Learning to Read Reading to Learn

Ormiston Cliff Park Primary Academy

September 2026



Why Early Reading Matters?

- A critical communication tool
- The rich language of books
- Reading builds thinking skills
- Reading unlocks creativity and develops children's imagination
- Reading helps to develop concentration
- The "master skill" of school
- Life chances
- Good readers become good writers
- Reading, alone and together, builds shared experiences, brings life-long joy and promotes well-being!



Where Does it all Begin?

Take a moment to read the following quote about reading:

"The more you read, the more things you will know. The more things that you learn, the more places you'll go." Dr Seuss

What skills and knowledge did you draw upon to be able to read and understand

it?



Without even thinking about it, you are likely to have:

- Fixed your eyes on each word and swept your eyes automatically from left to right – instantly processing the inky marks on the screen into sounds
- Transforming these sounds into words which have meaning, using your vast, existing knowledge of language and the wider world.

- In order to do that, you need to have acquired a number of key skills….

Reading is a multi-skilled process

The Building Blocks for Reading - Semantics

- Semantics is the science of words!
- When we come across an unfamiliar word, we use clues- the rest of the sentence, the pictures or diagrams, words that resemble the unfamiliar one- to help us understand the meaning.
- English has lots of words that can mean different things in different contexts!

Syntax

- As well as the science of words, children need the science of sentences- syntax!
- Our familiarity with the way words are arranged also helps us find the meaning of unfamiliar words.
- Early readers gain the skills and knowledge of syntax to become early writers.

The Importance of Talk

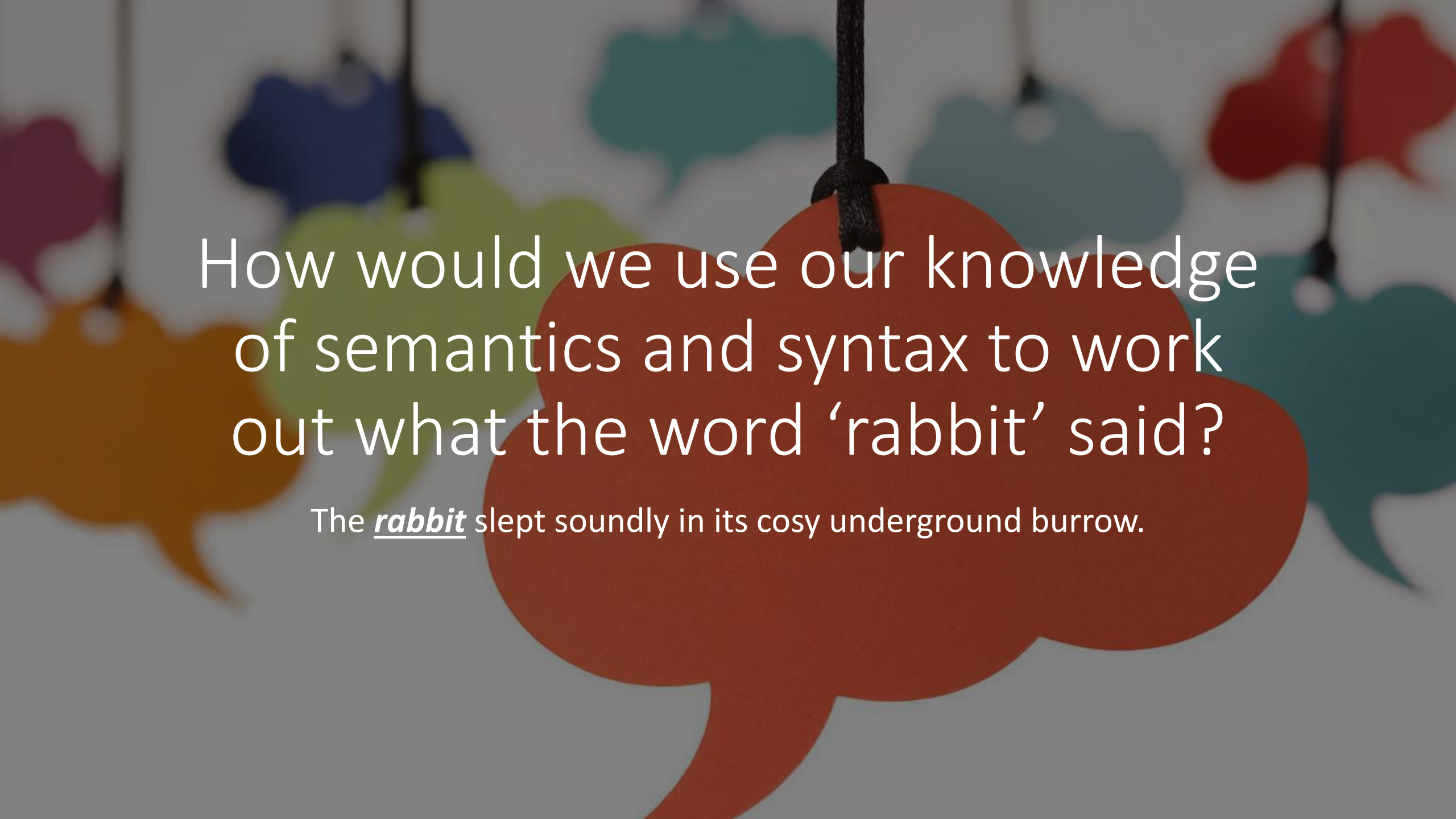
- To make sense of the world and develop their knowledge and creativity, children need to TALK!
- Developing understanding of semantics and vocabulary comes from sharing words through talk.
- READING FOLLOWS TALKING!
- Talking partners at school.

Don’t underestimate the Power of the Picture Book to develop language and vocabulary!
“Never step on a snail….”
(From Shaun Tann’s ‘Rules of Summer’





What might the characters be saying/thinking/doing….? What if it wasn’t a Bear Hunt after all?



How would we use our knowledge of semantics and syntax to work out what the word ‘rabbit’ said?

The ***rabbit*** slept soundly in its cosy underground burrow.

Grapho-phonemic Cues

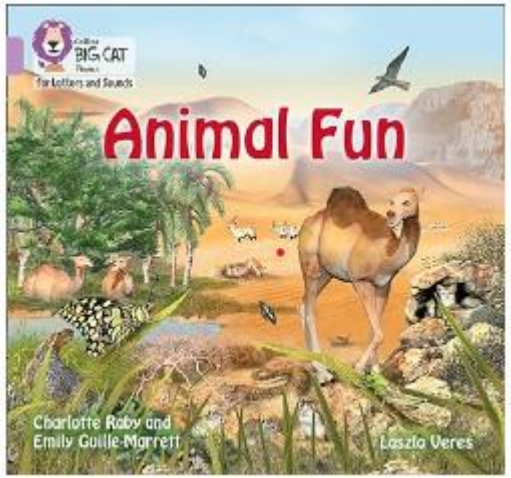
Our understanding of semantics and syntax will get us so far and plays a significant role in helping us to understand what we are reading but, to become an automatic and skillful reader, we also need to develop our grapho-phonemic awareness.

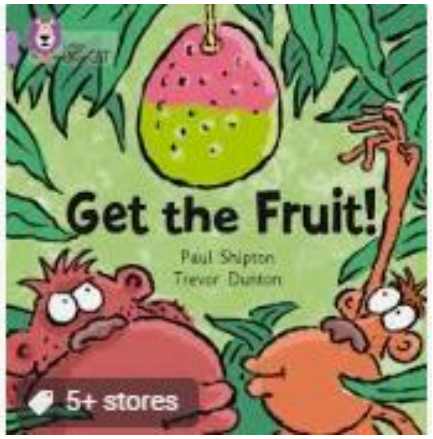
In other words, we need to be able to correlate written letters with the sounds that they make, in order to ‘hear’ the word on the page.

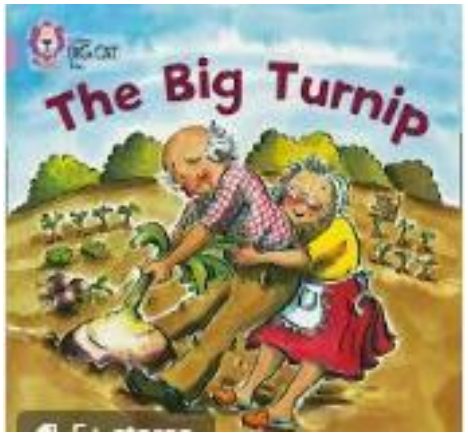
Phonics at Ormiston Cliff Park Primary Academy

Daily Phonics lesson

- Phase 1 – two weeks of playing games which develop listening skills. We work on sound discrimination, alliteration, vocal sounds, rhythm and rhyme and begin some segmenting.
- Phase 2 will start on 2nd Oct
- We teach sounds every week – between 2 – 4 sounds each week
- Each lesson children will practise letter-sound correspondence, segmenting and blending words, recognising common exception words on sight and applying their knowledge by reading or writing sentences
- First sounds are S A T P I N
- We use the correct terminology with the children, e.g. grapheme and phoneme, segment and blend
- We use actions when segmenting and blending – robot arms + clap
- Correct pronunciation is vital – you can watch 'Jolly Phonics' videos, use the sound mats we will provide in the homework books.







Home School books Picture books

Hold the book correctly, turn the pages

Develop talk

Build up vocabulary

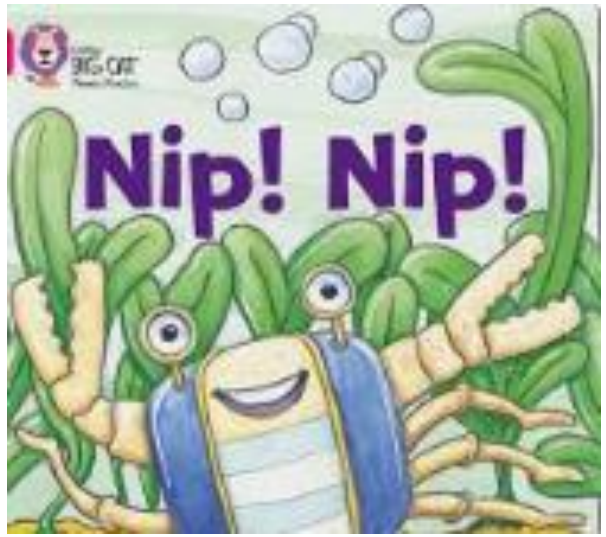
Story structure

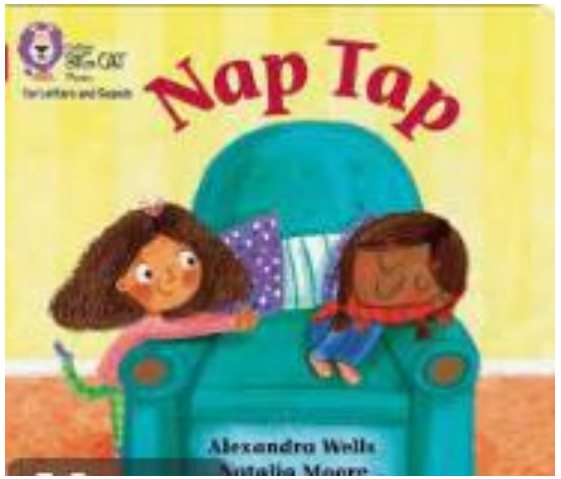
Start making predictions

Recall the content of book

Decodable texts
-matched to phonic knowledge
-practice segmenting and blending
- lots of word repetition









- During the week, your child will share their book once with their teacher and once with the class teaching assistant
- You can support your child's reading development by sharing the book at home.
- Please write in the reading diary – date and a short comment
- Please bring the folder to school every day.
- After three reads we can change the book.
- Place the reading folder into the box outside the classroom when the book needs changing.

Literacy lessons support reading

- Share a high quality text (linked to half term topic)
- We spend time on new vocabulary
- We model reading
- Get to know the text well
- Key words from the text will be displayed around the room

- RAINBOW WORDS – introduced in Spring term
- HOMEWORK – will include some phonics

Phonics through Picture Books
‘Oi Frog!’ by Wes Gray & Jim Field



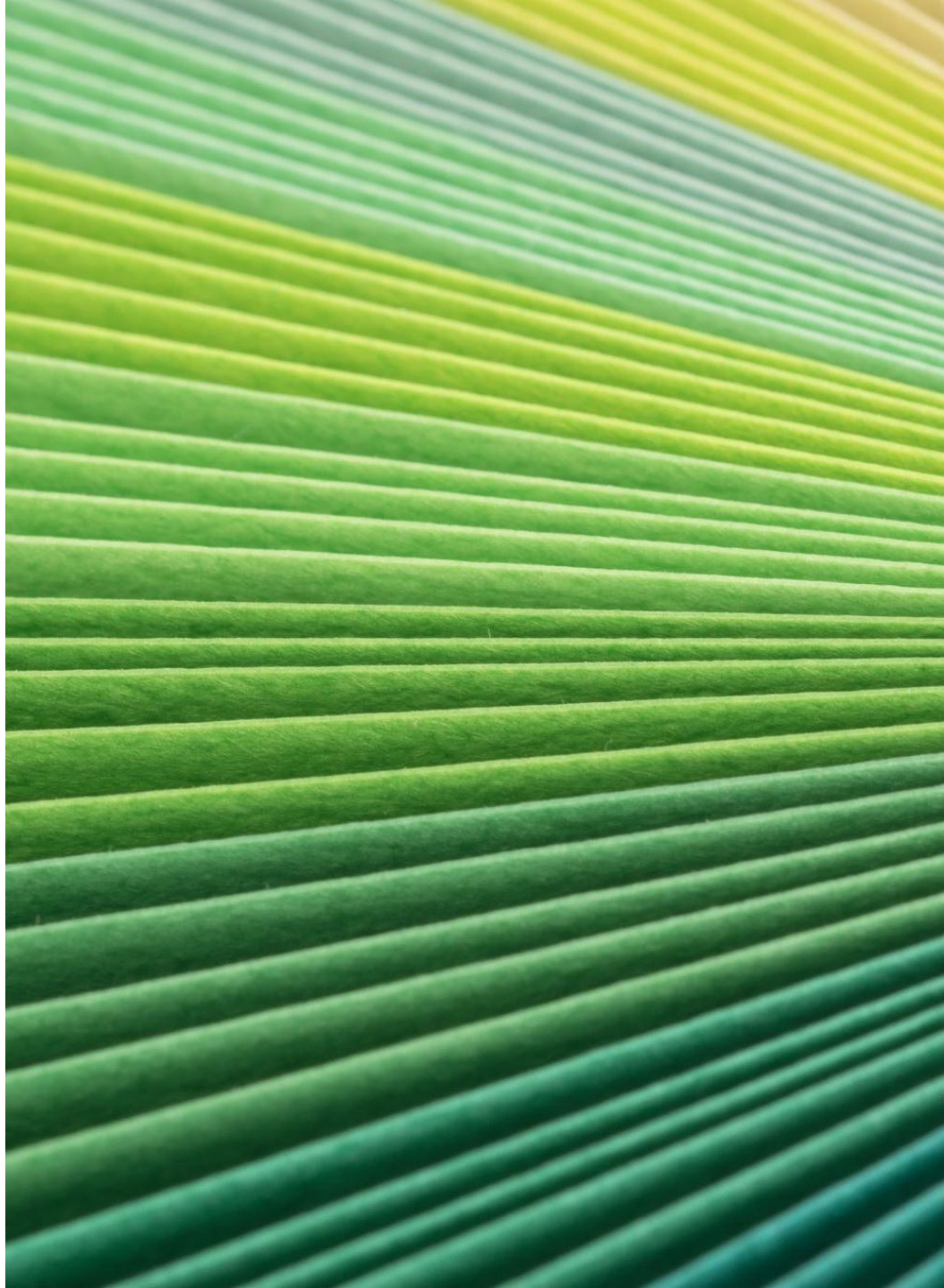
How do we support your child's reading?

- Your child's reading book
- Reading to an adult
- Three reads approach– decode, fluency and comprehension
- Picture books to share



Supporting Reading at Home

- Little and often is best! Every time you read with your child you are modelling the process
- Find a book which sparks their imagination
- Encourage your child to hold the book and turn the pages
- Talk about the book
- Make it fun
- Seek out new or interesting words





- Share opinions and ask questions
- Go ‘word spotting’
- Word attack!
- Use clues
- Take turns

OCPPA Reading Champions
Could You Help Us?