



Supporting a beginning reader

The preparatory materials are designed to build children's self-confidence so they **see themselves** as being **capable of learning to read** in the future. This will help children to be successful when they learn more about reading in early primary.

Children should be exposed to how/when/why to use different types of texts and explore the clues (in print, pictures and sound) that people use when reading before learning to use clues/knowledge/strategies to begin to read texts, with support.

Preparatory children **begin to read at different rates**. Each child:

- is ready to explore different types of clues/strategies, at different times
- has different 'prior knowledge' of topics and interests that will help them to read
- is familiar with different texts and wants to read different types of texts
- needs different texts to read that match their individual learning needs.

Preparatory children have **more success** as beginning readers when:

- teachers provide **texts that suit** each child's learning **needs and interests**
- when they **read** with an adult **face-to-face**.

What does beginning to read involve?

It is important for children to learn to think flexibly about how to read and to use different clues/knowledge/strategies. Children are less successful as readers if they try to rely on just one strategy (e.g. sounding out or memory). To begin to read successfully, preparatory children need to learn:

- how/when to use and combine different clues/knowledge/strategies
- that many letters/letter combinations make more than one sound
- how and when to break up words into 'units of sound' to help them read words.

As a beginning reader, preparatory children are expected to begin to use and combine clues/knowledge/strategies when reading, **with support**, including:

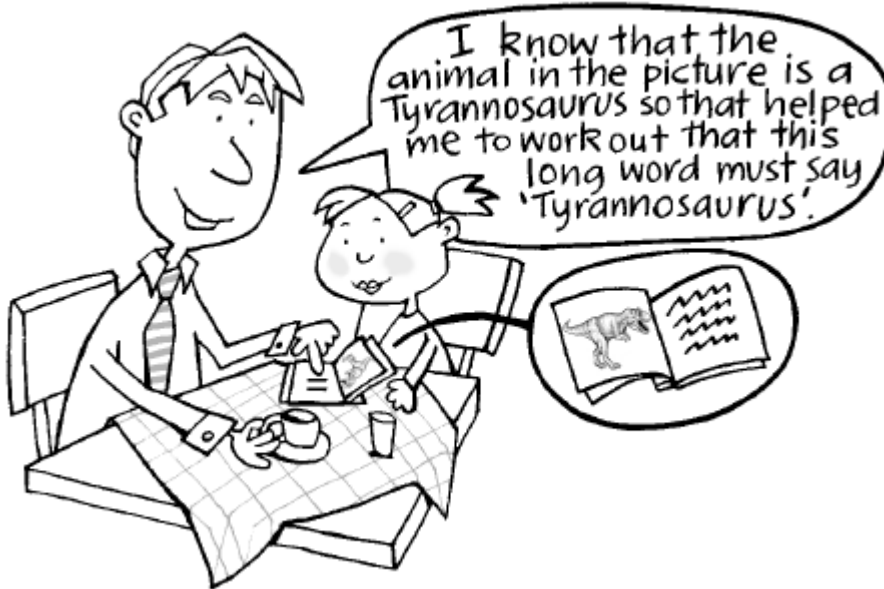
- predicting/thinking about 'what would make sense', using their knowledge of different types of texts (how/when/why they are used) and knowledge of topics
- using their memory of the text/similar text
- using picture clues
- remembering some familiar words (e.g. 'Mum' or 'Dad', 'I' and 'the')
- using letter/sound clues (at the beginning, middle and end of words)
- choosing how to break words into useful sound chunks (syllables, onset and rime and/or sounding out, if helpful)
- understanding that readers 'read ahead' (and then come back) to work out a difficult word/piece of text.



How to support beginning readers

Help children to begin to read by:

- using the **Helpful information — Learning about reading** and **Talking about words**
- talking about **when/how you use clues** when you are reading to children



- pointing out the **clues that are helpful**, when children are reading a particular text.

