

Encouraging Older or More Independent Readers

1. Read a wide variety of books

Encourage your child to choose texts with a variety of formats and layouts. Lots of children have favourite authors and genres, but it can be helpful to expand into new types of books every so often – and be sure not to neglect non-fiction texts, such as magazine articles, brochures, adverts, newspaper columns, signs, and notices.

Showing your child lots of kinds of texts will give them experience reading in a real-world context, and will also prepare them for national assessments where they are expected to engage with a wide variety of text types. Make sure you talk together about how the texts are presented – the writing will look different depending on what type of text it is from.

Your child may now be reading more independently, but reading to your child can still be useful, especially if the books you read are a bit above their current reading level. Take a look at our [free eBook library](#) for ideas for older readers.

Our free eBook library has lots of books perfect for older readers.

2. ... but value your child's choices too!

Your child might want to read something that everyone is reading at school, an old favourite they've read a hundred times before, or something you wouldn't pick yourself: another book about ponies or the biography of a footballer you've never heard of. Giving your child free choice of the book is a great way of building excitement about reading.

- Web page: [Encouraging reluctant readers](#)
- Blog: [Great books to get boys reading](#)

If your child tends to want to read the same books over and over again, it can be difficult to balance encouraging your child to read outside the box with letting them choose their own books. The best course is to aim for a mix of old favourites and exciting new ideas. Don't tell your child they can't read a book they have read several times before – but do be sure to point out new titles that might appeal.

4. Listen to audiobooks

Listening to an audiobook together can work well (even better when it is played from the hallowed tablet or smart phone). This could be curled up at bedtime, but it could also be in the car or at home while you're getting ready for school. Take a look at the free audiobooks on our [eBook library](#) for inspiration.

5. Carry on reading aloud

Your child may already be a fluent reader, but there are still lots of advantages to reading aloud to your child. Reading to your child gives them the chance to listen to books that they might not be able to read independently. This includes books that are too long for their current level of reading stamina, books with tricky vocabulary, or books that introduce concepts that benefit from discussion with an adult.

It also gives you lots of chances to talk about books with your child, and safeguards some shared time together. Read more about reading aloud to older children in James Clements' blog post, [Carry on reading aloud](#).

If your child is a [reluctant reader](#), try meeting them halfway. Perhaps you read a page to them and then they read a page to you. Or, you read one chapter, then they read the next few to themselves, and then you read another.

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6. Use pictures to talk about stories

For younger children, pictures provide an excellent opportunity to practise comprehension skills. This can also be true of children as they grow older and become more confident readers.

- Blog: [Picture books for older readers](#)

Talking about what is happening in a picture, what the characters might be thinking, or what might happen next. You might use a photo or picture on its own, or an illustration from a picture book, non-fiction book, or comic strip. Many popular books for children feature illustrations as part of the story.

7. Read between the lines

Talking about stories, poems, and information books can help your child understand books in different ways. It's not just about what's happened or who did what. Talk about what a book means to your child and whether they think there are any less obvious meanings that the author wants us to spot.

REF: [Reading & comprehension: Age 10–11 \(Year 6\) | Oxford Owl](#)