



Helping your child with reading

A guide to supporting reading for
parents/carers of KS3 children at

George Abbot School

Reading Lead: Nicky Cassidy

NCassidy@georgeabbot.surrey.sch.uk

About this booklet

Starting secondary school is an exciting time. Your child is becoming more independent and taking more responsibility with their learning. However, as a parent, you may be worried about how they are handling the new demands and wondering what you can do to help.

One of the best things you can do in KS3 is to encourage your child to read for pleasure. Reading habits that were established in primary school should not be stopped once they start Year 7. Research shows that children who enjoy reading do significantly better at school and parents play an important role in helping to develop a love of reading.

The study also found that parents who talk to their children about books, TV programmes and films help to keep their children interested in reading. Having books, newspapers and magazines around at home also made a difference to how interested children were in reading.

Quick ideas for getting books back in their hands...

- *Let them choose what they want to read, rather than choosing what you think they should read*
- *Encourage your child to read magazines, comics, blogs and websites as well as books; buy them a subscription to their favourite*
- *Talk to your child about books you have read that you haven't enjoyed, as well as ones you've loved*
- *Make time to read together if you can – 10 minutes a few times a week will make a big difference*
- *Talk about what they are watching on TV/film and see if there are any book tie-ins*
- *Join the local library and let them choose some audio books; listen to the audio books in the car*
- *Buy books, book vouchers or a magazine as presents/rewards*
- *Find out what they are studying in their different subjects and look through websites, magazines or non-fiction books relating to their topics*
- *Read yourself – set time aside at the weekend for everyone to down tools and read for 20 minutes.*

Helpful questions to ask about what they are reading:

- *Do you like the main character?*
- *How do you think it is going to end?*
- *What impression do you get of character x or y?*
- *Do you think they are likeable? Trustworthy? Suspicious? Etc.*
- *Which words or phrases make you think that?*
- *Does this book remind you of anything you've already read?*
- *If you were that character, what would you have done differently in that situation?*
- *Where is the book set? What does it look like in your head? Would you like to visit?*
- *Why do you think the author wrote this book?*
- *Would you have ended the book differently? Did it end the way you thought it would?*
- *Did the problem of the book's plot get solved?*
- *If you could change one thing in the book, what would it be?*

Supporting reading at KS3

Your child will be studying more subjects at secondary school and will be reading in lots of different ways. For example, scientific explanations will require a different reading approach to a fiction novel. Historical sources will need to be read differently to how they read a recipe. Parents who support their child's education make a real difference to how well their child does and there are lots of quick things you can do to help.

- Try some skimming and scanning together. Skimming is when you read through a text quickly to find out what the main idea is; scanning is glancing through a piece of text to find a specific piece of information. You can do this with a newspaper or a page in any book – ask your child to find something for you or give them three things to find in a certain time. Why not ask them to scan a report for news of their favourite footballer or to find out the weekend's weather.
- Help your child work out what an unfamiliar word means by getting them to read the rest of the sentence and look for clues.
- Help by testing your child when they have spellings to learn and have a dictionary around the house for them to look up words they don't know.

Try making time to:

- Build up the amount of words your child knows – their vocabulary. As they go through secondary school, your child will need to know specialist words and recognise them when they are reading. Take a few words from the George Abbot glossary each week and learn them together.
- Read the books or plays that your child is studying in school – this will hugely boost the conversations you can have about what they think of them. Sharing and comparing ideas will help develop their understanding and personal views.
- Watch the films of the books, plays or topics your child is studying.

“We read to know we're not alone.” — William Nicholson, *Shadowlands*