



To become good readers children need to develop skills in seven key areas and it can be useful to think about these when reading with your child.

- 1) **Decoding:** Using strategies to **break down words**.
- 2) **Retrieval and Recall:** Finding information from the text to find evidence for how e.g. a character is feeling or what the setting is like.
- 3) **Inference:** Reading between the lines i.e. how does an author 'show' not 'tell' us how a character is feeling.
- 4) **Structure and Organisation:** E.g. subheadings (to locate information quickly), paragraphs, new line for new speakers, chapters, contents pages, glossaries, etc.
- 5) **Language:** to consider how the author has carefully selected words for effect.
- 6) **Purpose and Viewpoint:** What does the narrator or author perhaps feel about a certain situation or subject?
- 7) **Making Links:** To real life experiences or to similar books.

Below are some questions linked to the above points, which we hope you will find useful. It is not necessary to ask every question each time your child reads, of course, but they may prove to be useful prompts to start a more focused discussion.

### Before Reading

- Look at the front cover. What might the story be about?
- What is the genre of the book: sci-fi, mystery, historical, fantasy, adventure, horror, comedy? What are the features that make you think this?
- Who is the author? Have you read any of their books before? Anything similar about his / her stories?
- What has happened in the story so far?
- What do you think will happen next?
- Who is your favourite character? Why?
- Who is the character you like least? Why?
- Find two things the author wrote about this character that made him / her likeable?
- If you met one of the characters from the story, what would you say to him / her?

### During or After Reading.

- Which part of the story was the funniest / scariest / saddest / happiest? How has the author created this effect?
- Pick three favourite words or phrases from this chapter. What do you like about them?
- How was \_\_\_\_\_ feeling when \_\_\_\_\_ happened? Which words show us this?
- Can you find any words or phrases that describe the setting?
- How do we know when a character is speaking out loud to another character? What might their voice sound like and why do you think this?
- Look out for . ! ? , ( ) - in sentences and encourage children to read with expression and to think about their tone.
- Do you like how the story ended? Can you think of another way the book could have ended?
- How would you feel in the situation? What would you do?
- How long has the author spent describing e.g. the setting? What pictures can you see in your mind?

### Unknown Words:

- Encourage children to break them down into separate sounds and then blend them back together.
- Encourage children to see words inside of words.