

How to Support Your Child's Reading (Grade One)

Key points:

- Choose books that have Islamic value.
- Give a brief background of the story before you start reading.
- Introduce the author of the book, and discuss the biography very briefly as most Arabic names are too complex and hard to remember.
- While reading, encourage your child to predict what will happen next, and connect characters or events to those in other books, stories, Quran and Hadith.
- Discuss what has been read after short intervals, and find out what kinds of stories they enjoy reading for example: Stories from the lives of the Prophet and Sahabah, moral stories, adventures, animal stories or stories about other children. Also encourage children to explain the reason for their preference.
- Take turns while reading a story with your child. Do not interrupt to correct mistakes that do not change the meaning.
- Explain the meaning of difficult words and break them down to spell them correctly.
- Make a list of difficult words and build a vocabulary list to reflect on later.
- Use the structure of the stories i.e., the beginning, middle and ending to organize thinking and sequencing for discussion.
- A question and answer session at the end of reading would be challenging as well as interesting.
- Key questions to ask: Who? What? Where? How? Why? As these would form the basis when structuring their creative writing.

To promote reading for all children:

- Set a good example as a reader – read every day at home, even if it is a newspaper or magazine.
- Make reading fun – a time that you both look forward to spending together.
- Enjoy yourself and have fun when you are reading together. The most important thing you can do to help your child become a successful reader is to let them know that you enjoy and value reading.
- The more children read, the better readers they will become, and the more they will want to read.

Learning to write – how to help your child at home:

- Do not worry too much about untidy writing. You want your child to write for fun and pleasure.
- Help your child to make their own labels and notices to put up in their bedroom or around the house. For instance, the kitchen is a good place to get started and label the spices e.g. salt, sugar, tea, coffee and so on.
- Your child can help you write your shopping list!
- A list of stationery when you visit the bookstore is next!
- A list of friends and family to invite for Eid and other occasions.
- A list of things to do can help practice capital letters and lower case letters.
- Write letters to their grandparents or other family members, and let your child convey messages of their own in short sentences. Let them watch you write sample letters, spelling or alternate words.
- Set up writing tables with pencil, rubber, color pens and some fancy stationery so they can use their imagination to write when they want to.
- Do not worry if your child crosses out words when he/she is writing. Many children try out different spellings until they think a word looks right. Get them to practice on scrap paper then write the word in place when they are happy with it.

- Start a diary with your child when you are on holiday and encourage him/her to draw and write about things they have done.
- Make a word-box full of words that your child uses the most and to which you can add new words.
- Play word recognition and word games with your child e.g., pairs, scrabble, hang-man, and others.
- Most important of all, have a positive approach and take time to share and talk about your child's writing with him/her; lots of praise will encourage your child to keep on writing.
- And finally, have a lot of patience!!!