



Ideas for supporting and encouraging reluctant readers

Many children view reading as something that must be done at school, but not for pleasure or enjoyment. It is often important to start by finding the root or any underlying causes of the reluctance; is it that the books your child is trying to read are too challenging or are they not enjoying the types of books they are reading? Often reluctant readers have difficulty connecting with a book, so the first step can be acknowledging their feelings of frustration, under-confidence or resistance, and let your child know that you are going to work through it together.

Once a child develops fluency in reading, they are far more likely to read more for enjoyment which helps them become stronger in their reading skills.

Below are our top tips for engaging the reluctant reader in your family:

- **Create a reading routine.** Set aside between 10-30 minutes a day to read with your child. Keep reading to and with your child even once they are confident, fluent readers. It can be a wonderful way to connect with them by discussing the book together and making predictions about what might happen next. You could even find a cosy reading place to share together!
- **Visit the library.** Encourage your child to read a wide variety of books to keep them engaged. A visit to the library is a fantastic way for your child access a large choice of books at no extra cost! Much has been written about the powerful impact of students have a choice in what they read. When children are given the opportunity to choose a book, they are more likely read it!
- **Choose visually appealing books.** Particularly for younger children, bright colours, appealing front covers and larger print can often be key to engaging reluctant readers. Art work or illustrations that are realistic, interesting or diverse can also draw in a reader.

- **Hook them in to a series of books.** Reading the first book of a series with your child will often lead to them independently wanting to read more and learn more about these characters and the plot of these books. They can make great gifts for birthdays and Christmas!
- **Watch the film.** Often as an adult this can spoil the surprise of a book but for a reluctant reader it can help to engage a child in the story and make a book more accessible. Seeing a book come to life can be really motivating for a child.
- **Read using technology.** Gadgets such as tablets and e-readers can help to capture children's interest in books. Technology is changing the way we all learn, and given that most children see using a tablet as a fun activity, it is likely to increase their enjoyment and confidence – therefore have a positive impact on their reading.
- **Listen to audiobooks.** Mix up their reading by allowing your child to listen to audiobooks for part of the story. It can be really engaging to listen and follow along with a book.
- **Create a reading competition.** Giving a reluctant reader an incentive to read books can really help their motivation.
- **Read to younger siblings or family members.** This can really empower a reluctant reader and help to build their confidence in their reading capabilities.
- **Pair reading with activities.** Ask your child to read the instructions to a new game and teach the family, or read a recipe and cook together... they won't even know they're learning!
- **Let them read anything.** Books are a fantastic form of escapism but reading magazines, game guides, football league tables are all a step in the right direction and may help a reluctant reader to see that they do have the ability to read.