

8 Ways to Support your Child with Reading

At secondary school, students move from the phase of 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn'. Whilst your child may be able to read, they still need encouragement and practice in order to develop the reading skills they need to access all subject areas.

Here are eight tips to help to keep your child reading outside the classroom, so that they can reach their full potential within it.

Create space for reading in your child's day: having time set aside for reading can help to ensure your child continues to read at home, and that reading continues to be a habit for them.

Read with your child: once children are able to read, many parents stop reading with them. With the challenges of the secondary school curriculum, reading with your child can really help them move from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn'. A mix of being read to, and reading to you, can help students stay motivated with reading and continue to make progress in all subjects. Perhaps, choose a text together from the TGS 50 books lists. [TGS 50 Book List | Thomas Gainsborough School](#)

Talk about reading: if you both read the same thing, whether a novel, an article or a feature in the news, talk about it afterwards. How do they feel about what they have read? What bits were good/ interesting / worrying/ useful to them? Why? Were there any bits they did not understand? By talking about what you have read, you will reinforce their understanding of it and help them to form and share their opinions on a text.

'Reading' doesn't have to mean a novel: whatever your child is interested in, someone will have written something about it. Whether this is an article online, a specialist magazine or a non-fiction book, there will be writing out there to match your child's area of interest and engage them in reading.

Encourage them to find new reading material: Our school library is stocked with a great range of up-to-date fiction and non-fiction.

Help them find their reading 'style': during their time at secondary school, students begin to explore who they are and what their own tastes and styles are. This happens with their reading too. Many teenagers' reading habits revolve around a favourite genre. For some this is gothic horror, others love a mystery,

some find they like real-life, others fantasy. To help them find their own reading style try the websites: [Bookfinder | BookTrust](#) or [Love Reading 4 Kids](#)

Make reading active: help your child to see that reading is vital for everyday life. If you are going on a day trip, could you ask your child to find out key information about where you are going? Could you ask them to find out about the history of the place you are visiting? Perhaps you could ask them to find and follow a recipe to make something for an evening meal? Or make a decision about what to buy in the supermarket by reading the ingredients or nutritional information table?

Let them know it isn't easy: like everything in life, becoming a confident reader requires help, support and a lot of practice. Guide your child to use online dictionaries if they are stuck with vocabulary. Look at a passage together if it is difficult and re-read it. Let them know when you yourself find something hard to understand or come across a new word.