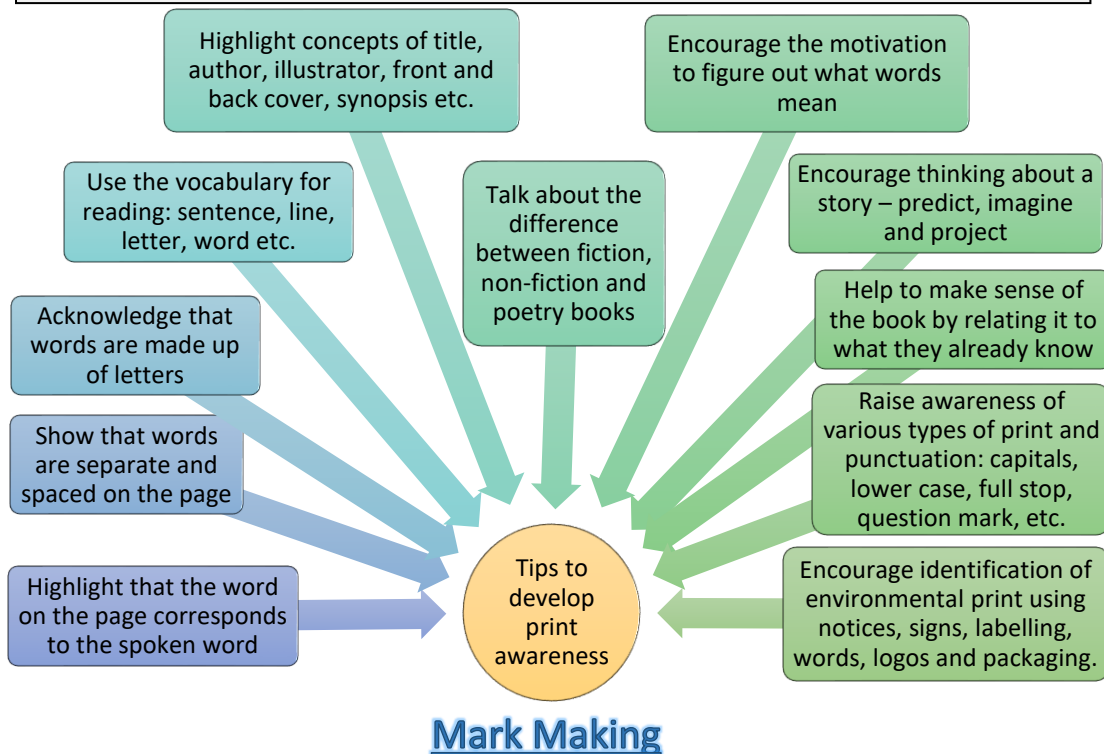


## Developing an Awareness of Print

Ensuring children have an awareness of print allows them to begin to understand that written language is related to oral language. They see that, like spoken language, printed language carries messages and is a source of both enjoyment and information. As your child's most influential role model, you can help develop their skills for reading and love of books by creating a literacy rich environment where you are regularly engaging, sharing and discussing texts.



Reading and writing skills develop together. Children learn about writing by seeing how the print in their home, classroom and environment provides information. Children's scribbles and drawings are their way of communicating and sharing observations of their world.

Use a range of pencils, pens, paper of different colours and sizes, whiteboards etc. to give your child opportunities to mark-make through play, craft activities, real life contexts. Providing opportunities for your child to develop their fine motor skills through using small construction equipment, tweezers, threading etc. can help them with their pencil grip. Encourage your child to hold a pencil correctly between thumb and forefinger with other fingers tucked away. Try a challenge – can you hold your pencil whilst also keeping a little bit of blue tack, plasticene or playdough held in the palm of your hand?

# Maidenhill Primary School



## Developing Reading at Early Level

## Talking and Listening

Reading and writing float on a sea of talking and listening.

One of the most effective ways of helping your child is through talking and listening. This can be done in a relaxed, enjoyable way. Children make numerous language discoveries as they play, explore and interact with others and the language skills gained from these activities cannot be underestimated. Ensuring that you spend time talking and listening is key in supporting and extending children's thinking and advancing their language and understanding.



### Ideas

Sing songs and recite nursery rhymes together.

Treat your child as a conversationalist. Children learn very early how conversations work (taking turns, making eye contact, using facial expressions)

Play games which encourage your child to think about sounds.  
*E.g. "I spy with my little eye something beginning with f...f..f"*

Encourage your child to be imaginative and tell stories about things that have happened during the day. Show that you are interested and take time to ask questions.

Offer a description or clues and have your child guess what you are describing.  
*E.g. "It is cold, sweet and good for dessert. I like strawberry." (Ice cream)*

Encourage your child to give you directions and follow their instructions.  
*E.g. to build a tower using blocks.*

Tell simple jokes and riddles. Children usually enjoy simple word games like finding rhymes and making up words.

Play memory games together such as "I went shopping and I bought..."

Play odd one out games and have your child explain why one object is different.  
*E.g. "A shoe does not belong with an apple, orange and lollipop because it is not round and you can't eat it."*

## Sharing Texts with Your Child

Learning to read is a complex process. In the beginning stages, learning to read is not only about developing skills, it is about learning to behave like a reader. Sharing books and stories with your child is one of the most beneficial ways to help foster a love and enjoyment of reading whilst developing your child's literacy skills.

Some top tips for reading aloud to your child include:

### Introduce the Book

Look at the book cover together and ask your child to guess what they think the book might be about. Name the author and illustrator to reinforce the concept that people write and draw books.

### Give It All You've Got!

Dramatic and fun sound effects, hand motions, facial expressions, and changes in tone help your child to become a part of the story with you.

### Involve Your Child

Give your child a line to repeat, a hand motion, or a sound effect that they can add at the appropriate time.

### Help Your Child "See" the Story

Children who are attentive to the picture details of a book are learning how to use visual clues to get meaning from everything on the page. Point out details in illustrations and characterisation to help children become keen observers, and discuss what they notice.

### Invite Your Child to Use Their Senses

Help your child imagine not only the sights in a story but the sounds, smells, tastes, physical sensations, and emotions, as well. Occasionally, stop and ask your child to pretend to use their senses to explore a part of the story: "Can you pretend to pet the puppy? How does the puppy feel? What do you think the characters hear? What do they smell?"

### Take Time for Discussion

Children love to talk about a book you've just read. Use a open ended questions to discuss the text. E.g. "What do you think might happen next? Tell me why/ when/ what/ how... What made you think of that?"