

Rat—Super readable rollercoaster
by Patrice Lawrence



Perceptions of reading: exploring barriers and opportunities

Research report 2022

Raise a Reader

OXFORD

It's more important than ever we ensure children and young people have the tools and opportunities to become lifelong readers.

Raise a Reader

Contents

What does it take to raise a reader?	4
Key findings	8
About this report	9
The benefits of reading	10
What are some of the barriers that stop children becoming readers?	12
Raising readers together	14
Becoming a reader—ages 3-7	18
Supporting older readers—ages 7-11	20
Key recommendations	22
Tips for reading at home	23



The Raiders
by Carmel Reilly

What does it take to raise a reader?

A note from Helen Freeman

Director, Oxford Children's and Raise a Reader Project Director

It's a question that occupies the minds of so many parents and carers, schools and teachers, authors and publishers, librarians, policy-makers and key influencers working in the field of literacy and education.

Raise a Reader is a product of my own experience of being a child that struggled to read; a parent that tried to support my own daughters to be confident readers, and a children's publisher committed to creating reading experiences that make a positive impression on readers.

All these things combined prompted me to consider what role Oxford University Press could play.

The answer was clear to me. Raising a reader takes a unique mix of people and experiences. It requires a team effort from *all* the people in children's lives. Particularly now, in the wake of the pandemic which disproportionately exacerbated the learning gap in children from low socioeconomic status families, it's more important than ever we ensure children and young people have the tools and opportunities to become a lifelong reader. It needs us to remove the barriers that exist around access to books. It needs fun, flexibility and understanding—

expertise and working in partnership.

There are so many brilliant ways to share the joys of reading with children—whether it's encouraging them to organize book swaps with friends or visiting the library to discover new books—we have this fabulous opportunity to be a force for good in children's lives, sharing our expertise and excitement about reading and all the places it can take you, at home, in school, and in life.

There is no one thing, it's often the blend that counts: wonderful teaching and school reading programmes; reading role models; and access to all types of books, stories, characters, content and formats. It requires people that will take an interest and support children to acquire reading skills and then encourage them to enjoy using them to access stories and learning—and a world of exciting opportunities.

As a mission-led organization, it feels like the right time for OUP to leverage its reach and reputation as a thought leader, key influencer and provider of market-leading reading programmes, resources, and children's books.

'Raising a reader takes a unique mix of people and experiences. It requires a team effort from all the people in children's lives.'



Helen Freeman

Director, Oxford Children's and Raise a Reader Project Director



The Smile
by Marie Voigt

This report shares the findings of a significant piece of research designed to inform our understanding of the important role we can all play in helping children become readers post-pandemic. It explores teacher and parent perspectives, uncovers the perceived barriers to reading, but also the many benefits to be gained.

This research and our Raise a Reader activities are a continuation of OUP's work at the forefront of literacy publishing and research. We are committed to supporting children's literacy development: from learning how to read, to building a reading habit, to reading widely and for pleasure. We hope this will help amplify the excellent work of leading literacy and reading organizations, with our shared ambition to ensure that children are supported to become readers.

Please read the report and consider the views that parents, carers, and teachers have shared with us. We invite you to join our mission to help raise readers together by playing an active role in schools, in your community or workplace, and at home with family members. This will mean we can help more children to become readers and experience a love of reading today, tomorrow and for the rest of their lives.



Andrea Quincey
Primary Literacy Director,
Oxford University Press

A note from Andrea Quincey Primary Literacy Director, Oxford University Press

Ensuring that all children ‘can read’ has long been a priority for policymakers, teachers, and families. There is good evidence that being able to read by the age of six or seven is a greater predictor of future life chances than any other factor in a child’s life; if we want to tackle the growing disadvantage gaps in society, teaching all children to read is a very good place to start.

But it is also important that children *keep reading*; that they build their vocabulary and their knowledge of the world through reading; that they develop empathy for others and their own well-being through reading. Children need to learn from an early age that reading is fun and interesting and worth their time and effort. Reading needs to have relevance for them as a leisure activity, alongside gaming and sports and social media. Children need to want to be read to and/or to choose to read, for themselves. It is this habit of reading, this ‘being a reader’, that truly makes a difference.

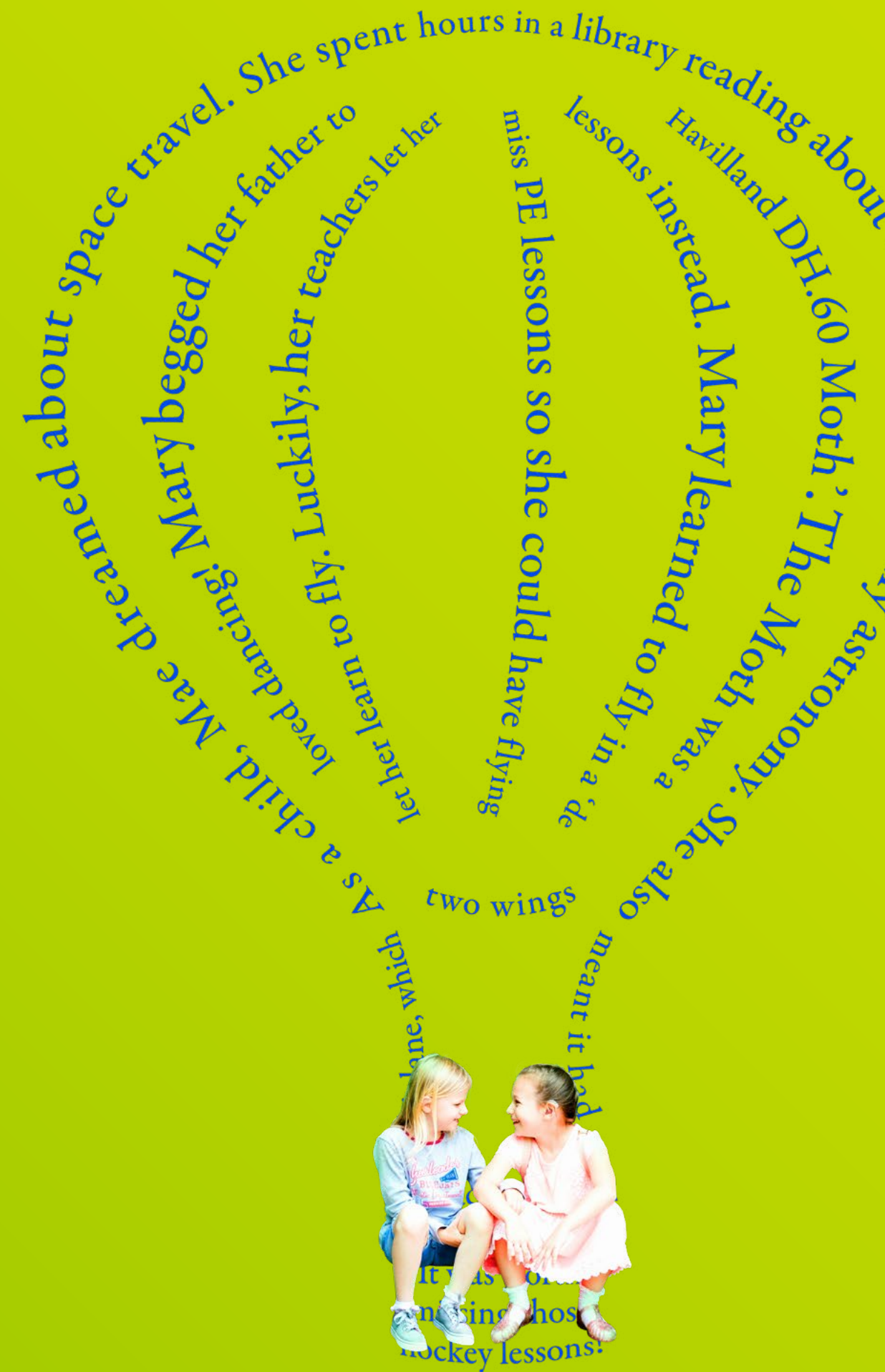
This latest research by OUP reveals how most parents surveyed understand the importance of reading with their children and are also very clear about their role, as parents, in encouraging children to read for pleasure. Children, too, know why

reading matters and can articulate both the academic and emotional benefits.

So why is it that so few children *are* reading for pleasure?

In this report, OUP also highlights some of the barriers for children, their families, and their teachers, with lack of time being significant, as well as children’s preference for screens and gadgets. In addition, the disruption to education caused by the pandemic has left many children behind with their reading. It is unsurprising that these children find reading challenging, stressful and boring.

As the UK’s leading provider of reading and learning resources, OUP is already helping thousands of teachers and parents to ensure children can read but as researchers and publishers our commitment to ‘raising readers’ goes beyond that. So we look forward to working with academics, schools, families, authors, librarians, booksellers, and important partners such as the National Literacy Trust, to give all children the skills, the confidence, and the motivation to read widely and often, for purpose and pleasure.



*A Speck of Stardust: The Lives
of Mae Jemison and Mary Ellis*
by Ruth Hatfield

Key findings

OUP has set out to understand more about the essential role that parents¹, teachers, librarians, and the wider reading community play along every child's reading journey. In the wake of the global pandemic, this report provides fresh insight and data from the perspective of thousands of parents and teachers.

1 The benefits of reading

The research highlights parents' understanding of the benefits of reading:

97% of parents believe it is important for their child to be a confident reader and 92% say it is important for their child to read for pleasure.

85% of parents agreed that 'reading helps my child do better at school' and 86% of parents believe reading will have a positive impact on their child's academic success later in life.

80% of parents believe that reading to their child improves the child's wellbeing and mental health and a majority believe that reading enables their child to go to sleep better, builds empathy and helps them to form friendships.

2 Barriers to reading

The research also highlighted perceived barriers to reading:

43% of parents say they find it difficult to get their child to concentrate on reading and 3 in 10 parents say that reading with their child is a challenge.

The research revealed some of the most common barriers preventing parents from reading

for pleasure with their child. This included children being distracted by screen time and gadgets (23%); a lack of time (22%); children being too tired (19%); and homework taking a priority (14%).

Parents want to find more time for reading: 35% of parents told us they would read more to children if they had more time in the day. 19% would read more if they implemented this into their routine.

3 The role of parents and teachers in raising readers

Encouragingly, the survey results show that parents and teachers recognize that raising children to be readers is a partnership and the findings explore parent and teacher perceptions of the role they play.

73% of parents feel they have the greatest responsibility for encouraging their child to read for pleasure.

1 in 4 parents are unsure how often they should be reading with their child. More than half of teachers recommend that parents read with their children 6 to 7 days per week, particularly up to the age of 7.

8 out of 10 teachers feel that parents should be reading

more with their children than they do now.

Almost all teachers wish children would read more on their own, with 3 out of 4 teachers saying they would like children to read independently at least 4 to 5 days per week.

Teachers recommend short, regular reading sessions with an adult at home, with a preference for reading for at least 5 minutes every day (38%) over longer but less frequent sessions.

Seeing parents reading encourages young readers: most parents (62%) who read regularly report that their children are also likely to be regular readers.

4 Becoming a reader—ages 3-7

When asked about the most important home reading activities for young children, 73% of teachers ranked parents reading to their child as top, followed by looking at books together and talking about the pictures.

When asked about the one change that would make them more satisfied about reading in their school, teachers would love to see more encouragement for parents to support their children's reading (70%).

5 Supporting older children to read—ages 7-11

While almost half of the youngest readers are reading with parents every day, only 30% are doing so by the age of 9.

Asked how often they would like children (aged 9-11) to be reading on their own at home each week, 61% of teachers said 6-7 days a week and 28% said 4-5 days a week.

According to the parent responses, just over half (54%) are managing to do this.

40% of children read for pleasure on their own every day at the ages of 9 and 10.



About this report

The purpose of this report is to shine a light on perceptions about reading and reading for pleasure in primary schools and families.

This report is based on two major surveys carried out on behalf of OUP.

Parent survey

OUP appointed specialist market research agency Opinion to conduct research with parents. We spoke to 2,000 parents of pre-school and primary school age children throughout the UK. The sample included an almost even split between parents of girls and boys and good coverage of children aged between 3 and 11.

Throughout this report, we refer to parents, but much of the insights and suggestions made would also apply to other carers and family members reading with children.

Teacher survey

We sent an online survey to teachers in May 2022, receiving 339 responses from teachers across the UK. Most respondents taught in the state school sector, with 11% working in the independent sector, teaching children of different age ranges between 3 and 11.

Responses came from a range of job roles from headteachers to subject leads and school librarians, with the largest group identifying as classroom teachers (30% of sample).

Insights from children were collected through the CHILDWISE Playground Buzz Omnibus survey, carried out by CHILDWISE with 1,255 responses received from children aged 7-11 years in June to July 2022.

¹The term 'parent' is used to indicate the role of parents and/or caregivers in children's lives.

The benefits of reading

Numerous research studies have found that reading is a fundamental skill that has a significant impact on our lives. But reading also offers access to worlds of imagination and knowledge that can provide a lifetime’s joy and inspiration.



97% of parents believe it is important for their child to be a confident reader.

Reading enjoyment is highly valued, with

92%

of parents saying it is important for their child to read for pleasure.

These responses show how much parents recognize the value of reading as a factor in academic success at school and beyond, and the many benefits associated with being a confident reader.

Reading benefits children in school

Parents see a strong link between being a confident reader and achieving success at school:

- 85% agreed that ‘reading helps my child do better at school’.
- 85% agreed that ‘reading encourages my child to ask questions and engage with important topics’.
- 85% agreed that reading ‘helps my child’s ability to understand the world around them’.

These views are echoed by teachers, with 97% of those taking part in our survey agreeing that children who read daily at home are better learners all round.

Children also recognize the value of reading to their wider learning.

Long-term benefits of reading

Parents believe that being a confident reader will also benefit children way beyond their time at school.

- 86% of parents believe reading will have a positive impact on their child’s academic success later in life.
- 75% of parents expect the benefits of being a regular reader to improve their child’s financial prospects in later life.

‘It teaches me new vocabulary and helps me to realize new things I did not know before.’

Boy, age 9

‘You learn more words and more types of writing. But also sometimes you learn more about other countries and their history.’

Girl, age 11

Reading helps mental health and wellbeing

The motivation to read can be varied. The benefits of reading for enjoyment, mental health and wellbeing may be more difficult to quantify, but they are widely recognized by parents and teachers. For example, 80% of parents believe that reading to their child improves the child’s wellbeing and mental health. More than 7 in 10 parents also believe that being read to helps their child to go to sleep better, builds empathy and helps them to form friendships.

The CHILDSWISE survey of children revealed that when children were asked how reading makes them feel, the most common responses were ‘happy’ (298 responses) and ‘calm’ (169 responses).

One of the children surveyed describes the impact of reading.

‘It makes me feel happy and peaceful, and it’s hard to explain. It’s just very imaginative to me, and it is like a small TV in my brain.’

CHILDSWISE survey response

Reading to children benefits adults, too

For many parents, reading with children is precious family time and improves their own wellbeing too. 84% of parents enjoy reading with their children, and 78% of parents say they feel rewarded when they read with their child.

What are some of the barriers that stop children becoming readers?

While the benefits of reading are widely appreciated, raising a reader is not always easy. 43% of the parents in our survey say they find it difficult to get their child to concentrate on reading and 3 in 10 parents say that reading with their child is a challenge.

Parents and teachers identify many barriers that stop children reading, such as lack of time or motivation. There may also be specific issues that affect smaller numbers of children but have a very real impact on being able to read with their child.

Parents find it difficult to fit reading into busy lives

Family life is busy, with parents and children facing lots of conflicting responsibilities and distractions, which can be a problem for any home reading routine. While 26% of parents said they faced no barriers to reading with their child, most families could identify factors that got in the way of reading for pleasure.

What are the barriers stopping you reading for pleasure with your child more often?



Screen time and gadgets



Don't have time



Child too tired at the end of the day



Homework takes priority

Looking in more detail at the survey responses, screen time and gadgets were particularly an issue for 8- and 9-year-olds. Tiredness at the end of the day is more of a barrier to children in the first years of full-time education.

35%

of parents would read more with their children if they had more time in the day.

Parents want to find more time for reading

When asked what would encourage them to read more with their children, making time emerged as the biggest issue.

35% of parents would read more if they had more time in the day.

19% would read more if they instigated a routine for it.

When we asked children for their views on reading, a significant number (132 mentions) said reading made them feel 'bored'. This may be linked to the other barriers to reading described above, however, it also highlights the importance of ensuring children have access to a wide range of reading materials to enable them to explore their interests and find their motivation to read.

Teachers need more investment of time and resources to improve reading

In addition to barriers to reading at home, we asked teachers what would make them more satisfied with the way reading is supported in their school.

'Parents who are able to support their children more with reading' (68% of teachers): as well as parents making time to read with children, this is also about having 'a shared commitment to improve reading'.

'More money for books' (49%): Teachers need more funding to ensure that book collections remain relevant and up-to-date. Teachers also raised having more staff to help support reading in school. 'More opportunity simply to read for pleasure' in school (41%).

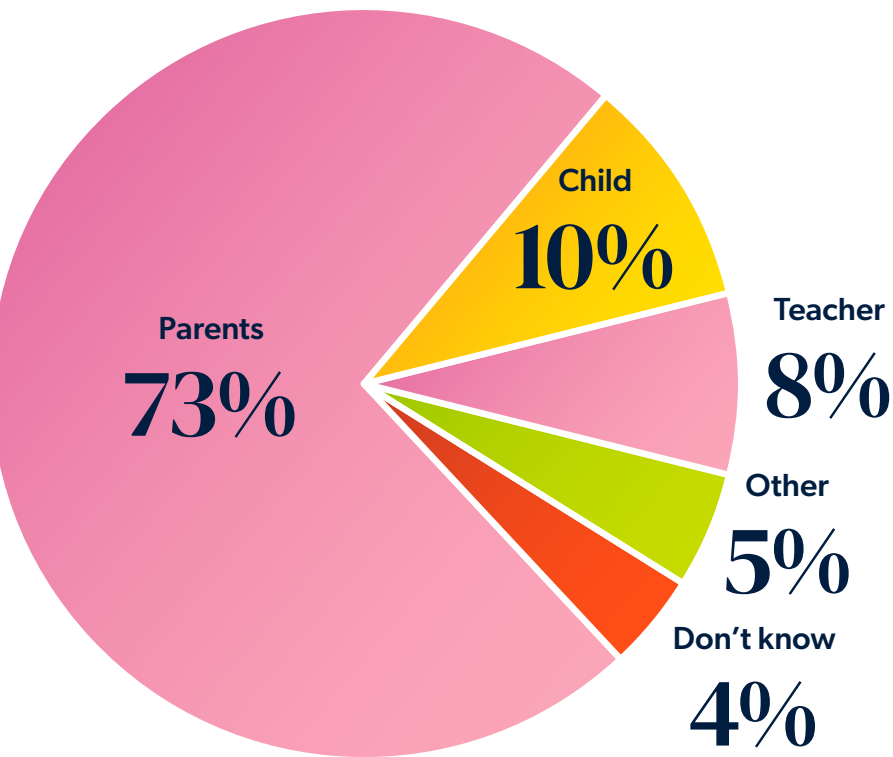
'Better knowledge of books among teachers' (28%): 'CPD for teaching assistants, e.g. How best to use reading schemes. Recommendations from librarian.'

'More investment in school libraries' (28%):



Raising readers together

For children to realize all the potential benefits that come from being a confident and enthusiastic reader, parents and teachers recognize that they need to work together. Raising a reader is a partnership between the child and the adults in their life, at home and school.



Parents are very aware of their responsibility for ensuring that their children read for pleasure, as this chart shows.

Teachers rate their own role and the parents' role as equally important in a child's reading development, but the two roles are different. Teachers develop vital skills such as phonics and comprehension and lay the foundations for a lifelong love of reading; while the parental role is to support with practice of these skills as well as to inspire and sustain that love of reading in their children.

A teacher's view on the role of parents in developing a love of reading:

'Teachers teach phonics and share stories but if the child doesn't have this love of reading nurtured at home, it's such a huge struggle for us to fill this gap.'

Parents' aspirations for reading do not always match reality

Making time to read with children is important, and 80% of parents read with their child at least 2-3 times per week. However, 1 in 4 parents are unsure how often they should be reading together.

Even when parents do have a clear intention to read regularly with their children, aspiration does not always match reality. 68% of parents would like their child to read for pleasure with them or another adult every day, but only 56% of parents say this actually happens.

While many parents would like to spend more time reading with their children, children's responses give a more mixed picture. Three in ten (28%) children aged 7-11 would like their parent or carer to read to or with them more often.

'Work reading into their routine at a certain time every day so that it becomes a habit.'

Revealing reading behaviours

As children get older, parents report a shift from children reading with them to independent reading.

- From the ages of 3 to 11, the amount of time children spend reading with parents increases steadily from 14 minutes to 20 minutes per day.
- Over the same period, the time children spend reading on their own more than doubles from 11 minutes to almost 28 minutes and children spend more time reading on their own from the age of 7.

Teachers recommendations to support reading at home

When teachers were asked how often they would like parents to read to their children, 80% of teachers said they would like them to be reading together at least 4 to 5 days per week. 8 out of 10 teachers would prefer parents to read more than they do now with their children. Teachers estimate that only around a third of the children they teach are reading every day with an adult at home.

Almost all teachers wish children would read more on their own, with 3 out of 4 teachers saying they would like children to read at least 4 to 5 days per week. Teachers recommend that children should read on their own more regularly as they become proficient readers.

More than half of teachers would like parents to read to their children 6 to 7 days per week, particularly up to the age of 7.

Teachers recommend reading little and often

We asked teachers about the ideal frequency for children to read with an adult at home. Teachers' clear preference was for children to read with an adult for at least 5 minutes every day (38%) followed by 10 minutes every other day (26%). Some teachers thought daily sessions should be up to 20 minutes but indicated that the key focus should be on reading daily.

Establish a reading routine at home

Two-thirds of parents say they have regular reading slots with their children, and teachers agree that a routine is vital for developing the habit of reading for pleasure.

While stressing the importance of reading together regularly for a short time, teachers also believe that reading for pleasure should be 'flexible' and warn that reading should not become a 'chore' or 'enforced and therefore unpleasant'. Instead, reading should be 'embedded in family life'.

‘Set up a cosy area at the same time every time we read. Put phones and electronics away.’

Key activities for building a reading habit

Teachers recommend the following activities as the most important for parents reading with their child:

- Encouraging children to read simply for pleasure.
- Reading to your child.
- Listening to your child read.
- Looking at books together, talking about pictures etc.

The final activity is particularly important for younger children as a way of encouraging a love of books and developing their vocabulary.

Bedtime is reading time

A majority of parents say their children are most likely to read for pleasure at bedtime, particularly on weekdays (61%). Around 4 in 10 children read for pleasure before or after school or weekend bedtimes.

Parents use a range of strategies to encourage and engage children

When reading to their child, parents say they use different approaches to engage their child and support their reading. As well as regularly reading bedtime stories (61%) and encouraging the child to read to them (73%), parents use different voices when reading (75%). Ensuring digital devices are out of sight or switched off is also a useful way to reduce distractions from reading.

Many parents also encourage children to read in less traditional ways, by reading road signs and names when they’re out and about (51% of parents), tackling difficult words they encounter (48%), or reading menus (42%), recipes and food labels (34%).

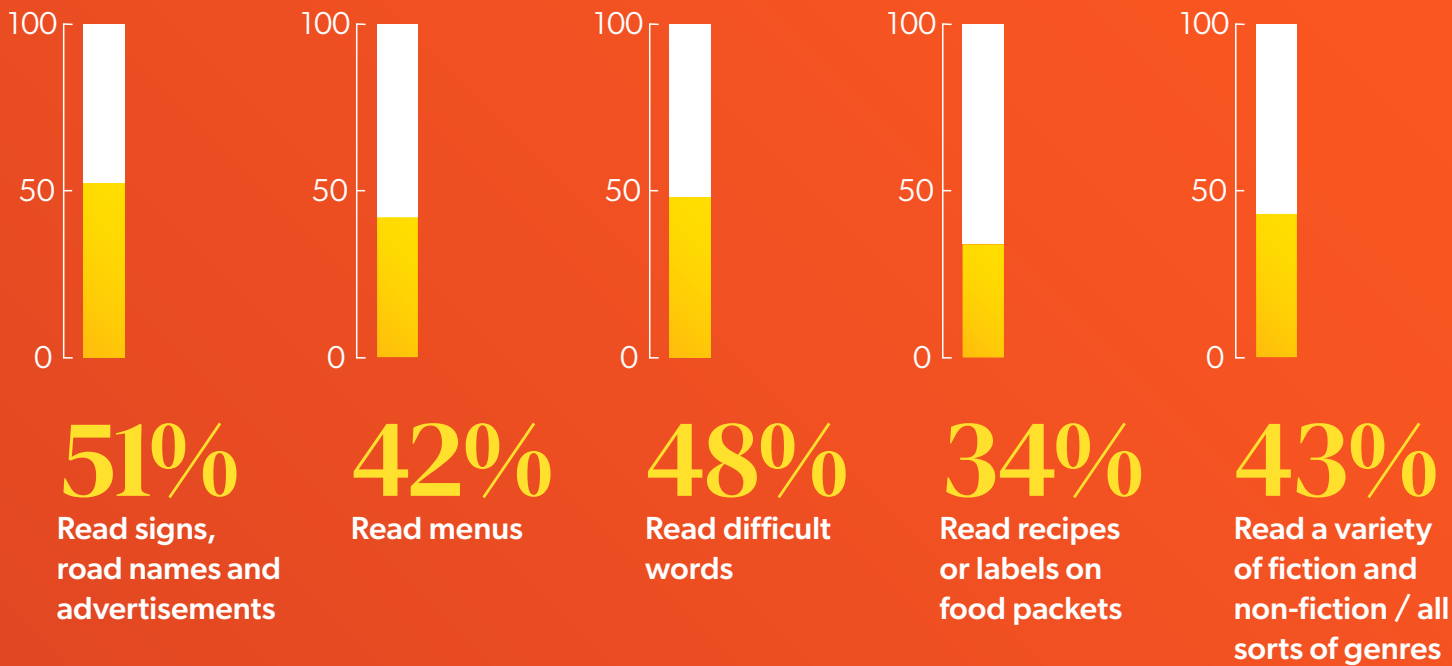
Seeing parents reading encourages young readers

The survey explored the importance of children seeing adults reading.

- 73% of parents believe that if their child sees them reading, it encourages them to read more often.
- 62% of parents who read regularly report that their children are also likely to be regular readers.
- Figures are much lower for parents who read rarely or never with only 1 in 3 children reading regularly, and 1 in 5 of these children reading rarely or never themselves.

Time spent reading ‘should be flexible depending on factors such as enjoyment level, reading ability and amount of independent reading the child does’.

Four in five parents encourage their child to read more but not just in the traditional setting ...



73%

of parents and carers believe that if their child sees them reading, it encourages them to read more often.

Becoming a reader—ages 3-7

Teachers play an essential role in ensuring children learn to read, but children's first experience of books and reading comes through reading with their parents. Teachers agree that parents have the strongest influence on children's reading development at ages 3-7, closely followed by school.

Start a reading habit early

'It starts young by reading to them, making books exciting and a daily experience and never force it.'

'Start young. Books from birth. Make story time special together time and enjoyable, not a battle.'

As these two statements show, parents and teachers recognize that good home reading habits start early. Teachers believe that the most important activities with the youngest readers are looking at books together and talking about pictures (67%) and parents reading to their children (63%).

In a previous report from Oxford University Press on the impact of the 'Word Gap' in schools, teachers reported that, on average, 49% of children entered Year 1 with a limited vocabulary to the extent that it affected their learning², and this figure appears to be growing. Starting the reading habit early is a big step in closing this gap, introducing children to words and contexts that they do not encounter in their day-to-day lives and conversations.

The teacher's role is essential in children learning to read for themselves

The teacher's role is essential in helping children learn to read, as all teachers agreed was the case for early years.

Teachers of children up to the age of 7 are happy with the way their schools support reading (80% are satisfied with their school's support for ages 5-7), particularly in developing phonics and reading for pleasure. When asked about the one change that would make them more satisfied about reading in their school, teachers would love to see parents who are able to support their children more with reading (70%).

Teachers recognize the time pressures that many parents face:

'All [types of reading] are essential, but the teacher is able to work on phonics and provide a variety of materials to enhance reading comprehension. Parents are vital but some may not have the time to support in the same way as at school.'

A teacher from our research describes their experience of the different roles as a child learns to read:

'The teacher ... ensure[s] the children are confident and fluent readers. The parent/carer role supports the teaching of phonics by reading at home and building a love for books and storytelling, and the school librarian enables the children's love for books to develop and expand.'

Teachers have high expectations for parental involvement in supporting young readers

Teachers of 5-7-year-olds emphasize the need for parents to listen to their child read, 76% say parents 'reading to their child' is one of the most important reading activities, and 55% choose parents 'listening to their child read' as a key activity.

Almost all teachers (96%) say they would like parents to read to their 5-7-year-old child at least 4-5 days a week, while 91% would like parents to be 'hearing their child read' at least 4-5 days a week. Most parents share this view, with 78% of parents of 5-year-olds saying they would like to read with their child 4-5 days per week or more.

The amount of time children spend reading on their own at ages 5-7 will depend on their reading confidence but just over half of teachers (54%) expect children to be reading on their own at least 4-5 days per week at this age. Parents report that 45% of 6-year-olds are achieving this, reading for an average of 16 minutes at a time.

Picture books are popular with young readers

We asked parents about the books their children liked to read. The top categories for young readers are:

- Picture books—the top choice for 3-5 year olds
- Fairy tales and folklore
- Animals
- Adventure

Picture books and other books with beautiful illustrations matched to the text are especially suited to the activity of looking at books and talking about the pictures, which 67% of teachers selected as the most important activity for the youngest readers.



91%

would like parents to be 'hearing their child read' at least 4-5 days a week.

²Why Closing the Word Gap Matters, OUP, p4.

Supporting older readers—ages 7-11

Only 30% of 9-year-olds read with their parents every day. However, parents still feel responsible for making sure that their child reads for pleasure, with 77% of parents of 10-year-olds saying they feel most responsible for this. This change in emphasis means that parents and teachers make some changes in the reading activities they focus on.

Teachers recommend that the key reading activity for parents of children aged 7 and over is to encourage them to read purely for pleasure (chosen by 81% of teachers for 9-11 year olds).

Older children can still benefit from reading with an adult, experiencing a wider range of books, more complex vocabulary and talking about books, but teachers feel it is less important for parents to listen to older children read to them once they are reading independently.

For older children, reading with a parent can still bring benefits, as this teacher explains:

‘Ideally daily and sharing books together rather than it being a quick “now read to me”. Some children at this age will be reading independently but still benefit from reading with an adult or hearing an adult read to them.’

89%

of teachers expect 9-11 year olds to be reading at home on their own at least 4-5 days per week, but only 54% are doing so according to parents.

Children read on their own more often and for longer

Solo reading becomes more significant, with 40% of children reading for pleasure on their own every day at the ages of 9 and 10. Older children’s reading sessions are longer too, averaging nearly 28 minutes by the age of 11.

There is a gap between how much children read at home and teachers’ expectations

In the later years of primary school, teachers expect students to be reading on their own 4-5 days per week or more, with 61% of teachers saying they would like children to read for pleasure on their own 6-7 days per week. Parents’ survey responses suggest that, although older children do more solo reading, almost half are not matching the amount of reading for pleasure that their teachers would like.

Isadora Moon meets the Tooth Fairy
by Harriet Muncaster

Schools focus on different reading activities with older children

Teachers tell us that these are the best activities to help children become good readers after the age of 7:

- Reading for pleasure
- Talking about books with adults and peers
- Small group guided reading sessions

The shared focus of parents and teachers on reading for pleasure in older children is vital to keep developing their confidence and enthusiasm.

Older children pick from a wider range of books

Teachers find that the books that are most beneficial for older children’s reading cover a wider spectrum than for younger readers. Choices for 9-11 year olds are broader, including graphic texts, comics and magazines as well as non-fiction and short fiction.

We asked parents about the books older children like to read. The top categories are:

- Adventure
- Fiction
- Children’s classics
- Fairy tales & folklore
- Fantasy/Sci-Fi

As teachers have stressed, making sure children have access to the books they want to read is essential in promoting reading for pleasure, and 90% of parents of 11-year-old children say they either choose the books they read together (29%) or their child makes the choice (61%). It’s important to note that some children find it challenging to know what they want to read and may need support from parents and teachers to choose what to read.

Here are some of the benefits that older readers feel they get from reading for pleasure:

‘It teaches me how to read the world around me’

‘It can help me see how other people see the world’

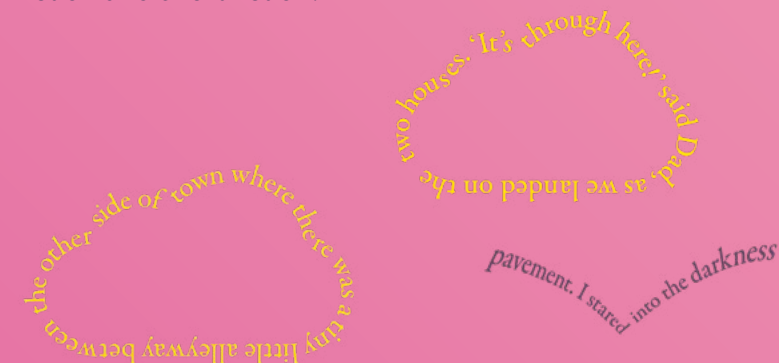
‘It helps me to have a more creative mind’

‘Expanding vocabulary’

‘Because it tells us how our planet works and how we should treat it sometimes’

Older readers have a wider range of influences on their reading

Teachers also report that the influences on children’s reading habits change as they get older. School remains a strong influence but parents’ influence declines to 63% (compared to 100% for youngest readers) to be replaced by friends and other influences such as social media.



Key recommendations

The results of this research give a detailed picture of the views of parents and teachers about the benefits of reading and how best to encourage children to read, and particularly to read for pleasure. The following recommendations, based on tips from parents and teachers, are intended to give parents and teachers some suggestions for how they can apply the insights from this research.

Parents

- When reading with your child, focus on enjoyment and fostering a love of books and stories.
- Establish a reading routine with your child as soon as possible. Having a clear routine will help you set aside time for reading.
- When you talk about the benefits of reading, focus on wellbeing benefits and how reading makes your child feel. This reinforces the message of reading for pleasure.
- Reading routines should not be too rigid and will change over time. Be flexible so reading never becomes a chore.
- When you read with your child, make the experience comfortable and remove distractions such as gadgets or screens if possible.
- Discuss and ask questions about the books you read, including the books your child is reading on their own. Talk about unfamiliar words, play games, and experiment with word swaps.
- As your child gets older, change your reading routine. Reading together is still important, but allow more time for your child to read on their own and put less emphasis on them reading aloud. Talk about book choices and peer recommendations.
- When reading with younger children, look for books with beautiful illustrations and/or different features you can discuss, as well as reading the text.
- Look for non-traditional reading opportunities, such as reading menus or recipes. These will broaden vocabulary without your child even noticing.
- Share the joy you take from reading for pleasure yourself so your child can see that you value reading. Talk about the books and other things you read with your family.

Teachers

- Parents want to be your partners in developing reading for pleasure. Integrate them into your plans and explain how they can support you by reading with and encouraging their children.
- Provide useful information that explains how reading works in school, with clear and accessible information so that parents feel well-informed.
- Give parents clear guidance about what you expect to happen with reading at home; how often to read, most supportive reading activities etc.
- Recognize the pressures on parents and understand that not all families will have the same approach or time for reading. Teachers have a vital role to play and may need to develop ways to ensure that all children are getting support if it's not as easy to access this at home.
- Encourage children to share the books they love, such as bringing books from home, as part of your partnership between school and home reading.
- Develop strategies to encourage reading for pleasure at home, including making books available for home reading, to increase the frequency of reading for those children who do not read at home regularly or may not have access to books outside school.
- Be a positive reading role model– modelling being someone that reads and is enthusiastic about reading can have a big influence on children.



Tips for reading at home

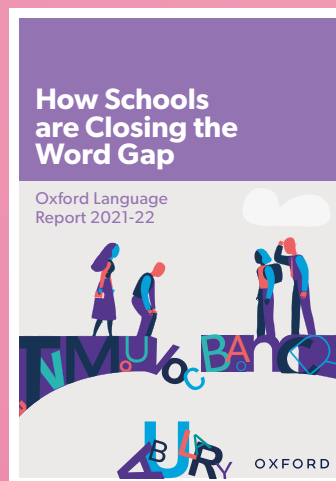
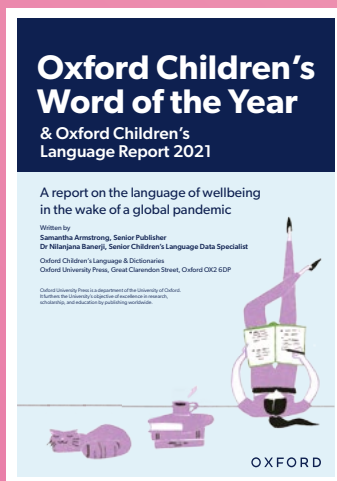
Homes, families and children are all different. One family's reading routine won't always work for others. We asked parents to share their tips for creating a regular reading habit, and here are some of their answers:

- After a bath when they are relaxed, they know that is book time, no screens or distractions
- Always having books to hand, in the car, at home etc
- Bedtime stories, talking around the story, making up stories
- Engaging them with games
- They also need to be modelled good reading habits by the adults around them
- Consistent reading variety of texts, not just stories–read the news, lists, mail etc
- Enjoy it, get involved, read a page each, go to the library
- Follow their interests. Reading doesn't have to be only books
- I ask my oldest child to read to my youngest at night time
- Turn off the TV or radio and have an atmosphere of relaxation
- Keep it fun and keep a routine
- Listening to audiobooks
- No pressure, read daily at the same time, good range of books and genres
- We always treat the reading like an adventure so she is always looking forward to it
- We have a reading corner, with a bookcase at his height so he can choose his own

Follow the Raise a Reader Campaign

We're aiming to join forces with teachers, parents, librarians and education partners to give all children the chance to access and enjoy reading, wherever they are. Find out more about the campaign by visiting: **global.oup.com/raise-a-reader**

You can also visit the OUP site to find out more about our research on the word gap and children's word of the year.



www.oup.com/education

Follow campaign updates on social media:

[@oxfordchildrens](https://twitter.com/oxfordchildrens) [@OUPPrimary](https://twitter.com/OUPPrimary) [@OUPSecondary](https://twitter.com/OUPSecondary)

[@oxfordchildrens](https://www.instagram.com/oxfordchildrens)

[@oxfordeducationglobal](https://www.facebook.com/oxfordeducationglobal) [@oxfordowl](https://www.facebook.com/oxfordowl)