Help the school build the necessary skills your child needs to be a successful lifelong learner...

This week we will explore reading tips and over the next few weeks I will look at games and activities you can do together.

Reading a muscle which needs exercising daily

Reading is an important literacy skill which is required by everyone to be able to interact successfully within all areas of one’s lifestyle. One needs to be able to read signs around them, menus at the restaurant, road signs, recipes, TV Guides, bank account application, legal documents and the list goes on.

Reading for enjoyment and relaxation is an important part of how one develops their understanding of the world around them. Just as exercise builds muscles in our body to make us stronger, individuals need to build the muscle of reading to ensure success in every reading situation; we might face during our life time.

Are you developing your reading muscle?

Reading is a literacy muscle which needs to be developed daily. Children need to develop the skill of reading just like developing muscles and body tone.

A simple way to assist your child/ren to reach their potential in the skill of reading is to follow a simple exercise routine.

TIPS for parents of Preschoolers

Read early and read often. The early years are critical to developing a lifelong love of reading. It’s never too early to begin reading to your child! The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

- **Read together every day.**
  Read to your child every day. Make this a warm and loving time when the two of you can cuddle close.

- **Give everything a name.**
  Build your child’s vocabulary by talking about interesting words and objects. For example, “Look at that airplane! Those are the wings of the plane. Why do you think they are called wings?”

- **Say how much you enjoy reading.**
  Tell your child how much you enjoy reading with him or her. Talk about “story time” as the favorite part of your day.

- **Read with fun in your voice.**
  Read to your child with humor and expression. Use different voices. Ham it up!

- **Know when to stop.**
  Put the book away for awhile if your child loses interest or is having trouble paying attention.

- **Be interactive.**
  Discuss what’s happening in the book, point out things on the page, and ask questions.

- **Read it again and again.**
  Go back and read your child’s favorite book for the 100th time!

- **Talk about writing, too.**
  Mention to your child how we read from left to right and how words are separated by spaces.

- **Point out print everywhere.**
  Talk about the written words you see in the world around you. Ask your child to find a new word on each outing.

- **Get your child evaluated.**
  Please be sure to see your child’s pediatrician or teacher as soon as possible if you have concerns about your child’s language development, hearing, or sight.

TIPS for parents of First Graders

Give your child lots of opportunities to read aloud. Inspire your young reader to practice every day! The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

- **Don’t leave home without it.**
  Bring along a book or magazine any time your child has to wait, such as at a doctor’s office. Always try to fit in reading!

- **Once is not enough.**
  Encourage your child to re-read favorite books and poems. Re-reading helps kids read more quickly and accurately.

- **Dig deeper into the story.**
  Ask your child questions about the story you’ve just read. Say something like, “Why do you think Clifford did that?”

- **Take control of the television.**
  It’s difficult for reading to compete with TV and video games. Encourage reading as a free-time activity.

- **Be patient.**
  When your child is trying to sound out an unfamiliar word, give him or her time to do so. Remind your child to look closely at the first letter or letters of the word.

- **Pick books that are at the right level.**
  Help your child pick books that are not too difficult. The aim is to give your child lots of successful reading experiences.

- **Play word games.**
  Have your child sound out the word as you change it from nut to fat to out from out to say and from say to sip.

- **I read to you, you read to me.**
  Take turns reading aloud at bedtime. Kids enjoy this special time with their parents.

- **Gently correct your young reader.**
  When your child makes a mistake, gently point out the letter he or she overlooked or read incorrectly. Many beginning readers will guess wildly at a word based on its first letter.

- **Talk, talk, talk!**
  Talk with your child every day about school and things going on around the house. Sprinkle some interesting words into the conversation, and build on words you’ve talked about in the past.

- **Write, write, write!**
  Ask your child to help you write out the grocery list, a thank you note to Grandma, or to keep a journal of special things that happen at home. When writing, encourage your child to use the letter and sound patterns he or she is learning at school.
TIPS for parents of Second Graders

Find ways to read, write, and tell stories together with your child. Always applaud your young reader and beginning story writer! The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

- **Warm Up:** Reading environmental print around our home and neighbourhood/what is seen on television
- **Stretches:** Vocabulary building games and activities to explore how words work
- **Work Out:** Developing skills in reading – decoding, fluency and comprehension - during class time daily.
- **Stretches:** responding to texts and making the necessary connections to the what they know and have learnt
- **Warm Down:** Reading for enjoyment...reading in bed is a terrific way for children to practice the skills they know and have learnt

**Warm Ups:**
- **Reading environmental print**
  - around our home and neighbourhood/what is seen on television

**Stretches:**
- **Vocabulary building games and activities to explore how words work**

**Work Out:**
- **Developing skills in reading – decoding, fluency and comprehension - during class time daily.**

**Stretches:**
- responding to texts and making the necessary connections to the what they know and have learnt

**Warm Down:**
- Reading for enjoyment...reading in bed is a terrific way for children to practice the skills they know and have learnt about reading.

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Is your Child’s Reading Muscle being exercised daily?

Following are some activities you can do at home with your child to assist them in developing their reading muscle:-

**Warm Up Activities**

**Crack open the dictionary.**
- Let your child see you use a dictionary. Say, “Hmm, I’m not sure what that word means...I think I’ll look it up.”

**Talk about what you see and do.**
- Talk about everyday activities to build your child’s background knowledge, which is crucial to listening and reading comprehension. Keep up a running patter, for example, while cooking together, visiting somewhere new, or after watching a TV show.

**Stretches**
- **“Are we there yet?”**
- Use the time spent in the car or bus for wordplay. Talk about how jam means something you put on toast as well as cars stuck in traffic. How many other homonyms can your child think of? When kids are highly familiar with the meaning of a word, they have less difficulty reading it

**Quick, quick**
- Use new words your child has learned in lively flash card or computer drills. Sometimes these help kids automatically recognize and read words, especially those that are used frequently.

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**TIPS for parents of Third Graders**

Read about it, talk about it, and think about it! Find ways for your child to build understanding, the ultimate goal of learning how to read. The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

- **Make books special.**
  - Turn reading into something special. Take your kids to the library, help them get their own library card, read with them, and buy them books as gifts. Have a favorite place for books in your home or even better, put books everywhere.

- **Get them to read another one.**
  - Find ways to encourage your child to pick up another book. Introduce him or her to a series like *The Berenstain Bears or The Magic Tree House* or a second or third book by a favorite author, or ask the librarian for additional suggestions.

- **Crack open the dictionary.**
  - Let your child see you use a dictionary. Say, “Hmm, I’m not sure what that word means...I think I’ll look it up.”

- **Talk about what you see and do.**
  - Talk about everyday activities to build your child’s background knowledge, which is crucial to listening and reading comprehension. Keep up a running patter, for example, while cooking together, visiting somewhere new, or after watching a TV show.

- **First drafts are rough.**
  - Encourage your child when writing. Remind him or her that writing involves several steps. No one does it perfectly the first time.

- **Different strokes for different folks.**
  - Read different types of books to expose your child to different types of writing. Some kids, especially boys, prefer nonfiction books.

- **Teach your child some “mind tricks”**
  - Show your child how to summarize a story in a few sentences or how to make predictions about what might happen next. Both strategies help a child comprehend and remember.

- **“Are we there yet?”**
  - Use the time spent in the car or bus for wordplay. Talk about how jam means something you put on toast as well as cars stuck in traffic. How many other homonyms can your child think of? When kids are highly familiar with the meaning of a word, they have less difficulty reading it

**Quick, quick**
- Use new words your child has learned in lively flash card or computer drills. Sometimes these help kids automatically recognize and read words, especially those that are used frequently.

**Work Out and Stretches**
- Children engage in learning situations at school where the skills of decoding, fluency and comprehension are developed within age appropriate learning activities.

The school works to implement programs that will support your child in their quest to develop their reading muscle.
Dig deeper into the story.
Ask your child questions about the story you’ve just read. Say something like, “Why do you think Clifford did that?”

Talk, talk, talk!
Talk with your child every day about school and things going on around the house. Sprinkle some interesting words into the conversation, and build on words you’ve talked about in the past.

Warm Downs
Reading for enjoyment and opportunity to practice what the child learns during the Work Out and Stretches sessions at school.

Watch this space for more information as to how you can help your child with reading Warm Downs activities at home.

Remember it takes a community to build a child, that is home, school and the wider community working together to help grow the whole child.

Try this activity next time you are at the supermarket.....

Supermarket Words
Palabras del Supermercado
The supermarket has different sections. Help Martha find her favorite foods. Have your child write or draw a picture of a food they find in the sections shown here.

El supermercado tiene diferentes secciones. Ayuda a Martha a encontrar sus alimentos favoritos. Pide a su hijo que escriba o dibuje un alimento que se pueda encontrar en las secciones que se muestran aquí.

The Bakery has foods that are baked in an oven.
The Produce Section has lots of fruits and vegetables.
The Dairy Section has items that are made with milk.
The Butcher Shop has many kinds of meats. (Martha’s personal favorite.)

**Try this activity next time you are at the supermarket...**