

How to help your child with: Reading, Writing, Handwriting, Spelling and Phonics



Barnes Primary School



At Barnes Primary there is a reading corner
in every classroom

How to support your child at home

At Barnes Primary we believe that by working in partnership with parents/ carers we can help each child reach the highest possible standard. Your help is invaluable. In this book you will find a wealth of information to support your child with reading, writing, handwriting, spelling and phonics.

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BASIC ORGANISATION

- Please make sure your child brings their Reading Journal with their school reading book each day in their book bag.
- Please ensure your child reads and hears you read to them every day and record this in their reading journal.
- Practise reading and spelling the word lists on pages 14 & 15 with your child at home.



Making reading fun – six tips

Top tips for reluctant readers:

- 1 Young children can become tired easily, particularly after a full day at school. Reading a little and often is the best approach.
- 2 Take it in turns to read each page. This can help maintain a child's interest.
- 3 Find out what kinds of books your child likes. Is there a particular subject or topic? Does she prefer non-fiction books? Encourage your child to look inside a book (more confident readers can read the blurb) before deciding to read it.
- 4 Allow your child to revisit a favourite book. This creates security. It consolidates success and can really help to boost confidence.
- 5 Be a good role model. Allow your child to see you enjoying reading. This will help him/her to realise the value of reading. Remember: children tend to model what they see adults doing.
- 6 Most importantly, praise, praise, praise! The English language is complicated and learning to read takes time. You might wish to reward little achievements with stickers or special time with you.

All Barnes Primary children usually read in groups of six with the class teacher. This is referred to as **guided reading**. We try to ensure that the books they read are at the correct level as children can become put off by a text that is too challenging. They should be able to read their text with at least 90% accuracy.

On the following pages, we outline in greater detail the reading skills that we will be focusing on in each book band.

Colour Banding for Reading Books

The table below shows the progression in reading bands. This information will help you understand the colour coded books your child will be working on during their time at Barnes Primary.

By recording in this book each day whether your child is reading 90% of their book accurately, you are helping inform the teacher's assessment. Children will progress through these bands at individual rates. Your child's class teacher will inform you when your child moves to the next level.

The year group indicated in the table below is national average. Each child will progress at their own rate and we will assist each child to make the maximum progress they can.

Book Band colour	Reception	Year 1	Year 2
lilac			
pink			
red			
yellow			
blue			
green			
orange			
turquoise			
purple			
gold			
white			
lime			

How to help your child with the different reading bands

LILAC BOOKS

These books help children to develop speaking and listening skills through telling visual stories. They are wordless books that tell the story through pictures alone.

- Look at the pages, in order, and talk about what is happening on the left hand side of the page before looking at the right hand side.
- Can your child talk about what is happening on each page?
- Who can she see?
- What is the book about?

PINK BOOKS

These books are for children just starting to read. Your child will now be getting used to reading from left to right. There are usually no more than 10 pages with up to 5 words on each page. The text will be short and highly predictable. There will be repetitive sentence structures, including high frequency words. Illustrations will fully support the text. The text will be fully punctuated and in the same position on each page.

- Can your child locate the title on the front cover?
- Help your child to open the book and turn the pages.
- She now needs to understand that we read from left to right.
- Can your child read the simple consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words by sounding them out and blending?
- Parents can support the reading of tricky words (words that are not decodable).

RED BOOKS

Your child will move up to red level when they have gained more confidence and know some high frequency words by sight. There are usually no more than 12 pages in these books, with one sentence per page. They are slightly longer than pink books, but still have highly predictable text. They have repetitive sentence structures, including many high frequency words. There is a simple story development. Non-fiction texts may have more than one type of print format. The print is reasonably large and there is a full range of punctuation.

- * Can your child locate and recall the title?
- * Can your child read the simple CVC words by sounding them out and blending?
- * Is your child starting to read more rhythmically and keep track of the text whilst reading? They should be using their finger to move from word to word.
- * Can your child self-correct if she makes a mistake?



YELLOW BOOKS

Your child is now beginning to read more varied sentence structures and is taking note of some punctuation. There are usually no more than 15 pages in yellow books, with one or two sentences per page. The books use some repetition of phrase patterns, ideas and vocabulary. There is more variation in sentence structure, including sentences with more than one clause. Illustrations continue to support the text. Story lines are more detailed.

- Your child should now be following the print with her eyes, finger pointing only at points of difficulty.
- She should now be taking note of punctuation. Does she know the name and purpose of the punctuation marks that she is coming across?
- Can your child sound out unknown words and blend to decode? These words may contain digraphs.
- Can your child search for information in print to confirm or predict unknown words?
- Your child should now be able to predict what may happen in greater detail.
- Can your child discuss what is happening? Encourage your child to make links to events on previous pages.

BLUE BOOKS

Your child is becoming more confident at reading longer and more varied sentences. There are usually no more than 15 pages in these books, with two to three sentences per page. They have greater variation in sentence pattern and content. Any repeated language patterns are now longer, or act as refrains. These stories contain more events. The pictures now support the storyline rather than conveying the precise meaning. Non-fiction books build on children's interests and encourage discussion around high quality photographs.

- Your child should be recognising key words by sight to support their reading fluency.
- Can your child sound out words independently using her phonic knowledge?
- She will come across a number of digraphs and trigraphs in these books.
- She should self-correct more rapidly.
- It might be helpful to re-read sentences after decoding to help enhance phrasing and meaning.
- Can your child tell you about the characters in the story, what they are doing and why they are acting in a particular way?
- Can your child recognise parts of longer words to help them when decoding?
- Model to your child how she can find particular information that interests her in non-fiction books.

GREEN BOOKS

Your child is now starting to read with increasing fluency and take note of punctuation. These books usually contain about 20 pages. There are three or four sentences per page. They have varied and longer sentences. There is little or no repetition of phrases. There are a larger number of characters involved. Events may be sustained over several pages. There will now be a larger number of words on each page. Some less familiar vocabulary will be used. Illustrations now provide only moderate support for the reader.

- Can your child read the sentences fluently?
- Can your child respond to punctuation marks and read with expression?
- These books will contain more split digraphs or alternative pronunciations.
- Can they discuss the characters or plot in greater detail?
- Can your child use the contents page and glossary of a non-fiction book and locate information?



ORANGE BOOKS

Your child is starting to read longer and more complex sentences and can understand a range of punctuation. There are usually about 20 pages in these books, with four or five sentences per page. These stories are now longer. An increased proportion of space will be allocated to print, rather than pictures. Sentence structures become more complex. Non-fiction texts contain more formal sentences and a widening range of unfamiliar terms.

- Can your child use her phonic knowledge and word recognition to read with fluency?
- Encourage your child not to rely on illustrations.
- There is an increased amount of dialogue to practise reading with expression. Model reading aloud to your child and get her to copy, or record your child on an ipad, so that she can listen and improve.
- Can she discuss the meaning of a wider range of punctuation and respond to it when reading? For example, stopping at a full stop or pausing at a comma.
- Can they infer meaning from the text and check for information?
- Can they discuss their feelings about the text? Did they enjoy the book and why?

TURQUOISE BOOKS

Your child can now read complex sentences fairly fluently, taking note of punctuation. She uses expression and does not rely on illustrations to help her. There are usually about 20 pages with four or five sentences per page. These books contain more elaborate episodes and events. There are extended descriptions, using a wide range of adjectives. Some books may have pages full of print. There will be more unusual and challenging vocabulary. Words will now be chosen for impact, rather than how easy they are to decode. Non-fiction texts contain more formal sentences and a widening range of unfamiliar terms.

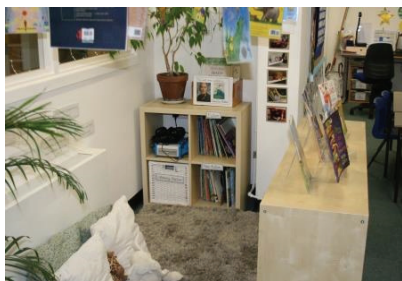
- Can your child approach different genres with confidence?
- Can she use punctuation to read with a greater range of expression and control?
- Can she sustain reading through longer sentences and small paragraphs?
- She should be tackling a higher ratio of complex words using known vocabulary, phonic knowledge and syllables.
- Can she use an index, or glossary in a non-fiction book?

PURPLE BOOKS

Your child can now read silently or quietly at a rapid pace, taking note of punctuation. There are usually about 25 pages in a book, with five to ten sentences per page. The sentence structures are becoming longer and more complex. The story plot may involve the feelings of the writer. There is a wider range of text, but some illustrations still exist. There is widening vocabulary and range of terminology. Non-fiction texts cover an increasing curriculum range and different text formats. Some texts are longer to encourage reading stamina.

- Can your child predict the content of the story?
- Can your child use a dictionary to help discover the meaning of unknown words that she encounters within the text?
- After reading silently, can your child answer comprehension questions about the text to ensure reading for meaning?
- Can she comment upon fiction, non-fiction and poetry, discussing meaning and personal preferences?
- Can your child begin to use words that she comes across in reading in her spoken and written language?

GOLD BOOKS



Your child can read silently, taking note of punctuation. There are usually about 25 pages with five to ten sentences per page. The sentences in these books are longer, varied and more complex. There are sometimes fewer illustrations at this level, so children continue to need help to ensure full meaning and enjoyment. The story plot will involve the feelings and views of the writer. Characters are more fully developed. There is a wider range and amount of text, but it is still illustrated. These books are more challenging. Children will be introduced to more unfamiliar vocabulary that will need to be discussed. Non-fiction texts cover an increasing range of subjects and different text formats.

- Can your child predict the content of the story?
- Can your child use a dictionary to help discover the meaning of unknown words that she encounters within the text?
- After reading silently, can your child answer comprehension questions about the text to ensure reading for meaning?
- Can she comment upon fiction, non-fiction and poetry, discussing meaning and preference?
- Can your child begin to use words that they come across in their speech & writing?
- Can your child read aloud with expression and intonation taking account of punctuation?
- Encourage your child to look for more books of the type they enjoy at the library or in books shops or at school.

WHITE BOOKS

These books may have chapters. Your child will be interested in longer texts which she can return to after a break. There are usually no more than 30 pages and about ten sentences per page. These books contain a widening range of stylistic features. The storyline may be sustained over a longer period of time, with chapters or sub-sections of text. More than one view point may be expressed within the text. Information or action may be implied, rather than spelt out. Your child will need to use some inference to establish meaning. Texts may contain more metaphorical language. Non-fiction texts include more detailed information.

- Can your child read silently most of the time and summarise chapters at the end?
- Is she sustaining interest in texts and returning to them?
- Can she search for and find information in non-fiction books independently?
- She should now be able to use a simple dictionary independently.
- Does she show an increased awareness of vocabulary?
- She should now be able to express reasoned opinions and compare texts that she has read.
- Can she discuss interpretations of a text and different viewpoints?
- Is she able to discuss alternatives or extensions to events and actions?
- The retelling of a story should now be balanced and clear.
- Ask your child to read some pages aloud so that she can read with expression and pace.



LIME BOOKS

These books may have chapters. Your child will be interested in longer texts which she can return to after a break. Books are usually no more than 30 pages, with about ten sentences per page. These books include a widening range of writing styles.

The narrator's voice in a fiction story may be distinguished from the character's voice through figurative, idiomatic and literary language. The story is often told through dialogue. Inference and deduction will be required to establish meaning.

- Can your child read reflectively and perceive meaning beyond the literal?
- Can she refer to the text to support ideas and viewpoints?
- She should begin to read in different ways for different purposes, e.g. skimming for relevance and scanning for specific details.
- Does your child show some awareness of the point of view of the author?

FREE READERS

These books will have chapters. Children can read silently, with confidence and perseverance. Books will be longer, with more demanding texts.

- Can your child sustain confidence and perseverance when reading longer, more demanding texts?
- Can she use some deduction and inference with more sophisticated fiction and poetry?
- Can she select key points from the text and summarise?
- Can your child refer to the text to explain her views?
- Can they identify any themes? Can they identify the impact of word choices?

Your child may well not want to read aloud regularly but it is important to ensure that they read actively and not pass their eyes over the words. You can help them by:

- Continuing to make time available for regular reading
- Establish an expectation for a conversation at the end of the reading slot (refer to comprehension questions in this journal)
- Ask questions which make your child go back to the book and find answers.

It is important to note that some books on each colour level may not fit the colour band criteria exactly. This is particularly true when looking at non-fiction books.

Questions about a book

Comprehension questions encourage children to read for understanding and meaning. They assist children to remember what they have read and make sense of it, rather than simply decoding. The following are just some examples of different questions that you may ask.

Seek, find and understand. The answers to these questions can be found in the text:

- Where did the story take place?
- When did the story take place?
- Can you name the characters in the story?
- What did s/he/it look like?
- Who was s/he/it?
- Where did s/he/it live?
- Who are the characters in the book?
- What happened before / after?
- Describe what happened when ?
- Who spoke to ?
- Can you tell me why?
- Which is true / false ?



Inference and deduction. Children need to read between the lines:

- What does think?
- What do you think about ?
- How did feel?
- How do you know?
- Why did feel / think ?
- Why is important?
- In what ways does _____?
- Agree or disagree with an opinion. Justify.
- How do we know ?
- What does this tell us about how is feeling / thinking?
- Have you ever had the experience of ?
- Who do you know who is like ?
- What do you think will happen because of ?
- If this was you – how would your friends react?

Structure. This is particularly relevant in non-fiction text:

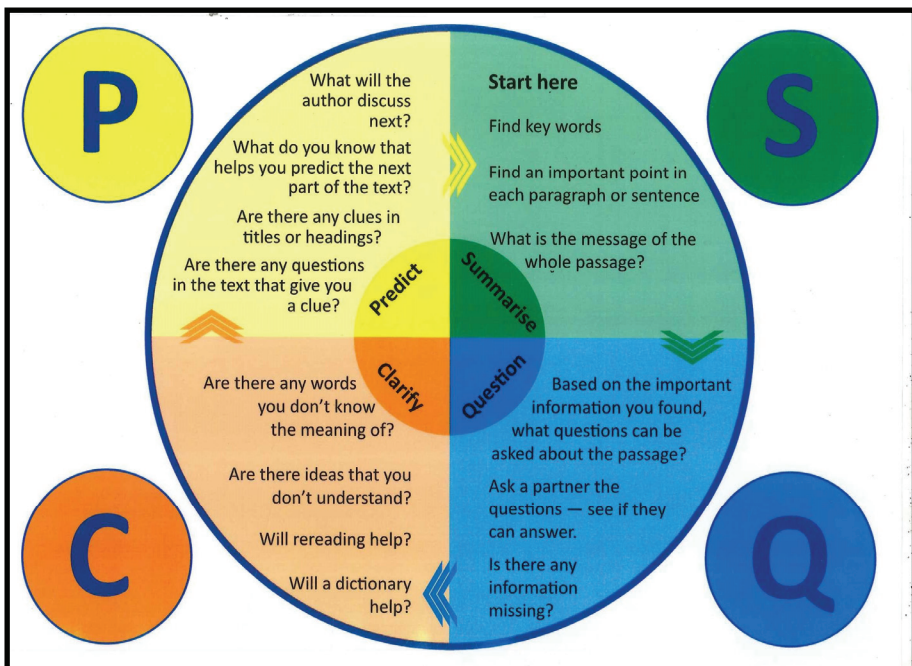
- What punctuation is used?
- Why is the text presented and organised as it is?
- Where could you find out about... in this book?
- Where in the book would you find... headings, contents page and glossary?
- Can you find one, two or three facts about....?
- Which sub-headings engage the reader more effectively?
- Why did the writer use that word / phrase / image / sentence?
- What does (word/phrase) mean?
- As a reader, how do you feel about...?
- How has the author created this feeling?
- Which words and phrases tell you that the author is describing...?

Questions about the writer:

- Why did the author choose this setting?
- Look at the picture. What does it tell you?
- What impression do you think the writer wants to give of this character? Why?

Making connections with other books and the wider world:

- Can you think of another story which has a similar theme?
- In the fairy stories that you know, who are the heroes/ villains?
- How is this setting similar to settings in other tales you have read?



PHONICS

Phonics checklist: sounds covered in every phase

In the Early Years and KS1, your child will learn to read and write all the sounds listed below. Phonics supports both reading and spelling. Your child will learn how to read the sounds and **then** learn the letter names. Using these sounds should always be the first strategy for reading an unfamiliar word. Sounds can be **individual**, **digraphs** or **trigraphs**. Your child will also learn the many alternatives for each sound.

Single sounds			
s	a	t	p
i	n	m	d
g	o	c	k
l	e	u	r
h	b	f	j
v	w	x	y
z			

Digraphs			
zz	qu	ch	sh
er	ar	th	ng
ai	ee	oa	oi
oo	or	ow	ur
ay	aw	ou	wh
ie	ph	ea	ew
oy	oe	ey	ue
	ir	au	

Trigraphs			
air	ure	igh	ear

Split digraphs			
a_e	e_e	i_e	o_e
u_e			

Words with split digraphs

A split digraph contains a letter that splits the digraph. So, a letter comes between the two letters that make up the digraph, as in *make*, where 'k' separates the digraph 'ae'. We teach five split digraphs: 'a-e', 'e-e', 'i-e', 'o-e', 'u-e' as in:

make (a-e)
scene (e-e)
like (i-e)
bone (o-e)
cube (u-e)

a_e	e_e	i_e	o_e	u_e
came	these	like	bone	June
made	Pete	time	pole	tune
make	Eve	pine	home	fuse
take	Steve	ripe	alone	cute
game	even	shine	those	huge
race	theme	slide	stone	cube
same	gene	pride	woke	tube
snake	scene	rice	note	use
gaze	complete	invite	explode	computer
escape	extreme	inside	envelope	

READING AND SPELLING

100 high frequency words

These are the Barnes Primary **100 high frequency words**. This list is made up of some of the most common written words in the English language.

Some of them are decodable (they are regular and can be sounded out in order to read and spell them accurately). Others are tricky words (they are irregular and do not sound out phonetically).

The average child is expected to be able to read, and spell correctly, all of these high frequency words by the end of Year 1. Many will know them by the end of Reception.

a	dad	him	my	see	up
all	day	his	new	she	us
also	do	how	no	so	use
an	down	I	not	some	want
and	first	if	now	take	was
any	for	in	of	than	way
are	from	into	off	that	we
as	get	is	old	the	well
at	give	it	on	their	went
back	go	its	one	them	were
be	good	like	or	then	what
big	got	look	our	there	when
but	had	made	out	they	who
by	have	make	put	this	will
came	he	me	said	to	with
can	her	more	saw	too	you
come	here	mum	say	two	your

The next 100 high frequency words

about	don't	most	think	nine
above	even	mother	those	ten
after	ever	Mr	thought	Monday
again	every	Mrs	through	Tuesday
although	everyone	need	time	Wednesday
always	everything	next	together	Thursday
another	father	oh	under	Friday
ask	finally	once	until	Saturday
asked	friends	only	very	Sunday
baby	great	other	where	January
because	help	our	which	February
before	hide	over	work	March
behind	house	people	would	April
between	I'm	please	year	May
both	know	really	young	June
call	large	school	three	July
called	last	should	four	August
children	little	small	five	September
climb	looked	suddenly	six	October
could	love	these	seven	November
different	many	things	eight	December

One and two are included in the first 100 words.

WRITING

How to hold a pencil

It may sound obvious but, for young children, learning how to grip a pencil is an important skill. Children can sometimes pick up bad habits which are then difficult and frustrating for the child to undo. Please observe your child writing from time to time and help him/her to hold a pencil correctly. We recommend sharing your observations with your child's class teacher.

- 1 Children should pick up the pencil between their thumb and first finger and use their third finger for support. In class, this is referred to as *froggy legs* as the first finger and thumb resemble a frog's legs.
- 2 They should hold the pencil sufficiently near its base so that they can control its movement.
- 3 The grip should be tight enough to prevent the pencil from slipping, but light enough to allow the pencil to glide across the page.
- 4 The other three fingers should rest upon the page.
- 5 The spare hand should be on top of the table, keeping the piece of paper still. It is also used to balance the body.

A gentle reminder to use froggy legs before writing is often helpful.

Some children write left-handed and for them these letters are written differently: **f**, **t** and **x** in lower case and **E**, **F**, **H**, **I**, **J**, **T** and **X** in uppercase. It will also help your child if their paper is slanted clockwise so that as they write their hand is not covering what they have written.



Handwriting

In school we use the Nelson Handwriting Font. The letters are shaped as follows:

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Ascenders (tall letters)

b d h k l t

't' is a three-quarter letter—it's stem isn't quite so high.

Descenders (letters that descend below the line)

f g j p q y

Other letters

c o a e i r n m

s u v w x z

A B C D E F G H I J

K L M N O P Q R

S T U V W X Y Z

Glossary

Term	Definition	Example
base word	A word (a stem) that an ending (or suffix) can be added to. In some cases a prefix can also be added: as in unhappiness.	Happy is a root word. The following words can be derived from it: happiness, happier, happiest and unhappy
colour banding	A system used in a reading scheme to categorise books in order of difficulty. Early books have repetitive language and simple vocabulary. The grading system is represented by colour bands.	
comprehension	How well a child understands what (s)he has read – the ability to read for meaning, rather than simply decode the words (but not understand what has been read) .	
CVC word	A three letter consonant-vowel-consonant word.	bed, man, tin
decoding	The ability to read a text accurately – literally to make the correct sense from the symbolic code of words that are made up of letters. Just because a child can decode it does not necessarily follow that they understand what has been read.	
digraph	Two letters that together make one sound. Digraphs can be made up of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a pair of consonants (th, ch, st) • a pair of vowels (oo, ur, oi) or • one consonant and one vowel combined together (ar, or, ow) 	A consonant digraph: shin A vowel digraph: feet A mixed digraph: bar
free reading	A child who has progressed through a reading scheme and is able to choose a non-reading scheme book. In doing so the child will come across less predictable language and is more likely to encounter unfamiliar words that (s)he will have to figure out.	

guided reading	A daily reading session led by the teacher, or a teaching assistant, that is aimed at developing children's reading skills. Frequently sessions are organised for a small group of children (usually 6). Whole class guided reading sessions also take place: all children are involved in these.	
high frequency word	A common word that appears frequently.	the, and, said
handwriting	The correct formation of letters.	
phonics	The linking of letters to sounds. Ascribing sounds to individual letters and letter combinations.	
sight vocabulary	Words that a child recognizes automatically – on sight – and doesn't need to 'sound out'. In the first instance these are usually the most commonly occurring words.	
split digraph	Two letters that make one sound but are separated by another letter.	bike, take, bone (i-e) (a-e) (o-e)
suffix	Letters added to the end of a root word to create new words.	est in happiest ing in talking er in taller
tricky word	A word that is phonetically irregular – it doesn't 'sound out'. English has far more of these irregular words than most other languages.	beautiful said though yacht
trigraph	Three letters that when combined make one sound.	str in stream ure in picture



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