

Supporting my child with ADHD to read. How to encourage your child.

At this time, your child's school may be suggesting that he/she spends some time reading at home each day. Children with ADHD often have to try twice as hard as their peers to concentrate and focus when reading and learning to read. It can easily become a battle ground for parents. Here are some suggestions to help you.

Read **to** your child, even if they can already read on their own. If you read first, your child will be familiar with the words and storyline and will be more confident to have a go themselves. Repeated reading of favourite books is a great shared experience and reinforces success, promotes fluency and provides opportunity to add expression. For children who struggle to focus, this will also help with listening skills, concentration and relaxation.



Begin by reading a short passage together. Maybe one or two sentences, with you helping to sound out unfamiliar words or telling them the words they are stuck on. Then your child can repeat what you've read together. Build up to reading longer passages together, gradually developing independence.



Use your computer, tablet or phone for your child to listen to an audio book, animation or film featuring the text. Here are just a few sites to try. There are lots more!

www.audible.co.uk

<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/find-a-book/library-page/> Free ebooks

www.booktrust.org.uk

www.storynory.com

www.literacytrust.org.uk

Lit2Go or Project Gutenberg (for older readers)

www.getepic.com – free 30 day trial



Keep active. Remember that for children with ADHD, to focus and concentrate takes a huge amount of effort. Keeping still for long periods of time can be a huge challenge. Try reading lying down, slouching over a cushion, or even upside down!



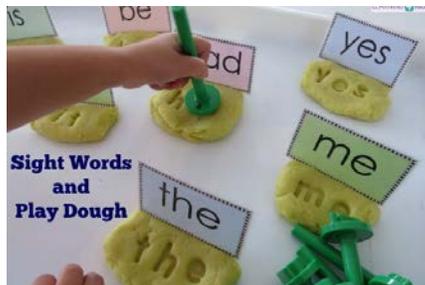
Being really still can be very difficult so expect fiddling and fidgeting as it may be that your child needs to do this to concentrate.

Burn off some energy before reading time. Run around or do some physical exercises indoors for 5 minutes – then sit quietly and calmly to read.

Think about the noise level in the room. Some children like a quiet space to work in where there is no distraction. Others focus more with some calming music or quiet noise in the background.



Does your child have a special interest that motivates them? Maybe they love finding out about animals, pop singers, cars or football. If so, read books, magazine articles or non-fiction texts about their passions. Reading comics, joke books, newspapers and magazines all count and your child may find this more motivating.



If you're reading specific key words, vocabulary or learning letters and sounds (phonics), try playing fun, active games to reinforce your child's learning. Making and doing uses energy and can keep children with ADHD more engaged and focused. See how many times they can find the letter or key word on a page or in a magazine article; stick the words being learned on post-its around the room and time them collecting/reading them all, race across the room on all fours to find the key word, treasure hunt- how many objects can you fit on plate that have a specific 'sound' or phoneme.

There are lots of ideas for teaching reading and spelling on the internet.

Try making a game of the work you're doing. Keep a record or chart of the words your child has learned to read or spell. Many children enjoy competition, so challenge them each day to beat yesterday's score, or read all their words in a faster time each day you read. Join in and make a matching or snap game to reinforce key word reading. See if they can beat you! Remember that some children don't cope well if they lose a game, so think carefully about making their learning achievable and not too difficult!

SPELLING Write each of your spelling words in a sentence (.), a question (?) and an exclamation (!). Put a BOX around your spelling words.	SPELLING Write each of your spelling words in your notebook. Then write each word in ABC order.
SPELLING Write your spelling words forwards and then backwards. Write neatly! Example: bat --- tab	SPELLING Make your spelling words disappear by deleting one letter at a time. bat



Schedule reading time when it suits your child and your family. It might be just before bedtime or in the morning when your child is wide awake and more likely to focus. Let your child know how long you will be reading for, what will happen next and use timers or rewards after they have put in lots of effort.

MORNING				
Brush Teeth	Comb Hair	Get Dressed	Breakfast	Backpack
AFTERNOON				
Wash Hands	Snack	Homework	Clean Room	Free Time
EVENING				
Dinner	Shower	Pajamas	Brush Teeth	Bedtime



Above all, enjoy yourselves and avoid reading becoming a time of conflict. Little and often (just a few minutes) is much better than struggling on and causing upset. Praise all effort and tell your child how proud you are!

Don't forget that your school and child's teachers are still available. If you are really struggling or feel like the reading material is too tricky or too easy for your child, get in touch and ask for their advice.