



Liskeard Hillfort
Primary School

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Monday to Friday: 8.00am – 4.30pm

Dear Families,

I wanted to write to you today in relation to reading! As you know, here at Hillfort we love reading – whether it be stories, poems or non-fiction. There's many reasons to be good at reading, and one of those reasons is just to love books. To 'lose yourself in a book' is a wonderful hobby – there's role models, villains, new information, different perspectives on life, windows into other cultures and traditions...the possibilities can be boundless.

Of course, another reason is around children's entitlement. All children are entitled to reading. It's not a gift – this should be a child's right. Without reading, children will struggle at secondary school and that can go on throughout their lives. Children who can't read all too often become adults who can't read, which holds them back in their employment and in their life chances.

And this is to say nothing of the bonding experience that families can enjoy by reading books to one another.

So, I wanted to take a moment just to review where we are in terms of reading – how adults can help, and how children can help themselves.

Read Write Inc.

At an early stage, children encounter reading through the systematic synthetic phonics scheme that they encounter from the Early Years Stage. We use a scheme that is used on a national basis called "Read Write Inc.". A really helpful guide to this scheme can be found at [Parent guide to Read Write Inc. Phonics | Oxford Owl](#).








If your child is on Read Write Inc. children will have access to the following books:

- a coloured book (e.g. red book or yellow book) that your child is currently reading in school;
- a coloured book bag book that is similar to the original coloured book;
- a differently coloured book that your child has read already and is now confident with. Although your child can read this, we still send this home for them to read to themselves so that their skills become embedded;
- a bedtime book. These can be trickier – so adults will need to read them to the child.

It is really important that children are reading on a daily basis at this point!



In the children’s book bags/plastic wallets, there should be a handy guide to this – as shown below:

Reading at Home		
 <p>Orange books</p>	<p>These are the books that I am learning to read at school. I read these in my lessons so they are not completely new to me but some of the words will still be quite tricky. It’s important that I practise these so that I become more fluent.</p>	<p>When children are stuck on a word, ask them to sound it out. We say ‘Special Friends, Fred talk, Read the Word’. Before children move off this colour they should be able to read tricky words using ‘Fred in their Head’. Words which they meet more often should be read at a glance.</p>
 <p>Orange books</p>	<p>I don’t study these books at school but I will have read this once. The sounds in this books will match the sounds I am learning in class. Some of the words will be really tricky. I’ll have to sound them out.</p>	
 <p>Pink books</p>	<p>These books are the ones I was learning in my last group. It’s important that I still read these so that I can practise my fluency and expression. I should be able to read these on my own. I could read it to an adult, to myself or even a pet!</p>	<p>Reading books which are a bit easier is important in building confidence as a reader and developing skills like reading with expression. Once children can read fluently, they will be able to comprehend more easily.</p>
 <p>Bedtime book</p>	<p>These books are too tricky for me to read on my own – they are for an adult or older sibling to read to me. This will help me to learn new words that I will have to read myself when I’m a bit older.</p>	<p>Bedtime books aren’t only for bedtime! Reading to your child is hugely important in developing vocabulary.</p>
Can you meet the triple crown every day?		
 Read to an adult	 Read to yourself	 Be read to by an adult

Accelerated Reader:

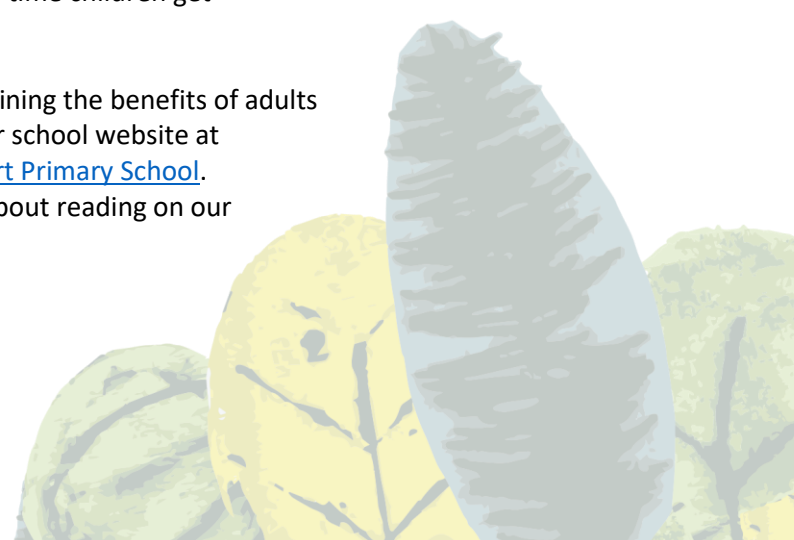
As children progress with their reading so that they are more independent, they are placed onto the Accelerated Reader scheme. This involves the child taking an online test called a “Star Reader” test. The programme then identifies a numerical range that children select their book from (as an example, a child might choose books from our library from 3.4 to 4.8, or from 3.8-5.0). This will be unique to the individual child.

We expect that children should then be reading on a daily basis – this might be in school, but it is really important that children read every evening at home too. Practise makes perfect.

Once children are on Accelerated Reader, they have the ability to read to themselves. That said, they are very welcome to read to parents, and it can be very helpful to discuss the book being read e.g. looking at tricky words.

When a child on Accelerated Reader finishes their book, they can then take a quiz on it in school. They will be awarded points when they pass the quiz, and over time children get progressively better at reading!

If it helps, I have also put together a brief video explaining the benefits of adults reading to children. This is hosted on YouTube via our school website at [The benefits of reading to your child – Liskeard Hillfort Primary School](#). There is, of course, lots of other useful information about reading on our website.



Some final pleas:

Please could you ensure that you sign the home planner regularly – once a week as a minimum. This will aid communication between home and school. If you have any concerns about planners not being signed from our end, please do not hesitate to contact either the class teacher or indeed myself.

And – please...if you have any books from school around the house, we'll have them back if possible! It doesn't matter how long they've been at home, we'll just be grateful for them back!

So, as the weekend beckons and Christmas is just around the corner, perhaps have a think about how reading can play a role in your family lives over the next few weeks and months!

Happy reading!

Tim Cook

