

## Reading guidance for parents

Here at Long Lane, we value the importance of learning to read fluently and encourage daily reading at home. Home reading is supported through a combination of structured phonics for younger pupils and the **Accelerated Reader** programme for more confident readers. Parents are encouraged to use the **Reading Record** as a primary communication tool to share progress and feedback with teachers.

In class, we use **VIPERS** (developed by [The Literacy Shed](#)) to help pupils develop key comprehension skills aligned with the National Curriculum.

Included below are question stems parents can use at home, adapted for different stages of learning.

## School-Wide Expectations & Resources for Reading

- **Minimum Daily Reading:** All pupils are expected to read for at least **10 minutes every day** at home, with 20 minutes producing the best results in reading progress.
- **Reading Records:** An adult must sign the Reading Record daily for all year groups to confirm home reading has taken place.
- **Login Support:** Passwords for online tools (like Accelerated Reader and Oxford Owl) can be found inside your child's Reading Record.
- **Online Hub:** Parents can access the [Home Learning Zone](#) for curriculum maps and links to educational apps.

## Guidance by Year Group

### Foundation (EYFS) - developing early reading skills

Reading development begins with a strong foundation in **phonological awareness**. This is the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate sounds in spoken language *without* needing to see any written letters.

## Why Phonological Awareness Matters

Before children can successfully use the school's **Read Write Inc. (RWI)** phonics programme, they must be able to "tune in" to the sounds of English. Developing these skills at home is a powerful predictor of future reading and spelling success.

## Key Skills to Practice at Home

You can support your child through simple, 5–10 minute "sound games" that require no extra materials.

- **Syllable Clapping:** Help children hear the "beats" in a word. Clap out names or objects: "ba-na-na" (3 claps) or "cat" (1 clap).
  - **Rhyme Time:** Sing nursery rhymes like *Humpty Dumpty* and encourage your child to finish the line (e.g., "Humpty Dumpty had a great...").
  - **Initial Sound Detective:** Emphasise the first sound of a word and ask your child to find other things that start with that sound. Focus on the **sound** (e.g., /s/) rather than the letter name ("Ess").
  - **Oral Blending (Robot Talk):** Talk like a robot to help them learn to blend sounds together. Say "/k/ - /a/ - /t/" and ask them "What's my word?" (Cat!).
  - **Oral Segmenting:** The reverse of blending. Ask your child, "How many sounds can you hear in 'dog'?" (d-o-g).
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- **Phonics Focus:** Children begin the Read Write Inc. (RWI) phonics scheme to learn letter sounds and blending.
  - **Repetition:** Parents are encouraged to re-read books with children up to **three times** to build confidence and fluency.
  - **Resources:** Use Oxford Owl free resources to practice RWI sounds at home.

**Parent Tip:** Always use "pure" sounds when practicing. Avoid adding an "uh" sound to the end of consonants (say /s/, not "suh"; /m/, not "muh") to make blending easier for your child. [RWI - how to say letter sounds](#)

## Developing early comprehension skills

For parents of children at the early stages of reading, oral comprehension is all about talking through the pictures and making "best guesses" before they can read the words themselves.

Since these children are often using **Read Write Inc. (RWI)** "Sound Blending" books or "Ditty" sheets, these questions focus on the **VIPERS** skills tailored for their age and can be used with any book-sharing or story time.

### **Before Opening the Book**

- **Prediction:** "Look at the front cover. What do you think this book is about? Is it about a real animal or a pretend one?"
- **Vocabulary:** "The title says the dog is 'clumsy'. Do you know what clumsy means? Let's try to act out being clumsy!"

### **While Looking at the Pictures**

- **Retrieval:** "Can you point to the character wearing the red hat?" or "How many ducks can you see on this page?"
- **Inference:** "How is the little boy feeling in this picture? How can you tell?" (Look for: "He is smiling" or "He looks sad because he dropped his ice cream.")
- **Vocabulary:** "The author says the woods are 'gloomy'. Look at the picture— why do you think they used that word?"

### **After Reading a Page**

- **Retrieval:** "What did the cat find under the sofa?"
- **Inference:** "Why do you think the girl is hiding? What is she afraid of?"
- **Explanation:** "Which part of the story made you laugh the most? Why was it funny?"

### **At the End of the Book**

- **Sequencing:** "What was the very first thing that happened? What happened right at the end?"
- **Summarising:** "If you had to tell Daddy what happened in this story in just three words, what would they be?"
- **Connection:** "Does this book remind you of any other stories we've read, like *The Gruffalo* or *Stick Man*?"

### **Parent Tip: The "Thinking Out Loud" Strategy**

Sometimes, EYFS children find it hard to answer "Why?". You can help by "thinking out loud" first:

*"I think the bear is sad because his face is looking down and he's all alone. Do you think he's sad too?"*

### **Key Stage 1 (Years 1 & 2)**

- **Year 1 Phonics Screening:** Reading at home focuses on preparing for the national Phonics Screening Check at the end of Year 1.
- **Fluency Practice:** Continue re-reading books (up to three times) to move beyond decoding to expressive reading.
- **Transition to AR:** Once children are fluent, they begin the Accelerated Reader scheme, where they take short quizzes after finishing a book to test comprehension.

### **KS1 VIPERS (Years 1 & 2)**

In Key Stage 1, the emphasis is on **Vocabulary**, **Inference**, and **Retrieval**. The letters stand for: **V**ocabulary, **I**nfer, **P**redict, **E**xplain, **R**etrieve, and **S**equence.

- **Vocabulary:** "Which word tells you that [character] is feeling happy?" or "Find one word that means the same as 'scary'."
- **Infer:** "Why was [character] feeling sad?" or "How can you tell that it is a cold day in the story?"
- **Predict:** "Based on the cover, what do you think this book will be about?" or "What do you think will happen next?"
- **Explain:** "Who is your favourite character and why?" or "Would you like to live in this setting? Why/Why not?"
- **Retrieve:** "Where did [character] go at the start of the story?" or "What kind of animal is [character]?"
- **Sequence:** "Can you tell me the first thing that happened in the story?" or "Put these three events in the order they happened."

## Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 & 4)

- **Reading Frequency:** Minimum of 10 minutes daily with an adult, who must sign the Reading Record.
- **Consolidation:** Children are encouraged to read books at least **twice**—once to master the text and a second time to deepen understanding.
- **Accelerated Reader:** Use Renaissance Home Connect to track your child's quiz scores and book levels (ZPD).

## KS2 VIPERS (Years 3 to 6)

- In Key Stage 2, the "S" changes from Sequence to **Summarise**, and questions require more evidence from the text.
- **Vocabulary:** "Find and copy a word or phrase that suggests the setting is spooky." or "What does the word [X] mean in this sentence?"
- **Infer:** "How do these words make the reader feel?" or "What was the character thinking when they said [X]? Give evidence."
- **Predict:** "What does this paragraph suggest will happen next? What makes you think this?"

- **Explain:** "How does the author build tension in this chapter?" or "Why has the author arranged the text with these subheadings?"
- **Retrieve:** "According to the text, when did [event] take place?" or "Find and copy two things that [character] packed in their bag."
- **Summarise:** "Can you summarise the main ideas of this chapter in one sentence?" or "What is the main message of this story?"

## Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 & 6)

- **Independent Reading:** While children read more independently, a parent must still **sign the Reading Record daily**. Aim for 20 minutes daily reading.
- **Comprehension Skills:** Focus on "VIPERS" strategies (Vocabulary, Infer, Predict, Explain, Retrieve, Sequence/Summarise) during home discussions to prepare for end-of-KS2 assessments.
- **Reading Ambassadors:** Year 6 pupils often act as [Reading Ambassadors](#), supporting younger peers; parents can encourage this leadership by discussing how they might explain a story to a younger child.

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## Parent Tip: The "PEE" Method

- For older children, the school may encourage them to answer using the **PEE** method:
- **Point:** State the answer clearly.
- **Evidence:** Find a quote or specific part of the text that proves it.
- **Explain:** Explain how that evidence supports the point

## Key Parent Support Tools

- **Reading Bingo:** Look out for the seasonal **Reading Bingo Challenge** to encourage diverse reading habits at home.
- **Author Visits & Workshops:** The school hosts reading workshops and author visits throughout the year to inspire a "Love of Reading".
- **Class Reading Spines and recommended books** quality texts used as a basis for our curriculum and recommended reads to inspire a love of stories and reading.
- **Class Blogs/Teams:** Specific weekly tasks and recommended reading lists are often shared via **Microsoft Teams**.