

KS2 reading prompts

Parents often wonder how they can help to develop the reading skills of children who are already fluent readers. The best way is to continue to share books with your child, regularly listening to them read, sometimes reading to or with them, but also discussing books read in increasing depth. To become good readers children need to develop skills in seven key areas and it can be useful to think about these when reading with your child.



Decoding: this is the skill that parents are generally most familiar with, and deals with the varying strategies used by children to make sense of the words on the page. Even fluent readers can be stumped by an unfamiliar word, and it is useful at these times to discuss the range of strategies used to make a sensible guess.

Retrieval and recall: early readers need to develop this skill, in order to locate important information and to retell stories and describe events.

Inference: reading between the lines. Encouraging children to make inferences based on clues in the text and their understanding of the context of the book will help them to develop this important skill.

Structure and organisation: as children read a wider range of text types, they need to be able to comment on the features of each and how they are organised. Discussing the presentation of the text, e.g. the use of subtitles to assist reading of a non-fiction text, and the author's reason for organising the text in this way, will support children's development in this area. Making links between the *purpose* of the text and its *organisation* is a useful place to start.

Language: specifically, thinking about the language choices made by writers, their possible reasons for making those choices and the effect the choices have on the reader. Discussing alternative choices and their effects can be a good way to begin discussion about the author's language and an opportunity to develop vocabulary generally.

Purpose and viewpoint: Who is the narrator of this story? What does the writer of this biography feel about his/her subject? Children need to understand that writers write for a purpose, and to be able to recognise that this will have an impact on the way a text is written. Newspapers and advertisements are perfect examples of this and can lead to lots of lively discussions.

Making links: as adults, we are constantly making links between ideas and experiences. Good readers connect the book they are reading with real life experiences; with other books read and stories heard; with films; and with the context in which they were written. A child reading 'Goodnight Mister Tom', for example, will need to place the story within the context that it was written to fully understand it. They might also link it with other stories read, such as 'Friend or Foe' or 'Carrie's War'.

Overleaf are some questions linked to the above points, which I hope you will find useful. It is not necessary to ask every question each time your child reads, of course, but they may prove to be useful prompts to start a more focused discussion.

What strategies would you use when you get stuck on a word?
What voice might the character use?
Where does the story take place?
Who is telling the story and how do you know?
Find some words or phrases which tell you about the setting
What happened in the story
What do you think is going to happen to the main character?
Who would you like to meet in the story? Give reasons for your choice.
How did the character's feelings/actions change?
Why might someone choose to read the book?
How did the characters' actions affect the outcome of the story?
What is the theme of this story?
Why has the author chosen that title?
Does the layout and colour of the text have an impact on the reader?
How does the author engage the reader?
Why do you think authors use short sentences?
Which part of the story best describes the setting?
When would you use a glossary?
What did you enjoy about the story?
Can you think of another story with a similar theme?
What is the genre of the story? How do you know?
What was the most exciting or interesting part? Explain why.
What effect does the setting have on the story?
Have you read any other books in the series/by the same author?
Where and when is the text/story set? How does the writer show this?
Have you read any other books that are about the same topic?
Do the events happen in time order? If not, why not?
What is the purpose of writing in bold/italic/boxes?
Can you find a page, which has an interesting layout?
Can you find some words to show how the speaker is feeling?
What is the book called? Why?
What did the story make you think about?

*Questions to ask your child
when reading - Key Stage 2*

Before reading the book:

- What do you think this story will be about?
- What might happen in the story?
- What genre will this story be? E.g. fantasy, comedy, horror.
- What do we call the writing on the back of the book? (Blurb) or What does the blurb tell us?

During the reading of the book:

- What has happened so far? Is it what you expected to happen?
- What might happen next?
- How do you think the story might end?
- Who is your favourite character? Why?
- Who is the character you like least? Why?
- Find 2 sentences, which describe the setting.
- Is the plot fast or slow moving? Find some evidence in the text, which supports your view.

*Questions to ask your child
when reading - Key Stage 2*

At the end of the book:

- Which part of the story is your favourite / least favourite? Why?
- Would you change any part of the story? How?
- Would you change any of the characters? How?
- Which part of the story was the funniest, scariest, saddest, and happiest? Find some evidence in the text to support your opinion.
- Would you like to read another book by this author? Why?
- Does your opinion of this character change during the story? How? Why?
- If you met one of the characters from the story, what would you say to him / her?
- Find 2 things the author wrote about this character that made him / her likeable or unlikeable?

