Reading With Your Child at Home

Reading with children is fun and one of the best ways to help prepare them for school.

Children learn about the value and importance of reading as they watch their family reading and writing in everyday life.

Whether reading a novel, sharing a story, using a recipe, making a shopping list, writing a birthday card or reading a street sign, children observe the value of reading and writing.

What you can do at home

1. Be yourself and involve your child in everyday conversations from an early age.
2. Read aloud to your child. It will help your child to learn the language of books and encourages the enjoyment of books and reading.
3. Talk about books together - make reading a shared, enjoyable activity.
4. See that there is a range of reading material for your child at home, both fiction and non-fiction.
5. Read to your child in your first language - research shows that using your first language will help your child when he or she learns to read English.
6. Try not to let television intrude on reading time - set aside some uninterrupted time to read with your child.
7. Listen to your child read every day, even if only for a short time.
8. Give books as treats and presents.
9. Discuss the meanings of stories and words.
10. Join your local library. Borrow books for yourself as well as your child.

The magic of language

One of the keys in learning to read is exposure to literature. Most libraries have guides for recommended literature suitable for children of different ages and grades. These may help you choose books that will introduce your child to the magic of literary language.

You may also want to borrow books with audio tapes. This will help your child learn to track the words on the page as they are being read. You can teach this skill yourself by pointing to the words in a book as you are reading aloud.