

Chaucer Primary School



Ways to help your child at home

Phonics- Letters and Sounds

Ways to support your children at home: talking and listening.

- ★ Make time to listen to your child talking – as you meet them from their setting or school, as you walk or travel home by car, in the supermarket as you shop, at meal times, bath times, bedtimes ... any time!
- ★ Switch off the TV, radio and mobile phones – and really listen!
- ★ Show that you are interested in what they are talking about – look at your child, smile, nod your head, ask a question or make a response to show that you really have been listening.
- ★ Make a collection of different toy creatures – for example, a duck, a snake, an alien, say the sound it might make as you play together (for example, ‘quack-quack’, ‘sssssss’, ‘yuk-yuk’) and encourage your child to copy you.
- ★ Listen at home – switch off the TV and listen to the sounds both inside and outside the home. Can your child tell you what sounds they heard, in the order in which they heard them?
- ★ Play-a-tune – and follow me! Make or buy some simple shakers, drums and beaters, then play a simple tune and ask your child to copy. Have fun!
- ★ Use puppets and toys to make up stories or retell known ones. Record your child telling the story and play it back to them.

Ways to support your children at home: body percussion.

- ★ Learn some action rhymes, such as ‘Wind the bobbin up’.
- ★ Play some commercially produced tapes and CD-roms. Clap along with familiar rhymes and learn new ones.
- ★ Listen to the sounds your feet make when walking, running or skipping: slowly, softly, fast, stomping hard, in flipflops, boots, high heels.
- ★ Try different types of clapping: clap your hands softly, quickly and make a pattern for your child to follow. Do the same clapping your thighs or stamping your feet. Tap your fingers. Click your tongue.
- ★ Invent a special family clap routine for when someone does something really well.

Ways to support your children at home: what to do if your child is reluctant to read or write at home.

Reading

- ★ Make sure your child sees you reading.
- ★ Read to your child. Show you like the book. Bring stories to life by using loud, soft, scary voices – let yourself go!
- ★ Leave books around the house for your child to dip into.
- ★ Let your child choose what **they** would like to read – books, comics, catalogues.
- ★ Read favourite books over and over again. Enjoy!

Writing

- ★ Make sure your child sees you writing.
- ★ Compose an email together inviting a friend over to tea.
- ★ Make words together using magnetic letters.
- ★ Make up a story together about one of their toys. You write for them, repeating the sentences as you write. When it is complete, they can draw pictures to go with it.
- ★ Buy stickers of a favourite film or TV programme and make a book about it.

Ways to support your children at home: environmental sounds.

- ★ Go on a listening walk. When walking down the road, make a point of listening to different sounds: cars revving, people talking, birds singing, dogs barking. When you get home, try to remember all the sounds you heard. You could try taping the sounds, to listen to them again, or try reproducing them yourselves, using your voices or instruments.
- ★ Make sounds, using a range of props, such as running a stick along a fence or tapping the bin lid.
- ★ Invent a secret family ‘knock’ for entering rooms.
- ★ Play ‘sound lotto’. A commercial version of this can be purchased from many children’s toy shops but making your own, from your sound walk, would be far more rewarding.

Ways to support your children at home: sound talk.

This is a very supportive activity to play with your child.

Try breaking down simple words when you are giving instructions or asking questions, such as

"Can you find your h-a-t (hat)?"
"Where is the c-a-t (cat)?"
"Sit on the s-ea-t (seat)."
"Eat your f-oo-d (food)."

Find real objects around your home and practise 'sound talk'. First, just let them listen, then see if they will join in, for example, saying:

"I spy a p-e-g – peg."
"I spy a c-u-p – cup."

"Simon says – touch your ch-i-n – chin."

It is really important to say the sounds (**phonemes**) aloud, in order, all through the word.

Prior to this, your child should have experienced lots of the environmental, instrumental and body percussion, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration and voice sounds activities to tune in their ears.

Ways to support your children at home: instrumental sounds.

- ★ Make your own musical instruments, using cardboard rolls, tins, dried peas, beans, stones. Shake these loudly, softly, as you are marching, skipping or stomping. Play 'Guess what's inside the instrument'.
- ★ Sing known songs loudly and then softly, stretch words in known songs and add new words or sounds.
- ★ Listen to a range of music with your child, from rap to classical. Encourage your child to move in response to the variety of musical styles and moods.

Ways to support your children at home: alliteration (words that begin with the same sound).

- ★ Alliteration is a lot of fun to play around with. Your child's name can be a good place to start, for example, say: 'Gurpeet get the giggles', 'Carl caught a cat', 'Jolly Jessie jumped'. Encourage other family members to have a go, for example: 'Mummy munches muffins', 'Daddy is doing the dishes'.
- ★ Emphasise alliteration in songs and stories, for example: 'Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers'.
- ★ Play around with familiar song , such as 'Old MacDonald had some sheep, shoes, shorts, with a sh sh here and and sh sh there', to emphasise alliteration.
- ★ Identify the odd one out, for example, cat, cup, boy, car.
- ★ Make up little nonsense stories together using lots of alliteration
- ★ Collect items that start with the same sound from the park, the garden and around the house.
- ★ When shopping, think about items you are buying and say: 'a tall tin of tomatoes', 'a lovely little lemon'. Encourage your child to do the same.

Ways to support your children at home: rhythm and rhyme.

- ★ Get into the rhythm of language: bounce your child on your knee to the rhythm of a song or nursery rhyme; march or clap to a chant or poem. Help your child move to the rhythm of a song or rhyme.
- ★ Read or say poems, songs, nursery songs and rhyming stories as often as you can. Try to use gestures, tap regular beats and pause to emphasise the rhythm of the piece.
- ★ Add percussion to mark the beats using your hands, feet or instruments.Try out some rhythmic chanting such as 'two, four, six, eight, hurry up or we'll be late' or 'bip bop boo, who are you?'

Ways to support your children at home: voice sounds.

- ★ Repeat your infant's vocalisations.
- ★ Make fun noises and nonsense words.
- ★ Say words in different ways (fast, slowly, high, low, using a funny voice) 'Sing' known songs using only sounds (for example, 'la, la, la') and ask your child to guess the song.
- ★ Vary your tempo and pitch when reading stories.

Ways to support your children at home: oral blending and segmenting.

This is all oral (spoken). Your child will not be expected to match the letter to the sound at this stage. The emphasis is on helping children to hear the separate sounds in words and to create spoken sounds.

Oral blending and segmenting is a later skill that will be important when the time comes for your child to read and write. Being able to hear the separate sounds within a word and then blend them together to understand that word is really important.

Blending is a vital skill for reading. The separate sounds (phonemes) of the word are spoken aloud, in order, all through the word and are then merged together into the whole word. This merging is called **blending**. For example, the adult would say

c-a-t = cat.

Segmenting is a vital skill for spelling. The whole word is spoken aloud, then broken up into its separate sounds (phonemes) in order, all through the word. For example, the adult would say

cat = c-a-t.