

Teach your child to read using the 'whole language' approach.

This is a lovely holistic way to teach children to read from the age of three or four.

The whole language approach is a method of teaching reading that doesn't get used very often in schools. The reason for this is that it is difficult to organise in large classes. It requires teachers to give children a great deal of personal attention.

This is how it works:

Explain to your child: we are going to make a book together.

Find lots of photographs and involve your child in the selection process.

Choose one photo, perhaps for the front cover. It might be a picture of your family.

Listen to your child and engage in a conversation about your family.

Together make a title for the book:

Our family

Remember to print clearly. *No one ever read a book written in joined up scribbly writing!*



Our
family

Talk about the next photo, noticing what he or she tells you. For example it may be a photograph of Daddy. Your child may start rambling all about what he's been up to lately but try to narrow it down to a simple single sentence i.e. **This is Daddy**. Write this down. You might want to add another:

Daddy is working.

Daddy



This is Daddy.

Daddy is working.

Mummy



This is Mummy.

Mummy is working.

Add a different photo with a caption every day and very soon you will find your child has become the author of his or her own book.

Remember: No more than ten pages
Keep the language simple
Stick to a very basic vocabulary
Use clear bold quite large font
Repeat the words as often as possible

**I.e. This is Sammy. Sammy is our dog.
Sammy, our dog is in the garden.**

(Not: **this is Sammy in the garden** - because we are taking the opportunity to provide **repetition** of the words **Sammy, our, dog, and is**).

Read as you print.
As soon as you have printed the full sentence read it back.
Encourage your child to read it back **with** you.
Point to each word.
See if they can read it back independently.
Re read each page before adding a new photograph.
If this is successful start a new book about anything - fact or fiction.

This is all about learning to associate the spoken word with the printed word. A very important link.

Remember young children lose focus really quickly. Don't force this activity as there are plenty of other ways to interest children in books and in reading independently.

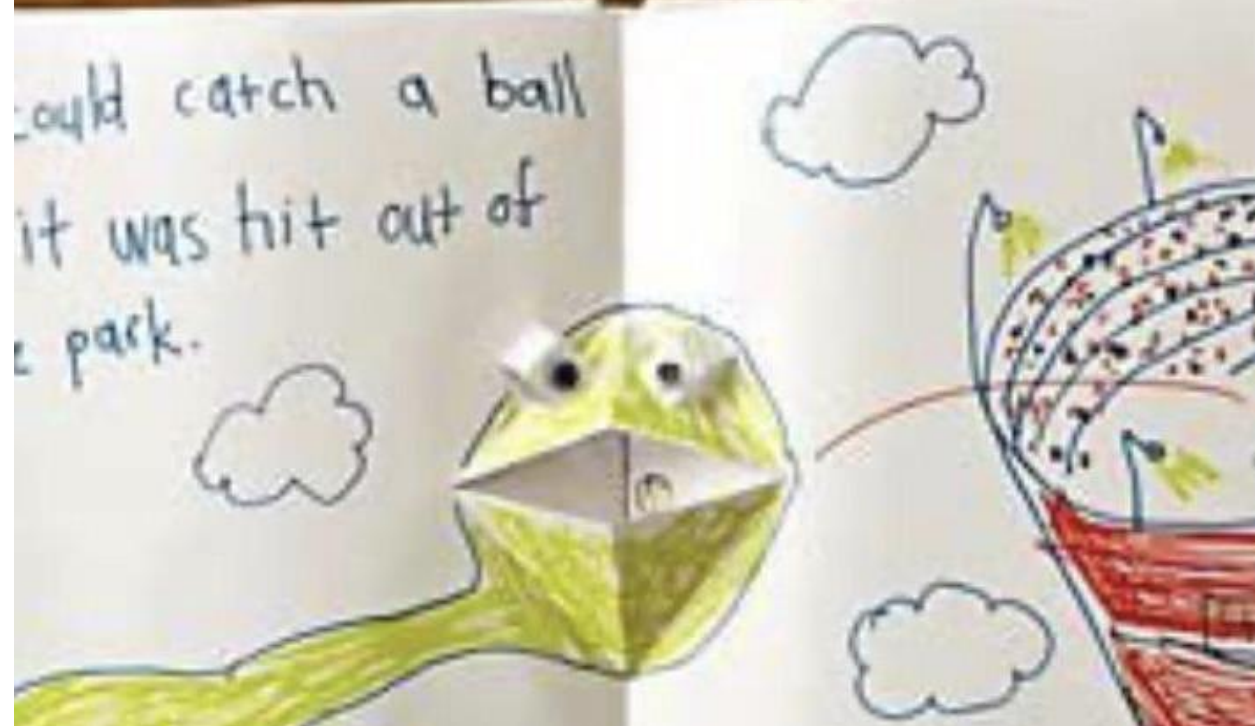
Young children like to read about space, dinosaurs, fairy tales, animals, mini beasts, transport as well as many other topics that grab their interest. So it's up to them what they would like to 'write' a book about.

There are thousands of commercialised reading schemes used in schools but they are all based on two principles.

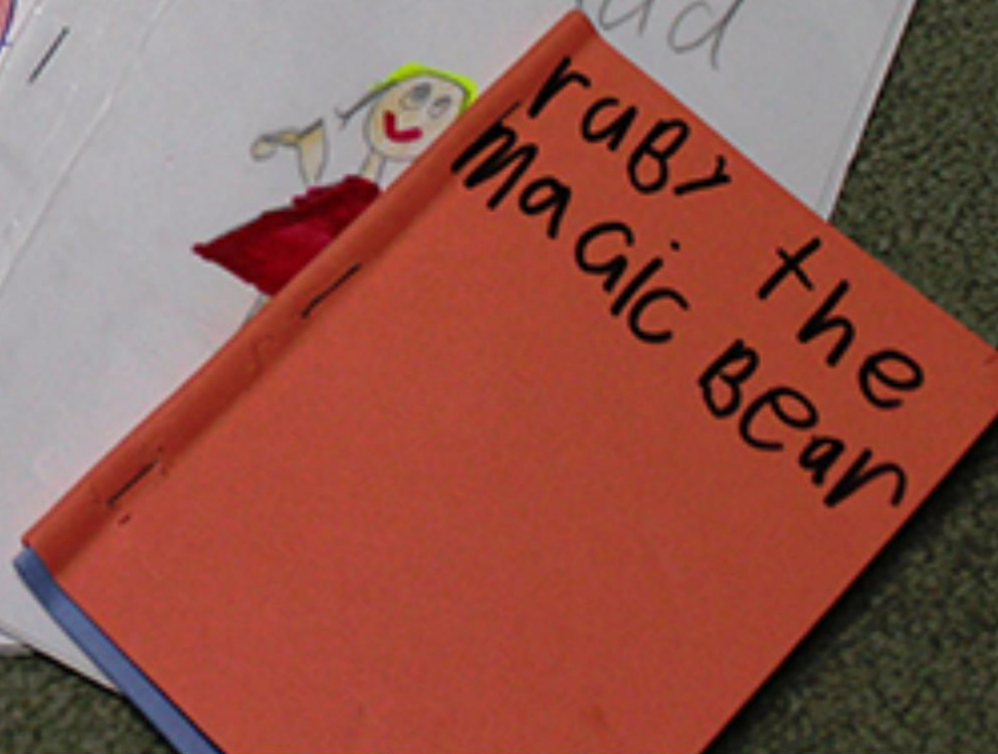
1. Knowledge of phonics (letter sounds)
2. Ability to memorise irregularly spelled words such as **said** or **because**.

They are all very 'woke' in their content and by using the 'whole language' approach you can decide what you want your children to read.

Some children find the process of learning to read as simple and as effortless as breathing but sadly far too many don't. Using this method it's possible to work at the pace and level of your child.







Finally, it's important to stress that none of this should be rushed or forced. Some children will pick up reading quickly and for others it might seem as though it will never happen. Just like acquiring the ability to get dressed by themselves nearly all children get there eventually! Ten minutes a day is all you need and you will be amazed at their rapid progress. For further information there is a link on the website.