

Forest Hill School - The Reading School



Your son, his reading
and our support.

Beginning to read



The following link has lots of tips for beginner readers:

<http://www.walker.co.uk/grown-ups.aspx>

It is aimed at younger children but much of the advice still applies to children joining secondary school.

Support him with his **reading homework** by using the school's reading homework card to maintain contact.

When a Year 7 is working to become a strong reader it can feel quite tough and uncomfortable. Giving them confidence to keep trying is vital. Making them feel good about themselves as a reader is the best support a parent, carer or teacher can give them.

Take it in turns with him to read the book so that he does not become too tired. When he hesitates over a word, say it for him, so that he can hear and see it. He may repeat it and you can praise him. In this way the story experience is not disturbed. If he has a sounding out strategy and is comfortable with this habit then equally praise him for this effort too.

Enjoying stories is the goal, so if reading is a challenge, use audiobooks (available from the public library). Listening to Stephen Fry read Harry Potter, or David Walliams reading his own books is really entertaining. Great for developing your son's powers of concentration too.

Challenging a Confident Reader

Discuss the story by asking questions to support their critical thinking such as:

Has the author used structure in an interesting way? (flashbacks, circular plot etc) Are there any characters who you think the author wants us to dislike? Why?

What genre is the book? How similar/dissimilar is it to others of the same genre?

What is the strength of the book? Or its weakness? What would a girl reader make of this story?

Find out a little about the author -do you think his/her personal experience inspired this book in any way?

Enjoyment of the story and of any discussion is key, it should not in any way feel like a test.

Problems with reading?

If you are concerned about your son's reading let us know – contact his English teacher, the SEN co-ordinator or the librarian. If he has lost his reading habit, if he is finding it difficult, or seems to be taking a long time to finish a book then discuss this with us.



Visit the Public Library

Introduce your child to a whole new world of knowledge...

Books can be borrowed for FREE!

They also run reading groups, writing clubs, show films and provide internet access.

The following link is for Lewisham Public Libraries with locations and what's on in each library:

<http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/libraries/branches/Pages/default.aspx>

Reading Aloud With Your Son Is Important

We read aloud to children for the same reasons we talk with them: to reassure; entertain; bond; inform; arouse curiosity; and inspire. But reading aloud goes further than conversation.

A good children's book is three times richer in vocabulary than conversation.

Children have a reading level and a listening level and these are usually not the same. A Year 6 student can be reading at a Year 6 level but able to listen to stories on a Year 8 level. The more of these book words he knows, the more easily he will be able to discuss and later read complex ideas.

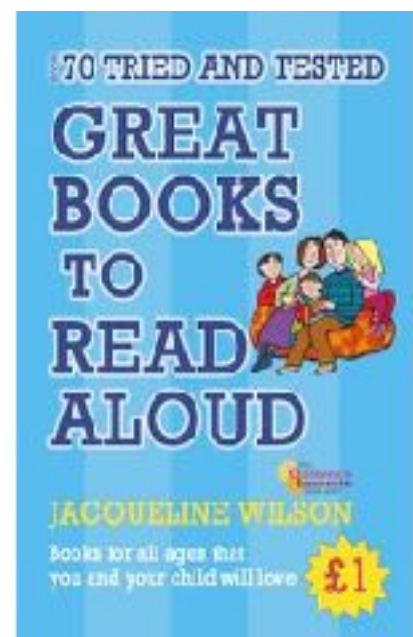
Most importantly, reading together enables a child to associate reading with pleasure. Without this link to pleasure, children are more likely to turn away from reading as something boring.

(Trelease, J. 2006 The Read-Aloud Handbook Penguin) www.trelease-on-reading.com

Sharing the Reading Experience

Great stories have been produced by Malorie Blackman, Bali Rai, Annabel Pitcher... to name but a few. Enjoy reading them too and the fun of discussing the experience, sharing the same joke or feelings at the loss of a favourite character. It helps to feed your son's enthusiasm to read the next book.

When teenage years become a more testing time, a shared love of authors and their stories can remain a bond, for both child and adult.



Need ideas to suggest to your son for reading?

Ask the Librarian at school or at the public library for suggestions.

Our school website has a library page with lots of different booklists e.g. Funny Stories, Horror reading, Pathways forward...

We also have a Facebook page: Forest Hill School Library

Click 'Like' and you will receive news about our latest projects and reviews of books read by Ms Webb.

The following links provide ideas for books and reading:

1. Book Zone is a blog written by a deputy headteacher who is also a really keen reader of children and teenage fiction. He recommends lots of good books for boys:

<http://bookzone4boys.blogspot.co.uk/2012/09/review-ratburger-by-david-walliams.html>

2. Booktrailer films are great ways of hooking someone into trying the book. This site is about encouraging reading throughout the school years:

[booktrailers4kidsandya](http://booktrailers4kidsandya.com)

3. This site reviews a great range of young people's fiction:

www.lovereadingsforkids.co.uk

4. The Guardian newspaper has lots of reviews and runs the Guardian Children's Fiction Prize led by Julia Eccleshare. There is an online club of young reviewers that your son can join:

<http://www.theguardian.com/childrens-books-site/2012/nov/21/review-ratburger-david-walliams>

5. The following link is for the Book Trust's list of national book award prizes. If a book has made it into the shortlist for a prize then that is a sign of good quality writing, so they are a good source of reading suggestions.

<http://www.booktrust.org.uk/prizes-and-awards/4>