



Supporting  
Your Child  
with English

St Albert the  
Great School  
KS1

When you share a story with your child s/he is learning these speaking & listening skills:

**Speaking** When children listen to stories being told by you, they not only practice their listening skills but they watch your speaking skills and learn from these examples. Discuss new words with them and then reuse them into conversations at meal times or when you are making up stories or playing games together.

**Listening** Listening to stories being told by you allows children to practise their concentration and identify and remember details of that story.

**Group Discussion and Interaction** Children learn to take turns when they speak in a group (e.g. family at home/ class members at school), to back up and give appropriate reasons for their thoughts and opinions and to take into account others' reactions and thoughts.

**Drama** When they tell stories children learn how to use their language to convey the setting, characters and emotions. They learn that they can create and keep up all the different roles of the different characters in the story.

**Language variation** At KS1 children are learning about language variation - language and speech often changes in different circumstances and depending upon the particular audience listening to the speech. e.g. Consider how you change the way you speak to your child, your parent, your friends or a stranger. . .

. . . as well as being entertained by you!



# Reading at home

Learning to read takes practise, more practise than children get during the school day.

## If your child is just beginning to read:

- **Practise the sounds of language.** Read books with rhymes. Teach your child rhymes, short poems, and songs. Play simple word games - How many words can you make up that sound like the word "bat"?
- **Help your child take spoken words apart and put them together.** Help your child separate the sounds in words, listen for beginning and ending sounds, and put separate sounds together.
- **Point out the letter-sound relationships your child is learning on labels, boxes, newspapers, magazines and signs.**
- **Listen to your child read words and books from school.** Be patient and listen as your child practises. Let your child know you are proud of his/her reading.
- **Hidden Letters** --Build reading observation skills with this activity. Ask your child to look for letters of the alphabet on boxes and cans etc. For example, find five As or three Cs or any combinations of letters on cereal boxes, soup tins, bars of soap. Start with easy-to-find letters and build up to harder ones. Then have children write the letters on paper or point out the letters on the objects where they were "hidden."
- **Dress Me**--Increase your child's vocabulary. Teach the name of each item of clothing your child wears-shirt, blouse, sweater, sock, shoe when your child is dressing or undressing. Also teach the body parts-head, arm, knee, foot. Then print the words on paper and ask the child to attach these papers to the clothes in the drawers. Make a silhouette of the child on a large sheet of paper, and ask your child to attach the works for the body parts to the right locations.



## If your child is reading

- **Reread familiar books.** Children need practise in reading comfortably and with expression using books they know.
- **Build reading accuracy.** As your child is reading aloud, point out words s/he missed and help her/him read words correctly. If you stop to focus on a word, have your child reread the whole sentence to be sure s/he understands the meaning.
- **Building reading comprehension.** Talk with your child about what s/he is reading. Ask about new words. Talk about what happened in a story. Ask about the characters, places, and events that took place. Ask what new information s/he has learned from the book. Encourage her/him to read on her/his own.

## Make reading a part of every day

- **Read together every day.** Spend time talking about stories, pictures and words.
- **Be your child's best advocate.** Keep informed about your child's progress in reading and ask the teacher about ways you can help.
- **Be a reader and a writer.** Children learn habits from the people around them.
- **Visit the library often.** Story times, computers, homework help, and other exciting activities for the entire family.
- **Use dictionaries together for difficult words** - a picture dictionary can make exploring language more interesting.



# Writing at home

- Encourage children to get involved in writing lists and cards. Model how you have to segment the words into sounds to spell them and then remember which grapheme makes that phoneme!
- Emphasize the links between drawing and writing, and make sure your child always signs finished artwork - only using a capital for the first letter in their name.
- Create real opportunities for your child to write, such as letters, lists, posters or invitations.
- Talk to your child about her/his writing and read it through together.
- Praise your child for trying.
- Don't dwell on mistakes, focus on the content and show them all the bits they got right.
- As they become more experienced, if they ask for help with a spelling, encourage thinking skills rather than just writing the word for them or spelling it out. Try these strategies...
  - show them the word and get them to say the letters and remember the shape. Then hide the word away whilst they try to write it and let them check their accuracy afterwards.
  - make links to rhyme and 'spelling by analogy'. For example - if they want to spell went show them how to spell bent.
  - help them count the phonemes in the word and say which grapheme they need for a particular phoneme. For instance 'make' has 3 phonemes (m, long vowel A, k) and is spelt with the split digraph 'a-e', not 'ai'.

## Some writing Activities . . .

**Comic Strip Writing**--Use comic strips to help with writing. Cut apart the segments of a comic strip and ask your child to arrange them in order. Then ask the child to fill in the words of the characters (orally or in writing).

**Disappearing Letters**--Promote creativity and build muscle control with a bowl of water and a brush. On a warm day, take your children outside to the driveway and encourage them to write anything they wish. Talk about what they've written.

**Story Endings**--Improve listening skills and imagination. Read a story aloud to your child and stop before the ending. Ask the child how the story will turn out. Then finish the story and discuss the ending with the child.

**Day-by-Day Calendar** Turn a large calendar into a personalised family communication centre. Have children fill in the blanks with morning messages, weather reports, birthday, special activities, or notes to the family.

**Nice Words** Make someone happy. Write each family member's name on separate sheets of paper. Add a note or a drawing to each sheet for example, "I like the way you make breakfast," or "You make me happy when you do the dishes." Fold the sheets and put them in a bag and shake. Ask each person to choose a paper from the bag. Place the notes where they can be found by family members. At the end of the day, talk together about the notes.



**Proud displays.** Have a place in your home where you display your children's writing. This will build their confidence and encourage them to write more often.

**Most importantly remember that writing can be difficult, so be available, supply help if asked and marvel at how well your child is doing.**

## Handwriting

It's easier to get into good handwriting habits early on than to correct poor writing later.

Please ask your child's class teacher for a copy of our handwriting font. It shows where to start writing each letter and which direction to form it.

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z  
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



## Sight Words

These are the key words on the inside covers of your child's reading diary.

- Blend the words that are phonically regular e.g. went
  - Group words with shared spelling patterns e.g. could, should, would
  - Practise writing words on a rough surface
  - Make words with magnetic letters
  - Practise writing words in short sentences

## Is your child left-handed?

This website has a short video clip about the problems a leftie has to deal with.

[www.anythingleft-handed.co.uk](http://www.anythingleft-handed.co.uk)

**If your child brings a spelling list home to learn**, try to make the practising fun by playing games that encourage careful listening to the sounds in words and looking for letter patterns e.g. could, should, would

If you have any ideas that you think would be useful for others please let us know .





# Useful websites

Our own, of course - <http://www.albertthegreat.herts.sch.uk/>

Digger and the gang:

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/digger/5\\_7entry/5\\_7.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/digger/5_7entry/5_7.shtml)

Magic Key activities:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/magickey/adventures/index.shtml>

Phonics activities:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/wordsandpictures/phonics/index.shtml>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/laac/menu.shtml>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/dynamo/den/index.shtml>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/spellits/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/revisewise/english/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/wordsandpictures/hfwords/starwords>

[/index.shtml](#)

[www.phonicsplay.co.uk](http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk)

Several authors have good interactive sites e.g:

<http://www.roalddahl.com/>

<http://www.eric-carle.com/>

or 'google' your child's favourite author

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/adventure/index.htm>

Writing activities:

<http://www.brucevanpatter.com/mugshots.html>

<http://www.meddybemps.com/9.700.html>

