



Tips for parents/guardians to support the development of their child's reading skills.

Tip 1: Make reading routine, find a quiet comfortable spot. That is the 'go-to' spot.

Tip 2: Before you start reading the book, ask simple questions about the cover and the story.

- "What do you think this book is about?"
- "What makes you say this is what the story might be about?"
- "What is this?"
- "Can you read the title of the book?"
- "Who or what do you think is on the cover?"
- "Who wrote this book?"

Tip 3: If your children get stuck on a word do not help them straight away.

- Say the first sound in the first word - once they work it out get them to re-read the sentence; or
- If there is no individual sound in the first word, then tell them the whole word and see if they can now read the sentence; if not, use the "sound-out" tip for each word.
- When your child is trying to sound out an unfamiliar word, give him or her time to do so. Remind the child to look closely at the first letter or letters of the word.
- When your child makes a mistake, gently point out the letters he or she overlooked or read incorrectly. Many beginning readers will guess wildly at a word based on its first letter.
- Always get them to re-read the sentence.

Tip 4: Encourage them to use their reading strategies. Otherwise, they will expect you to tell them words they get stuck on every time.

- e.g., Phonics – sounding out words.

Tip 5: Let them hear you reading the story and encourage them to follow.

- Make some silly mistakes to see if they are reading with you. They will love correcting you.

Tip 6: If their reading sounds choppy or not smooth ...

- Use the "Echo" Reading Technique
 - When the child has read a sentence in a "choppy", "unsmooth" manner. Encourage them by focusing on something that they have done correctly.
 - Then ask them to listen to you read the sentence. ("Listen to my voice and try to sound like I do.")
 - You then ask them to re-read "Echoing" you. It is about the experienced reader "modelling" fluent reading for the child.
 - You can do this line by line or a couple of sentences at a time.
 - Good readers: (1) Read words correctly, and (2) Sound nice and smooth, like talking..."



- Once the child has read nice and smoothly you then move on to asking a few questions about what they have read. (Tip 7)



Tip 7: Have conversations about the text (Ask a couple of questions at the end to encourage comprehension.)

- “Good” readers comprehend best when: (1) Words were read correctly; (2) Reading was smooth.
- When your child reads, get them to retell the story or information.
- If it is a story, ask who it was about and what happened.
- If it is an informational text, have your child explain what it was about and how it worked, or what its parts were.
- Ask your child questions about the story you have just read. Say something like, "Why do you think Bongani did that?" "What would you have done if you were Bongani?" What was your favourite part of that story? Why was that your favourite part?
- Reading involves not just sounding out words but thinking about and remembering ideas and events.
- Improving reading comprehension skills early will prepare your child for subsequent success in more difficult texts.
- Ask questions beginning with who, what, where, why, how?

Tip 8: Make reading fun and enjoyable.

Tip 9: Once is not enough.

- Encourage your child to re-read favourite books and poems. Re-reading helps children read more quickly and accurately.

Tip 10: Pick books that are at the right level.

- Help your child pick books that are not too difficult. The aim is to give your child lots of successful reading experiences.

Tip 11: I read to you, you read to me.

- Take turns reading aloud at bedtime. Children enjoy this special time with their parents.

Tip 12: Talk, talk, talk!

- Talk with your child every day about school and things going on around the house. Sprinkle some interesting words into the conversation and build on words you have talked about in the past.

References:

- Reading Tips for Parents – Reading Rockets
- Parent Tips for Reading at Home - “The Simple Teachers”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJUq095ldil>
- How to teach a child to read (A Parents guide)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M4Sl87VPX_4