

Frequently Asked Questions & Helpful Home Reading Hints



Year 2 - 2013

The Home Reading Program provides students with the opportunity to read texts at their independent level. Home reading books should be easy enough for children to read without adult help. It is important for developing fluency and confidence as a reader. Students will exchange their home readers during reading group time, under the supervision of their teachers. They borrow one book at a time, and may only take home a new book after the previous one has been returned.

Students should be reading at home on a daily basis and are encouraged to combine their home reading with reading for enjoyment by borrowing books of interest from the school and local library.

FAQs

- ✓ **My child's home reader is too easy. Should he/she be taking home a more difficult book?**

✓

It is a common concern that the books children are taking home for levelled reading are too easy. This is intentional. The aim of the levelled readers is to develop fluency and there is a significant body of research that tells us students are more likely to develop well in reading if they are allowed time to read at an independent (easy) level each day. You can help your child by encouraging them to read the book aloud, adapting their expression to suit the cues provided by both the text and the punctuation.

- ✓ **My child has not moved up levels for quite some time. Should I be concerned?**

It is important to note that as reading levels increase it becomes more difficult and takes much longer to move up to higher levels. Most children will move quickly through the lower levels, perhaps moving forward once a month. However, from level 15 progressions will be slower, with some children taking 6 months to move forward. This is because not only must they be able to read more difficult texts fluently, there are also higher benchmarks set for comprehension and vocabulary.

✓ **How does the teacher determine which level home reader my child will take home?**

A reading assessment is required to determine the level of independent reading (home reading level). This assessment is also conducted before a student moves up a higher level. It takes about 20 minutes to administer per student and is comprised of three components:

1. **Retell.** After reading the story silently, the student is asked to retell the story in detail.

2. **Read Aloud.** If the student is able to successfully retell the story, the student is asked to read it aloud. In Years 1 and 2, they need to achieve an accuracy rate of 96% or greater, with a fluency rate of 80 correct word per minute.

3. If the Read Aloud component was successful, the student is asked some **comprehension** questions. There are different accuracy rates for different levels, but typically, the student needs to have 6 out of 8 questions correct in order to move to a higher level. Comprehension includes literal, inferential, creative and vocabulary questions.

As the assessment is a lengthy process, we need to plan for it and build special times into our teaching programs that allow us to work with each child individually. At Castle Cove Public School we aim to assess each child's reading twice a term.

Helpful Home Reading Hints

How you can help your child progress.

Some students become quite nervous when tested and do not perform as well as they might otherwise. Sometimes they worry about making mistakes, or disappointing their teacher and family if they do not move up a level each time. You can help by reassuring them that it is all part of the learning process, and encouraging them to take risks. Any answer is better than no answer to a question. They also need to know that you are proud of them, no matter what.

When your child reads to you at home, you might ask them to retell parts of the story. A good retell provides a summary, in order, of the main events. It will also include details such as the names of important characters and places. In a non-fiction text, a good retell will provide a range of detailed facts about the topic.

Another important skill is to summarise. Rather than memorising and reciting an entire story word-for-word, students need to learn to choose the important details and provide a succinct retell.

Comprehension is the ability to understand what you read and is demonstrated by the readers' ability to answer questions and draw inferences from the text. Below is an example of the type of questions students might encounter if they had read *The Three Little Pigs*.

You can help your child build their comprehension understanding by asking some questions about what they have read.

The Three Little Pigs

Literal Questions are those whose answers can be easily found within the text. Examples include:

- How many pigs were there?
- What were the three houses made of?

Inferential Questions are those that require students to engage with the text at a deeper level. Answers do not come directly from the book but are informed by an understanding of the text as well as the reader's personal knowledge. Examples include:

- How did the first little pig feel when the wolf knocked on his door?
- Why do you think the wolf was able to blow down the house of the first and second little pig?
- How do we know that the third little pig's house was the strongest?
- Why is it important to stick to a task?

Understanding **vocabulary** is an important part of reading and students may often encounter words which they can read but which they do not understand. You can assist your child by encouraging them to derive word meanings from the context of the sentence. For example:

Once upon a time there were three little pigs and the time came for them to leave home and seek their fortunes.

Allowing your child time to hazard a guess at the word meaning will assist them in their ability to better determine unknown word meanings in the future.







