Introduction

When a child learns to read, it is a very exciting milestone in their lives. When a child learns to read independently, a whole new world opens up to them. Along every step of this journey and beyond, you, as the role model reader in your household, have a massive part to play in your child achieving their potential in life.

Research has proven that children who read for fun, achieve more across the whole curriculum. So, what can we do to fulfil our moral obligation to give our children the best possible life chances?
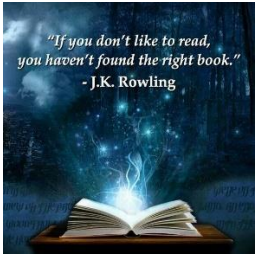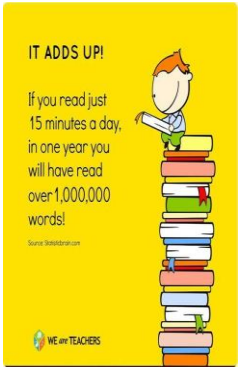
How can I ensure my child reads?

Set aside a regular time and make it a habit. Vary your reading material, reading is reading whether it is a comic, a gaming magazine or a newspaper article. If reading is treated as a top priority by you, your child will follow. If they see you reading, then they will follow. A love of reading is our main aim.
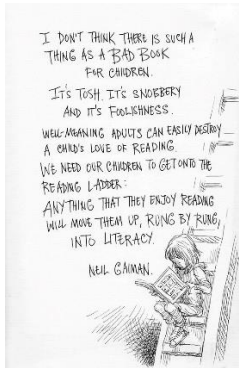
What are the right questions to ask?

Whether a child is beginning to learn the basics of decoding or is a fluent reader, we still need to ensure that they are understanding what they are reading. In order to achieve this, the questions we ask as adults are crucial. Reading at school is split into six main areas including: vocabulary, inference, prediction, explanation, retrieval and summarising. In this booklet, you will find some question stems to help you ask the right type of questions depending on what skill your child needs to work on. When a child comes across a new word when reading with you, make it a habit that you look the word up together in a dictionary, make a note of it and check they remember the meaning the next day, if possible try and use it in everyday conversations to consolidate the meaning.

If your child is a competent reader, it might not be appropriate to ask individual questions once they have read to themselves. An alternative here would be to read the same book as your child and discuss the plot, characters, thoughts and ideas as you both read the book. There are some great books out there which you may well be missing out on!

Vocabulary	What does the word …. mean in this sentence? Find the word in the sentence that means… What does this word tell you about the character/setting? Which word in this sentence do you think is important? Why? Look at the word the author chooses to describe the character, what other word could the author have used? What does the word/s ………….. suggest bout the character/setting/mood? Which word on this page/in this paragraph tells you that ….? Find one word in the text which means/shows… Find the word which is closest in meaning to….. Find a group of words which tell us that….
Inference 	Look at the picture that goes with these words you have read, what does the body language of the character tell you? Looking at the picture, how do you know…? Why was ….. feeling …? Why did … happen…? Can you explain why…? What sort of voice do you think the character would use here? What do you think the author wanted you to feel when….? How does … make you feel? Find a group of words which show you that… How do the words … make the character/reader feel? How do the descriptions of the …. show that they are…? How can you tell that….? What impression of ………. do you get from these paragraphs? What was …. thinking when…?

Prediction	Look at the cover/blurb - what do you think the book will be about? What do you think will happen next? Why do you think this? What do you think might have happened before…? What do you think will happen after…? What does this paragraph suggest might happen next? What makes you think this? Do you think the choice of setting will influence the story? Do you think …. will happen? Explain why you think this?
Explanation IT ADDS UP! If you read just 15 minutes a day, in one year you will have read over 1,000,000 words! Source: Statelibrarian.com WE are TEACHERS	Who is your favourite character? Why? Which character do you dislike? Why? Would you like to live in this setting? Why/why not? Is there anything you would change about this story? Are you enjoying this story? Why/why not? The mood of the character changes throughout the text. Find and copy the phrases which show this. What is the author thinking here? What affect does … have on the audience? How does the author ensure you are enjoying the story? Which section of the book did you find most interesting/exciting?

Retrieval	Who did…? Where did…? When did..? What happened when…? How did …? What happened to…? What genre is this book? Who had…? What happened to…? What does… do? Give one example of … The story is told from whose perspective?
Summarising	Can you remember the order of the story? What happened after…? What was the first thing that happened to … in the story? Can you summarise in a sentence….? Read out two of the chapter headings. Which one came first in the story? Can you tell me the five things that happened in this chapter? Can you summarise the whole story in five sentences