

Parent information: Reading at home

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 (including writing) is not a skill that we learn naturally – everyone needs to be taught how to read (& write). Research shows that for students to comprehend what they read there are two main areas - **Word Reading** (decoding words on the page) and **Language Comprehension** (making meaning from the words, sentences, paragraphs that are read).

How can you help at home?



Sit with your child to read using both of the below approaches.

1. You reading, this is called **Shared Conversational Reading** and
2. Your child is the reader/writer, this is called **Word reading and writing**

① Shared Conversational Reading is...

when you, as an expert reader, reads and talks about a book with your child, helping them build strong language skills that support future reading success. While children learn to read simple, decodable books on their own, shared reading lets them enjoy richer stories and hear rich vocabulary and ideas they may not yet be able to read themselves. These books also connect them to the world beyond their experiences.

The most important part is the conversation – pausing to talk about the text, the pictures, new words, and how the book connects to their own experiences. Almost any engaging picture book works, and the goal is to enjoy the book together while growing your child's vocabulary and understanding. These books can be fiction and/or non-fiction

② Word Reading and Writing is....

explicitly taught at HRSS using an approach called systematic synthetic phonics. This just means we have a planned order in which we teach phonics. (Phonics is when we refer to the letter and letter combinations that represent speech sounds/what we hear). Students are taught the process of *blending sounds* to decode (read) words, and *segment sounds* (break up) to *encode* (spell) words. Learning to read and write is about decoding and encoding. At Highland Reserve we teach reading in a systematic explicit way that is research and evidenced-based.

1

Shared Conversational Reading is reading authentic texts

Authentic texts are the books you find at the library, the rich picture books and the non-fiction books on a range of topics. Until children can decode them for themselves, skilled readers take on the role of the decoder, and we read out loud to them. Students have access to our school library, borrowing fortnightly. Additionally, accessing the local libraries varies choice for you and your family to engage with a range of interesting books.



Shared reading, viewing and listening to texts beyond independent reading is important to build your child's language comprehension skills. Support your child by:

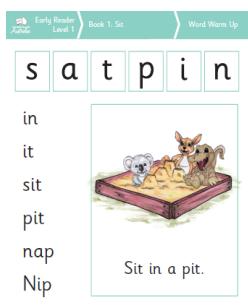
| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Discuss the text and form predictions</p> | <p>Talk about the title, words and images. Ask open ended questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do you think there is an image of a __? • What do you think will happen in the story? |
| <p>Model your thinking and ask questions</p> | <p>Model your thinking. eg; "I think the ____ will ____ ."</p> |
| <p>Ask questions to promote discussion</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take time to stop and discuss throughout the text • Why do you think the character did that? • How do you think the character would be feeling? • This diagram shows us how..... • Confirm predictions or thinking from what has been viewed/read |
| <p>Talking about new words</p> | <p>Discuss the meaning of words and how they help us understand texts</p> |
| <p>Modelling how to summarise and make personal connections</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss what the text was about, the main idea, what you liked and didn't like. • Discussion might include what the story reminds you or your child of. Have you ever.....? |

2

Word Reading and Writing is....

→ 2.1 reading decodable readers

Our students have access to both online readers using [Decodable Readers Australia](#) and decodable books. Students each have a unique log in, provided by their teacher for the online platform and have access to borrow decodable books weekly from The Hub, coming home in a home reading bag. Prep students begin with the *Early Reader Warm Up* cards. All students who are continuing to decode and make meaning from texts, online or in a borrowed reader, will read appropriate texts for their phase of phonic knowledge that has been set by the classroom teacher.



Early Reader Warm Up cards.



Online readers



Borrowed readers

→ 2.2 reading and spelling words

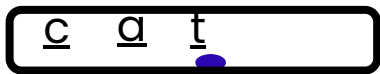
See an example below how you would support your child at home with blending sounds to read and spell words.



Let's look at this whole word and segment the sounds so we can blend it back together



Point to each letter (grapheme) and encourage your child to say the sound (phoneme). Try and "hold" the sounds continuously. For example c/aaaa/t



Blend the sounds to read the word.



You and/or your child says /cat/

A similar example below how you would support your child at home with encoding sounds to spell and write words.

| | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Let's listen to the whole word. | cat |
| Let's listen to each sound in the word | /c/ /a/ /t/ |
| Now, let's represent each sound with the letter. | (child or adult writes each sound) |
| Read the word, say each sound | (child or adult reads the whole word) |

What we do at HRSS is based on RESEARCH

Learning to read is life-changing, with almost everything we do in society involving reading and writing.

We need your help at home. Following the tips on the first pages will support you with what we do at school, and in turn, impact your child with their reading.

"It is a complex process. As reading is not a naturally developing skill, such as walking or talking, all students need to be taught to read words and understand the language of written texts.

It takes years of learning and practice to become a skilled reader. Texts we read also become more complex as we get older.

We teach reading every day, in every classroom. This occurs in English and other learning areas as students read and engage with a variety of texts.

Our evidence-informed approach to reading includes systematic synthetic phonics and word study to strengthen students' word reading skills. We build students' language comprehension by reading and discussing texts, as well as teaching background knowledge, vocabulary and other important skills.

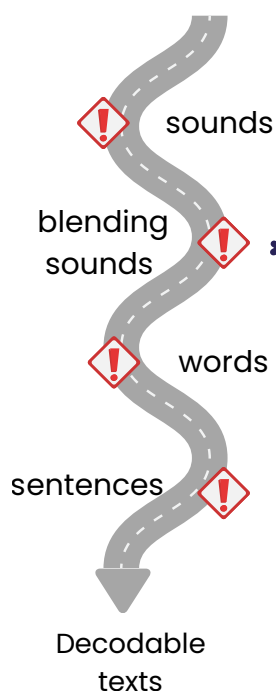
This evidence-informed approach is called the Simple View of Reading and is shown in the below visual."

The above information comes from our Department's reading commitment for Education Queensland.



SYSTEMATIC SYNTHETIC PHONICS

At first, the goal is to experience success manipulating sounds and letters to read and write words. This all happens within ONE **phase** before learning the next phase. E.g. success with **S A T P I N** (this is phase 1), building fluency and automaticity, ensuring this knowledge is transferred to long term memory. There is then space to cognitively load the short term memory with the next new phase. This is the systematic way we teach reading.



Students first learn the sounds that letters and letter combinations make in isolation. Our early readers start with Early Reader Warm Up cards then move into decodable texts.

Next, students learn to blend sounds into words. Once students know a group of sounds (a phase), they then learn to blend and segment these sounds together to read and spell words.

After practising to read decodable words aligned only to the phase they have been taught, students then move onto encoding (writing) these words.

Finally, students are able to decode/encode sentences and later on, read a decodable text from beginning to end.