

## Helping your child with their English at home

In order to help your child make the best progress, it's important to work with them at home and encourage them to practise and use English as much as possible. Studies show that parental involvement has a significant positive impact on student outcomes throughout their school years. Here are some ideas and suggestions you can use.

- Ask them about their lessons, what they enjoyed or what they learned. You can play 'the English lesson', in which your child is the English teacher and you are the student, and the child is teaching you songs and words in English. If they don't want to talk about what they did in class, you can play a guessing game, in which you're trying to guess what they did (a song, games, drawing, writing practice, and so on).
- Encourage them to watch cartoons and films for children in English without subtitles or with subtitles in English.
- Read them books in English. If they are pre-literate, you can point out the words to them as you read the story. If your child has started learning to read, read together. Reading helps them expand their vocabulary and improves their grammatical accuracy. Our library has a wide choice of storybooks and graded readers, suitable for students at all levels. Just ask at the library for guidance.
- Alternatively, use story websites where they can watch, read and listen to children's stories. There are more and more authors, teachers and parents who post videos of themselves reading stories in English on YouTube, which can be a useful resource if you don't have access to the original story books.
- If you like drawing, painting or doing crafts with your child, whenever you make something new, you can encourage your child to say what it is in English, and depending on what they have learned so far, if it's big or small, what colour it is, what it's got, what it can do and so on.
- Play games using pictures from old magazines with your child. You can write labels for the pictures, match the labels to the pictures, turn the pictures and guess what they are, or you can describe the pictures to them and they can guess what they show.
- Make a Word Monster with your child. Draw a monster with a big mouth on card. Cut it out and stick a plastic bag behind the mouth. Every day feed the monster a word or a sentence in English.
- 10 minutes of English: if you speak English, choose a time each day/week in which everyone in the house speaks only in English for ten minutes.
- Alternatively, you can have a 5 o'clock tea party once a week when you speak English, or read a story in English. If your child is reluctant to speak English to you, try reading stories or singing songs in English instead.

- Children learn effectively through games, stories and songs. Use the British Council websites and apps with them:
  - **LearnEnglish Kids:** Find lots of fun learning activities that children can do online, as well as worksheets they can download, print and do for more practice offline:  
[www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglishkids](http://www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglishkids)
  - **Parents section:** There is also a parents section with lots of tips and advice:  
<https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/en/parents>
  - **British Council apps:** Download British Council and LearnEnglish Kids apps:  
<https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/en/apps>

There are also lots of other websites that can help children develop their English. However, please note that the British Council is not responsible for the content of external sites.

- <http://www.funenglishgames.com/>
- <http://www.anglomaniacy.pl/>
- <http://supersimplelearning.com/resource-center/>
- <http://www.starfall.com/>
- <http://www.turtlediary.com/>
- <http://www.primarygames.com/>
- <http://www.funbrainjr.com/>
- <http://www.learninggamesforkids.com/>
- <http://www.abcya.com/>

Finally, when working with your child, try not to worry about your own level of English, and keep expectations of your child realistic. Remember to always be supportive, give your child lots of praise, and of course have fun!