

Paired or Shared Reading

This is a well known method of encouraging reading. You can use it for a pre-school child who shows signs of wanting and being ready to learn. Or you can use it to help a child who has started school but lacks confidence or some of the skills necessary for independent reading. You can even use it for older children whose reading is not fluent. Just use the right books for your child's level.

Paired reading is a systematic but simple approach which is designed for parents to do with their children. It aims to build confidence and NOT to focus on mistakes. It's best to do about 10 minutes a day.

There are two stages:

Stage 1 - reading together

- Child chooses book (but if your child is a non-reader it should be one he knows; if he can read a little, it should be simple).
- Read aloud together, with adult pointing to the words; child reads fractionally behind the adult or simultaneously if he can.
- If a child makes a mistake, adult says the correct word and moves on.
- Do this on 4/5 occasions for about 10 minutes each time.

Stage 2 - independent reading

- Use the same book (or a new one for a more experienced reader).
- Arrange a sign (such as a tap on the table).
- Adult and child begin reading together.
- When child wants to read alone, he gives the sign and the adult stops.
- If child makes a mistake, adult joins in, giving the correct word, and continues reading with child until child gives the sign.
- It's very important not to make a fuss about mistakes. Paired reading is about building confidence and fluency rather than anything else. Make sure you are not using a book which is too difficult.