**Reading books at home**

When your child brings a book home, you can help them by following these steps:

***Before reading***

* Find time and a quiet place to work with them.
* Read any notes their teacher has written about how they are getting on and the areas they need more help with.

***During reading***

* Encourage them to read the relevant part of the book on their own. Let them take time to work out what the words say without interrupting them or giving them too much help.
* Don’t rush to tell them a word if they get stuck – ask them to look carefully at the letters in the word and remind them about the sounds you practised before they read the story. Only tell them the word if they really cannot work it out – but don’t get cross!
* Don’t interrupt if they get a word wrong – just carry on reading well. Make a note of the word and when they have finished reading the story, go back to the page and the word that caused a problem, point out the word and say something like: *I noticed that you had a bit of a problem with this word. You said … but I don’t think this is what the word says. Let’s look at it again very carefully* *and work it out together.*
* Make a note of examples where they did really well working out a word. Wait until they have finished the story and then go back to the page where they did well, point out the word and say something like: *I noticed that you had to think carefully about this word – show me again how you worked it out … That was really good!*

***After reading***

* Talk with them about the latest events in the story and the things the characters have been doing.
* Fill in the parents’ section of the home/school reading diary.

**Fun Ideas: Age 3-4**

Children at this age absorb so much and are eager to learn so learning through play is a great way to develop their language and have real fun! Play games inside and outside and even on the move.

**1. Songs, rhymes and funny names**

* Listen to, say and sing nursery rhymes and rhymes with actions.
* Listen to, say and read repetitive rhymes and stories with language patterns, e.g. *Each Peach Pear Plum* (Ahlberg), *Dear Zoo* (Campbell), *Dr Seuss*.
* Make up nicknames for family members ‘daddy duck’, ‘mushy mummy’...

**2. Letter fun**

* Play alphabet games and sing alphabet songs, e.g. *a* for apple, *b* for banana, etc.
* Play with magnetic letters on the fridge. Focus on the letter sound not name (so *sssss* not *suh*).
* Play with [**flashcard games**](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/home/reading-owl/find-a-book/library-page).

**3. Memory games**

* Play picture snap games and play picture lotto games.
* Play list games ‘I went to the market and bought an ant.... I went to market and bought an **a**nt and a **b**alloon....’ (make it as silly as possible to make it fun).
* Use alphabet cards with pictures and lay them out in the correct sequence then take a couple out and ask your child to say which ones are missing.

**4. Listening games**

* Listen to stories, CDs, music, nursery rhymes and songs.
* Go on a sound walk; try recording some of the sounds on your phone and then, when you are home, ask your child to listen and remember what made the sounds.
* Play sound lotto games such as Cock a Doodle Moo (Orchard Toys).

**5. Action games**

* Retell or act out favourite stories and make new ones too, with toys, puppets, teddies, train sets and cars.
* Help your child to set up role play games using teddies and other toys; a café, a shop, a library...and visit as a customer.
* Encourage your child to play independently, using bricks or other construction toys, train sets, pegs and sheets!

**6. Tactile games**

* Thread beads or painted pasta to make sequenced patterns with colours and shapes. This later helps them spot patterns in words/language etc.
* Squeeze paint onto a hard surface and help your child to finger-write letters and patterns, encouraging a left-to-right direction to reflect reading and writing.
* Read pop-up books, books with holes, textures, fabrics and sounds.

**7. Screen games**

* Watch television programmes together such as *Olivia*, *Little Princess*, *Harry and his Bucketful of Dinosaurs* and then read the original picture books afterwards.
* Play games on the computer together, for example [**Cbeebies**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/). Discuss the instructions and ask your child if they like the game.
* Find some [**phone apps**](http://www.kidztory.com/the-little-red-hen/) that make stories fun.

**8. Car journey games**

* Take it in turns to ask questions, e.g. Who can see the first bridge/horse/red truck?
* Play games such as ‘I spy’ but instead of something beginning with a letter say something that is a colour ‘I spy something that is blue...’.
* Listen to story and nursery rhyme CDs, e.g. *Winnie the Witch* (Thomas/Paul), *Doing the Animal Bop* (Ormerod/Gardiner).

**9. Out and about activities**

* Spend some time choosing books from the library.
* Join in with free library rhymetime or storytime sessions.
* Make choices together at the shops – ask your child about what to buy and why.

**10. Reading books of all kinds together**

* Read books of all kinds to and with your child; picture, word and picture, pop up, lift the flap, eBooks, print books... even ‘make your own’ books.

**Fun Ideas: Age 4-5**

Your child will probably have started [**synthetic phonic activities**](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/home/reading-owl/expert-help/phonics-made-easy) at school so finding time to enjoy playing with letters and sounds in games and activities will really help to support these new skills. And obviously find time to continue all the other types of games too:

**Top ten games and activities:**

**1. Rhyming games**

* Listen to and join in with rhyming stories, e.g. *The Gruffalo* (Donaldson).
* Play [**rhyming games**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks1/literacy/rhyming_words/play/).
* Make silly rhyming jokes, e.g. What do you call a smelly elephant? A smellyphant! What do you call an elephant watching TV? A tellyphant!

**2. Phonic games**

* Play [**snap and lotto games**](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/home/reading-owl/find-a-book) with letters and sounds.
* Use homemade letter flashcards, add a paperclip to each, tie a magnet to some string and a stick and ask your child to ‘fish’ for a particular sound.
* Play ‘I spy’ games, e.g. ‘I spy something beginning with a...’ using the letter sound when you are out and about. For help with letter sounds, take a look at our [**sound chart**](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/home/reading-owl/expert-help/phonics-made-easy).

**3. Memory games**

* Play Kim’s game: put a few items on a tray, look, cover, remember and check!
* Talk about, photograph or write out some ‘events’ from something you have done together – can your child remember the correct order?
* Go shopping – try to remember the list together!

**4. Listening games**

* Play games such as ‘Simon says’ – party games are often good learning value!
* Listen to music and talk about the instruments being played – find pictures on the internet together.
* Play bingo using letters and simple words.

**5. Action games**

* Make a puppet theatre with cardboard boxes or a towel over a chair and encourage your child to make up or retell a story to you or any willing family members!
* Have lots of fun dressing up with clothes and props at home (charity shops are a great source!) so that your child can dress up as a character and act out favourite stories.
* Play games such as *‘What’s the time Mr Wolf?’*, but instead of saying the time write the times down for them to read.

**6. Tactile games**

* Use magnetic letters to spell names and simple words on the fridge or radiator.
* Use modelling clay to make your child’s name or simple words like mum.
* Enjoy jigsaws together and chat about finding the right pieces!

**7. Screen games**

* Watch TV programmes linked to books and then read the books afterwards. Talk about what they like or don’t like about the characters.
* Find story-telling sites like [**Little Kingdom**](http://www.littlekingdom.co.uk/#/home), TV programmes or find story apps for your phone.
* Look at DVDs from picture books together, e.g. *Penguin* (Dunbar)

**8. Car journey games**

* Play ‘The curate’s cat is an amazing cat/beautiful cat/clever cat/daft cat... etc. and then make up your own versions (The doctor’s dog...).
* Look for letters of the alphabet in registration plates – keep a tally to see which letter is most frequently spotted!
* Take it in turns to make up stories – Once upon a time there was...

**9. Out and about activities**

* Ask your child to find the things you need to buy when out shopping by reading the labels on products together.
* Check out your local library or community centre to find out what special activities or clubs are running in term time or holidays
* Try to do a few visits or find some information together to link with the topic or project work at school.

**10. Reading books of all kinds together**

* Carry on reading books of all kinds to and with your child: picture, words and pictures, pop up, information, poetry, eBooks, print books... and the levelled books brought home from school. Video or record your child reading it for fun!

**Fun Ideas: Age 5-6**

Your child will probably now be starting to read independently, but games and activities are still really important to help with phonic skills, word recognition and general language development. Continue to play the full range of games as they will still all help to build confidence and keep it fun! Your child may become more aware of signs, notices, posters, newspaper headlines, TV adverts...so make the most of this new reading opportunity! This also helps to reinforce why learning to read is so important.

**Top ten games and activities:**

**1. Tongue twisters and language games**

* Make up and play with tongue twisters like *Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers* or *Betty Botter bought some butter....*
* Find poems and rhymes that play with language, like Michael Rosen’s *‘There’s mustard in the custard’*.
* Make up guessing games during meal times, e.g. *I’m thinking of an animal. It can gallop. You can ride it. What is it?* Take it in turns.

**2. Phonic games**

* Use the school levelled book to see how many words your child can find with a particular sound e.g. the sound ai even if it’s spelled in different ways: *ay*, *a-e* – in two minutes!
* Play full circle! Use magnetic letters to make a word. Change one letter each time to make a new word until you get back to the original e.g. park-part-tart-dart-dark-park-full circle!
* There are masses of [**online phonic games**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks1/literacy/phonics/play/) to discover too.

**3. Memory Games**

* Find songs and [**mnemonics**](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/home/reading-owl/expert-help/jargon-buster--2#mnemonics) to help your child remember the days of the week/months of the year/colours of the rainbow (e.g. Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain).
* Use flashcards to learn words which your child finds difficult and play a matching game to find words beginning with the same letter.
* Put some objects on a tray, talk about them with your child, then cover them up and see how many he or she can remember: Kim’s Game or *Yo Ho Ho!* (Orchard Toys).

**4. Listening games**

* Write and read out a list of rhyming words that have the same sounds e.g. rain, brain, main and another word that is different, such as ‘the’. Ask which is the odd one out.
* Play ‘Simon says’ with slightly more complicated instructions than ‘Stand up/Sit down’. Try and jiggle on one leg, flap your arms and hop, rub your tummy and smile!
* Play yes/no games. Your child chooses an object/person and answers yes/no to your questions until you guess what/who they are thinking of.

**5. Action games**

* Set up treasure hunts or challenges and encourage your child to read the clues to find the treasure. Visit our [**encouraging boys**](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/home/reading-owl/expert-help/encouraging-boys) page for help with getting your son to enjoy reading.
* Play games such as charades or *What a Performance* (Orchard Toys) and make sure you encourage your child to read the instructions.
* Play timed word games like *Boggle*. Set an egg timer to one or two minutes and tell your child a sound, e.g. short vowel o and ask them to think up as many words with that sound (e.g. top, job, coffee) before the timer goes off.

**6. Tactile games**

* Use puppets, dolls and construction toy characters to build a story setting.
* Put a dollop of paint onto a piece of paper and help your child to blow tricky words or letter patterns that have to be learned, using a straw!
* Play dice games by changing the dice faces to letters and asking your child to roll dice to see if he or she can make a word from the letters. Say the sounds when making the word.

**7. Screen games**

* Play computer games together and ask your child to read the instructions and explain the rules to you.
* Watch educational programmes together such as *Alphablocks* (Cbeebies). Talk about it and join any linked online clubs.
* Read a book, see the film, play the game! Make links between books and films – which is best?

**8. Car journey games**

* Where do you think that truck is going?’ Make up a story together about the journey of the truck, each telling a sentence at a time.
* Encourage your child to read the road signs and to ask questions.
* Play audio tapes of favourite stories and songs – these are still really useful.

**9. Practical games**

* Read letters/invites/cards, recipes when cooking and instructions for new games.
* At breakfast, read the back of a cereal packet or the funny jokes on products on some packaging.
* Use books/websites to find information about the school topic or hobbies and sign up to clubs.

**10. Reading books of all kinds together**

* Make books together for younger siblings or grandparents.
* Sometimes try reading books to your child that are above their reading age so they can listen and enjoy your reading and expression.
* Read or listen from [online story sites](http://www.rockfordsrockopera.com/home/).

**Fun Ideas: Age 6-7**

Your child will now be more of an independent reader with views about what he or she likes to read. It is still important to play games, not least because we all love games! Here are some that are fun and easy to do and which will help with your child’s developing reading skills, spelling and writing:

**Top ten games and activities:**

**1. Language games**

* Read and remember poems, e.g. [Michael Rosen's](http://www.michaelrosen.co.uk) and join online author fan clubs as they usually feature fun activities, jokes and competitions.
* Play with language. Spot words within words or try to make up new words for things like stepevator for elevator, or smoketube for chimney...
* Play games such as *Articulate*.

**2. Phonic and spelling games**

* Complete and make up word searches.
* Play word/spelling games like *Junior Scrabble*, *Bananagrams* and *Boggle* to focus on blending letter sounds to make words.
* Write any word out, cut it up and ask your child to put it back in the correct order.

**3. Memory games**

* Have fun trying to memorise menus in restaurants and cafés!
* Memorise directions to the swimming pool or to a friend’s house using the right terms; turn right, go over the roundabout, pass the sweet shop and it’s second on the left.
* Use flashcards to help your child remember the weekly spellings and/or write the words out: look, say, cover, write, look back to check it!

**4. Listening games**

* Draw a picture and then while you describe what you have drawn your child has to draw what you are describing. Compare your drawings.
* Make up riddles about an object or person you know and see if your child can guess what or who it is, e.g. they wear skirts, they have grey hair, they live in a house etc. Who are they?
* Play with [flashcard games](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/home/reading-owl/find-a-book/library-page). Send your child on an errand – can they listen and remember the list?

**5. Action games**

* Play *Twister* – read the instruction about which colour dot your left/right, hand/foot should be placed on the floor mat! Lots of skills to coordinate at the same time!
* Play charades with friends and family.
* Write words like run, walk, jump, sit, etc. on separate pieces of paper like flashcards. Get your child to read the word and do the action. Time them!

**6. Tactile games**

* Use puppets, creatures, models to create and tell stories as a show.
* Create posters, book covers and presents using sand paper, magazine cut outs, fabric, paint, glitter glue, buttons and straws. Go 3D!
* Use fridge magnet games to build messages, stories and poetry, e.g. Gone to Matt’s for tea!

**7. Screen games**

* Buy ‘educational’ DS games and encourage your child to read the instructions by themselves. Talk to your child about the games and ask them to explain how to play.
* Watch adaptations of stories, e.g. *The Gruffalo* (Donaldson), *Horton Hears a Who* (Dr Seuss), and talk about the differences between the book and the film.
* Show your child useful online sites like YouTube and iTunes, explaining how you read to make choices.

**8. Car journey games**

* Use Michelin I-Spy books (*I-Spy* *Car Journeys*, *I-Spy Cars*, etc.).
* Make up sentences using the letters and numbers on registration plates – like text language.
* Encourage your child to read road signs, to give you directions or to set the satnav!

**9. Practical activities**

* Look at newspaper articles, notices from school, leaflets/guides in museums together.
* Get your child to think about the week’s activities: clubs, school events, parties.
* Get them to think about holiday packing lists (it’ll save you the worry!) and ‘to do’ lists.

**10. Reading books of all kinds together**

* There are some great picture books for older children so don’t give up on pictures. Don’t forget comics too!
* Read simple chapter books with fewer pictures and read a couple of chapters at night.

**Fun Ideas: Age 7-9**

Your child will now be reading independently and for a wider range of purposes, but it’s still useful to play language games of all kinds. Here are some that are fun and easy which will help with your child’s developing reading skills, spelling and writing – and they won’t even realise!

**Top ten games and activities:**

**1. Word games**

* Try alphabetical games such as '*The Philosopher’s Cat is ... an angry cat, a beautiful cat'*, and so on, to expand vocabulary.
* Have fun with riddles – make them up and enjoy discovering different meanings for the same word.
* Make your own versions of well-known rhymes to help your child to hear patterns in words.

**2. Board games**

* Play *Junior Trivial Pursuit* which requires lots of reading and develops general knowledge at the same time.
* Play games where your child must use the powers of deduction to work out a journey or solve a crime, e.g. *Cluedo*. There are many on-line versions too.
* Code-cracking games like *Mastermind* are really useful for helping your child to think logically.

**3. Screen games**

* Brain-training games are useful for developing a wide range of skills that are useful for reading and writing too.
* Search for on-line code-cracking games.
* There are plenty of commercially available adventure problem-solving games that demand creative thought and talk to succeed. Try, *Roomscape*.

**4. Make a game of it**

* Get your child to make and keep a diary or calendar to encourage them to begin to take responsibility for their own organisation and activities.
* Get your child involved in planning a party. They can suggest a theme, who to invite, food, invitations and so on.
* Setting up a pin board or magnetic board for display, messages, postcards, certificates, reminders and other memorabilia in your child’s bedroom is a great way to be creative about being organised and writing messages.

**5. Action games**

* Play paper and pencil games such as *Call My Bluff* and *Categories*.
* Reading around a hobby or a creative project can be fun, e.g. gardening, cookery or a craft activity.
* Many places to visit in the school holidays have quizzes or treasure hunts organised so make sure you take full advantage of these.

**Fun Ideas: Age 9-11**

Your child will still enjoy playing games but you may need to initiate them as there are often so many other demands on their time (their friends!). Here are some that are fun but challenging, and which will help with language, reading and writing.

**Top ten games and activities:**

**1. Word games**

* Encourage them to make up their own crossword puzzles or word searches for friends and family to develop vocabulary and dictionary skills. *Bananagrams* is great for this too.
* Play the *Headline Game*; use stories to make up headlines and then vote for the best, e.g. *Girl dressed in Red stalked by Wolf* (guess the story).
* Play around with anagrams to help with patterns and spelling, e.g. make as many words as you can out of *Constantinople* (1697 apparently!).

**2. Board games**

* Play games that play around with definitions and bluff definitions to encourage interest in word meanings and origins, e.g. *Absolute Balderdash* or *Call My Bluff*.
* Play games such as *Taboo* to encourage clarity, fluency and expression without ever saying the obvious descriptive words.
* *Scrabble* is a classic spelling game – guaranteed to get the family talking – or shouting!

**3. Screen games**

* Don’t forget that games like karaoke require on-screen reading (and performance) which children usually love to play with friends and family.
* Setting up games, such as on the *Wii*, involve reading and understanding instructions, so make sure that your child can do this for themselves (although they normally teach us).
* Many downloadable eBooks include end of book activities and quizzes, which will be fun to complete and help with understanding.

**4. Write about it**

* Encourage book blogging and taking part in readers’ book sites, e.g. adding reviews to Amazon.
* Children may like to keep a Favourite Book journal which can have lists of titles, quotations, pictures and sketches to encourage children to look back at what they’ve read.
* Get involved in planning a holiday schedule (making a list of books to read, entering book review competitions, planning day trips and so on).

**5. Reading together**

* Keep your eyes open for book awards and read the shortlists together to decide which title you would choose and why. It may encourage your child to want to read it too.
* If you have younger children then encourage your 9–11 year old to read to and with them.
* Talk to your child about the articles in your local free newspaper or even take out a subscription to the children’s newspaper, First Times [www.info.firstnews.co.uk](http://www.info.firstnews.co.uk/) for example.

**Top Tips**

Apart from that nightly bedtime story, what else can you do to make sure your child gets off to a good start, gains independence and enjoys reading? There are lots of simple things you can do at home to help. Take a look at these top tips and try out some of the ideas to see what works well in your home.

**Younger readers 3-7 year olds**

**It's good to share**

**1. Talk together**

Talking about words and pictures is really important for building up a store of vocabulary and confidence – and it’s fun too. The words may be in the street, in a book, on-screen or on your ketchup bottle; it really doesn’t matter so long as you talk about them together.

**2. Read together**

There is something very magical about sharing a book with a child. Just 5-10 minutes at bedtime, bath time or quiet time really does help to hook them in. And even your 7 year old will still enjoy the sharing if it’s on offer...

**3. Remember when...**

Compare events in stories or information books with things you’ve done together, so your child starts to make connections between these things and their own experiences: 'That’s just like when we went to Thorpe Park. Do you remember? Dad was scared...'

**4. Sing together**

Even if it’s not your forte, just sing. Nursery rhymes and songs for your youngest and chart-topping songs you hear on the radio for your 6-7 year old all count – and grandparents can contribute some golden oldies too!

**5. New books but old favourites too**

You’ll notice that your child will want to revisit an old favourite over and over again and that’s great (although may be not after the 64th time). But it’s also important to build confidence by reading lots of different books at the same reading level too, and continue to re-read earlier books so that you aren’t pushing up the difficulty of the read too quickly and causing frustration (to be avoided as this might make your child anxious and possibly affect their progress in reading).

**Skill up...**

**1. Use phonics first...**

Help your child to learn phonic sounds as pure sounds – sss not suh. Be aware that some sounds, like sh in shop is one sound but two letters. When your child can break a word into its sounds to read it, then encourage them to write it out too.

**2. Play games...**

Use phonic flashcards to help children to read letter sounds and blend them together to read words. Use flashcards that encourage play to help your child to learn [tricky words](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/reading-owl/expert-help/jargon-buster--2) by sight. Tricky words are those words that cannot be worked out by sounding out – like *'said'*.

**3. Listen to your child practise reading**

It’s really important that your child reads aloud to you. Reading from a levelled reading scheme book, usually one that has come home from school, means there is built-in progression so your child can steadily get more confident as they move through the reading scheme. Most children will start with fully [decodable](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/reading-owl/expert-help/jargon-buster--2) phonic books.

**4. Use book talk**

Talking about stories and using story language helps to tune your child into reading. Talk about the author, illustrator, cover, the beginning, the end, words, sentences, features on the page, for example speech bubbles and pictures – it’s 'book talk'.

**5. Check understanding**

Use the pictures to help understanding, but also show your child how you might be able to predict what might happen next in a story from the words and pictures. Try to guess the ending! What clues were there?

And most importantly, enjoy what you do together and give loads of encouragement because it really works. Remember too much pressure could put your child off.

[Want to know more about phonics?](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/reading-owl/expert-help/phonics-made-easy)

[Not sure how to pronounce the sounds?](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/reading-owl/expert-help/phonics-made-easy)

[Want more fun ideas to try?](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/reading-owl/fun-ideas)

[Want to know more about levelled reading books?](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/reading-owl/find-a-book)

Speak to your child’s teacher or visit www.oxfordowl.co.uk

**Top Tips**

Apart from that nightly bedtime story, what else can you do to make sure your child gets off to a good start, gains independence and enjoys reading? There are lots of simple things you can do at home to help. Take a look at these top tips and try out some of the ideas to see what works well in your home.

**Older readers 7-11 year olds**

**Sharing reading (of all kinds)**

**1. Talk together**

Older children continue to need opportunities to talk with you about what they are reading or their reading interests. They may also be interested in what you are reading. Talking gives you both a chance to share and recommend.

**2. Read together**

There is never an age when this is not an enjoyable and useful way to spend 10 minutes a day – even your 11 year old will still enjoy the sharing opportunity if it’s on offer. It’s a great idea to get your older children to read with younger brothers and sisters too.

**3. Revisiting favourites**

It’s important for children to know that it’s OK to revisit old favourites and memories – even if this may seem like ‘easy reading’ – there’s no mad rush to keep moving on, and we all like the comfort of a favourite book sometimes. Comparing and sharing memories of real life and books will help your child to develop empathy.

**4. Sing together**

Why not? Rhythm, rhyme, raps, advertising jingles or the latest top-rated downloadable track can all help the older reader to appreciate and use the patterns of language they hear in both their speech and writing.

**5. Making choices**

It’s important to still visit book shops, libraries and places where your child can browse and chat with you about their interests. They’ll start to prefer certain authors or series, or types of reading such as comics, magazines or websites, and with your encouragement, they can learn to make choices for themselves too.

**Developing skills….**

**1. Phonics and spelling**

Children will still need to use their phonic skills to tackle new or unknown words but they will also be learning about spelling patterns and rules, too, so that they have a wider range of tools to use when they get stuck.

**2. Play Games**

Many games are really useful for developing the skills that children need as developing readers. You probably already have a host of really useful games in the cupboard, so dig out the *Scrabble*, *Bananagrams*, *Boggle* or a crossword, to name just a few.

**3. Listen to your child reading**

It’s still really important that your child continues to read aloud to you and this may or may not be from levelled books now, depending on how well their reading is coming along. The emphasis will be on reading fluently and with expression, understanding more complex plots and broadening their vocabulary as well as building an understanding of how punctuation and grammar are used.

**4. Use book talk**

Continue to talk about reading in its widest sense (stories, favourite authors and illustrators, series, different types of books including poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference materials, comics and magazines). Join book clubs and online forums to discover the wider reading community.

**5. Check understanding**

Whatever your child is reading it’s good to check that they are grasping the deeper levels of meaning (why things happen or how things work). Ask them to tell you about what they are reading, retell parts of the story, explain a specific section or make connections. Don’t forget to explore words and vocabulary with your child too, using dictionaries in print or online.

And most importantly, continue to enjoy what you do together, give lots of encouragement and expand the reading experience to keep your child switched on. Don’t forget – if they are reading something they are not enjoying, it’s OK to read something else. Reading has really got to be a pleasant experience if you want your child to keep reading.

[Want help finding a book?](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/reading-site/find-a-book)

[Want more fun ideas to try?](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/reading-site/fun-ideas)

Speak to your child’s teacher or visit www.oxfordowl.co.uk