

**St Mary's Catholic Primary School**

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## St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2022

### Valentine's Day Lunch



### Italian Menu

**Pizza con prosciutto e formaggio**

**Biscotti a forma di cuore**

Pizza with ham and cheese

Heart-shaped Biscuits

## Reading at Home

We really need everyone to help raise the standards in reading. We have a large group of children that never or hardly ever read at home. Good reading ability is linked with success across all curriculum areas. We ask that all children read at least three times each week as part of their homework commitment. To help inspire and motivate our children to read even more at home, I am introducing a new 5 STAR READING CHAMPION Certificate that children will receive every week if they read and record their reading at home in their reading diaries FIVE times. I cannot stress enough how much we need everyone to be on-board with this so the impact of the last couple of years can be really minimised. Thank you for your anticipated support.

# Helping your child with reading: Top Tips

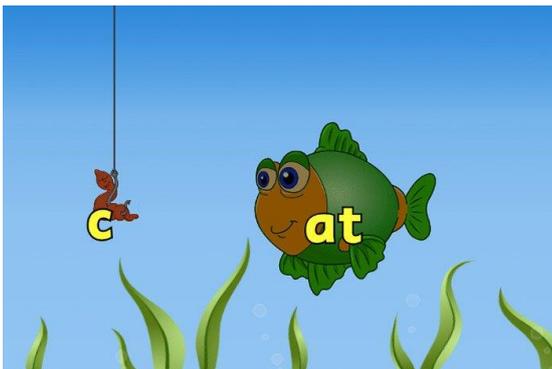
Here are 10 simple steps to teach your child to read at home:

## 1. Use songs and nursery rhymes to build phonemic awareness

Children's songs and nursery rhymes aren't just a lot of fun—the rhyme and rhythm help kids to hear the sounds and syllables in words, which helps them learn to read. A good way to build phonemic awareness (one of the most important skills in learning to read) is to clap rhythmically together and recite songs in unison. This playful and bonding activity is a fantastic way for kids to implicitly develop the literacy skills that will set them up for reading success.

## 2. Make simple word cards at home

Cut out simple cards and write a word containing three sounds on each one (e.g. ram, sat, pig, top, sun, pot, fin). Invite your child to choose a card, then read the word together and hold up three



fingers. Ask them to say the first sound they hear in the word, then the second, and then the third. This simple activity requires little prep-time and builds essential phonics and decoding skills (helping them learn how to sound out words). If your child is just starting out with learning the letters of the alphabet, focus on the sound each letter makes, more so than letter names.

## 3. Engage your child in a print-rich environment

Create daily opportunities to build your child's reading skills by creating a print-rich environment at home. Seeing printed words (on posters, charts, books, labels etc.) enables children to see and apply connections between sounds and letter symbols. When you're out and about, point out letters on posters, billboards and signs. In time you can model sounding out the letters to make words. Focus on the first letter in words. Ask your child "What sound is that letter?" "What other word starts with that sound?" "What word rhymes with that word?"

## 4. Play word games at home or in the car

Building on from the previous step, introduce simple word games on a regular basis. Focus on playing games that encourage your child to listen, identify and manipulate the sounds in words. For example, start by asking questions like "What sound does the word \_\_\_\_\_ start with?" "What sound does the word \_\_\_\_\_ end with?" "What words start with the sound \_\_\_\_\_?" and "What word rhymes with \_\_\_\_\_?".

## 5. Understand the core skills involved in teaching kids to read

It's important to remember that learning to read involves various different skills. These are the skills all children need in order to successfully learn how to read. In summary, these include:

1. **Phonemic awareness** – the ability to hear and manipulate the different sounds in words
2. **Phonics** – recognising the connection between letters and the sounds they make
3. **Vocabulary** – understanding the meaning of words, their definitions, and their context
4. **Reading comprehension** – understand the meaning of text, both in storybooks and information books
5. **Fluency** – the ability to read aloud with speed, understanding and accuracy

## 6. Play with letter magnets

Middle vowel sounds can be tricky for some children, which is why this activity can be so helpful. Prepare letter magnets on the fridge and pull the vowels to one side (a, e, i, o, u). Say a CVC word (consonant-vowel-consonant), for example 'cat', and ask your child to spell it using the magnets. To help them, say each vowel sound aloud (/ayh/, /eh/, /ih/, /awe/, /uh/) while pointing at its letter, and ask your child which one makes a sound similar to the middle sound.

## 7. Read together on a daily basis and ask questions about the book

A lot of people don't realise just how many skills can be picked up through the simple act of reading to a child. Not only are you showing them how to sound out words, you're also building key comprehension skills, growing their vocabulary, and letting them hear what a fluent reader sounds like. Most of all, regular reading helps your child to develop a love of reading, which is the best way to set them up for reading success.

Strengthen your child's comprehension skills by asking questions while reading. For younger children, encourage them to engage with the pictures (e.g. "Do you see the boat? What colour is the cat?"). For older children, ask questions about what you've just read, like "Why do you think the little bird was afraid?" "When did Debbie realise she had special powers?"

## 9. Play games to memorise high-frequency sight words every day

Sight words are ones that cannot be easily sounded out and need to be recognised on sight.

High-frequency sight words are ones that occur very often in reading and writing (e.g. you, I, we, am, had, and, to, the, have, they, where, was, does).



The strategy for learning sight words is, "See the word, say the word". Learning to identify and read sight words is essential for young children to become fluent readers. Most children will be able to learn a few sight words at the age of four (e.g. is, it, my, me, no, see, and we) and around 20 sight words by the end of their first year of school. You can teach sight words by playing with flashcards.

10. Be patient; the best way to teach kids to read is to make it fun!

Every child learns at his or her own pace, so always remember the single most important thing you can do is to make it enjoyable. By reading regularly, mixing things up with the activities you choose, and letting your child pick out their own books occasionally, you'll instil an early love of reading and give them the best chance at reading success in no time.



Year 3

Today we became scientists and observed different types of soils which were:

Clay, clay loam, chalky loam and sandy soils.



Our scientists all had different jobs to do and this group had to open the soil samples without tearing the bag!

To help us observe we used some lenses. These helped us to look at the grains of soil. Some soils had fine grains and others had larger grains. In the clay there were even some small stones and straw.

We loved the feel of the chalky loam soil because it crumbled in our hands.



## Year 2 Music

This week we listened to three songs that were of the Rock genre. We danced and kept the beat and rhythm in different ways.

Tapping our feet, nodding our heads, swinging our arms, shaking our hips and any other way we could think of. We then discussed what instruments we could hear and whether we liked the songs or not.





## **Year 2 Birdfeeder Making**

**Children in Year 2 used all the leftover fruit to make fruit kebabs for our birds to eat.**

## **Congratulations**

**Big congratulations to Mr Freeman and his partner on the birth of their little girl. Both**



Mother and baby are doing well. Mr Freeman will be returning to school after half-term.

### **Half-Term**

**We break-up for half-term on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> February**