridge magnets, letters in bath etc

Kinaesthetic approaches – at beach writing name in sand, writing name with stones.

Parents need to be made aware of the importance of reading role models for children and the vital contribution they and the extended family can make to this.

The presentation can be videoed (and made into a DVD) to loan to parents who are unable to attend the session. This could also be made available via the school's website.

### **What can School Library Service do for you?**

We are happy to come out and

- provide talks for parents about the importance of reading for pleasure
- talk about a range of quality books for different age ranges, interests and abilities
- bring along a range of books and provide a “surgery” for parents to come and discuss individual concerns e.g. my child is stuck in a rut; my child is a very able reader but I’m concerned about the content of the books they are reading; my child only wants to read non-fiction; my child is a reluctant reader; etc.
- Photocopiable booklets for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 with recommended reads and tips for parents sharing books with their children. A *Where next?* booklet with suggestions for children who love reading specific authors/genre i.e. Horrid Henry, Jacqueline Wilson, fairy books

Key messages in our talks are:

- The benefits of reading for pleasure
- The stages children go through in their independent reading experience.
- For children to constantly read at challenge level will put them off. When you are reading for pleasure, the book you are reading won't

always be harder than the last book you read. Comfort reading is important too, we all do it sometimes.

- Guidance to help parents support their children in making appropriate reading choices.
- Reminding about the range of reading materials which children can enjoy.
- The importance of talking about what their children are reading and sharing the experience through talk. (see SLS publication *Reading begins at home* for ideas for prompt questions – details below)
- We make the link between reading experience and children as writers.
- Promoting use of the public library, the range of resources available and the activities which they run, especially during school holidays.

## What are the good resources?

### Reading begins at home: How to make it fun for everyone

SLS produced this pack for the National Year of Reading focus on engaging parents.

This is a pack of leaflets and bookmarks for parents, with tips and good ideas about reading with children at each stage of their reading development.

**The pack includes:** 4 A4 leaflets with tips and advice for different reading stages; 9 bookmarks related to specific picture books and stories, giving ideas for book talk and activities at home; 1 book mark with tips about reading non-fiction books together; 1 book mark for parents to help children who are confident readers; 2 leaflets (KS1 & KS2) to help parents to encourage reading, with suggestions of authors and genres children might enjoy; CD of artwork to print as needed. Subscribing schools £30 plus P & P and non-subscribing schools £40 plus P & P

## Examples of the leaflets and bookmarks

**READING WITH YOUR NEWLY INDEPENDENT READER**

Children of this stage will love reading books in a series. They are so pleased to have grasped the skill of reading they will want to practise lots but do not try and overstretch them – it might scare them off. Blue, Red and Yellow Series books have good stories and are graded in difficulty. Let your child succeed.

Carry on reading to your child – they will enjoy hearing books that are too difficult for them to read fluently and enjoy the closeness to you. Join the public library – it will give you lots of books to choose from – and it's free!

**FICTION BOOKS**  
There are some great picture books for all ages. Don't give up on these or you will miss a rich seam of literature with fantastic language coupled with brilliant illustrations. It's also great to go back to old favourites. Remember, we all like to comfort read.

Girls will love Rainbow fairy stories by Daisy Meadows. Animal stories are very popular at this stage as well. You can start to introduce them to some of the books you enjoyed as a child.

**NON-FICTION**  
Don't forget non-fiction. Some children love to read facts and figures – think of the Horrid Histories, Dinosaurs, Trucks, Sports, etc. They will love the gory details of books about sharks and spiders as well. These books do not have to be read from cover to cover – just talk about the pictures or read the captions if you want.

The Seriously Silly stories by Laurence Anholt have great boy appeal and links to traditional fairy tales.

**TRANSLATED FROM ANOTHER LANGUAGE**  
Children also like to read books about the same character, e.g. Horrid Henry books by Francesca Simon.

**LET YOUR ENTHUSIASM INSPIRE YOUR CHILDREN!**

**READING A NON-FICTION BOOK:**

**TOP TIPS!**

**EXTREME MACHINES**

- Choose a book about something that interests you both.
- Have a look at the contents page and see if it has some exciting chapters.
- You don't have to start at the beginning – go straight to the bits that most interest you.
- Read the index at the back to see if there are any other pages that will tell you more about what you want to know.
- If there is a glossary in the book you can look up any difficult words.
- Look at the pictures – talk about them and read the captions.
- Are there any fun boxes on the page? Are the facts interesting? Read them to each other!
- Be prepared to be excited by new facts. "Come to this..."
- Encourage your child to read new facts out to you too and respond with interest or ask questions to see if you can find the answers.

To order your pack: contact Lee Budd at [lee.budd@devon.gov.uk](mailto:lee.budd@devon.gov.uk)

## Stories and poetry out loud

These programmes are great to recommend to parents as they provide a great opportunity for children to listen to quality stories which are well presented and engaging. These are ideal for times when children have been very active and need a bit of “down time” or for when parents of younger children need some time to get on with other things, like getting the tea! The good thing about these as children’s activities is that they calm them down rather than hype them up.

[www.bookaboo.co.uk](http://www.bookaboo.co.uk) Children’s bookclub from CITV. Based on an award-winning series of programmes where actors/celebrities work with Bookaboo, an animated puppet, to bring popular picture books to life. A video of the first 12 books in the series is available for sale.

Bookaboo - Latest Trailer - Bookaboo Grown-Ups - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by Devon County Council

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Forward Stop Home Search Favorites

Address http://bookaboo.ning.com/video/bookaboo-latest-trailer

Sign Up Sign In Search Social Network

**Have You Shared A Book Today?**

Main My Page Books Celebs Videos Photos TV Listings Campaign Clubroom Forum

Blogs

All Videos My Videos My Favourites + Add Videos

Welcome to Bookaboo Grown-Ups  
[Sign Up](#)  
or [Sign In](#)

**Bookaboo - Latest Trailer**  
Added by Lucy Goodman on October 15, 2009 at 3:27 pm  
[View Videos](#)

CLASS TWO AT THE ZOO  
JULIA ADAM  
WITH LYNDIE CHELSEA

Latest Videos

- [Lucy Why I Chose The Cow That Laid An Egg-MPEG-4](#)  
0:35
- [Amanda Holden Backstage at Bookaboo - Part Two](#)  
02:15
- [Robson Green Backstage at Bookaboo - Part Two](#)  
02:43
- [Michael Rosen Backstage at Bookaboo - Part Two](#)  
02:56
- [Mel C Backstage at Bookaboo - Part Two](#)

**CALLING ALL KIDS!**

Fun activities and downloads for young Bookaboo fans!

**BUY A BOOK**

Start Microsoft Word Inbox - Microsoft Outlook Bookaboo - Latest Tr... 10:27

[www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/jackanory](http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/jackanory) Actors/celebrities give dramatised readings of popular children's picture books with animations from the original illustrations. A selection of the programmes can be accessed from the website.



### The Children's Poetry Archive

<http://www.poetryarchive.org/childrensarchive/home.do> This is a satellite site attached to the main online Poetry Archive. It enables you to search by theme, poet or poetic form. The best part is that it contains scores of audiofiles so that pupils can listen to poets reading their own poems. Children can also send in their own poems, the best of which appear in the regularly updated Poetry Gallery.

### Michael Rosen

<http://www.michaelrosen.co.uk/hypnotiser.html> The great poetry book The Hypnotiser is now out of print, so Michael Rosen has had the inspired idea of asking his son Joe to produce a video of himself performing all the poems from the book. Michael is also adding YouTube videos of himself performing poems. What a fabulous free resource!

## Links

<http://www.wordsforlife.org.uk/> This is a really helpful website for parents by the fabulous folk at the National Literacy Trust. It has been divided into sections for 3-5, 5-7 and 7-11. It has lots of practical advice for parents and grandparents and also some great book-related activities to download. It is in the process of being developed, so keep your eye on it for more new content. Recommend it to parents and put a link to it on your school website.

<http://www.barringtonstoke.co.uk/content.asp?Page=67&Menu=> Barrington Stoke publishers, two leaflets to download called *Can't read or won't read?* and *Won't read or can't read?*

<http://www.booktime.org.uk/schools/reading-with-your-child> Booktrust has created a downloadable booklet for parents which is available in 29 different languages

<http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/earlyreadingconnects/toolkit.html> Downloadable story games based on popular children's picture books. These are ready to print out and play.