

Reading with children 4–5 years old

When children start school, it's important that you continue to encourage and support their learning as much as you are able. This could often be using school books, with which children may already have made a start – they may even be able to read some books to you.

Try to read together every day, as a fun and bonding part of your routine.

Encourage sounding out and blending, if children find any individual words difficult to read. Then ensure the meaning of the word has also been understood.

Read as a team, whether books are fun or difficult. Encourage children to join in with books you're reading together, especially with rhymes and repeated phrases. If they find their own reading difficult or tiring, you could try taking turns to read a page each.

Begin to look at punctuation, and how it can affect both the way things are read aloud and their meanings.

Re-read favourite books, as this helps to embed learned vocabulary, assists with confidence and fosters that all-important love of reading. Easier texts can help with this, too.

Make connections with real life by reminding children of similar situations or people they have encountered.

Discuss big ideas and small details, asking children both to talk about the whole story and to tell you about specific points. Start encouraging children to make links between points, too.

Communicate considerably with teachers, perhaps using children's reading logs, about anything that stands out: unexpected difficulties or particular interests.

Remember, children will benefit from support with both phonics and understanding. The activities suggested above for building **word reading** and **comprehension** skills can be adapted and extended to fit with children's new reading material and developing abilities.