Reading with your child

1. Find somewhere quiet to read together.

Reading with the television or radio on is distracting and can be counter-productive. Try to find an environment which is comfortable and make reading together a pleasant experience.

2. Try to read for at least 20 minutes per day.

You do not necessarily need to sit and listen to your child read for all of this time, however if possible talking to them at the start of the 20 minutes about the book, listening to them reading a little bit and then going back to them at the end to discuss what has been read will give you an opportunity to check progress and ensure engagement.

3. Talk about the book as well as listening to reading

Talking about what is read is key to understanding. There are a list of 'questions to aid understanding' which can be accessed at Appendix C, but any discussion about the book is valuable. Ask your child if they are enjoying the book, what they do/don't like about it, what they think will happen and what they think of the characters.

4. If your child gets stuck on a word DON'T just tell them the answer

Ask them which word could fit, tell them to try sounding it out and help them to work the answer out themselves. See Appendix D for a list of strategies on helping your child decode difficult words.

5. Read to your child as well

This will help them to accept that it is OK to be reading aloud to you. Reading to your child also models good reading, aids understanding and can be really enjoyable for both of you. It is ok to make mistakes – this helps your child to understand that no one reads perfectly.

6. Praise!

Praise your child when they show progress and every time they make an effort with a difficult word or idea in a book. Reading is one of the hardest skills we ever learn and because progress can be slow it can be demoralizing, particularly for teenagers. Every time a book is completed remind your child to complete the AR quiz at school and ask them how they did. Any score between 80 - 100% is brilliant!