Supporting learning

Getting started with reading

Reading to children and encouraging them to read independently builds early literacy skills and increases their understandings about their world and how books ‘work’.

Read to the students every day (books and/or other print used in real life/peer’s writing/dictated stories, etc.).

**What to read**

- Read factual books, fairy tales/traditional stories, adventures, make-believe books, diaries, counting books, alphabet books, instruction books (how to make …).
- Read a variety (e.g. recipes, letters, invitations, postcards, signs, poems/rhymes, news/magazine headlines, comic strips, telephone books, web pages, brochures, maps and labels).
- ‘Read’ the pictures/symbols/logos as well as the print.

**How to interest students in reading**

- Read books/texts/topics that interest the students (e.g. read comics or instructions to make things, books about horses or motorbikes, factual or ‘make-believe’ books, poems/rhymes/songs).
- Sometimes read just with one student and other times involve other students.
- Encourage different people to read to the students (e.g. parents, grandparents, older siblings, other teachers etc.).
- Read books presented in different ways (e.g. CD/recorded/DVD stories, picture books with no words, read a book on a website).
- Reread books/texts to students so they become more familiar.
- Encourage students to look through and pretend to read/read from memory familiar books for at least 10 minutes each day.
What to do as you read

• Talk about how you used the pictures and words (print) to tell you what the text says. (e.g. The word says ‘Winton’ and the arrow says ‘turn left.’)
• Talk about other things that can help you to work out what a text is about (e.g. where the text is: on a wall, near a shop, on the back of a holiday postcard).
• Talk about other times you’ve seen/used a similar text (e.g. another recipe or a sign you’ve read).
• Listen to the student’s comments about texts and add some extra ideas. (e.g. When they see a sign that starts with the same letter as their name, a student might say: ‘That’s my name.’ You can say: The word starts like your name. It starts with a letter ‘L’ but it says ‘Laundromat’ and your name is ‘Lauren’.)
• Encourage students to talk about the pictures, ideas and words (print) in the book as you read.
• Encourage students to make links between the book/text and their own experiences. (e.g. How is the cat in the story like/not like your cat? You saw a possum when you were camping. What did that possum do/eat? How would you feel if you had the chickenpox like the girl in the brochure/book?)
• Encourage students to ask questions about the ideas in the book, the pictures and print. (e.g. Why would she need crutches to walk? What is that whale doing? What does that word say? Why is this bit of writing so big?)

Make reading an enjoyable experience.