

Pupil information sheet: How to improve my reading

The more you read the better you get at reading.

No one wants to do things that are difficult for them. If riding a bicycle is hard, you don't go cycling and it doesn't matter much. But if reading is hard for you and you avoid reading then it does matter. In order to learn at school and manage in life you don't have to ride a bicycle but you do have to read. The more you read the better you get at reading.

Systematic phonics programmes teach you to sound out the letters in words and blend the sounds so that you can read the words. As you learn, you will be able to work out more and more words. This is good. You also need to keep on practising by reading every day. If you don't practise, you forget what you've learnt. But if reading is still hard work, you might not be keen on reading. What can you do about this?

- In order to want to read, find something that interests you. There are many good books but it doesn't have to be a story in a book. It can be information about anything that you would like to know about and talk about. It can be a newspaper or a website.
- Find someone you can read with – a reading partner. It could be any adult that you get on with at school or at home or your school may have 'book buddies' – pupils who have volunteered to become reading partners.
- Start by talking together about the content – what do you think it is going to be about? There are then many ways of reading together.
 - You can choose to be the lead reader so that your reading partner only says the difficult words.
 - You can choose to take turns and read a bit each.
 - From time to time stop and talk about what you have read. It gives you a rest and it's nice to see what you both think.
 - If the book is good but there are many hard words, you can choose to read what you can and your partner reads the rest.
 - It helps to read some parts again so that the second time is easier and you can enjoy the content.
- It's good to see how much you've done so keep a list of what you have read. If you wish, you can give books ratings from one to five to show how much you liked them.
- Remember, the more you read the better your reading gets. It can be hard work when you start but, with time, you'll find that it gets easier. Hopefully you are not just practising reading, but, together with your reading partner, enjoying the content of what you read.