

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD TO READ

Parent workshop

NATIONAL YEAR OF READING 2026:



Creating a love of reading is potentially the most powerful ways YOU can help your child





When children and young people enjoy reading, they are more likely to create a habit and read more often which in turn will help to build vital reading skills and bring with it a wider range of benefits..

Being able to read independently and fluently improves your child's academic chances and those in the wider world

Why Childhood Reading Matters



Life Chances & Earnings: Proficiency in basic literacy during primary school correlates with earning up to £65,000 more over an adult lifetime

Cognitive Growth & Brain Structure: Early reading for pleasure improves cognition, mental health, and actual brain structure in developing children and adolescents

Empathy and Wellbeing: Regular fiction reading builds theory of mind (empathy), reduces loneliness, and supports lifelong emotional resilience

Children who are read to frequently at age five are over half a school year ahead in reading performance at age 15, compared to those who are read to infrequently or not read to at all.



What are some of the key motivators for children and young people to read in their free time?

While more girls read for **wellbeing and emotional support**, more boys leaned toward reading to connect with causes or the wider world. Reading to build knowledge and skills was equally strong across genders.

Children and young people who report low levels of reading enjoyment, though less engaged, still recognise reading's educational value - nearly half said it helps them learn new words or new things.

How can we support children and young people to grow a love of reading?

The findings from Book Trust's 2025 report suggest a need to align reading with children and young people's personal interests and media habits in order to encourage a love of reading in their free time. Insights highlighted the following key motivators for those who took part in the survey

- Books tied to films or TV series.
- Books with visually appealing covers.
- The freedom to choose what they could read.
- Hearing recommendations from friends, family or teachers.
- Encouraging reading through a variety of formats.
- Consider using digital formats.

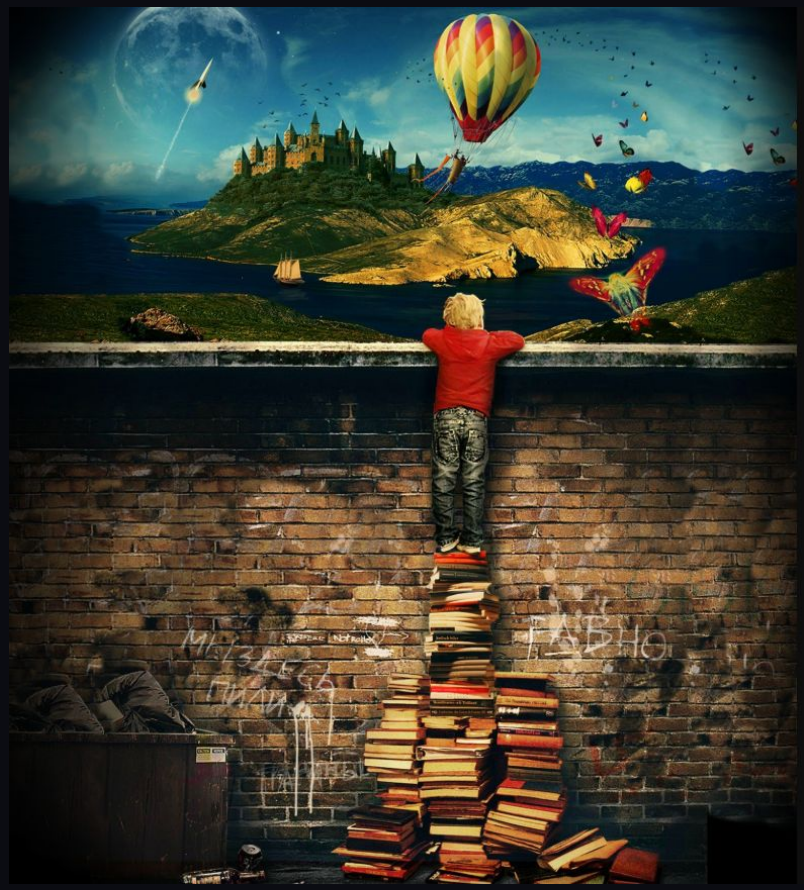
In fact, in 2025:

- Half (49.3%) of children and young people still read fiction or short stories in print each month.
- Two in five (40.1%) read non-fiction books, while
- **comics and graphic novels** (29.2%) and magazines (21.3%) also remain popular choices.
- **Digital formats** dominated in other categories, with **song lyrics** (60.7%) and news articles (28.2%) mostly read on screens.

These insights are powerful.

They suggest that re-engagement is possible, especially if we personalise reading opportunities around interests, allow autonomy in choice, and better link reading to other media children and young people already recognise as part of their cultural life.

How do we support children to get better at reading so that they want to read more-choose to read for pleasure?

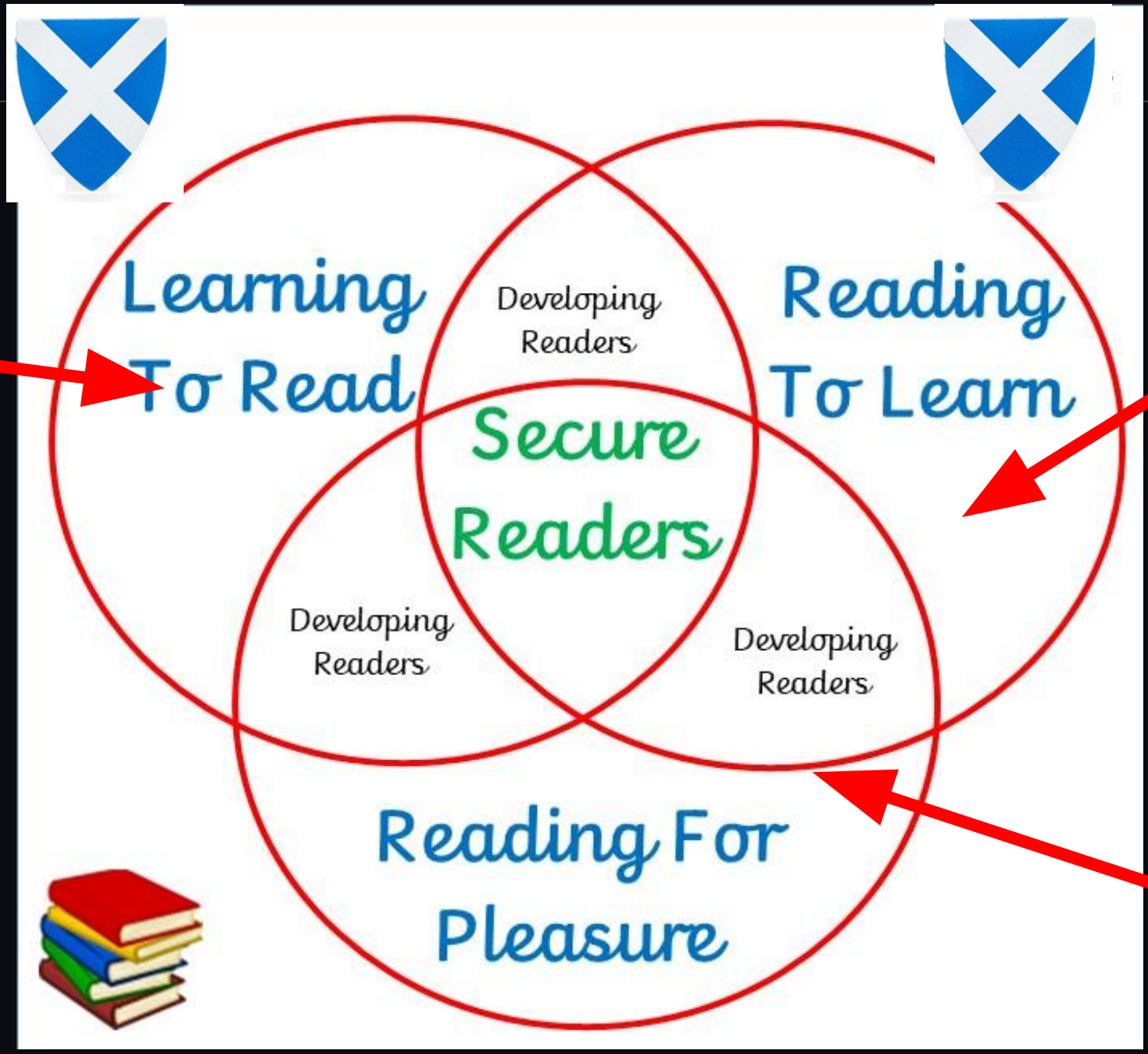


Reading is all about acquiring meaning for information, understanding and enjoyment.



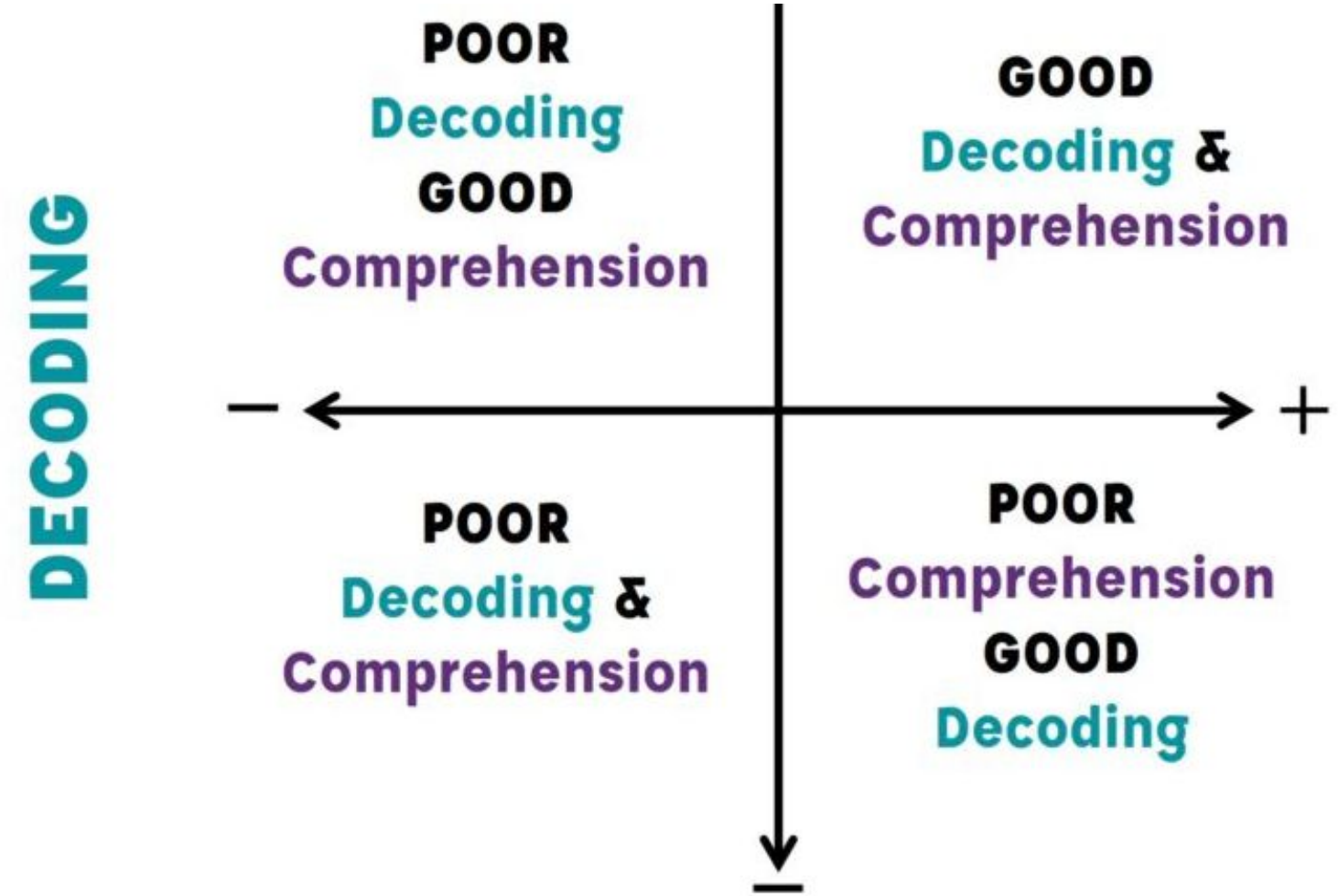
Reading books which come home

Phonics lessons and reading in school



Reading to acquire knowledge in other areas of the curriculum. Reading for a child's own interests.

Stories shared at home and in school


POOR
Decoding
GOOD
Comprehension
GOOD
Decoding &
Comprehension
DECODING
−
+
POOR
Decoding &
Comprehension
POOR
Comprehension
GOOD
Decoding
LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

Understanding Reading Development



Reading develops in stages:

- Pre-reading,
- Early reading, and
- Fluent reading.

Pre-reading includes skills like recognising sounds. Early reading focuses on sounding out words. Fluent reading means reading easily and with expression.

Phonics and word recognition

- The ability to recognise sounds in words (phonemes) and blend them together to read the word.
- The ability to recognise words in and out of context.

Understanding

- The ability to understand the meaning of words in a sentence and in a text.
- The ability to understand the ideas, information and theme in a text.
- https://www.standrewsprimaryschool.co.uk/supporting-reading-at-home/

If your child is stuck on a word….

- STOP, don't do anything! Give them time to work it out.

- If they can't work it out, then encourage them to –

1. Look at the initial sound of the word and then try to sound out the rest of the word (Remember that this does not always work - e.g. w-a-s)
2. Use clues from the picture or story
3. Re-read the sentence and think about what would make sense.

Creating a Reading Friendly Environment

- Try to set aside a time each day for reading and make it a top priority
- Try not to make it a time when you are both tired
- **5 minutes quality per day is better than big chunks, less often**




BookTrust

I Spy

Play 'I Spy' games. Can you find words beginning with...? Can you find a picture of a ...? How many ... can you see?

Ask Questions

Ask questions about the story as you read it e.g. What is the story about? Why do you think they made that choice? Was it a good choice? Why did that happen? What do you think will happen next? What was your favourite part of the story? Why?

Make it Fun

Enjoy reading together. Give characters funny voices and engage with the pictures. Make a game out of finding words that rhyme or start with the same sound.

Create

Use reading to inspire drawings or new stories.

Be Seen

Make sure you are seen reading. Keep books magazines at easy reach.

Get Out

Go to your public library regularly. Find the books you loved as a kid to read together.

Go Online

Look online & in app stores for appropriate word & spelling games.

Make Space

Have a special place or a certain time when you read together.

Your support and time really makes a difference to your child throughout their life.

THANK YOU!