



CHAPEL HILL STATE SCHOOL

Term 2 UPDATE: Reading at Home – Prep 2024

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As part of our school's Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) on the Effective Teaching of Reading, our Prep teachers are reviewing and aligning their classroom teaching and home reading practices to the evidence-informed reading instruction outlined in the Department of Education's (DoE) [Reading Position Statement](#).

Reading is the process of decoding and making meaning from texts as shown in the theoretical framework, The Simple View of Reading shared below:

The Simple View of Reading



The **Simple View of Reading** identifies components necessary for reading success. It shows that reading is the product of word reading and language comprehension. The Simple View of Reading is a settled framework to understand the components of skilled reading.

We know that our students need to have both Word Reading and Language Comprehension to attain Reading Comprehension success.

How Children Learn to Read

Learning to read is a process that needs step-by-step teaching and plenty of practise at school and at home. Unlike walking or talking, reading is not a skill that we learn naturally — everyone needs to be taught how to read.

Reading, as shown in the Simple View of Reading Framework, requires two very important skills:

- decoding (Word Reading) the words on the page; and
- making meaning from the words, sentences and paragraphs that are read (Language Comprehension).

For our student to learn how to decode words, they need to understand how sounds and letters link together. They are taught that:

- words can be broken up into sounds (the word 'cat' is made up of 3 sounds: c-a-t) and that sounds can be blended to form words (the sounds c-a-t blended, forms the word 'cat'); and
- the sounds in words can be represented by letters or groups of letters.

Our teachers use a Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) approach at school to teach your child how letters and sounds link together to form words. This is a reliable, evidence-based approach for decoding words and discouraging guessing. Your child also practises their word reading skills at school this year by engaging with decodable texts in class. Decodable texts contain only the letter-sound correspondences that your child has already learned. They may also contain some high-frequency words that the teacher has taught simultaneously.

As part of our 2024 EIA on the Effective Teaching of Reading, we have reviewed home reading in Prep to align with DoE's expectations on how we teach reading. As a result, the Magic 100 words and levelled predictable texts will no longer be sent home for home reading.

In Term 2, parents and guardians are asked to support your Prep child using a **shared reading approach** where you are encouraged to read together at home on a daily basis. Daily shared reading provides your child with an opportunity to develop a love of reading by engaging with authentic texts including picture books, storybooks, information texts and any reading material the child enjoys.

In Term 3, our Prep families and students will also have access to an online decodable text platform, Decodable Readers Australia (DRA), at home that can be used to support your children to practice and further develop their Word Reading using decodable texts that align with the teaching that is happening in classroom.

Information on DRA was shared with our parent community in the Term 2 Week 2 Newsletter, and a parent consent form for your child to access this platform will be sent home via Q Parents in the following weeks.

Home Reading - Why use shared book reading?

Shared reading describes the interaction that occurs between an adult and a child when reading or looking at a book. Although one of the most obvious and engaging features of storybooks is their illustrations, they also provide children with access to a world of sights, sounds, and words that may be quite different from what they experience in their homes, communities and school.

Reading aloud with your child builds language development so that by the time children have mastered letter-sound correspondences and can read increasingly complex texts themselves, they will have the language skills to understand what they read. Having strong oral language skills sets the foundations for children to build strong literacy skills. Reading authentic texts aloud to your child allows them to continue to hear stories, information and written language they may not yet be able to read themselves.

What does shared reading look like?

An important aspect of shared reading is the conversation that occurs between the adult and child during the reading. Pausing while reading and taking the time to discuss details in the story can support your child's oral language development. The conversation might focus on the storyline, such as characters or where the story takes place; it may focus on similar experiences the child has had to those that happened in the book; it may focus on specific words; aspects of print; or concepts that are new to the child. When you read aloud to your child, they hear and learn lots of new and sophisticated words and sentences they may not hear or use in everyday conversation.

What books should be used for shared reading?

In the early years of reading instruction, children engage with different books for different purposes.

At school, your child is engaging with decodable texts to develop their word reading skills (decoding), and they also listen to and interact with authentic texts with their teacher, as part of their curriculum learning, to develop strong oral language skills.

This term, we would appreciate your continued support to engage in a shared reading approach at home to support the effective teaching of reading in the early years. Virtually all children's books are appropriate for shared reading, but the best books will have rich, detailed pictures, and are interesting to the child.

We strongly suggest that these rich texts are reread to your child multiple times throughout the week to develop their comprehension skills, vocabulary knowledge and confidence building to develop into a lifelong love of reading. The purpose of a shared reading approach being to stimulate rich talk between the adult and child, not for the child to be able to read the text themselves.

To assist with access to some great authentic texts, this term we have increased the number of books that our Prep students can borrow at the school library visit.

If you have any questions, please reach out to your child's teacher.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Kind regards,
Shannon, Anna, Kim, Monique and Andrew
Prep Teachers