

## **HELPING YOUR CHILD TO SPEAK AND LISTEN**

As your child moves through school, they will speak with greater fluency and with a greater knowledge of the world. Some tips to foster more fluent speaking include:

- Continue to involve your child when discussing everyday activities, such as grocery shopping, gardening, cooking dinner, collecting post from the post box, doing house work, and travelling in the car or bus.
- Try to ask your child specific questions about their day. A general question like “how was your day?” will likely get a single-word response of “good.” Ask specific questions like “what is the book you are reading in class about?” or “what did you do at lunchtime today?”
- Involve your child in your discussions about the day’s events or current events. Ask their opinion. This helps them understand different perspectives and increases their vocabulary.
- Show a genuine interest in your child’s reading, writing and viewing of all types of texts. Talking about texts can create meaningful discussions and help your child see them as important.
- Show interest in topics your child is studying at school. These can be a great springboard into discussions.
- Encourage your child to discuss their everyday problems and feelings.
- Use questions and discussion to explore other people’s feelings. This will help your child to develop empathy for others.
- Use questions and discussion to broaden your child’s experience and knowledge of the world, particularly during new experiences or on outings.
- Discussing news and current events as your child gets older, they become more aware of news and current events. Discussing news and current events can enrich your child’s understanding of the world.
- Questions are an effective way to encourage your child to think critically about an event and can help foster empathy. Questions also help your child to develop oral fluency when discussing social issues.
- Questions you might ask when discussing a news story or current event include:
  - What do you think caused the event?
  - How do you think people will be affected?
  - Is it fair?
  - Why do you think people think that/do that?
  - What do you think will happen next?
  - How could the problem be fixed?
- Some other activities to develop your discussion:
  - Read several articles together on the same issue to get different opinions. Then discuss the different opinions. Have a debate on a topic, with you and your child taking different sides of the issue. Download and listen to podcasts on an issue, and

discuss. Discuss different “What if?” scenarios. This will help develop your child’s problem solving and imagination.

### **HELPING YOUR CHILD TO READ**

Here are some tips to encourage reading:

- It is recommended that you continue to read together, even if your child is reading independently.
- Take your child to the local library often so they can choose, borrow and renew books. Taking your child to the library at the beginning of school holidays encourages weeks of independent reading.
- Encourage your child to borrow from their school library as well.
- If your child likes an author, find another book or a series of books by the same author.
- Encourage your child to read about their favourite author or illustrator at their website.
- Introduce your child to read different genres such as fantasy, science-fiction, action and adventure.
- Introduce your child to reading different types of texts, such as poems, music lyrics, and short plays.
- Encourage your child to read non-fiction. The newspaper or an online encyclopedia might be a good start, but your child might also be interested in history books or autobiographies of their favourite sportsperson or celebrity.
- Encourage your child to use a dictionary to look up words they might not understand.
- Allow your child to play age-appropriate video games that require reading
- Book Chat
- Book chat is an important strategy to help your child to reflect more deeply on the content and meaning of their favourite books.
- As your child moves through school, add more questions when discussing the book you are reading together, or when discussing the book your child is reading independently.
- Some further questions might include:
  - Does the main character change in the story? How does the character change?
- If you could change the ending of this book, what would it be?
- What do you think is the story’s main message?
- What is your opinion about the story’s main message?
- Can you relate the story or message to another event or issue?
- How could other people see it differently?

## **HELPING YOUR CHILD TO WRITE**

As your child moves through school, he or she will begin writing longer creative pieces, writing in different genres, and exploring non-fiction and persuasive writing.

Some general tips to help with your child's writing in these years include:

- Continue to encourage them to write for everyday skills. This includes writing recipes, family messages, shopping lists and greeting cards.
- Make sure they have an appropriate place to write, such as a desk in a quiet room.
- Provide stationery, such as coloured pens and pencils, and different coloured paper.
- It is always helpful to discuss the writing topic with your child before they start to write. This will give your child ideas and confidence to start writing.
- After discussing the topic your child is writing about, you may want to write down a few arguments or story plot points to help them. They can then expand on these points.
- Encourage your child to write creatively in different genres, such as fantasy, realism, and adventure.
- Encourage your child to write different types of literary texts such as poems, short plays or film scripts.
- Use a book your child has read as a springboard into creative writing.
- Persuasive writing will become a focus at school, particularly in secondary school. Encourage your child to write down their opinions and ideas about specific issues.
- Encourage your child to edit their work for mistakes before they show you. They should also make sure the writing makes sense.
- Getting your child to read their work out loud is a good technique to find mistakes in writing.
- Using a dictionary helps with spelling mistakes. Using a thesaurus helps to expand your child's vocabulary.
- Look, cover, say, write, check will help spelling. Use a picture to help remember. Break the word down.
- Try to buy a handwriting pen or soft grip

<https://literacytrust.org.uk>

<https://www.worksheetworks.com/english/writing/handwriting.html>