

Highland Council Psychological Service



Improving Literacy with Parental Involvement

Highland Council Psychological Service

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About the Pack

This pack was originally developed by the Highland Council Psychological Service in 2008. Full acknowledgement is given to **Ken Crossan, Shiona Alexander, Neil Brown and Christine Bunker**. The pack has been updated in response to recent national and local developments in literacy, specifically the Scottish Government's Literacy Action Plan (2010) and the Highland Council Literacy Strategy (2013).

The benefits of the active involvement of parents in the reading process are self-evident. Much research has taken place over the years supporting the value of collaborative approaches to reading – from shared and paired reading to peer tutoring. Although parents are keen to help their children with reading, they often lack the skills and the confidence to know how best to go about this. This pack provides information to help parents support their children effectively, particularly at the early stages of acquiring reading skills.

The pack outlines the current educational context highlighting the relevance and importance of involving parents in their children's learning. It provides information leaflets on reading together with baby and toddler, on reading together at the pre-school/nursery stage (Shared Reading), on entry to Primary School (Reading Together 1st Steps) and when the child has acquired basic reading skills, usually around P3 (Reading Together). Evaluation of the Shared Reading, Reading Together 1st Steps and Reading Together processes is provided and results indicate that parents and children enjoy the sessions and that children's skills and confidence with the printed word are enhanced.

The main thrust of improving literacy in this pack is through the development of parent groups, where parents have the opportunity to share experiences, give moral support and learn from each other. Detailed presenter's notes with associated support materials (appendices and handouts) are provided for each of the three stages. Although they can work effectively as stand-alone materials, they can, of course, be modified and adapted to meet the needs of presenters and/or parent groups.

We hope that this pack provides a mechanism to support active parent-school collaboration from the earliest stages; gives parents the skills and confidence to become involved with their children's learning on a long-term basis and, most of all, instils in children the joy of reading from their earliest years.

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Overview

Parent Group Sessions

The group sessions which follow are run by schools, and show how parents and children can work together on learning to read.

The main principles underpinning the sessions have been well researched and documented over many years:

- Parents are prime educators of their children and have a unique contribution to make, irrespective of their own educational experiences or standards.
- Group dynamics contribute to and extend the ability of parents to become positively involved in the reading process. They learn by doing the activity themselves, by observing other parents in action, and by receiving feedback on the outcomes of the activity.
- Effective learning takes place when the activity is matched precisely to the child's current operating level.
- Participation in the groups can have positive spin-offs in other areas of the child's learning and behaviour, primarily because the parent and child are involved in positive interactions together – enhancing the parent/child relationship.

These particular sessions have been developed and evaluated in schools by the Highland Council Psychological Service over a number of years, and now focus on the development of literacy skills at 3 key stages:

- Pre-School **Shared Reading**
- Primary 1 **Reading Together 1st Steps**
- Primary 3 **Reading Together**

Each programme has 4 or 5 sessions lasting approximately 1 hour – including a cup of tea/coffee! Two presenters from the school meet weekly in the school with a group of 6-10 parents and look at aspects of reading together. Their children are also involved during part of each session. The groups learn through demonstration, discussion and practice.

Evaluation of past Shared Reading and Reading Together groups indicated that there was a significant rise in reading attainment following their programme, and parental comments noted that they had found that their involvement in the programme had a positive impact on various aspects of their child's learning and on their relationship with their child.

Overview of the Parent Programmes

The content and materials of the programme demonstrate how parents can become involved in their child's reading from the earliest days through to the time when they leave the infant stages of school and move into P4.

Reading Together with your baby and toddler

For the years before the pre-school stage, there is a leaflet for parents that emphasises the benefits of reading to their child from the very early days, and engaging them in communicating and conversing from the start of their lives. This leaflet could be given out to parents attending the school sessions, as they may also have very young children.

The 3 group sessions

Ideally the school would have a rolling programme of parent groups every year for pre-school, P1 and P3. Parents could then take part in each stage of the programme as their child grows. However, parents can opt in at any stage.

Shared Reading

This is for parents at the pre-school stage. This programme consists of 5 sessions and looks at sharing a book with your child; building vocabulary; rhyme; rhythm; environmental print and the initial sounds of words.

Reading Together 1st Steps

This level is intended for parents who have children in P1. There are 4 sessions focusing on choosing the right book; getting the setting right; the importance of praise; supported reading; simultaneous and independent reading.

Reading Together

This is for parents whose children are in P3. There are 5 sessions which look at getting the setting right for hearing children read; choosing books at the right level; how to praise and deal with errors; independent reading for pleasure.

For each programme there are presenters' scripts and notes; handouts and worksheets. The school would need to provide suitable books for each child to read at home, and refreshments for the group sessions.



EVALUATION

Evaluation

The initial project was evaluated at the time with information provided by around 150 parents. Evaluation was carried through:

- **Rating Scales**
- **Parents comments, written and verbal**
- **Formal evaluation of Reading Together 1st Steps, using the Group Reading Test II (6-14) (NFER-Nelson, 2005)**

Rating Scales:

The rating scales were employed to provide an overview of how the groups were received. Course participants completed 5-point Likert Scale rating for;

- **Presentation**
- **Usefulness**
- **Pace**
- **Recommendation for Other Parents**

There were around 150 respondents for the Shared Reading Programme, 19 for the Reading Together 1st Steps and a further 200 for the Reading Together programme. With parental agreement there was formal assessment of children participating in the Reading Together 1st Steps programme (parent group) and children whose parents did not attend (control group)

There was near unanimity in rating both presentation and usefulness as 5, that is, the workshops were found to be well-presented and very useful, well-paced and would be recommended to other parents. In addition, for the 1st Steps programme, the evaluation targeted three key questions, namely;

- What did you find most useful?
- What did find least useful?
- What changes have you see already in your child?

Parents' Comments:

Parents' comments reinforced the view that the sessions not only supported the development of early literacy skills in the children, but provided parents with the confidence to interact with their children in a way that impacted on other aspects of their development. A selection of comments across the groups highlight the more common issues raised;

- *It has been helpful knowing how to read a book and ask open questions instead of closed questions all the time. Also, for making me, as a parent, understand the importance of rhyme and rhythm. How important it is for my son to learn these. I would not have known about these things if I had not gone along to the workshops.*

- *My child chooses the book and holds it, turns the pages and feels in control. Sometimes she will choose the story book in the afternoon and sets this by her bed in preparation for bedtime.*
- *Because their friends have also been to the classes, they walk down the street or in the park together, clapping everything they see.*
- *I now feel more confident that there are things I can do to help my child.*
- *My child's concentration and attention seem to have increased.*
- *I didn't realise the extent to which I could influence my child's learning to such an extent. I thought this should be left to the teacher.*
- *I find I am praising my child more, not just when we are reading or doing homework.*
- *My child now turns the television off because she enjoys sharing the quiet time.*
- *Raised my awareness of the difference between reading a story to my child and sharing a book with her.*
- *I found this workshop very useful, not only for the understanding of reading skills, but for everyday practices in dealing with my child. Appreciating praise can go a long way to promote better behaviour both from parent and child.*
- *Initially I was very concerned that the methods subscribed would seem overly-patronising to my son. However, having followed the process of praise and encouragement, I was taken aback and absolutely delighted with the immediate improvement in fluency, enthusiasm and confidence that he displayed. Right from the very first week the improvement was obvious. Creating an environment for him to read to me at a set time seemed difficult to schedule, but I was soon put in place by my son if I dared say "A little later." His enthusiasm for his reading time became infectious and we were both delighted to see it introduced formally.*
- *At first I was very uncomfortable with coming as I thought it was because there was something wrong with my child's reading. But I found it was the exact opposite. I feel that my child has come on so much by coming to this group. I also do the same with an older child that has been needing some extra help. It has given them both more confidence. I enjoyed the group too.*

What Did You Find Most Useful?

- *Child's perspective on learning to read*
- *Tips on how to encourage*
- *Made me realise how difficult it can be for a child to learn to read when it comes so naturally to us as adults*
- *Remembering how important the sounds and expressions are*
- *Talking to other parents*

What did you find least useful?

- *8 respondents left this blank*
- *9 noted that this question did not apply*
- *1 mention of Role Play*
- *It might be better to have the sessions in the first term to get parents thinking about reading, before books are "homework"*

What Changes Have You already Seen in your Child?

- *Growing confidence for books and reading*
- *Excited about new books and choosing them*
- *He appreciated my time coming in and showing an interest in his schoolwork so he puts more effort into concentrating on it*
- *Loves joining in with the story, especially rhyme. Feels especially proud when he can recognise letters and sounds*

Other Comments

- *I think all parents should have access to this scheme*
- *Cemented a good relationship with school and my son's teacher*
- *Very helpful and inspiring*
- *Having time to choose and share books together is a special time which I appreciate more now*

Formal Evaluations

In order to assess the reading levels of children who participated in the research, the Group Reading Test (NFER-Nelson, 2005) was used. This can assess early reading skills of children as young as six and can also monitor their progress up to the age of fourteen. The test uses everyday language and situations and is made up of three multiple-choice tests which comprise of sentence completion tests and context comprehension tests.

The first reading tests of the children were conducted 18 months after the Reading Together 1st Steps parent groups, while the children were in Primary 2. The follow-up test was completed two-years later in 2011 when the children were in Primary 4. Of the 65 children tested, 18 had a parent who had attended the Reading Together 1st Steps group, whilst the remaining 47 did not.

Table 1
Group Reading Test II (6-14) Scores 2009

School	Group	Test Score
1	Parent	105.57
	Control	92.46
2	Parent	102.17
	Control	86.00
3	Parent	108.40
	Control	94.64

Table 2
Group Reading Test II (6-14) Scores 2011

School	Group	Test Score
1	Parent	109.57
	Control	104.09
2	Parent	103.80
	Control	91.33
3	Parent	111.33
	Control	99.06

The tables show that in both the initial and follow-up assessments, children whose parents had attended the Reading Together 1st Steps parent groups performed significantly better than children whose parents had not attended.

These results support research that indicates that children whose parents are involved with their reading at home fare better on reading tests in comparison to children whose parents are less involved (Hewison & Tizard, 1980; Jordan, Snow & Porche, 2000; Tizard, Schofield & Hewison, 1982). The results also support findings that children's exposure to books and participating in reading activities at home can have significantly positive influences on reading achievement and the development of vocabulary and listening comprehension skills (Rowe, 1991; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002). Kelly-Vance and Schreck (2002) found that in a school where parents were encouraged to increase the amount of time spent reading with their children at home, the children showed a higher increase in reading rate and accuracy compared to their matched peers.

Interventions that involve parents reading with their children may not just improve reading scores, but also improve relationships between parent and child. Bus and Van Ijendoorn (1992) found that mothers whose attachment with their child was less secure spent less time reading to their child and had more troublesome episodes during the reading session than mothers whose attachment with their child was more secure.

Limitations

The parent groups took place during the school day; therefore only parents who had no obligations at that time were able to attend. This could mean that these parents had more free time not only to spend at the parent classes, but also to carry out activities with their children. Also due to parent self-selection, it could be that these parents had a greater investment in their children's education than other parents and would be more likely to read with their children at home regardless of the parent group intervention.

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GENERAL INFORMATION LEAFLETS

READING TOGETHER WITH YOUR BABY AND TODDLER

WHY READ TO YOUR BABY/TODDLER



It gives your child the experience of language, rhythm and sounds from the earliest age.

Pre-school children who are exposed to lots of language (from books and conversation) tend to do better in school.



It is a great way to bond with your child.

It can be very calming, so bed-time story is more than just a treat.

When your baby tries to focus on a picture it can help develop eye-muscles.

Each time your baby hears a word, it imprints more strongly in their brain - the more they hear the word, the better they will learn it.

HOW TO READ TO YOUR BABY/TODDLER

Reading with your young child must be relaxing and fun and should not be a chore for either of you, so choose a time when you are able to focus on and enjoy the activity.

Find a quiet, comfortable place, and sit together so that your child can see the book too.

You can use books with songs/stories that you like reading, and just read so that your baby can enjoy the sound of your voice and hear the rhythms of language. It does not matter that they do not understand what you are talking about!

Use a slow sing-song voice for the story.

Make sound effects with your voice, or different voices for different characters - be entertaining.

You can also use books with large, simple pictures of objects or animals, with bold colours such as red, green, blue and black.

For babies, you point to the pictures and say the names - this will help your child focus on specific sounds.

For toddlers you can say the names of objects on the page and ask them to point to the picture, or later point to the picture and ask your child the name of the object.

Give **big** praise when your child points at or names a picture.



WHAT IF I HAVE READING DIFFICULTIES MYSELF

At this stage you don't have to be very good at reading. When your baby is young you can just tell a story about the pictures, and not even read at all. Most books for very young children do not have much text, and you can read slowly. You could also practise reading the story before reading to your child.

If you would like help to improve your reading skills, there are groups which will help adults with their reading. Ask about adult literacy support at the Citizen's Advice Bureau or your GP or Education Office.

OTHER ACTIVITIES THAT DEVELOP PRE-READING SKILLS

Language - The more experience children have of language, the more easily they should learn to read. Your baby/toddler needs to hear and join in conversations, and listen to stories and songs.

As well as including them in the general language of the family, you can try specific activities -

- At the youngest age you can have "conversations" with your child by copying the sounds they make and waiting to see if they repeat them again. Do it again if they respond - and again and again!
- As your baby grows, you can hold up or give them familiar objects (e.g. cup/ball/sock) and say just the name clearly. Wait silently to see if they copy you. Give lots of praise if they do, or repeat the word for them.
- Later, when your child is using lots of single words you can say 2 words together to encourage them to join up words (e.g. Dolly jump/Mummy sit/Wash hands). Do this as a commentary while they are watching what is happening.

Rhyming - Children who understand about rhyming words have a head start in learning to read. When your child is very young you can say/sing all the nursery rhymes, just for them to listen and enjoy the sounds. Later you can say the line and leave off the rhyming word at the end to see if they can fill it in, e.g. Little Bo ---- Has lost her -----.

Fill it in for them if they cannot manage it.

Looking at books - Right from the start keep books and newspapers around the house so that your child grows up knowing that reading is part of life. Show them how you turn the pages; point to where you start reading so that they see that print goes from left to right; show them that you love looking at books.

Have books that they can have to play with themselves in their cot etc., e.g. cloth books, cardboard books - always check these books for safety.

Visit the library with your child. They should have books suitable for all ages and may even do story time and other events for very young children.

The main point at this very early stage is to have **fun** with your child and let them see that books and reading are an everyday part of life - something to enjoy.



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SHARED READING - PARENT GROUPS

GENERAL INFORMATION LEAFLET FOR PARENTS

The main purpose of the Shared Reading Groups is to look at ways in which parents can help their pre-school children learn to enjoy books and become familiar with the printed word.

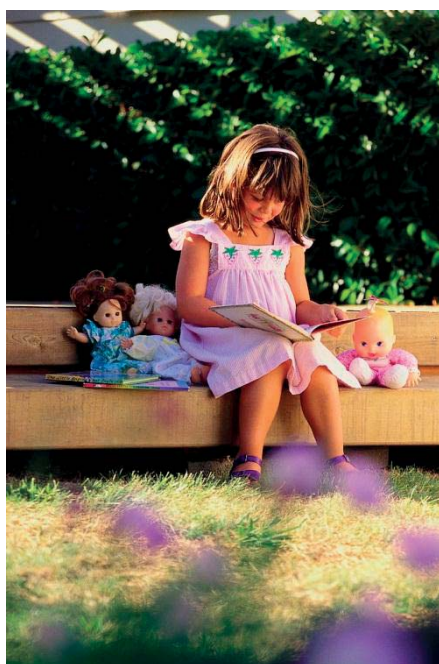


WHAT HAPPENS

- ❖ 5 Friendly sessions
- ❖ All parents of the nursery class are invited
- ❖ No more than 10 adults in every group
- ❖ Children will join the workshops at appropriate times
- ❖ Sessions will be led by 2 trained adults
- ❖ You will be asked to read to your child regularly at home for short spells
- ❖ Learning will be through demonstration, discussion and practice

WE LOOK AT VOCABULARY BUILDING, RHYME, RHYTHM AND INITIAL SOUNDS IN WORDS

- ❖ Praise and sharing a book in a quiet corner helps children learn to enjoy books
- ❖ Games and ways of sharing books which will improve your child's vocabulary
- ❖ Games and ways of sharing books which will help your child's sense of rhyme. This helps children break down words into syllables which helps learning reading
- ❖ Games and ways of sharing books which will help your child's sense of rhythm. Again this will help children break words into syllables
- ❖ Games and ways of sharing books which will help children hear how a word starts and how to identify individual letters



THESE GROUPS HAVE BEEN PROVEN TO WORK
AND REALLY HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN TO
READ.

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Works for Positive Change

READING TOGETHER 1st STEPS PARENT GROUPS

GENERAL INFORMATION LEAFLET FOR PARENTS



The main purpose of the Reading Together 1st Steps Groups is to look at things that parents can do which have been demonstrated to improve both how well their child can read and their child's confidence with the written word.

WHAT HAPPENS

- ❖ 4 Friendly sessions
- ❖ All parents of children in the class are invited to the groups
- ❖ No more than 10 adults attend any one group
- ❖ Children will join the groups at appropriate times
- ❖ Sessions will be led by 2 trained adults
- ❖ Learning will be through demonstration, discussion and practice
- ❖ You will be asked to read along with your child regularly at home for short spells

WE LOOK AT WAYS TO HELP YOUR CHILD TO START TO READ

- ❖ Getting the setting right
- ❖ Ways of sharing books and making it a positive, happy time
- ❖ How to get started
- ❖ 3 main ways children learn to read
- ❖ Supported reading: a successful approach to developing your child's reading





**THESE GROUPS
HAVE BEEN PROVEN TO WORK
AND REALLY HELP YOUR CHILD
LEARN TO READ**

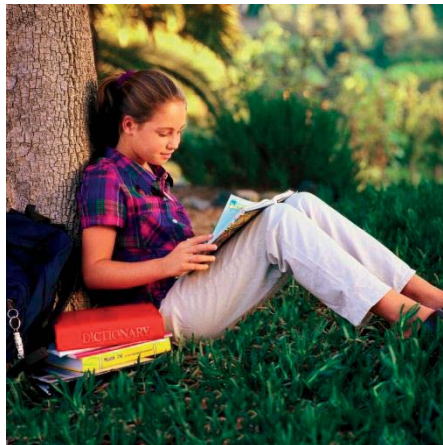
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Works for Positive Change

READING TOGETHER - PARENT GROUPS

GENERAL INFORMATION LEAFLET FOR PARENTS



The main purpose of the Reading Together Parent Groups is to look at things that parents can do which we know will improve their child's reading.



WHAT HAPPENS

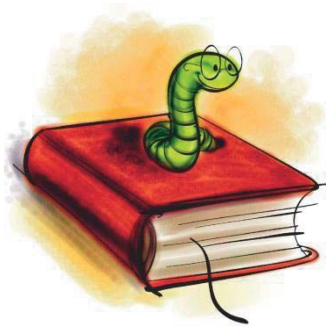
- 5 Friendly sessions
- All parents of the class are invited
- No more than 10 adults at any one group
- Children will join the workshops at appropriate times
- Sessions will be led by 2 trained adults
- You will be asked to read regularly with your child at home
- Learning will be through demonstration, discussion and practice

WE LOOK AT A RANGE OF FACTORS TO HELP LEARNING

FOR EXAMPLE

- Getting the setting right for hearing your child read at home
- How to choose a book at the right level of reading
- The need for regular praise when hearing your child reading and how this can best be done
- How to deal with reading when your child gets stuck with a word or makes a mistake





**THESE GROUPS
HAVE BEEN PROVEN TO WORK
AND REALLY IMPROVE
CHILDREN'S READING**

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Works for Positive Change

SHARED READING PRESENTER'S SCRIPT

PARENT GROUP MATERIALS CONTENT

A Presenter's Script

- Session 1: Setting the Scene
- Session 2: Sharing a Book and Vocabulary Building
- Session 3: Rhyme
- Session 4: Rhythm
- Session 5: Initial Sound, Environmental Print and Evaluation

B Appendices

- Appendix 1: Home/School Pie Chart
- Appendix 2A & 2B: Hieroglyphics
- Appendix 3: Role Play (A) Script
- Appendix 4: Role Play (B) Script
- Appendix 5: Book Selection Sheet
- Appendix 6A & 6B: Sheets with two Words
- Appendix 7: Cat and Tree Picture
- Appendix 8: Page with Picture – Open Questions
- Appendix 9A & 9B: Sheets with two Words - Rhythm
- Appendix 10: Evaluation sheet
- Appendix 11: Alternative/Supplementary Evaluation Questions (optional)

C Other Support Materials Required

- Selection of different types of early year books
- Book for role play, e.g. “I don’t want to go to bed!” – Magi Publications – or make a video of the role play situation and use this on the day.
- Feely bags and suitable objects for rhyme and rhythm to put in the bags.
- Pack of picture cards for rhythm activities.
- Name badges (parents, presenters and children)
- Tea/coffee/biscuits

D Handouts

- Sharing a Picture Book
- Open Questions
- Vocabulary Building
- Bookstart Rhyme
- Rhyme
- Rhythm
- Initial Sounds
- Environmental Print
- Summary: Main Points to Remember
- Shared Reading Certificates for children

E Parent Leaflet

- How to Do it: the Main Points

PRESENTER'S SCRIPT

CONTENTS

- Session 1 Setting the Scene**
Introduction
Overview
What we are **not** going to do
What we **are** going to do
Getting the Setting Right
Discussion
- Session 2 Ways of Sharing a Book/Vocabulary Building**
Choosing the Right Book
Ways to Share a Book
Vocabulary Building - Open and Closed Questions
Concepts about Print
Children's Book Choosing
Discussion
- Session 3 Rhyme**
Introduction
Rhyme
Demonstration of Games
Games Practice
Children's Book Choosing
Discussion
- Session 4 Rhythm**
Introduction
Rhythm
Demonstration of Games
Games Practice
Children's Book Choosing
Discussion
- Session 5 Environmental Print, Initial Sounds, Evaluation**
Environmental Print – explanation and activities
Initial Sounds Games
Discussion
Evaluation

Session 1: Setting the Scene

Preparation:

1. Welcoming room with suitable number of chairs for parents and presenters.
2. Tea and coffee. This can be done at either at the beginning to break the ice or at the end to give parents a chance to talk over what they have been doing.
3. Pie chart (Appendix 1).
4. Hieroglyphic sentences (Appendix 2A & 2B).
5. Book with text and pictures for role play e.g. 'I don't want to go to bed!' Magi Publications.
6. Role Play (A): Getting the setting right (book, TV/radio)
Exemplar script (Appendix 3)
7. Role Play (B): Importance of praise (book)
Exemplar script (Appendix 4)
8. Handout: Sharing a Picture Book.
9. Selection of books for the children to choose to take home.
10. Record sheet to note what books have been taken home (Appendix 5).



Procedure:

1. Introduction

1.1 Welcome

1.2 Introduction of course presenters.

1.3 Reassurance that invitation to participate in the group was extended to all parents of children in the nursery class. No focus on particular children in that class.

2. Development of workshops

2.1 Pre-school parent groups arose from parental requests following Paired Reading groups for older children, where parents felt that the principles and information would have been very useful if provided at an earlier age.

2.2 The pre-school groups were developed by a team comprising learning support teacher and nursery nurse from school, speech and language therapist and psychologist. The resulting groups were subsequently trialled and revised with a number of parent groups of nursery aged children.

3. Overview

3.1 The main focus of the group will be:

- i. to focus on developing a positive working partnership between you and your child which will stand you in good stead throughout your child's school career.
- ii. to look at ways to help your child to build a solid foundation of pre-reading skills through enjoying books and some fun games together.

The main skills we will be concentrating on are:

- Getting the setting right
- Choosing the right book
- Vocabulary building
- Concepts about print
- Rhyme
- Rhythm (or syllables)
- Initial sounds
- Environmental print

3.2 Parents have an enormous role to play as educators of their children. School factors are thought to contribute 15% towards academic achievement while family factors contribute 85%. **Show Pie Chart** (Appendix 1).

- 3.3** A child who has been read to daily for 30 minutes from 6 weeks of age would have more than 1000 hours of book experience on entering formal education. (This is more than most of us do so don't get discouraged if you didn't start reading to your child at the age of six weeks. What we do from now on is what is important.) A school teacher will then begin to teach that child to read spending perhaps 2 hours per day – approximately 360 hours per year with his/her attention divided between 20+ pupils. So the child with no or very little book experience before entering school will be at a great disadvantage.

4. What we are NOT going to do

- 4.1** What we are not going to do is to teach you to be replacement teachers.
- 4.2** Let's look at some of the skills that the teacher has, ones that he/she has been especially trained for:

Use **hieroglyphic sentences** to highlight reading conventions. Laminate sheet with translation on the back (Appendices 2A & 2B).

- Which way up
- Where to start
- What direction
- Check on some words
- Sound symbols
- Shape of words
- Spaces defining words
- Two or more letters making one sound etc.

This is part of the teacher's contribution – so what about us parents?

5. What we ARE going to do

- 5.1** As parents, we have a unique understanding of our child, and have in fact as much to offer as the teacher but in a different way.
- 5.2** Studies have shown that children who grow up in families where books are read to them and with them are at an advantage where reading is concerned. Since the ability to read affects all of the other school subjects, these children remain at an advantage throughout their schooling.
- 5.3** As a parent, the way you respond to your child when sharing a book together, and later when hearing reading, has been shown to play a very important part in how well he/she reads and how confident he/she can be with books. Children respond to their feelings. If they feel good about sharing in a story or book, they will want to do it again. This good feeling will encourage them later as they move into independent reading.
- 5.4** First you must **get the setting right**.

Role Play (A): Getting the Setting Right (or use video of role play!)

Demonstrate lack of attention, disruption by use of radio, newspaper etc. See exemplar script (Appendix 3).

Did this ring any bells with you? Encourage comments from the group.

- 5.5** Young children find it very difficult to filter out distractions such as the TV, radio, washing machine, other children etc. and concentrate only on what someone is saying to them or reading to them. We need to organise a special time and a special place.

How do you think that this can be achieved? Encourage parents to share ideas or suggestions. What problems would they encounter? Again encourage parents to share the problems that family life might bring to this.

- 5.6** As well as finding the right time and place, we also need to generate the right atmosphere. Make it a happy time and be enthusiastic and positive. Look for opportunities to give praise e.g. ‘clever boy’, or ‘that was really smart to notice that’, ‘you remembered, clever girl’ etc.

- 5.7 Role Play (B):** The Importance of Praise (or use video of role play!)

Parent and child sitting close together. Atmosphere warm and relaxed. Child in charge as far as possible e.g. Child choosing book, turning pages etc. Parent praising child regularly.

See exemplar script (Appendix 4).

Encourage comments from the group.

6. Summary

- 6.1** The importance of, and practice in, ongoing praise and encouragement while you enjoy books with your child will be an important part of the meetings that follow. We will also be looking at other ways you can help your child to develop the necessary pre-reading skills that will help your child to learn to read more easily – namely good vocabulary skills, rhyme and rhythm.

- 6.2** Bring the children in and introduce yourself to them. Tell them that they will be joining us every week for the next five weeks. Tell them that when they come, we will be sometimes playing games and choosing books for them to read at home with their parents.

- 6.3** Distribute handout: **Sharing a Picture Book**

- 7.** Ask the children to choose a book to take home and write down which book they have chosen (Appendix 5).

SHARED READING: PARENT GROUPS

7.1 Children are returned to nursery class.

7.2 Discussion over tea and biscuits.

Session 2: Ways of Sharing a Book/Vocabulary Building

Preparation:

1. A welcoming room with suitable number of chairs for parents and presenters preferably around a table. Possible chair also for the children when they come in. They may wish to sit on their parent's knee.
2. Name tags for parents and presenters.
3. Selection of appropriate books for demonstration, including possibly:

Early Board Books	Christopher Crocodile's Jungly Jingles – Orchard Books
'Find it'	Find the Teddy – Usborne
Pop-up	Playful Pets – Marshal Publishing
Rhyme/interactive	Don't Put Your Finger in the Jelly Nelly – Picture Hippo
Rhyme and Rhythm	Hairy Maclary from Donaldson's Dairy – Picture Puffin
Lift the Flap	Who's Making That Noise? - Usborne
4. 'Fantastic Sheets' (Appendix 6A & 6B).
5. Cat and Tree Picture (Appendix 7).
6. Suitable book with text and picture for Role Play A and B (Appendix 8).
7. Handouts: Open Questions
Vocabulary Building
8. Selection of books for children to borrow.
9. Tea and coffee.

Procedure:

1. Introduction

- 1.1** Distribute name tags to parents so that we all know who everyone is.
- 1.2** Ask for feedback as to how they managed during the week. Encourage parents to participate.
- 1.3** Highlight main issues to be looked at during this session.
 - Review how to get the setting right.
 - Choosing the right book for your child.
 - Suggestion on ways to share a book.
 - Vocabulary building.
 - Children choosing a book and homework pack.

2. Getting the Setting Right

- 2.1** Remind the group of the role play from the last session which emphasised making it a 'special time'.
- 2.2** Factors to consider may include:
 - How have parents managed over the previous week?
 - What has been the best time and place for their child?
 - Have there been any distractions?
 - How have parents tried to cut these down?

3. Choosing the Right Book

- 3.1** Different children respond to different books in different ways. Choosing the right book for your child will help to hold your child's attention to the end of the story.
- 3.2** Use books listed on preparation page (or your own choice) to demonstrate the following:
 - Short books for children who can't sit for long.
 - Board books for impulsive children or for children who would have trouble turning paper pages.
 - Interactive books to help keep attention.
 - Pop-up and Flap Books can increase excitement and anticipation.
 - Books with a repetitive line for the child to join in with.
 - Books which are written in rhyme or contain nursery rhymes.
- 3.3** Books on a child's favourite subjects are always likely to hold interest. It is always a good idea to encourage your child to help to choose the book.

4. Ways to Share a Book

- 4.1 Research shows that most progress is made when we actively engage the child's attention when sharing a book. We can do this in a variety of ways.
- 4.2 Sometimes a story may lend itself to being read straight through, especially where rhyme and rhythm feature heavily. This helps to the child to hear the rhyme and rhythm more clearly.
- 4.3 At other times, we can stop at a page which your child finds interesting and discuss it at length. Rather than getting in the way of the story, this can add depth and interest to the story.
- 4.4 You may have to adjust the length of the story by summarising the text if the story is too long and complex. This often involves characters your children love, e.g. Postman Pat, Thomas the Tank Engine, Disney Books etc.
- 4.5 Also with longer and more challenging stories, we may wish to do a 'bookwalk' before getting down to reading the story. This means that we look at the pictures and leaf through the pages before we read the story so that your child has an idea of what the story is about and can tune in to the narrative more easily. Taking a 'bookwalk' is rather like an adult reading through the summary on the back of a novel or checking the newspaper to see what the Saturday night film is about before watching it. It helps us to tune in to the story line more easily and helps the child to listen to the story next time without the usual interruptions.

5. Vocabulary Building

- 5.1 Sharing books in ways such as these will help to encourage discussion and build on your child's vocabulary. Good vocabulary knowledge is necessary in order to become a fluent reader. When children start reading they look for clues as to what a new word might be. They look in the picture for clues, then use the context of the sentence for clues and they use the first letter of the word as a clue. With these three clues, they can sometimes work out the new word. If the word is not part of their vocabulary, it will be very hard for the child to read it.
- 5.2 It is much easier to read words that we are familiar with than ones we have not come across before.
Demonstrate using the pairs of words of the same length – one common, one unusual. (Appendix 6A & 6B) Show the cards for just a couple of seconds. Ask if they can read any of the words. Most will be able to read the first word, very few if any, the second and unknown word.
- 5.3 Pictures in a story are particularly important in helping to expand young children's vocabulary. Even simple drawings can bring in a wide range of vocabulary.

Demonstrate using the cat and tree picture (Appendix 7).

E.g. Look at this animal. What kind of animal is it?
It looks nice and **soft** and **furry**.
The cat is **under** the tree.
It is a **big** tree and a **little** cat. etc.

5.4 Asking questions about the story or picture is also an important way of extending your child's vocabulary. Different types of questions result in different types of answers. Choose a book with an interesting picture, e.g. *Busy Children* (Appendix 8).

5.5 Role Play (A): Closed questions
'Adult' asks 'child' questions such as:
'What colour is the table?'
'Are the children busy?'
'Can you see the lady?'
'What is that called?' (Point to the apron)

Point out that questions such as these require the child to point or give a one word response.

5.6 Role Play (B): Open questions
Using the same picture, 'adult' asks 'child' questions such as:
'**Who** do you think this lady is?'
'**Why** are the children wearing aprons?'
'**Where** do you think all the things on the table came from?'
'Suggest possibilities e.g. Maybe.....this little girl's mummy brought it in' etc.
'**How** could you make a rocket from these bits and pieces?'

With open questions there are an unlimited number of answers. You will be amazed at some of them. This gives you the ideal opportunity to praise them for their thoughts and answers.

5.7 Encourage parents to come up with other open questions of the why?, how?, where?, what if? Talk about the picture.

5.8 Give out the handout: **Open Questions**

5.9 Give out the handout: **Vocabulary Building**

5.10 Explain and discuss the handouts on open questions and vocabulary building

6. Concepts About Print

6.1 By talking about the pictures, we help to expand vocabulary and knowledge about the world and by talking about the words in a story we support and develop our child's

curiosity about text and the meaning it conveys. We encourage our children to look more closely at the print by occasionally saying ‘Look it says here.....’ and following a line or two with our finger as we read.

- 6.2** An exercise such as this helps to establish left – right directionality, the link between the written and spoken word and the knowledge that it is the print and not the picture that tells the story.

7. Children’s Book Choosing

- 7.1** Bring children to the group. Explain that they will be coming to the group to read with their mums and dads and also play some fun games next week. Take some time to look at a picture with the children, asking open questions for them to answer.
- 7.2** Parent and child choose a book, giving details to presenter.
- 7.3** Children are returned to the nursery class.
- 7.4** Follow up discussion over tea and biscuits. (Presenter circulating round parents for individual chat).

Session 3: Rhyme

Preparation:

1. Welcoming room with suitable number of chairs for parents, presenters and children.
2. Selection of modern rhyme books.
3. Suitable rhyming book for Role Play e.g.
Don't Put Your Finger in the Jelly Nelly – Picture Hippos.
4. Feely Bag containing an assortment of everyday objects for rhyme game e.g.
 - Ball
 - Pencil
 - Spoon
 - Toy car
 - Toy cat
 - Toy dog
 - String of beads
 - Small book
 - Comb etc.
5. Pack of picture cards for rhyme game. Early Learning Centre do a rhyming lotto game.
6. Selection of books for children to borrow.
7. Handout: **Bookstart Rhymes**
Handout: **Rhyme**
8. Tea and coffee.

Procedure:

1. Introduction

- 1.1** This session we will be looking at the importance of rhyme and practising some rhyming games. Later the children will be joining us to play games round the group and to choose a new book.
- 1.2** Any questions or issues relating to Ways of Sharing a Book and Vocabulary Building that we did last week?
- 1.3** Did parents feel that their child had chosen a suitable book last session? How did the children do with their homework sheets?

2. Rhyme

- 2.1** Rhyme is important for reading. Children need to be comfortable with rhyme before they can break words down further. In the early stage and in the nurseries, teachers spend a lot of time working with children on rhyme. As they get older, their knowledge of rhyming sounds can be developed into reading skills and knowledge of spelling patterns.
- 2.2** Children enjoy playing around with the sounds of words and will often spontaneously rhyme. Many adults, when playing with and talking with young children also spontaneously rhyme e.g. Doggy woggy, horsey worsey.
- 2.3** In the past a child's early experience of language included nursery rhymes which were passed down through the generations. Many of these nursery rhymes are still enjoyed today despite some old fashioned words. Children often don't understand the meaning of the rhymes, but enjoy the sound of them.
- 2.4** There are now many more rhyming books available. Show examples of these books, giving parents a chance to look through them too.
- 2.5** When reading these books we are helping our children to learn more about sounds and improve their rhyming skill. It is important to read nursery rhymes and poetry together regularly.
- 2.6** It is good to do a 'bookwalk' through a new rhyming book before you start to read it with your child. This means that you are more likely to be able to read uninterrupted through the rhyme, helping your child to hear the rhymes and take part in the reading of it. Stop occasionally at the rhyming words and see if your child can fill in the rhyme.

3. Role Play

Parent and child role play using a rhyming story book. The parents could all take the part of the child calling out the missing words.

Highlight words which ‘sound the same at the end’ asking the ‘child’ to try to guess what the missing rhyme is. Extend this by making up other rhyming words to make the rhyme really silly.

4. Demonstration of Games

- 4.1** Feely bag – each member of the group picks an object from the feely bag, names it and gives a word which rhymes with it e.g. ball – tall. Nonsense words are acceptable. Emphasise to parents that children all develop at different rates and that this does not have any bearing on how clever they are. Children all have different skills, and with lots of praise when they get it right, they will soon learn.
- 4.2** Extend this game by generating further rhyming words round the group e.g. Cat – bat – fat – tat – mat etc. Get the children to set a target for the number of words they want to try to get to rhyme with it, say five or ten. Or keep rhyming until no more words can be found. Count how many you got. See if you can get more using another word.
- 4.3** Use pictures instead of objects in feely bag.
- 4.4** Give out Handout: **Bookstart Rhymes**.
Give out Handout: **Rhyme**.
Discuss.
- 4.5** Talk over the rhyming exercise sheets. Remind parents that we want this to be a very positive and happy experience and if their child is not interested, then don’t go on. Never force your child at this stage because it will result in a resentful and uncooperative child. Remind them to praise when their child makes a good effort.

5. Games Practice

- 5.1** Bring children to the group. Introduce yourself by name, trying to find a real or made up word that rhymes with it. Ask the parents and the children to do the same.
- 5.2** Play games described in 4.1 with parents help. Encourage them to praise their children and other children in the group.
- 5.3** If children are participating well, the games in 4.2 and 4.3 can also be used.

6. Children’s Book Choosing

- 6.1** Parent and child choose a book, giving details to presenter. Children are then returned to the nursery class.
- 6.2** Follow up discussion over tea and biscuits.

Session 4: Rhythm

Preparation:

1. Welcoming room with suitable number of chairs for parents, children and presenters.
2. Role Play (A): Suitable book, e.g. **Hairy Maclary from Donaldson's Dairy**.
3. Sheets with two words (Appendix 9A & 9B).
4. Feely Bag containing an assortment of everyday objects of 1 – 3 syllables for rhythm game, e.g.
 - Small ball
 - Pencil
 - Rubber
 - Sellotape
 - Teddy
 - Toy dog
 - String of beads
 - Toy cow
 - Handkerchief
 - Toy lorry etc.
5. Pack of picture cards.
6. Selection of books for children to borrow.
7. Handout: **Rhythm**.
8. Tea and coffee.

Procedure:

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This session we will be looking at the importance of rhythm and practising some rhythm games. Later the children will be joining us to play games around the group and to choose a new book.
- 1.2 Any questions or issues relating to rhyme and the rhyme games that we played last session? How did you go about doing this – for example, were there good opportunities such as in the car, while peeling potatoes! etc.
- 1.3 Did parents feel that their child had chosen a suitable book last session?

2. Rhythm

- 2.1 Rhythm as well as rhyme, is important for reading. A good sense of rhythm helps to boost reading and writing skills. Some children's books make use of both rhyme and rhythm very effectively.
 - 2.2 Role Play A: Rhythmical books.
Using a rhythmical book such as **Hairy Maclary from Donaldson's Dairy** adult leads a brief 'bookwalk' through the book and discusses with child.
Adult then reads the book straight through.
When reading a rhythmical book, we may not wish to break the rhythm. Can be useful to discuss before reading rather than during reading.
 - 2.3 The ability to feel the rhythm of language and split words into syllables is necessary before we can break words down into individual letter sounds. If a child can hear the syllables in a word, it helps when they come to read themselves and write. When they are faced with a new word, they don't have to read or write it all at one time. If they break it up into syllables, they can concentrate on working on manageably sized bits of a word.
 - 2.4 Just as a child needs to learn that a phrase or a sentence is made up of individual words, they need to learn that most words are made up of groups of letters forming syllables.
 - 2.5 The length of the word does not necessarily give us a clue as to how many syllables may be in it. For example, you can have long words with only one syllable and shorter words with more than one syllable.
 - 2.6 Demonstrate this using sheets - see Appendix 9A & 9B.
- 3. Demonstration of Games**
- 3.1 Presenters say own name whilst clapping the number of syllables. Invite parents to take turns to clap own name round the group.

- 3.2 Feely bag with everyday objects. 'How many claps in.....' Take turns to take an object from the bag and clap out its name.
- 3.3 Sort them into groups of like number of syllables.
- 3.4 As above but using the picture cards.
- 3.5 Give out Handout: **Rhythm**. Discuss.
- 4. **Games Practice**
- 4.1 Bring children to the group and clap children's name round the group with parent's help.
- 4.2 Repeat game described in 3.2 with parents assisting.
- 4.3 Set out objects or pictures which have either one, two or three syllables in their names and tell the children you are going to clap one of them. Children shout out which one it is.
- 5. **Children's Book Choosing**
- 5.1 Parent and child exchange books, giving details to presenter.
- 5.2 Children are returned to the nursery class, having been thanked for taking part in the group.
- 5.3 Parents are invited to bring any favourite books they have enjoyed with their child next week.
- 5.4 Follow up discussion over tea and biscuits.

Session 5: Environmental Print, Initial Sounds and Evaluation

Preparation:

1. Room with suitable number of chairs for parents and presenters.
2. Paper for taking notes from feedback.
3. Handouts for environmental print and initial sounds.
4. Shared Reading Certificates.
5. Evaluation forms for the parents to fill in (Appendix 10).
6. Alternative/supplementary evaluation questions (Appendix 11).
7. Tea/coffee (and maybe even sticky buns this time!).

Procedure:

1. Introduction

- 1.1** For a short time this session we will look at the printed word in the world around us (environmental print) and the initial sounds in words.
- 1.2** Firstly, any questions, issues relating to rhythm or rhythm games we played last week? How are the children managing with the clapping?
- 1.3** Did parents feel that their children had chosen a suitable book last session?

2. Environmental Print

- 2.1** It is very helpful to point out words in your child's environment, for example simple road signs, labels on food, greeting cards, shops signs, menus and posters.
- 2.2** This offers an excellent entry point for your child to begin to learn to read. It gives children a concrete connection to everyday print. They read it within the context of their everyday experiences – their interests and backgrounds.
- 2.3** Ask group to think of words that they see on the way to nursery, on the way to town and in the car. Give out handout and discuss.

3. Initial Sounds

- 3.1** Just as it is important that children are familiar with the rhyme of a word and the rhythm of a word, it is also important that children can hear how a word starts. This helps them to identify individual letters and is an important start to learning to recognise letters.
- 3.2** Learning should be fun and the best way to help children to hear sounds is through a lot of practice listening to words. If this is done as a game, the children are more likely to want to repeat the exercise.
- 3.3** It is important to stress that if a child does not want to do this or is not interested in sounds, then it is better not to push this. But if they are at the stage where sounds intrigue them, then praise them as much as possible when they get something right.

4. Demonstration of Games

- 4.1** Play "I Spy with my Little Eye" something beginning with.....a, f, m etc. Use the letter sound rather than the letter name.
- 4.2** Play "The School Cat is an Angry Cat". Everyone tries to think of a word beginning with **a** to describe the cat. Then everyone tries to think of something beginning with **b** to describe the cat and so on.

4.3 Give out handout on **initial sounds**.

5. **Games Practise**

5.1 Say your name and think of something that starts with the same letter. Do this around the group.

5.2 Bring children to the group and play ‘the school cat’. Only do a couple of letters.

5.3 If any of the parents has brought a favourite book with them, and if you have time, choose one of the books to read to the children.

5.4 Inform the children that this is their last visit to the group. Ask them to keep practising rhyming and clapping and playing ‘I spy’.

5.5 Distribute Shared Reading Certificates to the children and thank them for coming along to the group.

5.5 Children return to the nursery class.

6. **Evaluation**

6.1 Ask the parents to fill in the evaluation form (Appendix 10) so that we can evaluate the success of the group and make any necessary changes to subsequent groups. Impress upon them that it is anonymous.

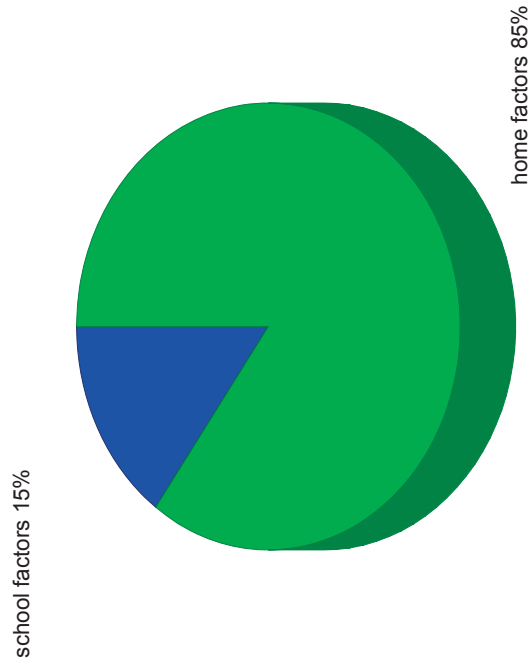
6.2 Optional: If a more detailed breakdown of aspects of the group is required, the questions contained in Appendix 11 may act as a prompt.

6.3 **Thank parents for their time and help.** Then relax and have a chat over tea – and even sticky buns!

SHARED READING

APPENDICES

Relative Influence of Home and School





Welcome to our Pre-school Parent Group. We hope that you will have fun and enjoy yourselves, while also helping develop your child's reading skills.

Role Play (A): Getting the Setting Right

For example: **I Don't Want To Go To Bed!**

Julie Sykes

Tim Wares

T.V. is on. Adult is watching.

Child **'Read me a story'.**

Adult **'Right, sit down there'.**

Child sits on floor

Child **'I can't see the pictures.'**

Adult turns the book

Adult **'Now I can't see the words. Come up and sit beside me.'**

Adult reads the book quickly and without expression, still glancing at the T.V.

Child **'I can't hear'.**

Adult turns the sound down and begins to read again.

Child **'That word start like my name.'**

Adult continues to read.

Child **'Why's the tiger up the tree?'**

Adult continues

Child **'Why's that tiger up the tree?'**

Adult **'Because that's where the man drew it.'**

Adult turns page quickly. Reads page 3. Continues reading, attention on the T.V.

Role play (A) continued

Child **‘Why is he punching his Mum?’**

Adult **‘Because he’s bad’.**

Adult reads last line of page 3

Child **You’ve got to roar that bit’.**

Adult roars it.

Child **‘Where does it say that?’**

Adult **‘For goodness sake let me get on with the story’.**

Adult reads page 4

Adult **‘Oh, there’s the adverts. I’m off to make a cup of tea’.**

Role Play (B): Importance of Praise

For example: **I Don't Want To Go To Bed!**

Julie Sykes

Tim Wares

T.V. is on. Adult is watching.

Child **'Read me a story'.**

Adult **'Right, just a minute while I turn off the T.V.' (switches of T.V.) 'Have you chosen a good story?'**

Child Nods

Adult **'Come and sit up beside me.'**
Adult and child get cosy.

Adult Pointing to cover picture.
'What's this?'

Child **'It's a Tiger'.**

Adult **'Clever girl. It is a tiger. The story is called 'I don't want to go to bed!' You turn the pages.'**

Child Opens the book and looks at inside of the cover.
'Look that's red!'

Adult **'That's right – a red sky and lots of trees. Where is the story?'**

Child Turns lots of pages.

Adult **'Oops! I think we've missed the start of the story. Let's just turn one page at a time.'**
Helps child to turn to first page with print. Begins to read with expression.

Child **'Why's the tiger up the tree?'**

Role Play (B) continued

Adult **‘I wonder why.... His Mum said ‘bedtime’ so why did he go up the tree?’**

Child **‘To hide’.**

Adult **‘Well done. He’s hiding up there. Let’s see what happens’.**

Child **Turns page.**

Adult **‘Clever girl, you turned just one page’.**

Child **‘Why’s he punching his Mum?’**

Adult **‘Let’s read and find out’.**
Reads page with expression.
‘So why is he punching Mum?’

Child **‘Cos he doesn’t want to go to bed.
He’s an angry tiger!’**

Adult **‘That’s right. He’s angry. Clever girl.’**
Reads page 4 and uses fingers on page to ‘scamper’.
‘You help him run away’.

Child **‘scampers’ and says ‘I’m not going to bed’. Giggles.**

Adult **‘Where will he go?’**

Child **‘Dunno.’**

Adult **‘If we turn over maybe we will find out’.**

Child **Turns page. ‘Ah! He goes to see the lions’.**

Adult **‘So he does! Well spotted, you are smart!’**
Reads pages 5 and 6

Stop here saying to parents and so we could continue reading and discussing to the end of the story.

Emphasis in this role play is on involving child and praising. It is important that the ‘child’ should show reaction of pleasure each time parents gives praise.

Shared Reading: Book Selection Record Sheet

School

Child's Name	Session 1 : Book Selection	Session 2 : Book Selection	Session 3 : Book Selection	Session 4 : Book Selection	Session 5 : Book Selection

Each week take a note of the book taken home, and countersign when returned. Also use this sheet to note any changes of books between sessions.

fantastic

phththalmia

brilliant

distihias





through

nobody

domino

scripts

Shared Reading Parent Groups: Evaluation

School.....


Please Circle

Poorly presented	1	2	3	4	5	Well presented
Poorly paced	1	2	3	4	5	Well paced
Not useful	1	2	3	4	5	Very useful
Would not recommend to a friend	1	2	3	4	5	Definitely recommend

What did you find most useful?

What did you find least useful?

What changes have you seen already in your child?



Any Comments?

Anything missing?

Relationship with your child?

Thank you for taking the time to fill this in. It helps to plan for future groups.

Alternative/Supplementary Evaluation Questions

1. General

- How has being part of this group changed your behaviour at home?
- What effect has this had on your child?
- How has it changed the relationship with your child?
- Have any other children been involved at home?

2. Skills

- What did you find most useful about getting the setting right/making it a 'special time'?
- What did you find most useful about choosing the right book and ways to share a book?
- What did you find most useful about vocabulary building?
- What did you find most useful about rhyme activities?
- What did you find most useful about rhythm activities?
- What did you find most useful about environmental print activities?
- What did you find most useful about initial sounds activities?

3. Presentation and Organisation

- Was there anything that you would have liked more of?
- Was there anything that we spent too much time on?
- How useful did you find the role plays?
- How did you feel about practising games around the group?
- Should we have practised more games?
- How did you feel about your child joining in the group?
- How did your child react to joining in the group?
- Were the handouts helpful/ should they be adapted in any way?
- Were the home work activities useful?

4. Where do we go from here?

- How could this project best be extended in nursery?
- How could parents best be involved in the future e.g.
 - Parent volunteers to hear reading in nursery?
 - Parent volunteers to help run a similar group?
- How could links with the local lending library be established?

Thank parents for their time and help.

SHARED READING HANDOUTS

Sharing a Book

Reading with your child starts a reading habit that hopefully will stay with them all their lives.



- Try to set aside a special quiet time without the TV on.
- Choose a book that you both like.
- Make sure you are both comfortable and close.
- Don't turn it into a reading lesson.
- Try to find words or phrases that keep cropping up.
- Talk about rhymes if they are part of the story.
- Encourage your child to join in lines which are repeated.
- Give your child plenty of time to look at the pictures and talk about them.
- If your child is not interested, put away the book.





Busy Children

Some open questions:

What do you think these children are making?

Why do you think they are wearing aprons?

What do you think the lady is doing?

What will the children do next?

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Works for Positive Change



Bouncy Castle

Some open questions:

What do you think is happening here?

Why do you think people are looking in the bouncy castle?

How do you think the people are feeling?

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Works for Positive Change



A Party

Some open questions:

Why are the children lining up?

What will happen next?

Why do you think they have a table there?

What is the lady doing?

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Works for Positive Change



A Goat

Some open questions:

Why do you think the goat has his neck stretched through the fence?

Can you think of any way this might be dangerous?

How do you think the girl is feeling?

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Works for Positive Change



Humpty Dumpty

Some open questions:

What do you think is happening?

What might happen to Humpty?

Why is everyone smiling?

Where do you think the spider is going?

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Works for Positive Change

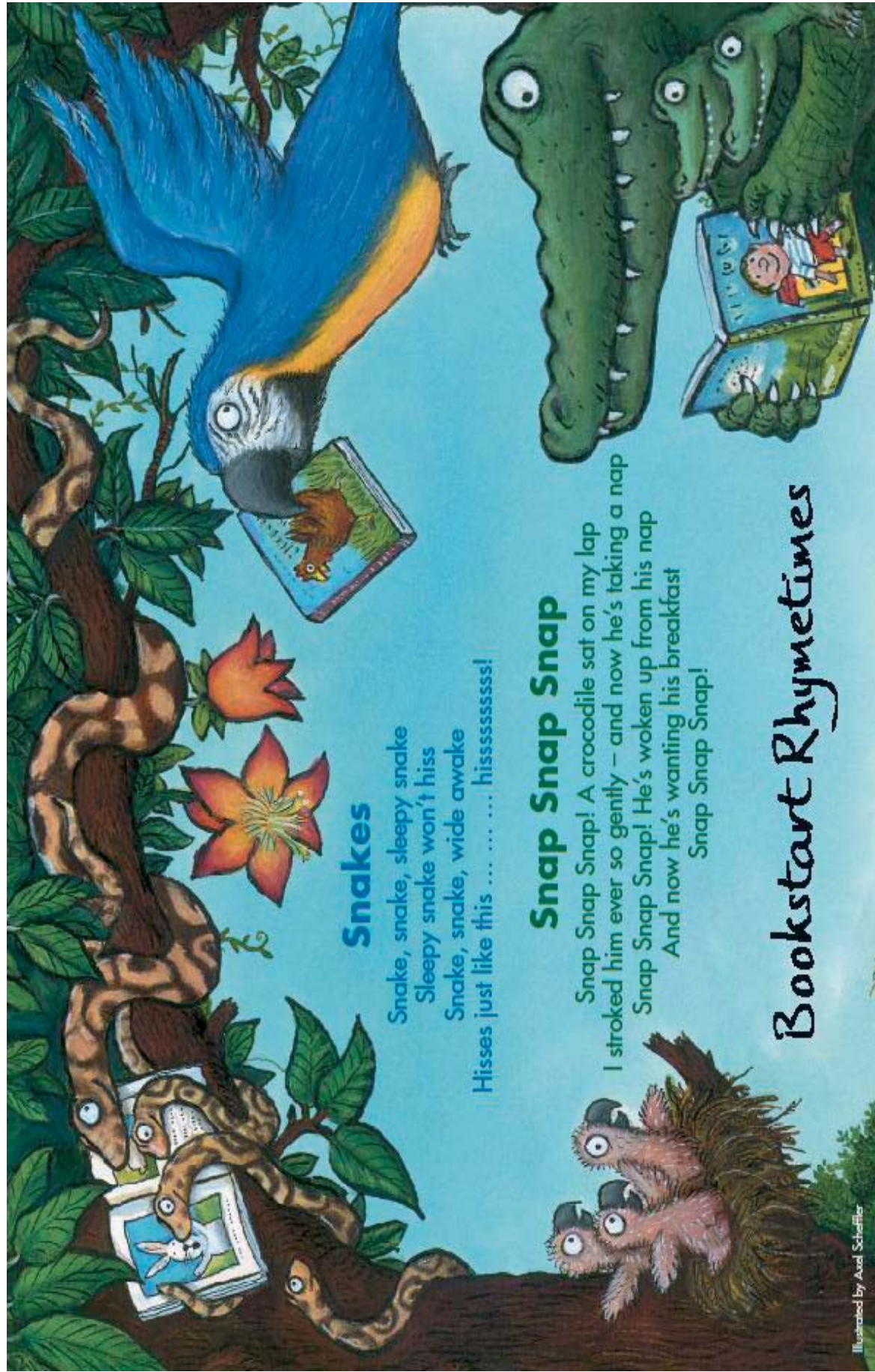
Vocabulary Building

Talking about pictures in books gives your child the opportunity to learn more about the world around them and learn new words.



- Help your child to find and name objects in the pictures.
- Help your child to describe the object.
- Talk about what is happening in the picture.
- Talk about any new words in the story.
- Leave space for your child to ask questions.
- Ask open questions like 'What do you think will happen next?'
- Encourage your child to use his/her imagination.





Snakes

Snake, snake, sleepy snake
Sleepy snake won't hiss
Snake, snake, wide awake
Hisses just like this hisssssssss!

Snap Snap Snap

Snap Snap Snap! A crocodile sat on my lap
I stroked him ever so gently – and now he's taking a nap
Snap Snap Snap! He's woken up from his nap
And now he's wanting his breakfast
Snap Snap Snap!

Bookstart Rhymetimes

Bookstart Rhymetimes

Twinkle twinkle little star
How I wonder what you are
Up above the world so high
Like a diamond in the sky
Twinkle twinkle little star
How I wonder what you are



Teddy plays on the swing
Teddy plays on the slide
Teddy plays on the swing
Teddy plays on the slide

And he goes
Tick - tock
Forwards and back
Round and round he goes
Tick - tock
Forwards and back
Round and round he goes



Repeat chorus
And he goes ...

Hey diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle
The cow jumped over the moon
The little dog laughed to see such fun
And the dish ran away with the spoon!



BOOKSTART

RHIMETIMES

A hedgehog is very prickly

A hedgehog is very prickly

A hedgehog is very prickly

It couldn't be anything else!

Now carry on.....

A fish is very slippery....

A teddy is very cuddly....

A frog is very jumpy....

A snake is very wriggly....

A crocodile is very snappy....

But a baby is very tickly!!!....

It couldn't be anything else!

I'm a little teapot,
short and stout
here's my handle,
here's my spout
When the tea is ready
hear me shout, out
tip me up, pour me out

Round and round the garden
Like a Teddy Bear

One step,
two steps

Tickle you under
there

Bookstart Rhymetimes

Illustrated by Jago

Oh the Grand old Duke of York
He had ten thousand men
He marched them up to the top of the hill
And he marched them down again

And when they were up they were up
And when they were down they were down
And when they were only halfway up
They were neither up nor down...



Jelly on a plate
Jelly on a plate
Wibble wobble
Wibble wobble
Jelly on a plate.

There's a worm at the bottom of the garden
And his name is Wiggly Woo
There's a worm at the bottom of the garden
And all that he can do
Is wiggle all night
And wiggle all day
Whatever else the people do say
There's a worm at the bottom of the garden
And his name is Wiggly Woo!



Rhyme

Being aware of and hearing rhyme is important for children to be able to hear sounds in words, and break them down further for reading.



- Read nursery rhymes and poetry together regularly.
- Ask your child to give you a word and you say a word that rhymes with it. You do not need to use real words - made up ones will do as long as they have the same end sound.
- Make up silly rhymes when you are doing everyday activities, walking to nursery etc.
- Say a word and ask your child to find a word that rhymes.
- Gather familiar objects and toys together - pick one and both try to think of a word that rhymes with it. Again they can be nonsense words if you cannot think of a real one.



Rhythm

A good sense of rhythm helps to boost reading. Here are some games and activities to help your child to develop a sense of rhythm.

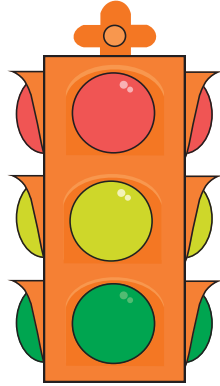


- Recite nursery rhymes using a rhythmical beat, sing songs, dance to music, clapping in time.
- Beat a drum or pot with a wooden spoon, and march to the beat of the drum.
- Tap a simple pattern for your child to copy. Then ask them to tap a pattern for you to copy.
- Gather familiar objects and toys together - pick one and clap out the number of syllables in the name. You and your child take turns to do this.
- Put out 2 or 3 objects with 1, 2 and 3 syllables in their names. Clap one, and ask your child to guess which object you are clapping.

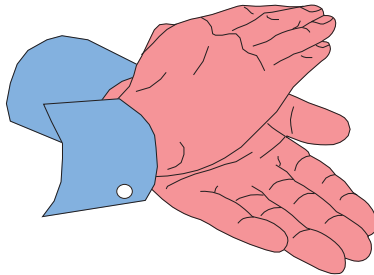


Out and About

Do you ever see traffic lights like this when you are out and about?



When I say traffic lights and clap at the same time, I clap three claps.



Tra ffic lights
clap 1 clap 2 clap 3

Next time you are down the street, look for other things.
Clap their names out.

How many claps do you need for each word?

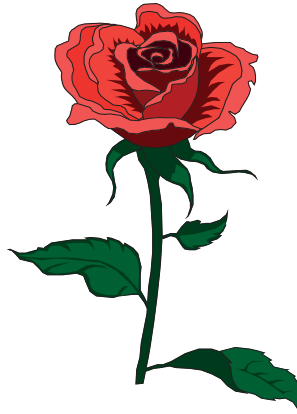


Rhythm time 1



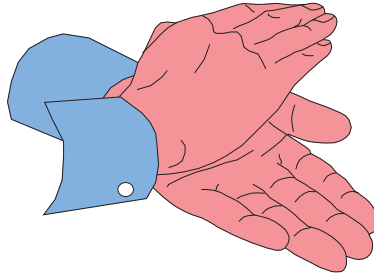
Things that Grow Outside

This flower is called a rose.



Isn't it beautiful?

Can you clap the word flower?



Flow

clap 1

er

clap 2

Can think of anything else that grows outside?

Trees bushes grass weeds

How many claps did you need for each word?



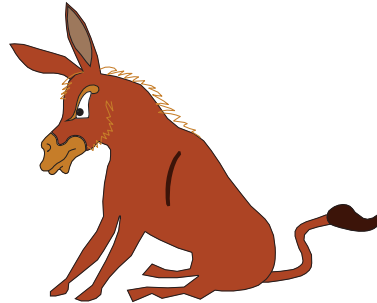
Rhythm time 2



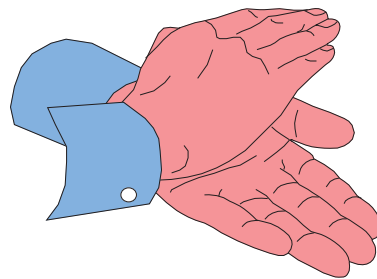
Animal Noises

Hello. I am a donkey.

When I speak, I say 'ee-or'.



Say the word 'ee-or' and clap out its rhythm. Did you clap two times?



'ee - or'
clap 1 clap 2

Can you think of sounds other animals make?

Clap while you say their sounds.

Which sounds need one clap?

Which sounds need two claps?

Have you found any animal sounds that need three claps?

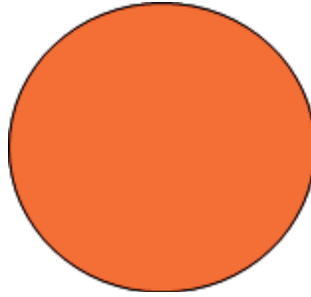


Rhythm time 3

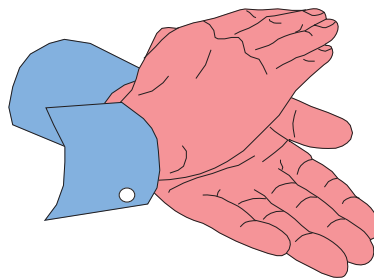


Fruit Salad

My favourite fruit is oranges.



Say the word oranges and clap out its rhythm.
How many claps did you need?

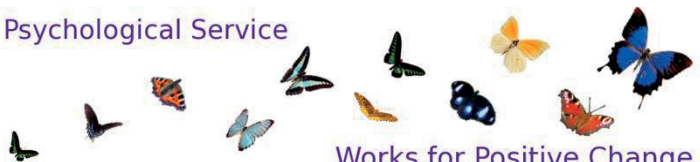


Or ange es
clap 1 clap 2 clap 3

Can you say the names of other fruits?
How many claps do they need?
Do any fruits just need one clap?
Do any fruits need more than three claps?

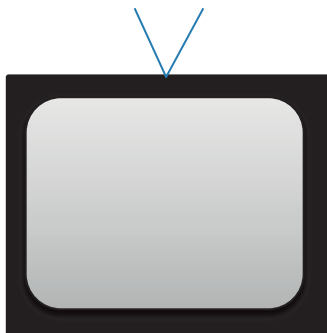


Rhythm time 4

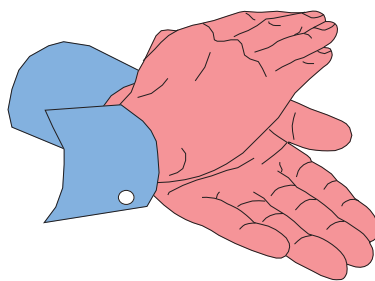


Around the House

Sometimes I like to watch the television.



Can you say the word television and clap out its rhythm?



Tel e vis ion
clap 1 clap 2 clap 3 clap 4

Look around the house. What other things can you see?
Clap out their names.
How many claps did you need for each thing?

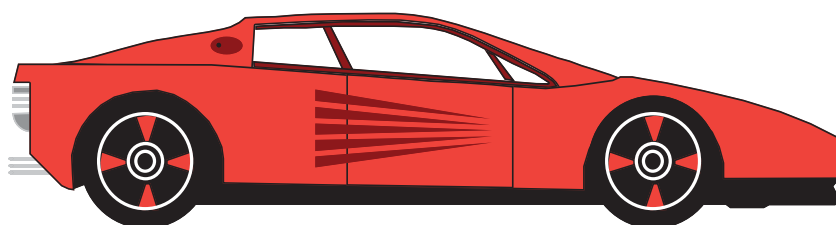


Rhythm time 5

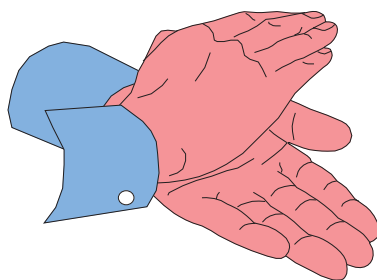


On the Road

This is a racing car.



Can you say the word racing car and clap out its rhythm?



Rac ing car.
clap 1 clap 2 clap 3

What other vehicles do you see on the road?

Caravans lorries cars bicycle van

Clap while you say their names.

How many claps did you need for each word?

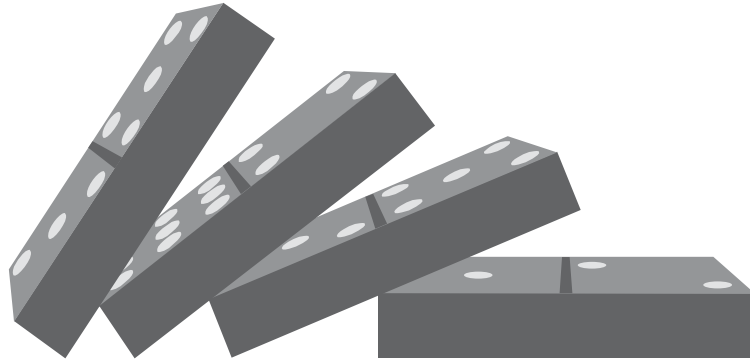


Rhythm time 6

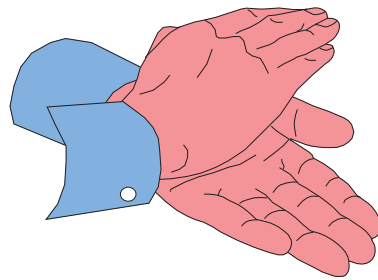


Toy Cupboard

My favourite game is dominoes.



Can you say the word dominoes and clap out its rhythm?



Dom in oes
clap 1 clap 2 clap 3

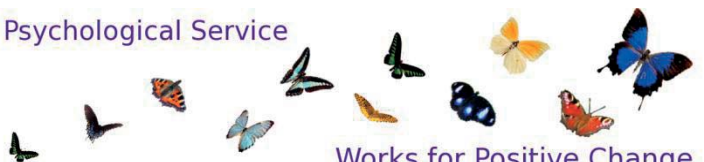
What toys do you play with?

Clap their names out.

How many claps do you need for each word?



Rhythm time 7

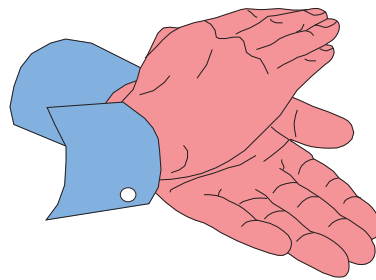


Bath Time

Do you like having a bath like this puppy?



Can you say 'bath time for pu.....pies' and clap out its rhythm?



Bath time for pup pies
clap 1 clap 2 clap 3 clap 4 clap 5

When you are in the bath, think of something to say like 'bubbles in the bath' and clap out its rhythm.

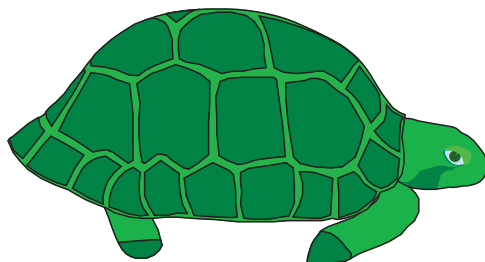


Rhythm time 8

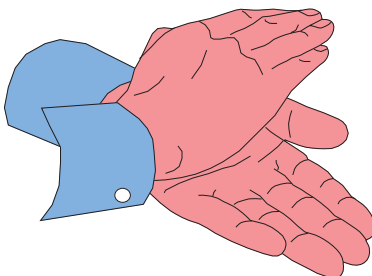


Animal Sounds

Hello! I'm a tortoise!



When you say my name and clap at the same time, you clap twice.



Tor toise
clap 1 clap 2

What is your favourite animal?
Say its name and clap at the same time.
How many claps did you do?

Think of more animals and clap for their names. Which animal
needed the most claps?
Which animals only needed one clap?

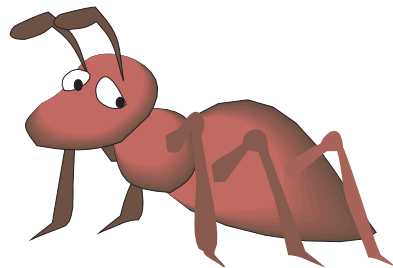


Rhythm time 9



Initial Sounds Games

I spy with my little eye something beginning
with **a**



How many things can you find in the picture
and in your house that begin with

a

Initial Sounds Games

I spy with my little eye, something beginning

with **b**



How many things can you find in the picture
and in your house that begin with

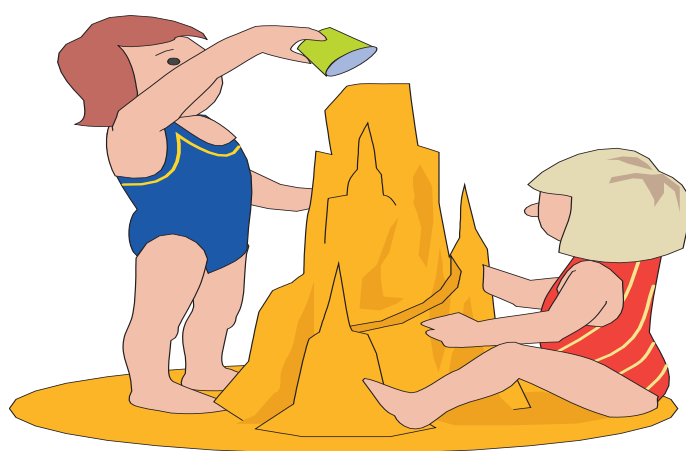
b



Initial Sounds Games

I spy with my little eye, something beginning

with **C**



How many things can you find in the picture
or in your home that begin with

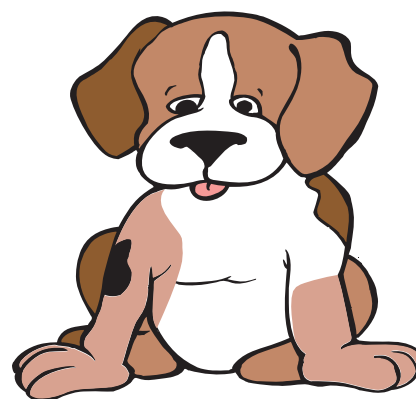
C



Initial Sounds Games

I spy with my little eye, something beginning
with

d



How many things can you find in the picture
or at home that begin with

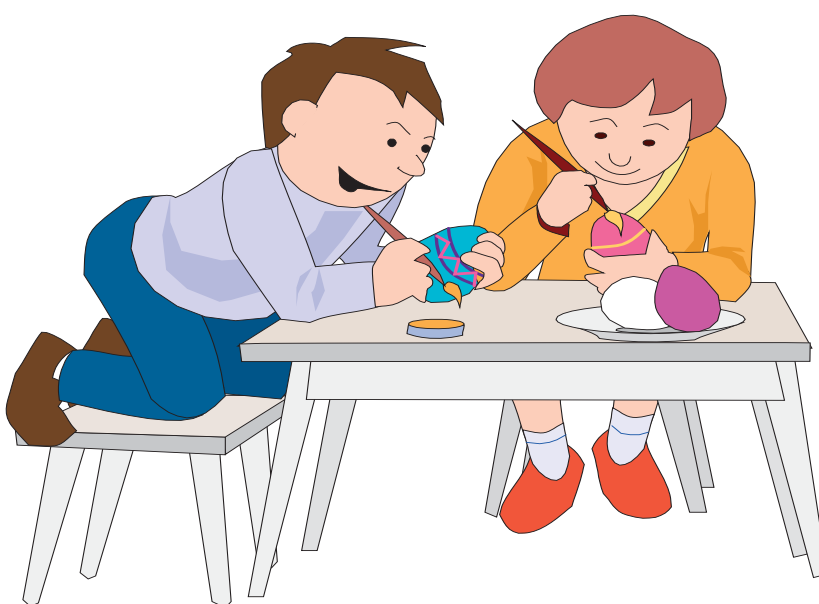
d



Initial Sounds Games

I spy with my little eye something beginning

with **e**



How many things can you find in the picture
and at home that begin with

e



Initial Sounds Games

I spy with my little eye, something beginning

with **f**



How many words can you find in the picture
and in your house that start with

f



Initial Sounds Games

I spy with my little eye something beginning

with **g**



How many words can you find in the picture
or at home that begin with

g



Initial Sounds Games

I spy with my little eye something beginning

with **h**



How many words can you find in the picture
and in your home that begin with

h

Initial Sounds Games

I spy with my little eye, something beginning

with **m**



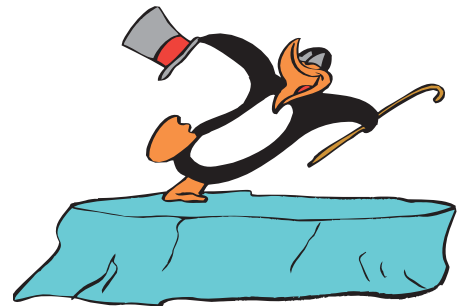
How many things can you find in the picture
and at home that begin with

m



Initial Sounds Games

I spy with my little eye, something beginning
with **p**



How many things can you find in the picture
and your house that start with

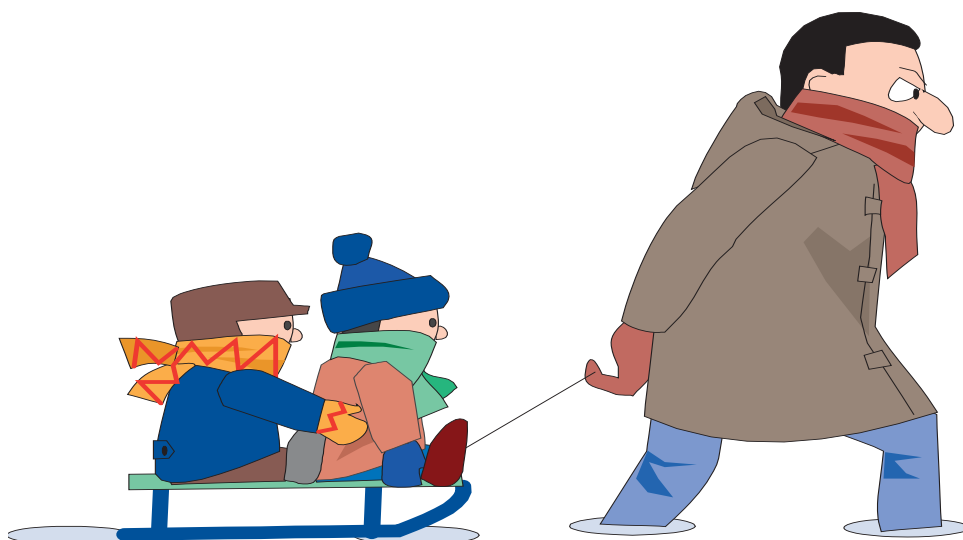
p



Initial Sounds Games

I spy with my little eye something beginning

with **S**



How many words can you find in the picture
and at home beginning with

S



Initial Sounds Games

I spy with my little eye something

beginning with **sh**



How many words can you find in the picture
and at home that begin with

sh

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Works for Positive Change

Initial Sounds Games

I spy with my little eye, something beginning

with **W**



How many things can you find in the picture
and your house that start with

W

Highland Council Psychological Service



Works for Positive Change

Initial Sounds Games

The School Cat

The school cat is an **apple-shaped** cat.

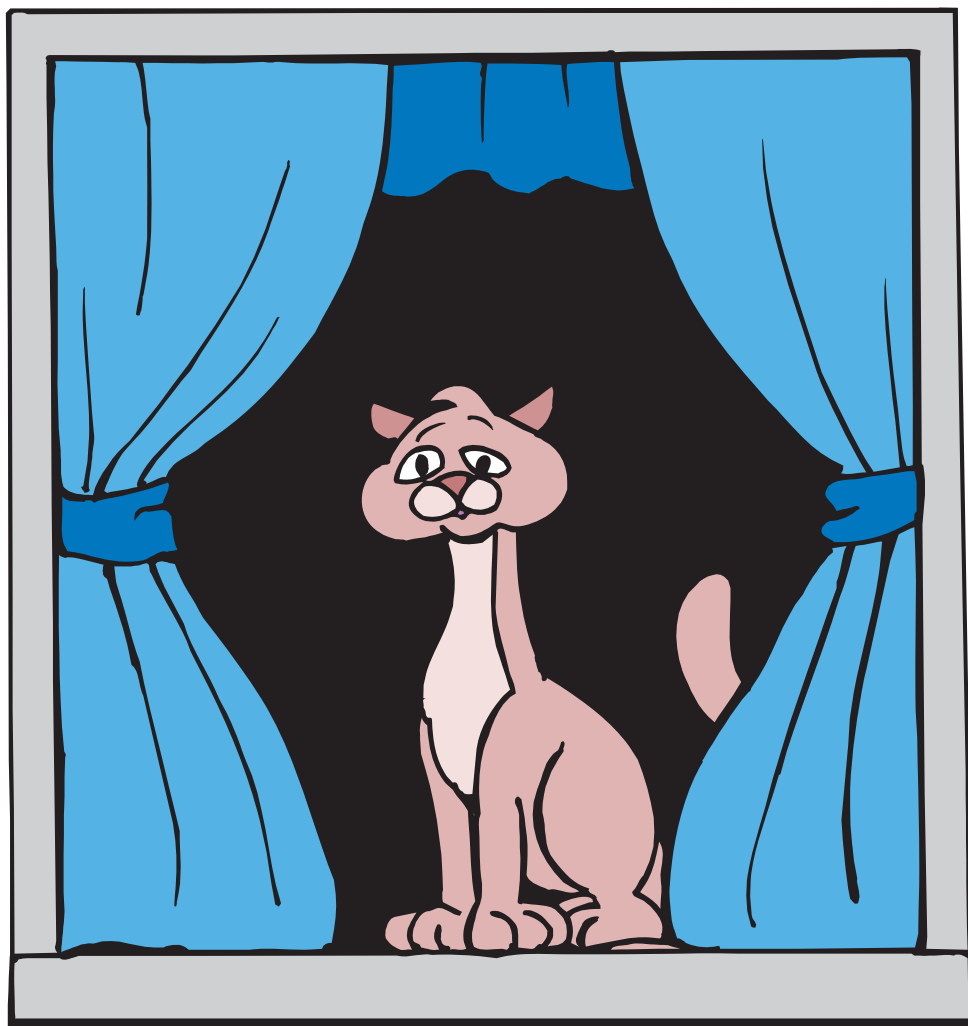


Can you think of any other words beginning
with **a** to describe the school's cat?

Initial Sounds Games

The School Cat

The school cat is a beautiful cat.



Can you think of any other words starting
with **b** to describe the school cat?

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Works for Positive Change

Initial Sounds Games

The School Cat

The school cat is a crying cat.



Can you think of any other words starting
with **C** to describe the school cat?



Initial Sounds Games

The School Cat

The school cat is a **daring** cat.



Can you think of any other words starting
with **d** to describe the school cat?



Initial Sounds Games

The School Cat

The school cat is an enormous cat.



Can you think of any other words starting
with **e** to describe the school cat?



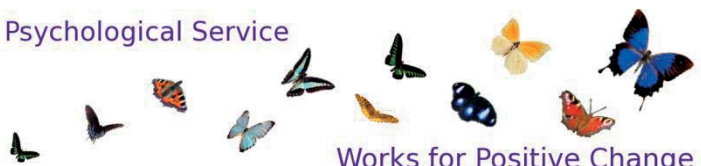
Initial Sounds Games

The School Cat

The school cat is a **fierce** cat.



Can you think of some other words starting
with **f** to describe the school cat?



Initial Sounds Games

The School Cat

The school cat is a gorgeous cat.



Can you think of any other words starting
with **g** to describe the school cat?



Initial Sounds Games

The School Cat

The school cat is a musical cat.



Can you think of any other words starting
with **m** to describe the school cat?

ENVIRONMENTAL PRINT

Definition: Environmental Print is the print of everyday life. The symbols, signs, numbers, and colours found in the world around us e.g. Asda, Stop, Coke, etc. They offer excellent opportunities for young children to begin to learn to read.



Resources for environmental print are: Books, posters, calendars, catalogues, comics, containers, coupons, flyers, greeting cards, supermarkets, labels, magazines, menus, newspapers, packaging, recipes, road signs, snack bags, telephone books and websites.



The reasons to use environmental print: It is everywhere, and because of that it is a natural starting point to teach young children to read. They "read" it within the context of their everyday experiences - their interests and backgrounds. It begins to show them that written words have meaning for them and that they can read these marks that make words. It is readily available, and free.



Long Term Goal: To move children in a comfortable way from relying on the contextual clues in environmental print to the more complex print in books. Below are some environmental print (EP) activities.

- Point out relevant signs on your way to and from nursery or when you are going round the shops. You could take photos of your child's favourite signs.
- Match identical EP: Use two identical signs for matching (like matching cereal or washing powder logos). Put them in a basket and have the children find matching signs.
- Make books of cereal covers, street signs, and shop signs etc.
- Make an "I Can Read" chart: Have the children glue on the chart the signs/words they can read.



MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER ABOUT SHARED READING

- Shared reading is not just reading to your child (although that is important too). Your child is more involved and active than just listening.
- Have books, newspapers and magazines around the house, and let your child see that you enjoy reading. Go to the library regularly with them.
- Get the setting right when sharing a book – cosy; both see the book; no distractions; be enthusiastic; read with real expression in your voice – different voices for each character.
- Give lots of praise – make it specific, e.g. "Well done, you found the tiger." "You turned just one page – very good."
- Have lots of different types of books, and let your child choose.
- With longer stories or rhyming books, think of doing a 'bookwalk' before reading the story.
- Try to build your child's vocabulary – use different and interesting words when talking about pictures; describe the detail in pictures (unless they just want to get on with the story!)
- Ask your child questions about the pictures and the story – especially Open questions, e.g. How.....? What for.....? What next.....? Why.....?
- Point to where the story starts and follow the print with your finger occasionally, so that they begin to look at the actual words and see how we read from left to right.
- Do rhyming songs, stories and games – let them finish the rhyme; get them to find words that rhyme with their name or any objects – they don't have to be real words, just sound the same at the end!
- Read stories and poems with rhythm, e.g. Hairy Maclary from Donaldson's Dairy; limericks etc. Help them to hear the groups of sounds (syllables) in words by practising clapping games, e.g. How many claps in "domino"?
- Help them to identify individual sounds in words by starting with initial sounds – e.g. play I Spy or the School Cat is an a...?... (e.g. angry) cat etc.
- Make use of print in the environment – give them written words to find when you go to the shops, e.g. Tesco, Cheerios, Milk, Stop, Push – words you know they see a lot. **Above all, make stories and reading FUN**



Highland Council Psychological Service



Works for Positive Change



CERTIFICATE

Awarded to:.....

Following Attendance at a Shared Reading Course

Date:

Signed:

SHARED READING PARENT LEAFLET

SHARED READING

HOW TO DO IT : THE MAIN POINTS

Pre-Reading Skills can be developed in children by sharing books and playing simple games with their parents



Help your child to read through an
ENJOYABLE, POSITIVE WORKING
PARTNERSHIP

- ❖ It is important to praise.
- ❖ Get the setting right with as few distractions as possible.
- ❖ Get your child to help in choosing a book.

HELPFUL WAYS OF SHARING A BOOK

Sharing books encourages discussions and builds vocabulary which your child needs to become a good reader.

RHyme

Learning rhymes helps children break words down.

- ❖ Bookwalk a rhyming book.
- ❖ Get your child to occasionally fill in a rhyming word.
- ❖ Highlight words that sound the same at the end by asking your child to guess what the missing rhyme is.
- ❖ All this can be extended by playing appropriate games.

RHYTHM

A good sense of rhythm helps to boost reading and writing skills.



If a child can hear syllables in a word then they can break words down into syllables which helps reading.

Games which play with rhythm help children develop a sense of rhythm which helps them to hear the syllables in words.

INITIAL SOUNDS

Hearing the first sound in a word helps children start to identify individual letters.

The best way for children to hear sounds is a lot of practice listening to words and the individual sounds in words.



Learning should be fun and some games with sounds and words can help.



READING TOGETHER 1ST STEPS

PRESENTER'S SCRIPT

PARENT GROUP MATERIALS CONTENTS

A Presenters Script

Session 1:	Setting the scene, and choosing the right book
Session 2:	Getting the setting right, ways to share a book, and the importance of praise
Session 3:	Getting started – beginning reading Introduction to Supported Reading
Session 4:	Supported Reading and Evaluation

B Appendices

Appendix 1:	Pie chart of relative influence of home and school
Appendix 2 - 5:	Arabic script activity sheets (Adapted from “ <i>Reading Assessment for Teachers</i> ”, Wiltshire County Council).
Appendix 6:	Nonsense Passage
Appendix 7:	Record sheet of borrowed books
Appendix 8:	Script of role play ‘Getting the Setting Right’*
Appendix 9:	Activity Sheet ‘Getting the Setting Right’
Appendix 10A & 10B:	Words of equal length, one difficult, one easy
Appendix 11:	Script of role play ‘Importance of Praise’
Appendix 12:	Reading Together 1 st Steps: Evaluation sheet
Appendix 13:	Alternative/Supplementary Evaluation Questions
Appendix 14:	Invitation letter to parents from the school

* *These role plays were created around the children’s book ‘I don’t want to go to bed!’ Presenters may want to use other books.*

C Other Support Materials Required

- Selection of different types of early years books
- Book for role plays [such as ‘I don’t want to go to bed’]
- Name badges (parents, children and presenters)
- A short children’s story for session 1
- Magnetic letters, or ‘home made’ lower case letters on cardboard, using the following six letters: p, a, i, n, t, s.
- Children’s book to demonstrate ‘Supported Reading’
- Tea, coffee, biscuits – a welcoming environment!

D Handouts

Handout 1:	Key points from Sessions 1 and 2
Handout 2:	Supported Reading advice sheet
Handout 3:	Reading Together 1 st Steps Certificates for children

E Parent Leaflet

How to Do it: the Main Points

PRESENTER'S SCRIPT

CONTENTS

Session 1	Setting the Scene and Choosing the Right Book
	Introduction Overview Choosing the Right Book Discussion
Session 2	Getting the Setting Right, Ways to Share a Book, and the Importance of Praise
	Introduction Getting the setting right Ways to share a book The importance of praise and keeping it fun Discussion
Session 3	Getting Started – Beginning Reading Introduction to Supported Reading
	Introduction Getting started – the beginning of independent reading Introduction to Supported Reading Discussion
Session 4	Supported Reading and Evaluation
	Introduction Supported Reading Discussion Evaluation

Session 1: Setting the Scene, and Choosing the Right Book

Preparation

1. Welcoming room with suitable number of chairs for presenters, parents and children.
2. Name badges.
3. A short children's story that lasts no longer than 10 minutes in total.
4. Pie-chart re the relative influence of home and school (Appendix 1).
5. Arabic scripts (Appendix 2, 3, 4, 5).
6. Nonsense passage: Corandic.....(Appendix 6).
7. Remind the school representative about when to bring in the children.
8. Copy of the session's script to the school representatives.
9. Tea/coffee.
10. Selection of books for the children to choose with their parents, and sheet for recording book selection for each child (Appendix 7).
11. A selection of different book types (see section 3.2) comics, short books, pop-up and flap books, rhyming books.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** Welcome. Name labels (also ask parents to make one for their child).
- 1.2** Introduce course presenters, where necessary. Also invite the parents to introduce themselves, and say who their child is.
- 1.3** Reassure that invitation to participate in the workshops was extended to parents of all children in the class (no hidden selection procedure).
- 1.4** Few children learn to love books by themselves. Someone has to lure them into the wonderful world of the written word; someone has to show them the way.
- 1.5** *Activity:* Presenter to read part of a short children's story to the adults, and promise to read the rest at the end of the session. Try to stop at a 'cliff-hanging' part of the story. Ask if they enjoyed the story, using open-ended questions. Enquire as to whether they were read to as children. What do they remember about it?
- 1.6** Remember that you taught your child to talk and play; you can also help your child to read.
- 1.7** These groups are primarily about reading material that is not a school reading scheme book, though most of what is said in these sessions holds true for school reading schemes as well.
- 1.8** In the course of Primary 1, 2 and 3, your child will be able to increasingly take part, and indeed possibly lead in reading.
- 1.9** Indicate that whilst the presenter is working from a script, it is flexible, and that the really important thing about the workshops is participation and discussion.

2. Overview

- 2.1** The main purpose of the Reading Together 1st Steps groups is to look at things that parents can do which have been demonstrated to improve both how well their child can read and their child's confidence with the written word.
- 2.2** The main focus of the 4 workshops will be:
 - i. to focus on developing a positive working partnership between you and your child which will stand you in good stead throughout your child's school career. Indeed, get it right now, and it will last for life.
 - ii. to look at some ways to help your child to build a solid foundation of early reading skills through enjoying books together. This is separate to reading a story to your child at bedtime.
 - iii. the main skills we will be concentrating on are:
 - Getting the setting right for hearing your child read at home.

- Choosing books.
- Ways to share a book and vocabulary building.
- Getting started in reading.
- The importance of praise.

This first session though is very much about setting the scene with you.

- 2.3** Research into reading suggests that one of the biggest factors associated with “success” is whether the children’s reading is heard at home. Children whose parents hear them reading regularly tend to be much better readers than whose parents do not. Most parents are willing helpers, but sometimes are not sure what exactly to do. The strategies we talk about at this and follow up sessions can help parents to become ‘able’ and ‘effective’ helpers.

Invite audience to guess relative influences of school and home factors.

School factors are thought to contribute 15% toward academic achievement while family factors contribute 85%. You as parents are therefore able to play a considerable part in raising your child’s attainments in literacy.

- 2.4** Show ‘**Pie Chart**’ (Appendix 1): “no pressure on you!” *Invite discussion.*
- 2.5** Teachers may begin teaching children to read spending perhaps 2 hours per day – approximately 360 hours per year with his/her attention divided between 20+ children. The greater the book experience that the primary school child has, the greater the likelihood of literacy success. You are able to help this process.
- 2.6** What we are not going to do is teach you to be mini teachers
- 2.7** As adult readers, there are presumptions that we make about reading that we take for granted, but which young children have to learn when acquiring basic reading skills. It is the recognition of these new learning experiences, and the methods and the approaches to teach effectively, for which teachers are trained. Let’s take you back to Primary One!!
- 2.8** When the child first encounters print, it may at best seem a bit like this! **Show Arabic script** (Appendix 2) – think how you might feel when faced with this! You have just the picture to go on.

It becomes a bit easier if you know a few key words – using your skills to fill in the gaps - *illustrate with Arabic script with some words in English* (Appendix 3): *read together with parents, inviting them to join in where they can, and praise their efforts liberally!*

It becomes easier still when you read it a second time, and when you know some individual letter sounds: e.g. n, s, t, w. (Appendix 4).

Invite discussion (Appendix 5).

2.9 There are a number of assumptions we make when faced with a page of print:

- Which way up.
- Where to start; in English we start at the top left-hand side, not all languages do.
- What direction: we read from left to right, scan back and drop a line.
- Symbols make certain sounds; some look different and make the same sound e.g. 'c' and 'k'; 'f' and 'ph'; others look the same but sometimes make different sounds e.g. 'g' and 'j'; or 'a' as opposed to 'a' followed by a silent 'e'.
- Shape and size of words. Space around a word identifies it as a word rather than a letter.
- Two or more letters making one sound: e.g. ch, th, ee.
- Punctuation marks: commas, full stop, speech marks.

2.10 *Activity: Hand-out the nonsense passage (Appendix 6) and invite discussion:*

- Suppose I were to ask you to read it, and answer some questions about it.
- How would you feel? (*pause*) Would you hope I would not ask you?!
- If I did, how I treated your efforts might affect your willingness to have another go another time!
- This demonstrates well the importance of the vocabulary of the story largely being understood by the child.
- Whilst you can read it, using phonic skills, the content is meaningless as the 'words' are not in your vocabulary. It becomes both boring and tiring.

You are probably wondering now how you ever learned to read, and it may help you understand how it is that some people find it very difficult.

2.11 As said earlier studies have shown that children who grow up in families where books are read to them and with them are at an advantage where reading is concerned. Since the ability to read affects all of the other subjects in school, these children remain at an advantage throughout their schooling.

2.12 Don't stop reading to your child just because they are beginning to read in school. Children can enjoy being read to right up to into their teens, and also as adults (a radio programme : "A Book at Bedtime" has run for years, books are also on CD, and can be played in the car, on train journeys. Recent copies of the 'Radio Times' were selling Jane Austen novels). Increasingly staff in schools are putting reading material onto iPads.

3. Choosing the Right Book

3.1 Different children respond to different books in different ways. Choosing the right book for your child will help to hold your child's attention to the end of the story.

3.2 Choices can include:

- Comics; magazines (*ask if any of their children take comics*).
- Short books for children who cannot sit long.

- Interactive books to help keep attention.
- Pop-up and flap books.
- Books with a repetitive line for the child to join in with.
- Books which are written in rhyme or contain nursery rhymes.

Illustrate this with a prepared selection of books.

- 3.3** Books on a child's favourite subjects are always likely to hold interest. It is always a good idea to encourage your child to help to choose the book. Look at the front cover; information on the back, as well as inside! Discuss the advantages of book tokens for adults as a gift (your choice), rather than being bought a book (which you might not like).
- 3.4** All young children enjoy hearing or reading some stories over and over again – it helps them to get to know the story, and they enjoy its familiarity although we as adults may soon tire of it!
- 3.5** *Activity:* Invite comments/discussion asking for recommended books from their experience. Any favourite books you'd like to share with us all next session.
- 3.6** *Activity:* Read the second half of the story you began the session with.
- 3.7** Parents to be told their children are coming through to join them, and to choose a book together that they will share in the week ahead from the selection the school has made available. (Staff member to get the children).
- 3.8** Reorganise the seating so that there is an empty chair beside each adult whilst the children are being fetched from class (ensure that the class are not undertaking a favourite activity during this time!).
- 3.9** Introduce the idea of the Reading Together 1st Steps project to the children by explaining that they are going to choose a book from the selection provided (not their class reader) and that their parents will read this book to them at home for about five to ten minutes, four or five times a week. Tell the children that they can join in as best they can, if they want to, by pointing out or reading aloud any words they know.
- 3.10** Explain to the children that they can choose a new book next week if they are finished, but they are free to select another book before then (through school arrangements) if they do not like the book, if it is too hard or too easy, or if they have finished before that time.
- 3.11** The title of the book which each child has chosen is noted on the Record Sheet (Appendix 7), and the children returned to class.

4. Tea/coffee

Depending on the start time and school organisational factors, this may be something to provide at the start rather than the end.

This is also a time for informal discussion.

Session 2: Getting the Setting Right, Ways to Share a Book, and the Importance of Praise

Preparation

1. Organise seating as before.
2. Ensure new books are available, and the 'old' ones returned / the record sheet of books previously borrowed.
3. Prepare a role play of 'Getting the Setting Right' (Appendix 8 uses 'I don't want to go to bed!' as an example).
4. Activity sheet: Getting the Setting Right (Appendix 9).
5. Words of equal length, one difficult, one easy (Appendix 10A & 10B).
6. Prepare a role play that demonstrates the 'Importance of Praise' (Appendix 11 uses 'I don't want to go to bed!' as an example).
7. Selection of books for the children to choose with their parents.
8. Liaise with school representative with regard to when the children join their parents (and ensure that even when a parent is not able to join the session that their child still participates in book selection).
9. Provide copy of the session's script for the school representative.
10. Handout summarising some key points from sessions 1 and 2.
11. Tea/coffee.

1. Introduction

1.1 Welcome everyone, including any ‘new faces’.

Consider having a ‘warm-up’ activity. For example, saying that you are all going to be at parents’ evenings and school events together for many years to come, and that apart from being parents of children in P1, you may have other things in common. Invite the parents to say a little about the things that they enjoy.

1.2 Recap on the last session: that it was a scene setting session:

- the relative influence of home and school
- reliving what it might have been like starting to learn to read
- choosing books: child central, with parent guidance
- vocabulary

1.3 Invite any comments about the content of last session, and about the books their child chose.

1.4 Detail the agenda for this session

- Getting the setting right
- Ways to share a book
- The importance of praise

2. Getting the setting right

2.1 *Activity:* Presenters to Role Play “Getting the Setting Right”.

Indicate that the purpose of the role play is to demonstrate inappropriate ways of reading to a child.

(Appendix 8 provides an exemplar: the adult’s interest is on something else; the sound is turned down, but not off. The replies to the child are cursory, and not thought out. The adult soon finds a way to bring the time together to an end).

Invite discussion about the role play.

2.2 Young children find it very difficult to filter out distractions such as the television, radio, washing machine, other children, and to concentrate only on the book. We need to organise a special time and special place. Invite comments from the group.

2.3 *Activity:* Invite participants to discuss with a partner/person next to them up to five conditions that help achieve them this, and identify up to five factors that sometimes work against them in their own situation. (Activity Sheet Appendix 9 can be used for this, if the presenters are confident that there are no literacy/handwriting issues for the parents present).

2.4 *Invite general discussion.* Highlight that there may not be as much time available as you might think initially. TV off, baby asleep, the dog had his walk. Optional: Presenter to record these on flip chart.

2.5 When reading sit close to your child, so he is relaxed and secure.

2.6 Reading Together is an active 2-way process:

- reading with your child
- your child reading with you
- looking at and talking about the book and its pictures
- this is not about hearing your child read to you from another room!

3. Ways to Share a Book

3.1 Research shows that most progress is made when we actively engage the child's attention when sharing a book. We can do this in a variety of ways.

3.2 Sometimes a story may lend itself to being read straight through, especially where rhyme and rhythm feature heavily.

3.3 At other times we can stop at a page which your child finds interesting and discuss it. Rather than getting in the way of the story; this can add depth and interest to the story.

3.4 Chat about the story.

3.5 Sometimes it is appropriate to explain punctuation, such as the use of speech marks, apostrophes, question marks.

3.6 Bring the books alive, by being expressive, and giving the characters different voices.

3.7 As your child gets under way with reading, you may decide to point to the word as you go along, or your child may point out words he recognises from school book.

Invite discussion about how the parents shared the book that their child chose last week.

3.8 Sharing books is a way to build on your child's vocabulary. Good vocabulary knowledge is necessary in order to be a fluent reader. When a child starts reading they look for clues as to what a new word might be.

- They look in the picture for clues
- They use the context of the sentence for clues
- They use the first letter of a word as a clue

That's why you will often hear a child read 'house' for 'home'. With these three clues, they can sometimes work out the new word. If the word is not part of their vocabulary, it will be very hard for the child to read it. Invite parents to think back to the Arabic writing shared with them in session 1.

Give example: a word such as 'catastrophe' (older readers!).

3.9 *Activity:* Also demonstrate using the pairs of words of the same length – one common, one unusual (Appendix 10A & 10B): show the cards for just a couple of seconds. Ask if they were able to read any of the words. Most will have been able to read the first word, very few, if any, the second and unknown word.

- 3.10** Change the book if you have read through it, or if he is bored with it. On the other hand he might want to read through it again and take a greater part, joining in – there are no hard and fast rules.
- 3.11** You could talk about the story before and after reading together; ask questions like: “What do you think will happen next?” or “What would you do if you were in the story?” Praise the suggestions “you may be right,” “I wonder,” “what a good idea”. Open ended questions have unlimited answers and therefore ideal opportunities for praise.
- 3.12** Don’t stop reading to your child at other times like bedtime. Being read to is very valuable, and many a child puts the light back on after you have left them, to look at the book again, and possibly read some of it some more themselves.

4. The importance of praise and keeping it fun

- 4.1** As a parent, the way you respond to your children when sharing a book together is very important, and will affect their confidence.
- 4.2** Children respond to their feelings. If they feel good about sharing in a story, they will want to do it again. This good feeling will encourage them later as they move into independent reading.
- 4.3** We have talked already about finding the right time and place. We also need to generate the right atmosphere. Make it a happy time and be positive. Look for opportunities to give praise, e.g. “clever boy”, or “that was really smart to notice that”, or “you remembered, good girl”.
- 4.4** Don’t tell him off for making a mistake: “wrong again” → tears?, the book thrown away, the adult angry and frustrated...what will tomorrow’s session be like?
- 4.5** *Activity:* Presenters to role play “The Importance of Praise”. (Appendix 11 provides an example). Parent and child sitting close together; atmosphere warm and relaxed, child in charge as much as possible, e.g. child choosing a book, turning pages etc. Parent praising child regularly. Encourage comments from the group. Highlight that in the space of less than 5 minutes there were at least five positive statements made to the child, and no negative ones. This can only foster a positive relationship between the adult and child.
- 4.6** Staff member to fetch the children to join their parents. Invite discussion about the book they had. What did the children like/not like about the book that they had chosen. Return last week’s book.
- 4.7** Provide handout of key points of session.
- 5.** Tea/coffee, and informal discussion.

Session 3: Getting Started – Beginning Reading Introduction to Supported Reading

Preparation

1. Organise seating as before.
2. Name badges.
3. Ensure new books are available, and the ‘old’ ones returned / the record sheet of books previously borrowed.
4. Flip chart (optional).
5. Magnetic letters *or* letters which can be fixed with ‘Blu-Tack’ on a flip chart (without the pad) or on a blank sheet of laminated card with ‘Blu-Tack’.
6. Presenters to have identified (and rehearsed) a story for role playing supported reading.
7. Tea/coffee.
8. Liaise with school representative with regard to when the children are to join the session (also that even if a parent is unable to attend this session, their child still has the opportunity to come and select a book).

1. Introduction

1.1 Welcome everyone (check if anyone missed last week's session).

1.2 Recap on the last session:

- Getting the setting right
- Ways to share a book
- The importance of praise

1.3 Invite any comments about the content of last session, and the book their child chose; ask how they are getting on generally with sharing a book, getting the setting right, and giving praise.

‘What’s happened over the past week?’

‘How has Reading Together gone?’

1.4 Detail the agenda for this session

- Getting Started – the beginning of independent reading
- Supported Reading – demonstration

2. Getting Started – the beginning of independent reading

2.1 Everything so far has been to do with reading, even though we have not talked much about how reading is taught. We did touch on this a little in Session 1 when we took you back to Primary 1.

Children have to learn that we read the left page before the right page, that we read from left to right across a line, and then sweep diagonally back, and repeat the process.

2.2 If your child is able or willing to join in, then read aloud together with the adult pointing to the words, the child reading fractionally behind the adult, or simultaneously if he can.

2.3 Use “easy books” with very few words so that your child can begin to “read” independently, by remembering a story he has heard often.

2.4 Put simply, there are three main ways to teach children to read: a combination of all three is appropriate.

2.5 One way is Look and Say (the whole word), forming a picture of the word, the first one is usually his name. You can help at home by, for example, making some single word signs and sticking them to household objects, such as ‘television’, ‘chair’, ‘fridge’. Your child’s teacher does this routinely in the classroom. Use lower case except for the first letter of a proper name (e.g. on our name badges). Invite comments about sight words; longer words do have more identifying features, so are not necessarily more difficult.

- 2.6** A second way is through Phonics: Children learn the different sounds made by different letters, and letter blends. Unfortunately, there are words in English, which do not fit the pattern.

Things a parent can do that help:

- Say letter sounds and ask your child to repeat them. When your child was a baby you probably went mummum; dadada. When the child became older, you may have referred to the 'p-u-b' or 'c-r-i-s-p-s' (presenter to demonstrate the difference between using letter names and sounds – highlighting the parental hope at the time that the child was less likely to catch on to your meaning if you used the letter names).
- Play I Spy, focusing on very simple regular words, and using the sound and not the letter. (Avoid words like 'sugar' and 'cereal', which are confusing). Exaggerate the initial sound.
- Once your child starts to acquire a knowledge of letter sounds, you can help them develop these skills by using homemade letters, or commercially produced magnetic letters. Homemade letters can be printed off a computer, or just make them yourself on cardboard, and use 'Blu-tack' on a piece of cardboard, for example. Form letter combinations, and involve your child in moving them around. First in making 2 letter sounds, and then 3 letter words (these can be nonsense as well as real words). The letters 's', 'a', 't', 'i', 'p', 'n' make up more 3 letter words than any other six letters.

Activity - Demonstrate using magnetic letters with parents. For example, invite them to form 2 or 3 letter blends; ie a-p, t-a-p, s-a-p. This provides opportunities to discuss left to right conventions, tapping out sounds, moving away one letter [at the beginning or end of a word] and introducing another letter. When the child constructs a word, he is also beginning to spell without the added complication of hand writing. The child learns by seeing and doing how words can be constructed and dismantled.

Emphasise the importance of saying and hearing the sounds correctly.

- 2.7** The third way is Real Reading, which uses context, clues, knowledge of how language works. It may help to understand this if you imagine yourself writing down, and then cutting up a long sentence, and putting the words in a strange order. You will find it harder to read fluently. A programme known as 'Reading Recovery' has this as one of its steps.

You can help when reading a familiar book, by encouraging your child to finish a phrase (e.g. once upon a.....).

3. Introduction to Supported Reading

- 3.1** Inform the group that the presenters are going to role play another approach to helping a child to read, but not go into it in any detail until the next session .
- 3.2** *Activity:* Co-presenters to role play supported reading – invite any comments.

- 3.3** Staff member to collect the children to join their parents. Invite discussion about the book they had. Return last week's book, choose a new book, have it noted, and return to class.
- 4.** Tea/coffee, and informal discussion.

Session 4: Supported Reading and Evaluation

Preparation

- 1.** Organise seating as before.
- 2.** Name badges (if still needed).
- 3.** Ensure new books are available, and the 'old' ones returned: to be noted on the record sheet – bear in mind this is the final session, in terms of how you get the books back. Schools may wish to continue the 'book lending facility' in some capacity after this final session.
- 4.** Suitable books for role-play.
- 5.** Supported Reading Handout.
- 6.** Session 4 handout: Supported Reading advice sheet.
- 7.** Arabic Script with some English words and letter sounds (Appendix 4).
- 8.** Evaluation sheet (Appendix 12).
- 9.** Optional: Alternative/Supplementary Evaluation Questions (Appendix 13).
- 10.** Paper for taking notes from feedback.
- 11.** Reading Together 1st Steps Certificate/special stickers (not included).
- 12.** Tea/coffee.

1. Introduction

1.1 Welcome everyone.

1.2 Recap on last session.

- Look and Say
- Phonics
- Real Reading

1.3 Invite any comments about the content of last session, and about the books their child chose.

1.4 Detail of the agenda for this session.

- Supported Reading
- General discussion on ‘anything’ to do with reading development
- Evaluation

2. Supported Reading

2.1 *Activity:* Refer participants to the Arabic script material once more. Use the example that contains some English words and sounds (Appendix 4). Invite the whole group to read this aloud. Emphasise how this is an easier task for them now than it might have seemed at the initial session. We are able to use sight vocabulary, context, clues from individual letters, vocabulary, familiarity of the content, and praise to aid the process of reading. Invite discussion.

2.2 We demonstrated to you last session an approach which we call ‘Supported Reading.’ Once your child gets started with reading, a well-researched and successful approach to developing a child’s reading is through Supported Reading. It is not as easy as it might seem on the face of it, so we want to spend some time on the detail.

2.3 Uses include:

- For a preschool child showing signs of wanting and being ready to learn to read.
- For a child who has started school but lacks confidence or some of the skills necessary for independent reading.
- For older children whose reading is not fluent. It aims to build confidence and not focus on mistakes.

2.4 Once upon a time there was a boy who found reading very hard:
‘If only when I got stuck, the words could speak out loud.’
Supported Reading does just this!

2.5 Supported Reading has 2 main components:
Simultaneous and Independent Reading

2.6 Simultaneous Reading: what is it?

- Parent and child read together.
- Point to the words as you read, so that you give the idea of direction (omit this support if you feel it’s not needed, or let your child do the pointing).

- Parent adjusts the pace to suit the child; don't go too fast.
- Parent provides a model of correct reading at the same time as the child is making his attempts to read for himself.
- The child is expected to pronounce all the words with the parent allowing time for a second attempt at failed words.

2.7 Benefits include:

- During simultaneous reading, children are frequently able to pronounce unfamiliar or complex words that they could not read unaided, adjusting their pronunciation continuously and rapidly to the parent model.
- Pressure is taken off the child in terms of anxiety, or being put off by the 'difficult' words they see lying ahead in the text. It takes away any embarrassment of not knowing the answer when the adult asks: 'what does that word say?'

2.8 Independent Reading

- Child reads out loud on his own
- Child is praised for correctly read words, or part words (the praise being given in a way that does not interfere with the reading process: e.g. 'yes, good', 'well done'). Later you can acknowledge in more detail 'I liked the way you managed to work out this particular word – how did you do that?' or 'Wow! I didn't think you'd get that word!' The child never gets told off.
- Spontaneously corrected errors are likewise applauded.

2.9 Moving from one to the other

- Child is instructed to signal at any time during simultaneous reading if he wishes to change to independent reading (e.g. a knock on the table; a gentle tap on your shoulder). This change is under the control of the child.
- With early readers the adult sometimes has to judge when to drop out from reading simultaneously and leave the child to read independently.
- Reverting to simultaneous reading automatically occurs whenever the child makes an error: the procedure is that the parent gives the correct version of the word; the child repeats it, and reading is continued in simultaneous mode.
- Reverting to simultaneous reading automatically occurs when the child is stuck at a word for 4 seconds: the procedure is that the adult reads the word to the child; the child then repeats it, and reading is continued in simultaneous mode.

2.10 The benefit of intervening in this way is that it prevents prolonged non-productive effort, and continuity of the story is maintained. Contextual clues (remind the audience about Real Reading which was discussed in the previous session) are part of the decoding process as well as the sounding out of words.

2.11 What makes this different from the traditional way of listening to your child reading?

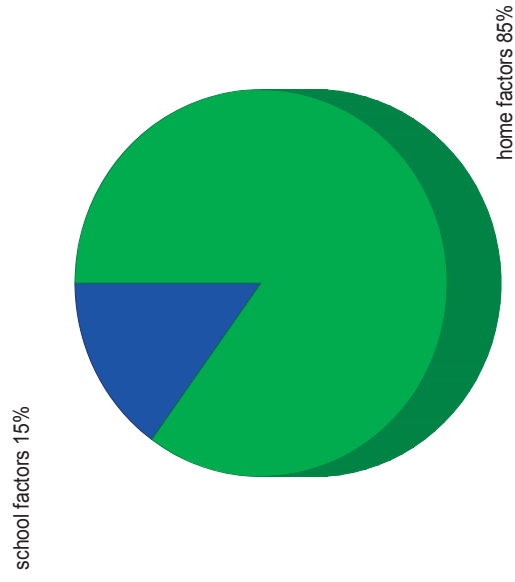
- Your child is reading a story, not just a series of words
- It develops fluency from the start
- Reading becomes possibly more enjoyable for both child and adult
- The child experiences success
- More books are experienced
- There is a reduced emphasis on error correction
- This approach helps develop a bridge between an adult reading to a child, and a child trying to read to himself

- 2.12** *Activity:* Presenters to role-play Supported Reading just as they did at the previous session, then reverse roles. A rhyming book in particular may help illustrate the role of familiarity and prediction in reading, and provide greater opportunities for the early reader to join in more easily. Hold discussion.
Issue Handout on **Supported Reading**
- 2.13** Optional: that the school might offer a future opportunity for any parent to practice this approach with their child, initially supported by a member of the teaching staff.
- 2.14** Children to join their parents, return last week's book, and are invited to talk about what's been happening at home with the books. As this is the final session, it may be that no new book is issued.
- 2.15** Thank the children for their contribution to the group and distribute the Reading Together 1st Steps Certificates. Children return to class.
- 3. Conclusion**
- 3.1** Briefly run through the topics covered.
- 3.2** Invite questions to do with any aspect of the workshops, and reading development in general. 'What difference has it made for you?'.....
- 3.3** Distribute evaluation sheets (Appendix 12) for completion (provide pens). Alternative/supplementary questions are provided in Appendix 13, if required.
- 3.4 Thank parents for their contributions to the workshops.**
- 4.** Tea/coffee (and sticky buns!) and informal discussion.

READING TOGETHER 1ST STEPS

APPENDICES

Relative Influence of Home and School



[illegible]



It Wednesday, Wayne Tracey
 the computer liked the computer,
 very the program
 Tracey, the



It ^s Wednesday, ^s
Wayne ⁿ Tracey
the
computer ^T liked ^s
the computer, ^s
very ⁿ
the program ^s
" ^s
Tracey, ^s
the ^s

Arabic Alphabet

a	b	c	d	e	f
ا	ب	ج	د	هـ	ف
g	h	i	j	k	l
ج	هـ	ي	ج	ك	ل
m	n	o	p	q	r
م	ن	و	پ	ق	ر
s	t	u	v	w	x
س	ت	و	ف	ز	خ
y	z				
ي	ز				

The Text

It was Wednesday, the day Wayne and Tracey had their turn on the computer. They liked using the computer, but they were not very interested in the program Miss Day had got for them to use that day. “I suppose we had better start”, said Tracey, pressing the space bar.

Corandic is an emurient grof with many fribs; it granks from corite, an olg which cargs like lange. Corite grinkles several other tarances, which garkers excarp by glarking the corite and starping it in tranker-clarped strobs. The tarances, starp a chark which is exparged with worters, branking a slorp. This slorp is garped through several other corusces, finally frasting a pragety, blicant crankle: coranda. The coranda is a cargurt, grinkling corandic and borigen. The corandic is nacerated from the borigen by means of loracity. Thus garkers finally thrap a glick, bracht, glupous grapant, corandic, which granks with many starps.

Reading Together 1st Steps: Book Selection Record Sheet

School

Child's Name	Session 1 : Book Selection	Session 2 : Book Selection	Session 3 : Book Selection	Session 4 : Book Selection

Each week take a note of the book taken home, and countersign when returned. Also use this sheet to note any changes of books between sessions.

Role Play (A): Getting the Setting Right

I Don't Want To Go To Bed!

Julie Sykes

Tim Wares

T.V. is on. Adult is watching.

Child **'Read me a story'.**

Adult **'Right, sit down there'.**

Child sits on floor

Child **'I can't see the pictures.'**

Adult turns the book

Adult **'Now I can't see the words. Come up and sit beside me.'**

Adult reads the book quickly and without expression, still glancing at the T.V.

Child **'I can't hear'.**

Adult turns the sound down and begins to read again.

Child **'That word starts like my name.'**

Adult continues to read.

Child **'Why's the tiger up the tree?'**

Adult continues

Child **'Why's that tiger up the tree?'**

Adult **'Because that's where the man drew it.'**

Adult turns page quickly. Reads page 3. Continues reading, attention on the TV.

Role play (A) continued

Child **‘Why is he punching his Mum?’**

Adult **‘Because he’s bad’.**

Adult reads last line of page 3

Child **You’ve got to roar that bit’.**

Adult roars it.

Child **‘Where does it say that?’**

Adult **‘For goodness sake let me get on with the story’.**

Adult reads page 4

Adult **‘Oh, there’s the adverts. I’m off to make a cup of tea’.**

Getting the Setting Right!

Think of up to 5 things that you already do, or would like to do, to get the setting right.

Think of up to 5 things that sometimes interfere with your plans!

fantastic

phththalmia

brilliant

distihias

Role Play (B): Importance of Praise

I Don't Want To Go To Bed

Julie Sykes

Tim Wares

T.V. is on. Adult is watching.

Child **'Read me a story'.**

Adult **'Right, just a minute while I turn off the T.V.'** (Switches of T.V.) **'Have you chosen a good story?'**

Child Nods

Adult **'Come and sit up beside me.'**
Adult and child get cosy.

Adult Pointing to cover picture.
'What's this?'

Child **'It's a Tiger'.**

Adult **'Clever girl. It is a tiger. The story is called 'I don't want to go to bed!' You turn the pages.'**

Child Opens the book and looks at inside of the cover.
'Look that's red!'

Adult **'That's right – a red sky and lots of trees. Where is the story?'**

Child Turns lots of pages
Adult **'Oops! I think we've missed the start of the story. Let's just turn one page at a time.'**
Helps child to turn to first page with print. Begins to read with expression.

Child **'Why's the tiger up the tree?'**

Role Play (B) continued

- | | |
|-------|---|
| Adult | ‘I wonder why.... His Mum said ‘bedtime’ so why did he go up the tree?’ |
| Child | ‘To hide’. |
| Adult | ‘Well done. He’s hiding up there. Let’s see what happens’. |
| Child | Turns page. |
| Adult | ‘Clever girl, you turned just one page’. |
| Child | ‘Why’s he punching his Mum?’ |
| Adult | ‘Let’s read and find out’.
Reads page with expression.
‘So why is he punching Mum?’ |
| Child | ‘Cos he doesn’t want to go to bed. He’s an angry tiger!’ |
| Adult | ‘That’s right. He’s angry. Clever girl.’
Reads page 4 and uses fingers on page to ‘scamper’.
‘You help him run away’. |
| Child | ‘scampers’ and says ‘I’m not going to bed’. Giggles. |
| Adult | ‘Where will he go?’ |
| Child | ‘Dunno’. |
| Adult | ‘If we turn over maybe we will find out’. |
| Child | Turns page. ‘Ah! He goes to see the lions’. |
| Adult | ‘So he does! Well spotted, you are smart!’
Reads pages 5 and 6 |

Stop here saying to parents and so we could continue reading and discussing to the end of the story.

Emphasis in this role play is on involving child and praising. It is important that the ‘child’ should show reaction of pleasure each time parents gives praise.

**Reading Together 1st Steps
Parent Groups: Evaluation
School.....**

Please Circle

Poorly presented	1	2	3	4	5	Well presented
Poorly paced	1	2	3	4	5	Well paced
Not useful	1	2	3	4	5	Very useful
Would not recommend to a friend	1	2	3	4	5	Definitely recommend

What did you find most useful?

What did you find least useful?

What changes have you seen already in your child?



Thank you for taking the time to fill this in. It helps to plan for future groups.

Alternative/Supplementary Evaluation Questions

1. General

- How has being part of this group changed your behaviour when reading with your child at home?
- What effect has the Reading Together 1st Steps project had on your child?
- How has this changed your relationship with your child?
- Have any other children been involved at home?

2. Skills

- What did you find most useful about reliving what it might have been like starting to learn to read?
- What did you find most useful about getting the setting right/making it a 'special time'?
- What did you find most useful about praising your child regularly and ways of sharing a book?
- What did you find most useful about getting started – the beginning of independent reading (look and say, phonics, real reading)?
- What did you find most useful about Supported Reading (simultaneous-independent reading)?

3. Presentation and Organisation

- Was there anything that you would have liked more of?
- Was there anything that we spent too much time on?
- How useful did you find the role plays?
- Were the handouts helpful/should they be adapted in any way?

4. Where do we go from here?

- How could this project best be extended in school?
- How could parents best be involved in future groups?
- How could books be made available in an ongoing way from the school?
- How could links with the local library best be extended?

Thank parents for their time and help.

School:
Address:
Date:

Dear Parent/Guardian

Reading Together 1st Steps Project – Primary One

We would like to offer you the opportunity to take part in a joint initiative between home and school. As a school we are very interested in developing children's enjoyment of books and early reading skills. We intend to offer a series of sessions to all parents of our P1 children after the October holiday.

The project is designed to help you understand how children learn to read and gives you advice on how best to help your child get the most out of books. The project is fun and no one should feel nervous about coming to school to take part.

Over a period of four weeks you will find out what it can be like learning to read from a child's point of view, and some things you can do to help the process along. At the end of each meeting your child will join you to select a book for pleasure to share at home for the following week. Children love this. They also see that school and home work together, and that if you are willing to give up your time to come into school, then what happens in school must be important. Getting reading right from the start can make a huge difference to children's confidence in the classroom generally not just for now, but for many years to come.

Meetings will take place on *day* from *time* till *time*, starting on *date*.

If you would like to take part in this programme, complete the tear off slip below and return it to the school by *date*.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

.....

I am interested in taking part in the Reading Together Project for primary three children.

Child's Name.....

Signed.....

READING TOGETHER 1ST STEPS HANDOUTS

READING TOGETHER - 1ST STEPS

Learning to read

What we often take for granted when reading are new and possibly worrying activities for a child. We generally do not perform so well when highly anxious.

Reading has lots of conventions that we take for granted; but why should these be obvious to a child?

We read from left to right along a line; and from the top of the page.

Words have different lengths.

A space between words indicates a new word.

Book selection

Involve your child, if possible, when choosing books, but it's obviously still okay to buy them one as a treat when you are out on your own. If they like one 'Thomas the Tank Engine' book, they'll probably like another!

Remember that what appeals to you as an adult does not necessarily appeal to them as a child.

There are no hard and fast rules about when to change a book.

Getting the setting right

Adults often need to organise a time and place to read together.

Children find it very difficult to filter out distractions, and concentrate.

Ways to share a book

There are different but equally valuable ways to share a book:

- Sometimes it works best to read straight through a story
- Sometimes we can discuss a story as we go along.
- Open ended questions such as 'What did you like about the story?' encourages discussion more effectively than closed questions: 'Do you like the story?' usually gets a short answer:

Yes, No, or Don't Know!

Try bringing the story alive by being expressive.

Praise is so much more enjoyable to give and receive than criticism; notice and celebrate success. If you are not enjoying it, the odds are your child is not enjoying it either.

SUPPORTED READING

SUPPORTED READING HAS TWO COMPONENTS:

1. SIMULTANEOUS READING

You and your child read the words out together.

Adjust your speed to suit your child; don't go too fast.

Point to the words as you go along, or let your child point if that is preferred.

Never let your child struggle.

The child is expected to pronounce all the words with the parent allowing time for a second attempt.

2. INDEPENDENT READING

Child reads out loud on his own.

Child is praised for correctly read words.

Spontaneously corrected errors are likewise applauded.

MOVING FROM ONE TO THE OTHER

Child is instructed to signal at any time during simultaneous reading if they wish to change to independent reading.

With early readers the adult sometimes has to judge when to drop out from reading simultaneously, and leave the child to read independently.

Return to simultaneous reading whenever the child makes an error. The child should repeat the correct version of the word.

Return to simultaneous reading when the child is stuck at a word for more than 4 seconds.

BENEFITS

The child is reading a story, not just a series of words.

The child experiences success.

More books are experienced, and vocabulary extended.

There is less focus on mistakes, and confidence is built up.





CERTIFICATE

Awarded to:.....

***Following Attendance at a Reading Together 1st
Steps Reading Course***

Date:

Signed:

**READING
TOGETHER
1ST STEPS

PARENT LEAFLET**

READING TOGETHER 1st STEPS PARENT GROUPS

HOW TO DO IT : THE MAIN POINTS

Few children learn to love books by themselves, someone has to show them the way. Parents can help their children to read. One of the biggest factors associated with success in learning to read is whether the child's reading is heard at home. Children can enjoy reading right up together to their teens.

When choosing a book always try to encourage your child to help with the choosing.



WAYS TO SHARE A BOOK AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAISE

- Get the setting right; organise a special time and a special place with as few distractions as possible. Sit close to your child.
- Sometimes a story may lend itself to be read straight through, sometimes it is better to stop at an interesting page to chat about it. Discuss the story.
- Be expressive, give characters different voices.
- Sharing books helps to build your child's vocabulary which helps reading.
- Make it a happy time and look for opportunities to praise.

GETTING STARTED, THE BEGINNING OF INDEPENDENT READING

- Children need to learn that we read left to right and the left page before the right.
- Main ways to teach a child to read:
 - (i) Look and Say; child learns the whole word.
 - (ii) Phonics; child learns the different sounds made by different letters and letter blends.
 - (iii) Real reading; child learns to use context, clues and knowledge of how language works.
 - (iv) To begin with, use easy books, read aloud together with the adult pointing to the words and the child reading together or fractionally behind.



SUPPORTED READING

- Once your child gets started with reading, a well-researched and successful approach to developing a child's reading is through supported reading.
- Supported reading has 2 main components:
 - (i) Parent and child read together at child's pace.
 - (ii) Child reads out loud on their own and is praised for correctly read words and corrections.
- Child can signal at any time to move from reading together to reading on their own.
- With early readers sometimes the adult has to judge when to stop reading.
- Reverting to reading together happens when child makes a mistake or is stuck.

READING TOGETHER PRESENTER'S SCRIPT

READING TOGETHER

CONTENTS

A Presenter's Script

- Session 1: Setting the Scene & the Role of Parents
- Session 2: Choosing a Book at the Right Level & the Importance of Praise
- Session 3: Handling Errors
- Session 4: Practising Praise and Handling Errors
- Session 5: Practising Praise, Handling Errors and Evaluation

B Appendices

- Appendix 1: Sample letter from school
- Appendix 2 - 4: Arabic scripts
- Appendix 5: Pie chart of relative influences of home and school
- Appendix 6: Record sheet for recording books which have been chosen
- Appendix 7: Copies of script, "Mr Creep's Plan" for Role Play C (Session 2)
- Appendix 8: Tally sheet to note the number of praise responses for each parent/child
- Appendix 9: Copies of script for Role Play: "Handling errors" (Session 3)
- Appendix 10: Evaluation sheet
- Appendix 11: Alternative/additional evaluation questions

C Other Support Materials Required

- Selection of books from which to choose
- Name badges (parents, children and presenters).
- Suitable book for "Getting the Setting Right" – how not to do it/how to do it Role Plays
- (Session 1) Suitable book for "Listening to reading without praise" and "Praising reading" Role Plays
- (Session 2) "Reading Together" certificate/special stickers.

D Handouts

- Handout 1: Reading at Home
- Handout 2: How Not to Do the Reading
- Handout 3: This is How You Do It
- Handout 4: Reading Together Certificate

PRESENTER'S SCRIPT

CONTENTS

Session 1	Setting the Scene & the Role of Parents Introduction Overview What we are <i>not</i> going to do The importance of parents So what are we going to do? Book choosing Discussion
Session 2	Choosing a Book at the Right Level & the Importance of Praise Introduction Choosing a book at the right level The importance of praise Reading round the group Book choosing Discussion
Session 3	Handling Errors Introduction Reading round the group Book choosing Handling errors Discussion
Session 4	Practising Praise & Handling Errors Introduction Reading round the group Book choosing Discussion
Session 5	Practising Praise, Handling Errors & Evaluation Introduction Reading round the group Book choosing Evaluation

Session 1: Setting the Scene & the Role of Parents

Preparation

1. Welcoming room with suitable number of chairs for presenters, parents and children.
2. Name badges (parents, children and presenters).
3. Arabic scripts (Appendices 2, 3, 4).
4. Pie chart – Relative influence of home and school (Appendix 5).
5. Suitable book for Role Play A: “Getting the setting right”- how not to do it (reading book, TV or radio, newspaper etc.)
6. Suitable book for Role Play B: “Getting the setting right”- how to do it (reading book).
7. Selection of books grouped broadly into reading levels (usually three groups of books).
8. Sheet for recording book selection for each child (Appendix 5).
9. Tea and coffee.

Procedure:

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Welcome. Name labels (also ask parents to make one out for their child).
- 1.2 Introduction of course presenters, where necessary. Also invite the parents to introduce themselves and say who their child is.
- 1.3 Reassurance that invitation to participate in the workshops was extended to parent of all children in the class (no hidden selection procedure).

2. Overview

- 2.1 The main purpose of the Reading Together groups is to look at things that parents can do which have been demonstrated to improve both how well their children can read and their children's confidence with the printed word.
- 2.2 We will look at a range of factors, for example:
 - Getting the setting right for hearing your child read at home.
 - How to choose a book at precisely the right level of reading.
 - The need for regular praise when hearing your child reading and how best this can be done.
 - How to deal with reading when your child gets stuck with a word or makes a mistake.
- 2.3 It may be natural for parents to help with reading during their children's early schooling, but there is a natural tendency for this to tail off as children gets older. After these sessions, we would hope that parents would be encouraged to continue with this activity.

So how are we going to go about this?

3. What We Are *Not* Going To Do

- 3.1 What we are not going to do is to teach you to be mini teachers.
- 3.2 As adult readers, there are presumptions that we make about reading that we take for granted – but which young children have to actively learn when acquiring basic reading skills. It is the recognition of these new learning experiences, and the methods and the approaches to teach them effectively, for which teachers are especially trained.
- 3.3 Let's illustrate this with some Arabic text. When children first encounter print, it may seem a bit like this (Appendix 2). Think how you might feel when faced with this! You just have the picture to go on.

It becomes a bit easier if you know a few key words, using your skills to fill in the gaps. Illustrate with Arabic script with some words in English (Appendix 3). Read together with parents, inviting them to join in – and praise their efforts liberally!

It becomes easier still when you read it a second time, and when you know some individual letter sounds e.g. n, s, t, w (Appendix 4).

Invite discussion.

3.4 There are a number of basic points that can be made, for example:

- Where do we start reading? In English, we arbitrarily start at the top left hand corner but not all other languages follow this convention.
- In what direction do we read – we read from left to right, then scan back and drop a line.
- There are some symbols which look different but which make the same sound (e.g. “c” and “k”, “f” and “ph”); whilst there are others letters which can make different sounds (e.g. “g” or “j”).
- Two or more letters can make a single sound e.g. “ch”, “th”, “ee”.
- Punctuation marks – commas, full stops, speech marks etc.

4. The Importance of Parents

4.1 As a parent, you have a unique relationship with, and understanding of, your child. Because of this, you have a critical contribution to make towards your child’s reading which can complement what the teacher provides.

4.2 So how important are parents in their children’s learning?

- About 80% of connections in the brain are established by the time the child is 3 years old. Parents are the main influence in these developments.
- Invite parents to guess the relative influence of home and school on a child’s learning.
Many studies have taken place exploring the influence of home on a child’s learning. Consistently, as this chart indicates, it has been found that around 15% of a child’s learning comes from school whilst a massive 85% comes from home. Show pie chart (Appendix 5). Discuss.
- When you think about it, a child spends about 1,000 hours in school each year, the class teacher having to divide her attention between 30 or so pupils. A child spends over 7½ thousand hours outside school in a year.

So, as parents, the importance of your role cannot be underestimated.

5. So What Are We Going To Do?

5.1 Research into reading suggests that one of the biggest factors associated with “success” is whether the child’s reading is heard at home. Children whose parents hear them reading regularly tend to be much better readers than those whose parents do not. Parents are willing helpers but sometimes are not sure what exactly to do.

The topics which we cover during these sessions can help parents to become “able” and “effective” helpers.

- 5.2 The way a parent responds to their child when hearing reading has been shown to play a key part in both how well the child reads and how confident the child is with the printed word.
- 5.3 So what should parents do to ensure that hearing reading is a happy, joint experience which brings about such an improvement?

Role Play A: Getting the setting right – how not to do it

Using any suitable book, the two presenter’s role play “parent” and “child”. The background distractions may include a television or radio; the adult’s interest may be interfered with by some external source such as ironing, newspaper etc.; there may be some distance between adult and child and the adult does not respond to successful reading.

Invite discussion about issues raised by role play from group.

- 5.4 Hearing your child reading gives an ideal opportunity for creating a “special time” for you and your child. Organising things so that you have a quiet time and place where you can be close to your child without distraction may not be easy, but the benefits are well worth it.

5.5 Role Play B: Getting the setting right – how to do it

In light of above discussion, adult switches television or radio off; sitting closely to the child, adult shows active interest in the child’s reading – asking questions about picture or text, praising correct reading etc. Child reads the same text as in role play A.

Encourage discussion from the group about ways in which they have found it best to get the setting right – time at which reading together may be best done, how to manage other children etc.

- 5.6 Correct reading can often be a one way process with the adult silent during the exercise. The importance of, and practise in, ongoing praise and encouragement while your child is reading will be a major focus of next session.
- 5.7 But what do you do when your child makes a mistake? Do you provide the word, do you encourage your child to try again, or to sound out, or to read on then return to the mistake? Later on, we will be looking at ways to deal with incorrect reading in a consistent way.
- 5.8 In order to work on all these areas, your children will be invited to take part in the group. They will choose a book from the selection available and, each week, will read a section of the book so that we can practice what has been discussed.

6. Book Choosing

- 6.1** Reorganise the seating so that there is an empty chair beside each adult for their child whilst the children are being fetched from class (ensure that the class are not undertaking a favourite activity during this time!).
- 6.2** Introduce the idea of the Reading Together project to the children by explaining that they are going to choose a book from the selection provided (not their class reader) and that their parent(s) will hear them read from this book at home for about five to ten minutes, four or five times per week.
- 6.3** The children will join the group each week and will read a short section from their chosen book aloud with their parent.
- 6.4** Explain to the children that they can choose a new book each week if they are finished, but they are free to select another book before then (through school arrangements) if they do not like the book, if it is too hard or too easy, or if they have finished before that time.
- 6.5** The children and parents are then directed to choose a book from the appropriate group (teacher judgement) with the parent hearing the child read a short passage to check that the text is appropriate.
- 6.6** The title of the book which each child has chosen is noted (Appendix 5).
- 6.7** Children are returned to class.
- 6.8** Parents are encouraged to create a “special time” for reading at home, separate from any other reading activities such as reading homework, bedtime story etc.
- 6.9** Informal discussion about any issues arising over tea/coffee.

Session 2: Choosing a Book at the Right Level & the Importance of Praise

Preparation:

1. Organise seating for parents, children and presenters, as before.
2. Ensure that books are arranged in groups.
3. Suitable book for Role Play A: “Listening to reading without praise” and Role Play B: “Praising reading”.
4. Copies of script, “Mr Creep’s Plan” for Role Play C (Appendix 7).
5. Tally sheet to note the number of praise responses for each parent/child (Appendix 8).
6. Handout 1: “Reading at Home”.
7. Tea etc., as before.

Procedure:

1. Introduction

1.1 Welcome (including name tags).

1.2 Encourage discussion on ways in which the parents organised things in practice to make hearing their child reading a special time. Any challenges? Parents may have found ways round some of the issues raised. Factors may include:

- What time?
- What about the other children?
- Where?
- How do you sit together?
- Who holds the book?
- Separate from schoolwork?

1.3 Any initial feedback from the children about the idea of reading to parent(s) on a regular basis?

1.4 Indicate to the group that today's session will focus on two key issues – namely, how to choose a book at the right level and the importance of praise. After that, we will bring the children in and they will read a short section of the book chosen last week. Parents may need reassurance that the children are quite used to reading aloud in front of their peers in school (any anxieties are more likely to be those of the parents rather than the children!).

2. Choosing a Book at the Right Level

2.1 When the children have the opportunity to choose books at the end of each session, it is important that the stories are not only interesting for the children but that they are pitched at the right level.

2.2 If reading is too difficult, the child will get stuck or make too many mistakes and will not be able to make sense of what has been read. This can lead to frustration and may even put the child off reading.

2.3 If your child is really interested in a book that is too difficult this book should be read to, and discussed with, your child.

2.4 On the other hand, if the book is read fluently and without error, this is reading for pleasure and should be encouraged. However, this level of reading provides no challenges in terms of the reading itself and, therefore, does not provide the basis from which learning new skills can take place.

2.5 Reading for pleasure, or independent reading, is the basis on which the joy of reading and the understanding of text, is established.

2.6 In order to encourage active learning during the reading process, the level of text should be slightly harder than the child can read independently but not so difficult to cause frustration.

- 2.7** It has been found that this is provided when 90% - 95% of the text is read correctly. This gives enough correct reading to provide fluency and understanding, and there is not the level of difficulty to interfere with making sense of what is being read. Therefore, frustration is reduced. It is this level of reading that we are aiming at when hearing our child read during the Reading Together process.
- 2.8** In practice, this means that when choosing a book with your child, you can check out that the book is at the right level by selecting a short paragraph of, say, approximately 50 words and asking your child to read it. If there are between 2 and 5 mistakes, this is about the right level. If your child makes more errors than this, or fewer errors than this, encourage your child to choose another interesting book and try again until the right level is reached.
- 2.9** You will find that through practice, you will gradually tune in better to the books that are at the right instructional reading level for your child.

3. The Importance of Praise

- 3.1** Probably the single most important message about reading together is the value of on-going adult praise when the child is reading correctly. All too often we, as adults, just accept things and take things for granted when things are going well and only start to intervene when things are going wrong! Let's illustrate this with a couple of role plays.
- 3.2** Role Play A : Listening to Reading without Praise
Choosing a suitable book, "child" reads the page(s) fluently and with expression. "Adult", sitting closely, listens with interest – perhaps even smiling and nodding – but utters absolutely no words of approval, not even when the child finishes the allotted text. The child may give a big sigh at the end!
- 3.3** Role Play B : Praising Reading
Using the same text as in Role Play A, the child again reads fluently and with expression. This time the adult, again sitting closely and listening with interest, praises audibly at the end of each sentence using a range of verbalisations indicating approval (yes, well done, good etc).
- 3.4** Invite discussion from the group about the differences between each role play. Highlight that, if praising at the end of each sentence has not been done before, it may seem a bit uncomfortable at first for both adult and child. However, the child soon gets used to it and, indeed, may come to expect it!
- 3.5** Role Play C: Script - "Mr Creep's Plan" (Appendix 7). Following the scripted page, "Mr Creep's Plan", adult extends praise to include prompts and self-corrections. It may be worthwhile providing a copy for each of the participants to reinforce the key areas for praise.
- 3.6** If the child remains stuck at a word after a prompt, provide the word after 2 or 3 seconds – any extended delay may result in loss of fluency. The ability to self-correct while reading has been shown to be one of the strongest indicators of success in reading, hence the emphasis on this area as a focus of praise.

4.0 Reading Round the Group

- 4.1** Reassure the group that, when we bring in the children to read, we recognise that it is artificial situation and that it will not mirror what is happening at home.
- 4.2** However, it does give us the opportunity to learn from others and to examine our own ways of responding. Try to introduce praise at the end of each sentence as a starting point.
- 4.3** Remember, the purpose of the exercise is not to consider how good the children's reading is, but to concentrate on how the adults are reacting and responding whilst hearing the children reading.
- 4.4** Arrange seating, as before, for parent/child pair as children are fetched from the class.
- 4.5** Invite each child to read a short passage from their chosen book to their parent.
- 4.6** Note discreetly the number of words of approval, or praises, which the parents make and quickly total on the tally sheet (Appendix 8).
- 4.7** Praise children's performance.

5.0 Book Choosing

- 5.1** At the end of reading round the group, invite those children who wish to change books to do so, using the procedure for checking out reading levels as described.
- 5.2** Note book selection for each child.
- 5.3** Again, remind the children that they are free to exchange books during the week if they wish to do so.
- 5.4** Return the children to the class.

6.0 Discussion

- 6.1** Feedback to the parents the number of praises recorded in the relatively short time of hearing reading. Highlight that it is unlikely that there is another occasion when you have the opportunity to respond like this with your child. And we all know how happy and positive children are when they are receiving praise.
- 6.2** Pick up on, and generalise, any issues rising from observation of group, e.g.:
 - Parent holding book.
 - Parent pointing word by word, thus dictating pace of child's reading.
 - Use of marker, where appropriate.
 - Smiling/nodding rather than verbal reinforcement.

- 6.3** Emphasise the importance of not making reading a sterile, mechanical task, but that it must be taken in context of pre-discussion and post-discussion of the story, talking about the pictures in the book etc.
- 6.4** Encourage the parents to continue practising – praising is the key feature:
- Praise after every sentence
 - Praise after a prompt
 - Praise after every self-correction
- 6.5** Distribute Handout 1: “**Reading at Home**”, indicating that this gives an overview of the main points of the sessions.
- 6.6** Continue discussion over tea and biscuits.

Session 3: Handling Errors

Preparation

1. Organise seating for parents, children and presenters, as before.
2. Ensure that books are arranged in groups.
3. Tally sheet.
4. Copies of script for Role Play: “Handling errors” (Appendix 9).
5. Tea etc., as before.

Procedure:

1. Introduction

- 1.1** Encourage the parents to provide feedback on how things have gone this week – what they felt worked, any difficulties/issues emerging, how they are feeling about it, how the children are feeling about it etc.
- 1.2** You may wish to introduce the use of the local library at this point, and any other local sources of accessing books that may be available.
- 1.3** This session will focus on how to handle things when the child gets stuck or makes a mistake when reading. However, before looking at this, we will read round the group to see how the regular praise is going.

2. Reading Round the Group

- 2.2** Arrange seating, as before, for parent/child pairs as children are being fetched from class.
- 2.3** Invite each child to read a short passage and note the number of praises on the tally sheet.
- 2.4** Praise children's performance - and parents' performance too, highlighting the number of praises recorded this week (hopefully, more than last week!).

3. Book Choosing

- 3.1** As before, ensuring that brief passages are read to the parent so that books are at an instructional level.
- 3.2** Return children to the class.
- 3.4** Again, feedback the number of instances of praise noted when parents are hearing their child reading round the group and discuss any issues from your observations during the process.

4. Handling Errors

- 4.1** There are three main rules when the child makes an error when reading or gets stuck on a word:
 - If the error does not make sense, the adult encourages the child to read on to the end of the sentence, then try to work out what the word might be i.e. use contextual cues.
 - If the error does make sense, the adult encourages the child to look at the beginning of the word and try to sound it out i.e. use phonic cues (some judgement may have to be used as there is a balance between reading accuracy and the development of comprehension through increased fluency).

- Never spend too long on a word which the child gets wrong and cannot correct or on a word over which the child is stuck. If in doubt, supply the word sooner (within a few seconds) rather than later as it is important that the fluency of reading is interfered with as little as possible.
- 4.2** In order to illustrate these points, presenters role play how to handle errors whilst praising reading using the Rabbit script provided (Appendix 9). Again, it may be useful to provide participants with a copy for reference.
- 4.3** Child reads scripted section of text, including self correction and need for prompt. Child also makes one error which does not make sense and one error which does make sense.
- Adult praises at the end of each sentence, for self-correction and after prompt. At error which does not make sense, adult encourages child to use contextual cues (e.g. read on to the end of the sentence); at error which does make sense, adult encourages child to look at the beginning of the word and use phonic cues.
- 4.4** Encourage parents to incorporate these elements when hearing their child read, but reassure them that this takes a lot of practice to do comfortably and automatically and that this would be a longer-term goal.
- 4.5** Continue discussion over tea and biscuits.

Session 4: Practising Praise and Handling Errors

Preparation

1. Organise seating for parents, children and presenters, as before.
2. Ensure that books are arranged in groups.
3. Handouts 2 & 3: “How not to do reading” & “This is how you do it”.
4. Tea etc., as before.

Procedure

1. Introduction

Encourage the parents to provide feedback on how things have gone this week. In particular, seek their views on how they managed the strategies when their child made an error, or got stuck, when reading.

- 1.2** Assure the parents that handling errors in a consistent way takes time and that this will require on-going practice.
- 1.3** When hearing their child reading in the group, parents may wish to try out these strategies, but if they do so, it is important not to dwell too long on the word as this may interfere with their child making sense of what is being read.
- 1.4** Alternatively, parents may simply wish to provide the word when hearing their child read in the group.

2. Reading Round the Group

- 2.1** Arrange seating, as before, for parent/child pairs as children are being fetched from the class. Invite each child to read a short passage from their selected book. Note number of times children are praised on the tally sheet. Also note any observations with respect to handling errors.
- 2.2** Praise children's performance and that of their parents!

3. Book Choosing

- 3.1** As before.

4. Discussion

- 4.1** Discuss any points arising from observation during reading round the group, in particular, those relating to handling errors. Feedback this week's praise score from tally sheet.
- 4.2** Discuss any issues which parents may raise.
- 4.3** Advise parents that the focus of the final session will be to hear the children reading, including praise and handling errors. We will then evaluate how worthwhile parents and children feel the project has been and what benefits they feel have accrued, as well as any points for improvement.
- 4.4** Continue discussion over tea and biscuits.

Session 5: Practising Praise, Handling Errors and Evaluation

Preparation

1. Room with suitable number of chairs for parents and presenters.
2. Books arranged in groups.
3. Tally sheet.
4. Juice and biscuits/healthy snack for children.
5. “Reading Together” certificate/special stickers.
6. Paper for taking notes from feedback.
7. Evaluation sheets (Appendix 10).
8. Alternative/additional evaluation questions (Appendix 11).
9. Pens for parents to fill in evaluation sheets.
10. Tea/coffee (and maybe even sticky buns this time!)

Procedure

1. Introduction

Feedback on the week's progress.

2. Reading Round the Group

Arrange seating as children are being fetched and invite children to read from their selected book. Use tally sheet for praises and note any issues arising from handling errors.

2.1 Praise performance.

3. Book Choosing

Advise children that, although this is the last group session that they will attend, they are free to continue to choose books for Reading Together with their parent. Explain the school's arrangement for this.

4. Evaluation

4.1 Over juice and biscuits (or a healthy snack!), invite children to comment on what they enjoyed about coming along to the Reading Together group, what they felt about reading with their parent(s) at home and any things that they did not enjoy or which could have been done better etc. Make notes, preferably verbatim, on responses.

4.2 There are obviously a range of ways, both formal and informal, in which feedback can be gained from the children. The important thing is that the children's views are recognised.

4.3 You may wish to consider designing a certificate or a special sticker for those children participating in the project. Thank the children for their participation and return to class.

4.4 Invite parents to complete Evaluation Form (Appendix 10) and collect. Distribute pens, if required. Alternative/additional evaluation questions are provided in Appendix 11, if required.

4.5 Over tea/coffee - and perhaps even sticky buns to celebrate the final session – note any comments (preferably verbatim) from informal discussion.

Thank parents for their contribution to the group.

READING TOGETHER

APPENDICES

School:
Address:
Date

Dear Parent/Guardian

Reading Together Project – Primary Three

We would like to offer you the opportunity to take part in a joint initiative between home and school. As a school we are very interested in developing reading together and are in a position to offer a series of sessions to all parents of our P3 children this term.

This programme is designed to help you understand how your child learns to read and gives you advice on how to give the maximum amount of help when you hear your child read. This programme is fun and no one should feel nervous about coming to school to take part. Please come and learn how to help your child read better.

Over a period of five weeks you will work with your child on their reading in school. The children love this. They begin to see that if you are willing to give up your time to come into school, then what happens in school must be important, so they put more effort into what they are doing. Children whose parents come in to work with them make remarkable progress in their reading and start to enjoy reading more and more.

Meetings will take place on Wednesday mornings from 11.30 – 12.30, starting on 8th September.

If you are interested in taking part in this programme, complete the tear off slip below and return it to the school by Friday 3rd September.

Yours sincerely

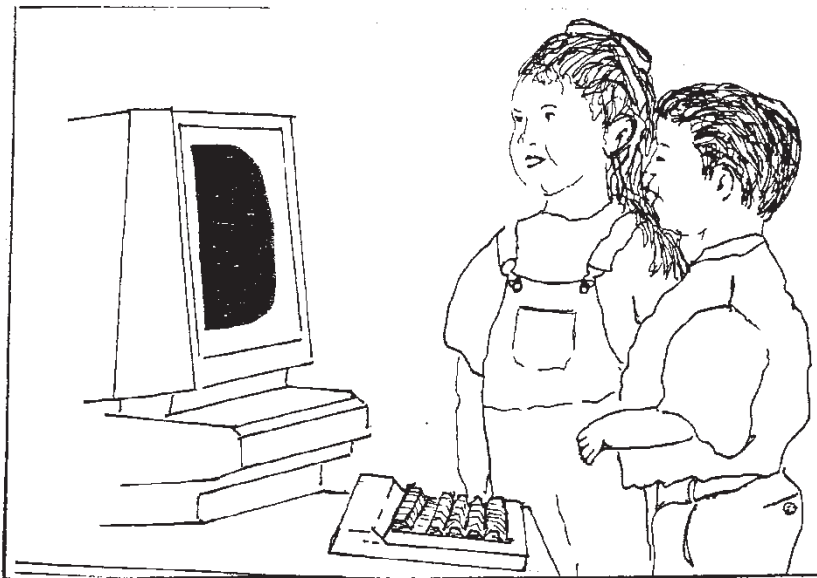
Head Teacher

.....

I am interested in taking part in the Reading Together Project for primary three children.

Child's Name.....

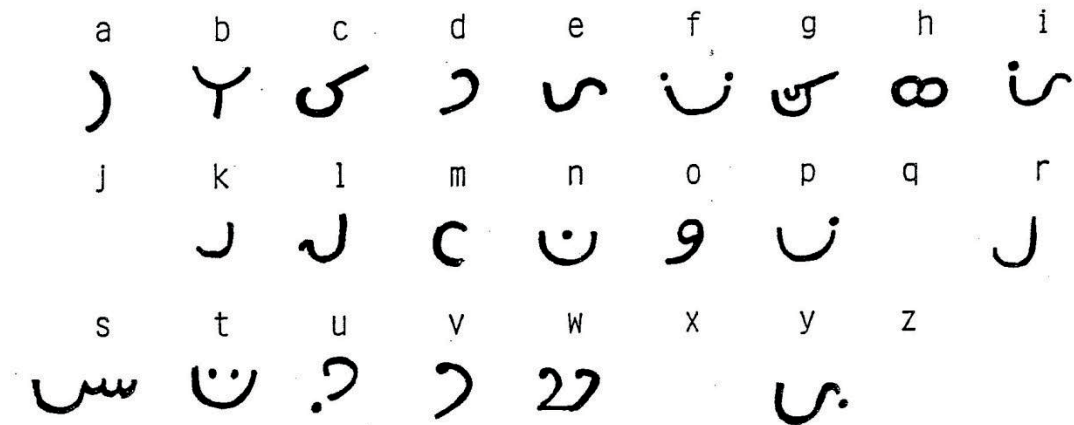
Signed.....

[illegible]



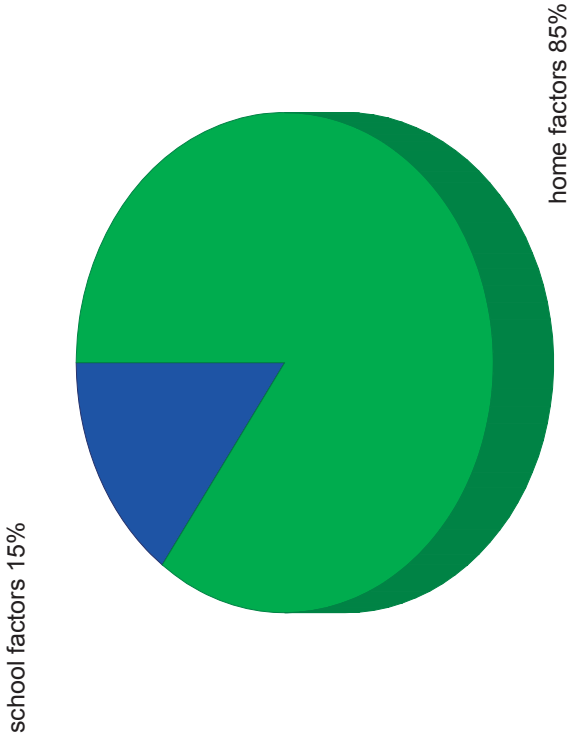
It ^{was} Wednesday , the
 Wayne and Tracey
 were at the
 computer . They liked
 the computer , they
 were very interested
 in the program .
 They were
 very interested in
 the program .
 Tracey was
 very interested in
 the program .

READING ARABIC



It was Wednesday, the day Wayne and
Tracey had their turn on the computer.
They liked using the computer, but
they were not very interested in the
program Miss Day had got for them to
use that day. 'I suppose we had better
start', said Tracey, pressing the space
bar.

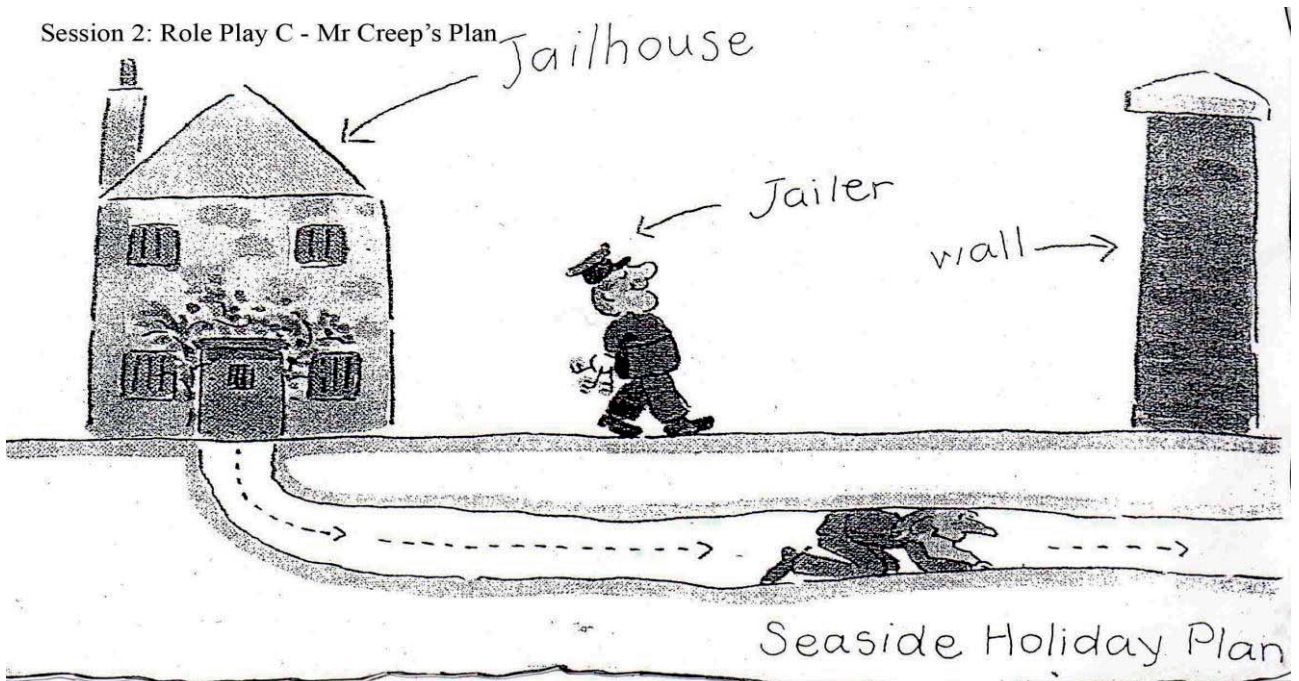
Relative Influence of Home and School



Reading Together Book Selection Record Sheet
School

Child's Name	Session 1 : Book Selection	Session 2 : Book Selection	Session 3 : Book Selection	Session 4 : Book Selection	Session 5 : Book Selection

Each week take a note of the book taken home, and countersign when returned. Also use this sheet to note any changes of books between sessions.



Here is Mr Creep's plan. ①

kin ... PROMPT → ✓ ①
 Mrs Creep was knitting a jail-house jumper. ①
 When she ^{was SC ①} saw the plan, she said,
 "That's a nice plan – can we stop
 at a wool shop?" ①
 "And a ^{sweet SC ①} sweet shop, too!" the children said. ①
 But Mr Creep shook his head. ①
 "No," he said. ① "No changes to the plan –
 it's fool-proof!" ①

① = PRAISE

SC = Self Correction

Appendix 6

Tally Sheet

Name	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5
TOTAL					

Session 3: Role Play - Handling Errors

Rabbit tried to gather up a pawful of the flour. ②
 'It's not very good for snowballs,' he said. ② 'It
 doesn't stick together.' ②

'But it's ^{pre... SC} perfect for DOUGHBALLS,' cried Little Bear,
 rolling up a piece of dough and throwing it at Rabbit. ②
 The doughball stuck to Rabbit's bottom and looked like
 an extra tail. ②

'This flour-snow doesn't come off,' said Zebra, jumping
 up and down trying to shake herself clean. ②

'I think you are going to need a bath,^{*2} said Bramwell. ②

② = PRAISE

SC = Self Correct

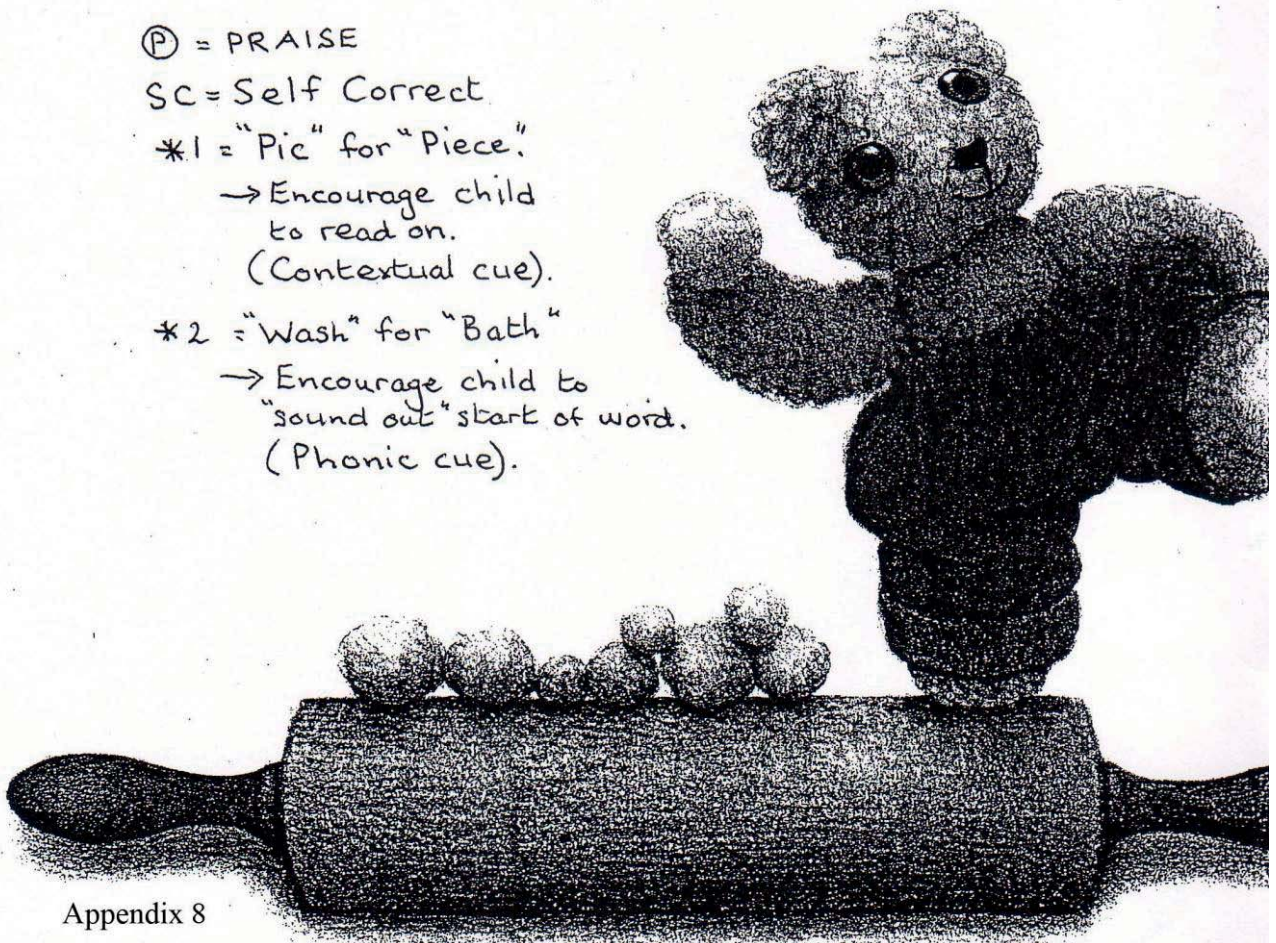
*1 = "Pic" for "Piece".

→ Encourage child
 to read on.

(Contextual cue).

*2 = "Wash" for "Bath"

→ Encourage child to
 "sound out" start of word.
 (Phonic cue).



Appendix 8

Reading Together

Parent Groups: Evaluation

School.....

Please Circle

Poorly presented	1	2	3	4	5	Well presented
Poorly paced	1	2	3	4	5	Well paced
Not useful	1	2	3	4	5	Very useful
Would not recommend to a friend	1	2	3	4	5	Definitely recommend

What did you find most useful?

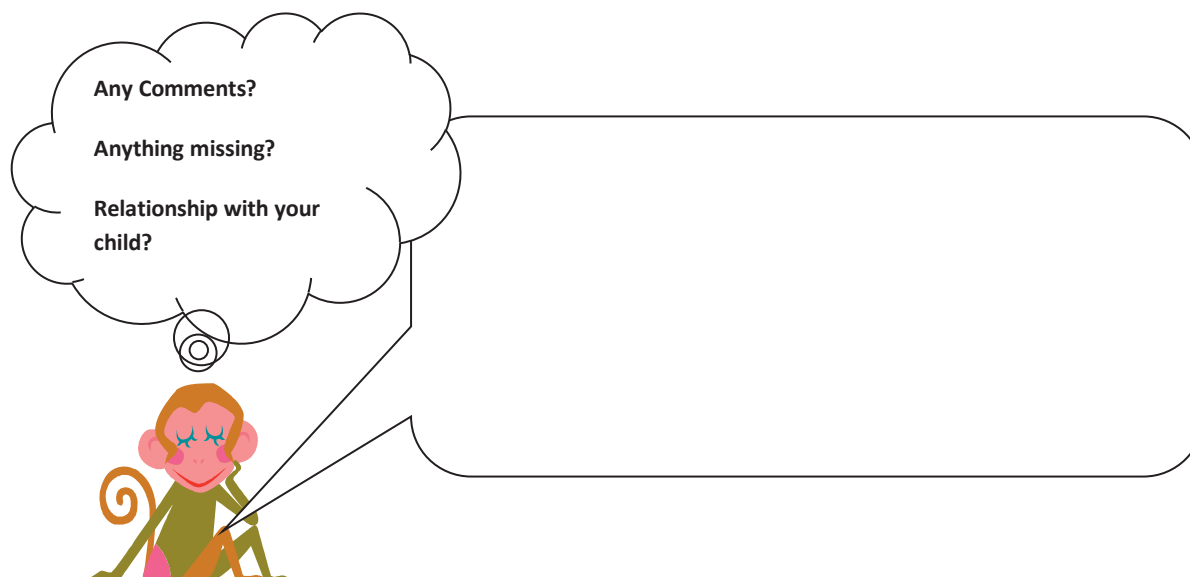
What did you find least useful?

What changes have you seen already in your child?

Any Comments?

Anything missing?

Relationship with your child?



Thank you for taking the time to fill this in. It helps to plan for future groups.

Alternative/Additional Evaluation Questions

1. General

- How has being part of this group changed your behaviour when hearing your child read at home?
- What effect has the Reading Together project had on your child?
- How has this changed your relationship with your child?
- Have any other children been involved at home?

2. Skills

- What did you find most useful about getting the setting right/making it a 'special time'?
- What did you find most useful about praising your child regularly for correct reading, for self-correction and after a prompt?
- What did you find most useful about choosing a book at the right level, using the 2-5 errors for every 50 words rule?
- What did you find most useful about handling errors when the mistake made sense and when the mistake did not make sense?

3. Presentation and Organisation

- How useful did you find the familiarisation session?
- Was there anything that you would have liked more of?
- Was there anything that we spent too much time on?
- How useful did you find the role plays?
- Were the handouts helpful/should they be adapted in any way?

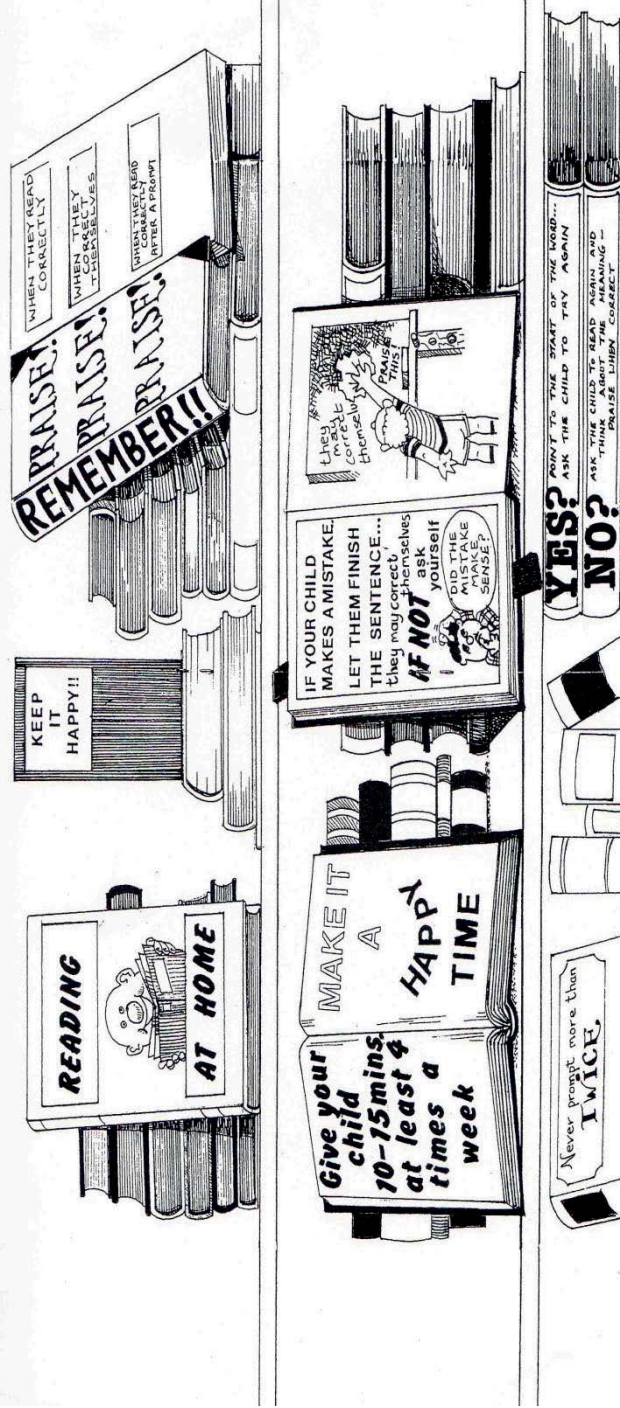
4. Where do we go from here?

- How could this project best be extended in school?
- How could parents best be involved in future groups?
- How could books be made available in an ongoing way from the school?
- How could links with the local library best be extended?

Thank parents for their time and help.

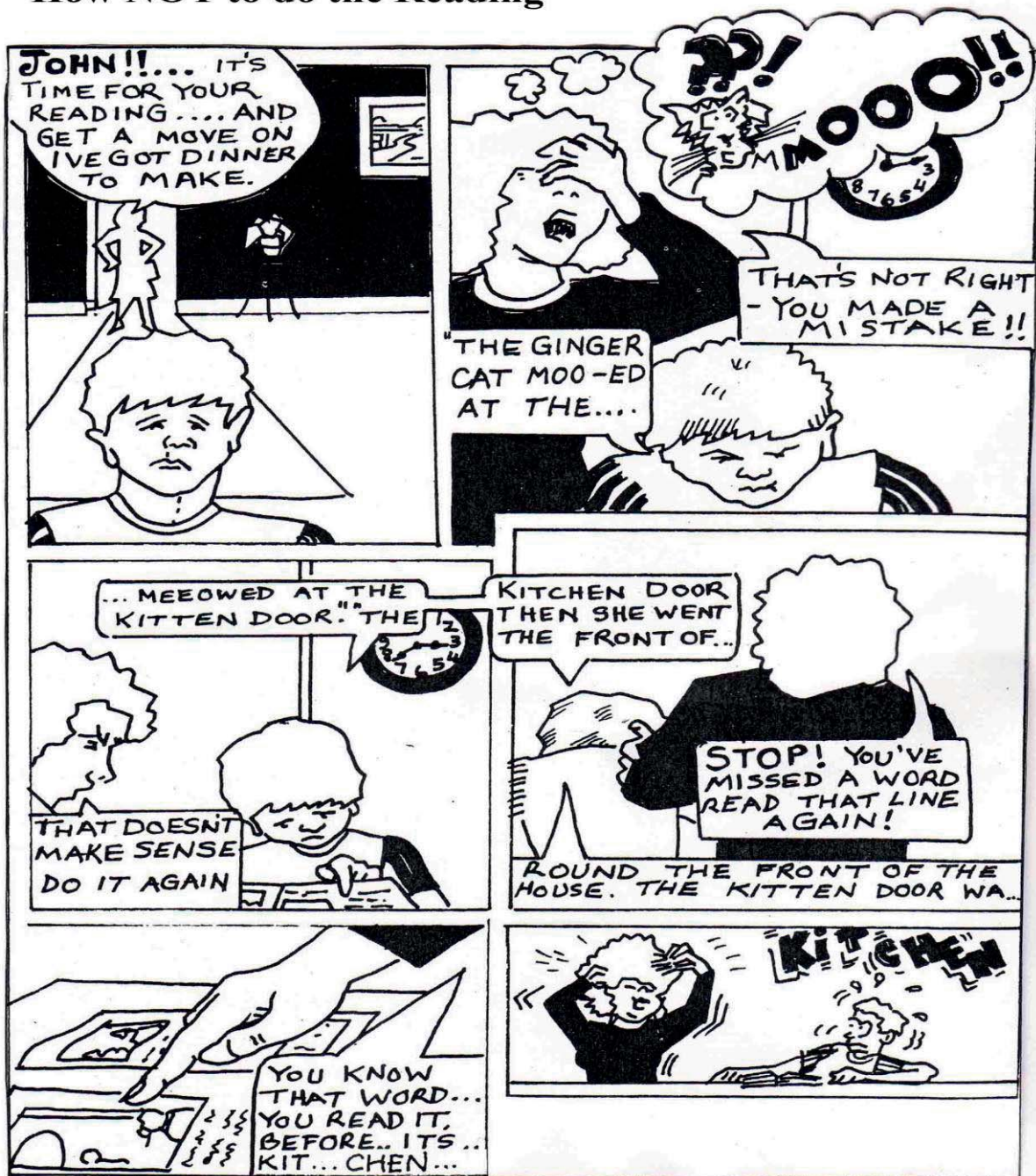
READING TOGETHER HANDOUTS

READING AT HOME



Handout 1

How NOT to do the Reading



Handout 2

This is How to do it



Handout 3



CERTIFICATE

Awarded to:.....

***Following Attendance at a Reading Together
Course***

Date:

Signed:

READING TOGETHER

PARENT LEAFLETS

READING TOGETHER

HOW TO DO IT : THE MAIN POINTS



Make hearing your child's reading a **SPECIAL TIME**

- ❖ Find a quite comfy place.
- ❖ Make sure you can attend completely to your child.
- ❖ Sit beside your child so you can both see the book.
- ❖ Discuss the story before and after your child has read. Talk about the pictures.

PRAISE AND ENCOURAGE your child.

- Praise your child when they correct themselves.
- Praise them by making encouraging noises etc. (your child will not notice if you are nodding and smiling as they are reading).
- Praise your child at the end of every sentence.



- Praise your child when they correct themselves after a prompt.



CHOOSE A BOOK AT THE RIGHT LEVEL

- Choose a book that they can read without making too many mistakes. Do not always choose a book they can read fluently.



- The best level is about 2-5 mistakes in a paragraph of about 50 words.

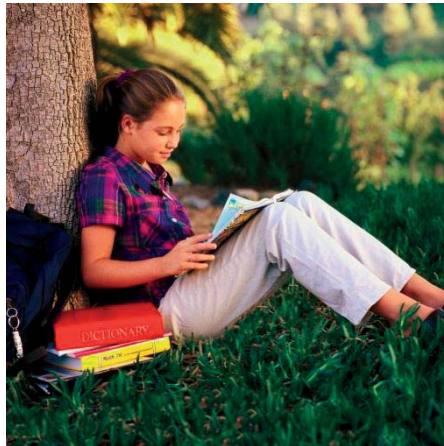


HANDLING MISTAKES

- When your child makes a mistake which does not make sense encourage them to think about the story and to read to the end of the sentence, then try the word again.
- When your child makes a mistake that makes sense encourage them to look at the word more closely.

READING TOGETHER - PARENT GROUPS

GENERAL INFORMATION LEAFLET FOR PARENTS



The main purpose of the Reading Together Parent Groups is to look at things that parents can do which we know will improve their child's reading.



WHAT HAPPENS

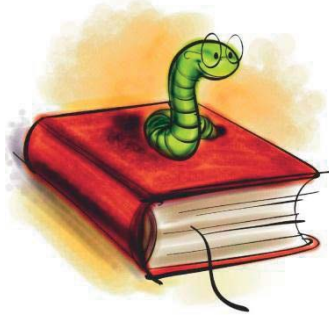
- 5 Friendly sessions.
- All parents of the class are invited.
- No more than 10 adults at any one group.
- Children will join the workshops at appropriate times.
- Sessions will be lead by 2 trained adults.
- You will be asked to read regularly with your child at home.
- Learning will be through demonstration, discussion and practice.

WE LOOK AT A RANGE OF FACTORS TO HELP LEARNING

FOR EXAMPLE

- Getting the setting right for hearing your child read at home.
- How to choose a book at the right level of reading.
- The need for regular praise when hearing your child reading and how this can best be done.
- How to deal with reading when your child gets stuck with a word or makes a mistake.





**THESE GROUPS
HAVE BEEN PROVEN TO WORK
AND REALLY IMPROVE
CHILDREN'S READING**

Highland Council Psychological Service



Works for Positive Change