

# Reading at home

Supporting  
your child's  
learning at  
**Year 4**

## Read and talk together

- Get your child to tell you about what they are reading. Who is their favourite character and why? Is there anyone like that in your family or school? What do they think is going to happen? What have they learnt from their reading? Does it remind them of any of their own experiences?
- Help your child with any words they don't understand – look them up together in an online dictionary if you need to.
- Read recipes, instructions, maps, diagrams, signs and text messages. It will help your child to understand that words can be organised in different ways on a page, depending on what it's for.
- Read junk mail or look at online ads – your child could compare costs, make their own 'advertisements' by cutting up junk mail or come up with clever sentences for a product they like.



**Here's a tip:** talk a lot with your child while you are doing things together. Use the language that works best for you and your child.

## Read with others

- If your child has chosen something to read that is too hard at the moment, take turns and read it together.
- Reading to younger brothers or sisters, whānau or grandparents will give your child an opportunity to practise reading out loud.
- Encourage other family and whānau members (Aunty, Grandma, Koro) to read to and with your child.
- Playing board games and video games is fun, too.
- Choose games that everyone wants to play. Make them challenging, not too easy.



**Here are some tips:** keep the magic of listening to a good story alive by reading either made-up, retold or read-aloud stories to your child – with lots of excitement through the use of your voice!

When they are reading, the most common difficulty your child is likely to have is working out the meaning of new words,

phrases and expressions. To do this your child will use their knowledge of words and word patterns (eg prefixes, suffixes and root words) to help build meaning. You may need to remind your child to read back and forward for clues to help their understanding of what they are reading. Talk with your child about the meaning of new words.

## Take your child to the library

- Help your child to choose a variety of books they want to read.
- Help them look for books about topics they're learning about at school.
- Get your child to choose a book that you can read to them (listening to you read helps them with their reading).
- Encourage your child to retell favourite stories or parts of stories in their own words.



**Here's a tip:** help your child link stories to their own life. Remind them about what they have done when a similar thing happens in the story.

# Writing at home

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## Write for fun

- Writing about their heroes, sports events, tīpuna (ancestors), hobbies and interests helps your child to stay interested in what they are writing about.
- Help your child to leave messages in sand on the beach, send a message in a bottle, do code crackers, word puzzles, crosswords, word finds online – these are all fun to do together.
- Make up a story or think of a pakiwaitara (legend) and act it out with costumes and music. Write down the names of the characters or tīpuna (ancestors).
- Using a digital device, encourage your child to write, email, message and publish or print for pleasure (emails, birthday cards, poems, jokes, letters, pictures with captions).



**Here's a tip:** keep writing fun and use any excuse you can think of to encourage your child to write about anything, any time.

## Writing for a reason

- Get your child to help write the shopping list, invitation lists for family events, menus for special dinners, birthday and thank-you cards.
- Postcards are a good size for a sentence or two and they are cheap to post, too.
- Have a special place to keep your child's writing at home (notice board, fridge, folder). You might frame a piece of writing and hang it up, too.



**Here's a tip:** be a great role model. Show your child that you write for all sorts of reasons. Let them see you enjoying writing. Write to them sometimes, too. You can use your first language – this helps your child's learning, too.

## Talk about your child's writing

- Get your child to talk about their writing and share it.
- Either physically or digitally cut out words and letters to make stories, codes, poems, puzzles and more.
- Play with words. Thinking of interesting words and discussing new ones can help increase the words your child uses when they write – look words up in an online dictionary or talk with family and whānau to find out more about where the words come from.



**Here's a tip:** talk about what your child writes. Be interested. If you don't understand what their story is about, ask them to tell you more about it. Use questions they will want to answer.