20 minutes a day is all it takes to build key reading skills

- Create reading routines and read together every day
- Talk about the pictures and ask questions
- Read with expression
- Read your favourite books again and again
- Talk, talk, talk! Talk with your child every day. Sprinkle some interesting new words into the conversation, and build on words you’ve talked about in the past.
- I read to you, you read to me. Take turns reading aloud at bedtime. Kids enjoy this special time with their parents.
- Find fun ways to read, write, and tell stories together with your child.

St Joseph's School, Hectorville
[Parent Reading at Home Pamphlet]

A parent's guide to reading at home

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

-- Dr. Seuss
Why is comprehension so important?

Reading is more than just reading the words from the beginning to end. Reading is a complex thinking process. To be successful readers, children need to be able to comprehend texts and make meaning from print. Research has shown there are some strategies we can share with our children as we read that will help them gain more understanding.

Before reading:
**Activating readers Prior Knowledge and Making Connections:** When we read, we make connections between what we know, other things we have read and the text we are reading. Here are some prompts to activate prior knowledge and help children connect to the text.

- “Does this remind you of something?”
- “What do you know about ………?”
- “Have you ever been to ……?”

**Predicting:** When readers predict, they use clues, such as title, illustrations, blurb, author text type, or what they have read so far to make smart guesses about what is coming up next in the text.

- “What do you think the story will be about?”
- “The pictures make me think………”
- “I predict…………”

**Questioning:** Good readers pose questions before, during and after reading a text. This helps them to engage with the text and provides a purpose for reading and a reason to clarify meaning.

- “I wonder why, where, how, if, who….?”
- “What is the author trying to tell me?”

During Reading:
**Inferring:** Inferring is being able to read between the lines, when the author implies something but doesn’t exactly state it. When we infer, we need to use the clues in the text and our prior knowledge to form our own ideas.

- “What does the author want me to believe?”
- “I would expect ……..”
- ‘My conclusion is …………”

**Visualising:** Good readers use text clues and prior knowledge to create a mental image in their mind of what is happening in the text. Creating a movie in our mind helps us understand the setting, the characters and the events of the story. Using your senses can make the story come alive.

- “What kind of things do you imagine?”
- “What can you see, hear, smell, feel?”
- “Can you picture this new information?”

**Revising and adjusting Predictions:**
“Thought … would happen, but now I think…”
“What do you think will happen next?”
“Why do you think……happened?”

After Reading:
**Retelling/Summarising:** Retelling and summarising are related but not exactly the same. Retelling is orally restating what happened in the text. It is the beginning stage of summarising. Students need to think about the sequence of ideas/events and their importance.

- “The characters in this story are ………”
- “This story is about…..”
- “What were the most important ideas in this story?”

Self Monitoring: It requires students to be aware of their thinking as they are reading. It requires students to realise when they have stopped understanding what they are reading, identify what they don’t understand - word, sentence or paragraph and then use the appropriate strategy to restore meaning.