

# Reading at home

Supporting  
your child's  
learning at  
**Year 6**

## Make reading fun

- Have discussions together about books – read the books your child is reading.
- Encourage online research about topics of interest – notice what they are keen on.
- Make your home a reader-friendly home with plenty of books and magazines that everyone can read – look for books and magazines at fairs and second-hand shops. Ask your family or whānau if they have any they no longer want.
- Share what you think and how you feel about the characters, the story or the opinions in online articles and newspapers you are reading. It is important that your child sees you as a reader and you talk about what you are reading.



**Here's a tip:** encourage your child to read every day. Make reading fun and praise your child's efforts, all the time.

## Read together

- Reading to your child is one of the most important things you can do, no matter how old they are. You can use your first language.
- When you are reading to your child, you can talk about words or ideas that your child might not have come across before.
- Children are often interested in new words and what they mean – encourage them to look them up in an online dictionary or ask family/whānau about the meaning and origin.



**Here's a tip:** 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!



## Keep them interested

- Help your child identify an author, character or series of books they particularly like and find more in the series or by the author.
- Talk about the lyrics of songs or waiata, or the words of poems your child is learning, and see if there are any links to who they are, and where they come from.
- Subscribe to websites that have content that builds your child's special interest, for example, animals, their iwi, kapa haka or disc golf.
- Go to your local library to choose books together. These might be books your child can read easily by themselves. They might be books your child wants to read but are a bit hard – you can help by reading a page to them, then helping them read the next one.
- Play video and board games together – the more challenging the better.



**Here's a tip:** be a great role model. Let your child see you enjoying reading – whether it's on a device or a novel. Read in the language that works best for you.

# Writing at home

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## Make writing fun

- Encourage your child to write about their heroes, tīpuna (ancestors), sports events, hobbies and interests to help keep them interested in what they are writing about.
- Play word games and do puzzles together. Games and puzzles such as crosswords, tongue twisters and word puzzles help build your child's knowledge of words, spelling, thinking and planning skills.
- Start a blog or build a website using a free website builder about a family interest. Find a topic you're both interested in.



**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. Use your first language – this helps your child's learning, too.

## Write for a reason

- Suggest your child is responsible for the weekly shopping list, equipment list for weekends away and holidays, task lists for the week.
- Encourage your child to write to others – emails, texts, messages on apps with parental controls turned on. It will help if some of what your child writes about is for others.
- Help your child to write about their experiences and their own feelings about things that have happened at school, in their family, on the marae, in the world, at sports events and on TV in a blog or short story.
- Report on a new baby or pet addition to the family. This might be a slide show, digital scrapbook or message to wider whānau members.
- Make an argument in writing for a special request – trip, event, present etc.
- Draw up written contracts for agreed jobs. eg. Every day I will...(make my bed, do one lot of dishes, and when I complete the contract I can choose...).



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

## Talk about your child's writing

- Talk about ideas and information they are going to write about. Talk about experiences, diagrams, graphs, photos, treasures and taonga, waiata, pictures, whakapapa and material that your child is planning to use for school. Discussing the information and main ideas can help their planning for writing and their understanding, too.
- Share enjoyment of their writing. Read and talk about the writing that your child does. Give praise for things they have done well and say what you liked and why – this all supports their learning.
- 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 to find out more about what they mean. Talk to family and whānau members to learn more about the background and the whakapapa (origins) of the words.
- Share your own writing with your child – lists, planning for family events, song lyrics or letters and messages. You can help them to see that you too use writing for different purposes.



**Here's a tip:** talk about what your child writes. Be interested. Use it as a way of starting conversations. Listen to their opinion, even if you don't agree with it.



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