



This NEPS Handout has been developed by educational psychologists and is based on current knowledge in this area. It is intended as a guide only. Not all the advice here may apply to any one student or situation. Teachers and parents may wish to identify the strategies that will work best for them.

Shared/Paired Reading At Home

Guidelines:

- Make sure the atmosphere is happy and relaxed as well as quiet.
- Sit together so that you can both see the book.
- Give lots of praise for effort.
- Do not make your child read when they really want to do something else.
- Each session should take place for approximately ten minutes every day. However, you may need to judge your own child's attention span and not push them beyond what is comfortable for them.
- Do not do more than ten minutes unless your child really wants to do more.
- Paired reading should last for about eight weeks initially and then should be repeated at regular intervals throughout the year.
- You might agree to read together at least twice a week, in between the eight week blocks.

Stage one:

There are two stages in Shared Reading. The first is called Simultaneous Reading:

- The child selects a story book that appeals to them and is suitable for their reading level.
- Parent and child read aloud together. The parent paces their reading to the reading speed of the child.
- In the early stages the child may be allowed to point with their finger to individual words. This practice should be discontinued as your child grows in confidence.
- When your child gets a word wrong you just tell your child what the word is. Then your child repeats it after you. You do not make the child struggle or 'break it up' or 'sound it out'.
- When your child gets words right you smile and show you are pleased and say 'good'. You don't nag or worry about the words your child gets wrong.
- Talk about the pictures. Talk about what is in the book as your child goes through it. It is best to talk at the end of the page or a section or your child might lose track of the story. Ask your child what they think might happen next. Listen to your child- don't do all the talking.

Stage two:

As the child develops fluency and confidence, the parent's role will be less supportive. Parents should gradually lower their voice to allow the child to dominate the reading partnership. Occasionally the parent, using their own judgement, should disengage completely and rejoin as soon as the child begins to struggle or lose confidence. Soon the child will feel sufficiently confident to read alone for longer periods having now reached the stage of Independent Reading.

- The child gives an agreed signal such as a nudge to the parent to indicate they are ready to read on their own, or the parent may decide the child is ready for "solo" reading.
- At this point the parent stops and the child continues on their own. Parents will intuitively sense when to stop, even without the signal, as they take note of the confidence and self-assurance of the child.
- If the child gets a word wrong or begins to struggle, the parent should say the word and the child should repeat it as before. Parent and child continue for a few lines and then the parent stops reading in response to the agreed signal or their own judgement of the child's fluency.
- At this stage the session may be extended to fifteen minutes if the child is enjoying it.
- It will be essential to praise the child's efforts and success. Praise is much more effective than blame and is the surest guarantee of continued confidence and success.



Remember:

Praise the child for:

- Reading all the words in a sentence correctly
- Correctly reading hard words
- Putting word right before you do (self correcting)
- Making a good guess (which may not be 100% right!) at a new word

Other hints

- Prepare for each reading session by revising the events of the story so far, talking about the characters, pictures etc.
- These sessions should not be used to develop word attack strategies but should rather be used to develop reading for meaning and pleasure
- Problematic words can be worked at in school