We learn when we recognise a reason to learn

At home
Children learn at home by what they see others do. They are surrounded by examples that arouse their interest. They enjoy doing what others do. They see a need to learn to communicate, express desires, feelings.

In the Early Years classroom
Teachers discuss with children the purposes for learning. They encourage them to talk about what they need to learn, have learnt and how they can use this knowledge. By talking over daily schedules they clarify learning intentions. They consider each child as an individual, exploring their interests and recognising their learning needs.

We learn when we are actively involved

At home
Children are never still — walking, talking, climbing, building, practising over and over. They demonstrate their desire to be independent by saying things like ‘I can do it’, by not wanting to hold hands, making their own choices and asking questions.

In the Early Years classroom
Children can be observed reading, writing, drawing, working alone and with others as a whole grade or in small groups. They share the use of equipment, moving about the classroom, working with others and extending experiences to outside the classroom.
Handout 1.3 (continued)

We learn when we are supported by models or demonstrations by others

At home
Children see parents and family members reading, being read to, talking about books together. People may be seen to read books for information, follow directions for games. They observe people having reasons to write. They recognise others at play and in work roles.

In the Early Years classroom
Teachers read to children and may match them with more experienced children for buddy reading and in shared reading. Shared writing sessions, author studies, charts on display provide demonstrations of how and why others write. Text models are provided through published books, class developed texts, and the work of other students. Listening to books read on tape reinforces demonstrations. Teachers themselves can be seen reading and writing for their own purposes.

We learn when we have the tools and resources we need

At home
There may be pencils, scissors, crayons, books to read, paper to write on, games to play, a safe area in which to play, bookshelves, a desk, computer, a place to store materials, and others to assist.

In the Early Years classroom
There are books that children are able to read, pencils, paper, crayons, publishing materials, learning centres, dictionaries, word lists, working areas and quiet areas, a listening post and tapes, computers, games for practising what has been learnt, and others to assist.
Handout 1.3 (continued)

We learn when we have opportunities for repetition and reinforcement

At home
Children may hear books read or stories told over and over again. They have time to return to their interests over and over again. They play games, observe print in the environment, receive encouragement and feedback on progress and are given prompts and guidance where needed.

In the Early Years classroom
Children have opportunities to read familiar books over and over again, to transfer their understandings to new situations, e.g. learning new vocabulary, rhymes and patterns. There are lots of opportunities to read and write. Support and challenges for new learning are provided through whole and small group teaching in daily reading and writing sessions. Encouragement and feedback are given. Teacher assistance and intervention are provided where needed.

We learn when we have time for practice

At Home
Children may be allowed to practise freely and places are set aside to encourage practice. There are not always set deadlines. Time is found to reread familiar books, read to parents and younger children. Writing can have a purpose when sending letters to others, putting up signs and notices or preparing lists.

In the Early Years classroom
Teachers plan opportunities for children to practise their learning. Meaningful tasks that encourage children to practise their learning are provided at learning centres and need to be completed within set timelines. Resources are easily accessible and available. Children can return to newly introduced books in school again and again.
We learn when our efforts are recognised

At home
There is an expectation that children are able to achieve. They are encouraged to attempt tasks and support is offered when problems occur. Their efforts are recognised, e.g. examples are displayed on the fridge door or pasted in scrapbooks to be shared with others, perhaps copies are sent to grandparents. Efforts and achievements are praised. Hugs are given to demonstrate excitement and a celebration of success.

In the Early Years classroom
Teachers recognise efforts with constructive praise, e.g. ‘I like the way you did that — that’s what good readers/writers do.’ Work is displayed in the room and around the school. Student portfolios are created to demonstrate learning development. Peer assessment is encouraged through feedback given at conferences, performances and the sharing of published writing. There is an expectation that all children can achieve and individual progress is identified and celebrated.
How to help your child with reading

Make ...
a regular time for reading together. Share books brought home from school or old favourites from your own collection.

Talk ...
about the book. Use the pictures to predict what it is going to be about. Ask your child to make suggestions.

Provide ...
reading materials that are about the interests and experiences of your child and your family.

Join ...
the local library.

Locate ...
signs, read recipes, junk mail, packets, boxes and other household items.

Give ...
books for gifts or treats. Select books with rhyme, rhythm, repetition and predictable ideas.

Read ...
old favourites again and again to promote familiarity and confidence. Encourage your child to read them to you.

Display ...
an interest in reading. Let your child see you reading, e.g. newspapers, phonebooks, magazines, novels.

Taken from ‘How to help your child with Reading’ 1995, Opening Doors Parent Information Kit for the Early Years of Schooling, Department of Education, Victoria
Discuss ...
the parts of the book. Show me the cover. Where is the title? Do you know the name of the person who wrote the book? Can you show me where the name is written?

Talk ...
about the author. Read books by the same author. Try to find things that are similar about the books.

Explore ...
the pictures in books to decide where the story is taking place. Compare events and places with those in your own lives, e.g. ‘What would you do if you were the person in the book?’

Read aloud ...
together and look for the clues to tell you how to say what is written, e.g. ‘talking marks’, bold print, italics, (brackets).

Show ...
your child that writing should make sense. Tell them what you do when the meaning isn’t clear.
- Reread a tricky section.
- Look for information in the pictures.
- Have a go at unknown words.
Real Life Literacy Partnerships

- Prepare a shopping list and go shopping
- Follow a recipe
- Talk about a TV program
- Look up a street directory
- Make a model
- Browse through a magazine
- Prepare invitations
- Send greeting cards
- Tell jokes
- Play board games; read game rules
- Listen to CD/cassette/record; join in with songs
- Read a book and talk about the pictures
- Reread and join in favourite books and rhymes
- Have fun playing with language, e.g. tongue twisters
- Read signs
- Read labels — what’s in it — directions
- Write letters to relatives and friends — receiving and replying
- Take and send telephone messages
- Prepare thank you notes
- Do crosswords
- Repeat riddles
- Prepare dinner menus
- Talk about newspaper excerpts, sporting pages
- Choose programs from the TV guide
- Play a computer game
- Hold a conversation
- Solve problems together, e.g. jigsaw, crossword
- Write a lunch order
- Complete an excursion form

Adapted from Parents as Tutors 1993, Department of Education, Victoria
Successful readers use a range of information to make meaning:

- knowledge about how language is spoken (structure)
- previous experience and understanding of the topic (meaning)
- knowledge of letters and associated sounds and how they are represented in print (visual information)

Successful readers:

- expect what they read to make sense
- predict what is to come based on their understanding of the content, knowledge of language and the information contained in the print.
The 3 Ps—Pause, Prompt, Praise

**Pause**

Before responding it is important to first wait, giving the child time to try to work out the word for themselves.

**Prompt**

Encourage the child to look at the pictures
Ask:  
*What word might make sense?*
*What would sound right?*
*What does it start with?*

If the word makes sense
• allow the child to continue reading.

If the word doesn’t make sense
• encourage the child to have another try
• tell the child the word.

**Praise**

At all times it is important that children are praised and encouraged for their efforts. The support and encouragement provided through praise will greatly assist children’s reading development. Try comments like:
*I like the way you … That’s what good readers do.*
*Well done …*
*That’s really great …*
*You must have been practising …*
*You did a lot of work today …*
How to read with your eyes shut: short stories to read aloud

Books to read to younger children

Fleischman, Sid
A carnival of animals
Short tall stories from the master of the art of oddball storytelling

Marshall, James
Rats on the range and other stories
Six-foot rats, a pig's night out, and a mouse that house keeps for a cat.

Nixon, Joan Lowery
"Beats me, Claude
Shirley and Claude have settled down to life on the farm, but when Shirley attempts to make an apple pie for Claude, little do they know that it will become the ultimate weapon.

Stacks of stories
Edited by Mary Hoffman
Libraries aren't so bad - here's a collection of stories that all have the library as a theme.

Telling tales: a collection of school stories
Compiled by Barbara Ireson
How long can Gerry Atkins get away with not doing his French homework? Do the strange things that happen when Miss Peabody's around mean that she's a witch? Can the end-of-year performance be so hopeless that the teacher will give up?

A treasury of funny stories
Chosen by Andrew Matthews
From a crummy mummy to flying dogs - stories that are giggle-guaranteed.

A treasury of ghost stories
Chosen by Kenneth Ireland
The dead man who was so ornery he wouldn't believe he was dead, 'ghosts' from the future, and the shortest ghost story ever told.

The upside-down mice and other animal stories
Compiled by Jane Mercer
Short stories by favourite authors including Roald Dahl, Penelope Lively, Dick King-Smith and Colin Dann - all about animals.
McBratney, Sam
   Guess how much I love you
McKee, David
   Elmer
Mahy, Margaret
   The lion in the meadow
Murphy, Jill
   Five minutes' peace
Rosen, Michael
   We're going on a bear hunt
Sendak, Maurice
   Where the wild things are
Steig, William
   Doctor De Soto
Varley, Susan
   Badger's parting gifts
Vaughan, Marcia
   Wombat stew
Waddell, Martin
   Farmer duck
Wells, Rosemary
   Benjamin and Tulip
Williams, Linda
   The little old lady who was not afraid of anything

Top of page
Picture Book Picks: classic read alouds for younger children

Armitage, Ronda and David
The lighthouse keeper’s lunch

Blake, Quentin
Mister Magnolia

Burningham, John
Mr Gumpy’s outing

Browne, Anthony
Gorilla

Campbell, Rod
Dear zoo

Carle, Eric
The very hungry caterpillar

Dodd, Lynley
Hairy Maclary from Donaldson’s dairy

Fox, Mem
Possum magic

Graham, Bob
Crusher is coming

Gretz, Susanna
It’s your turn, Roger!

Henkes, Kevin
Sheila Rae, the brave

Hill, Eric
Spot’s first walk

Hoban, Russell
Bedtime for Frances

Hughes, Shirley
Dogger

Hutchins, Pat
Rosie’s walk

Inkpen, Nick
Kipper

Kahukiwa Robyn
Taniwha
FAMILY READ-ALOUDS
Great novels to share

Aiken, Joan
Arabel’s raven
Atwater, Richard
Mr Popper’s penguins
Ball, Duncan
Selby screams, Grade 4.5
Selby speaks
Banks, Lynne Reid
The Indian in the cupboard, Grade 4.5
Barrie, James
Peter Pan
Brisley, Joyce
Milly Molly Mandy stories
Burnett, Frances H.
The secret garden
Carroll, Lewis
Alice’s adventures in Wonderland
Cleary, Beverly
The mouse and the motorcycle, Grade 4.5
Ramona the pest
Collodi, Carlo
Pinocchio
Cooper, Susan
The dark is rising
Dahl, Roald
Fantastic Mr Fox
Feagles, Anna
Casey, the utterly impossible horse, Grade 3.4, 5
Godden, Rumer
The dolls’ house
Miss Happiness and Miss Flower
Grahame, Kenneth
The wind in the willows
Hirsch, Odo
Bartlett and the ice voyage, Grade 5.6
Hazel Green
Honey, Elizabeth
45 and 47 Stella Street
Hunter, Norman
The incredible adventures of Professor Branestawm
Jansson, Tove
Finn family Moomintroll
Juster, Norton
The phantom tollbooth
King-Smith, Dick
Harry’s Mad
The sheep-pig
Kipling, Rudyard
All the Mowgli stories
Lewis, C. S.
The lion, the witch and the wardrobe
Lewis, Hilda
The ship that flew
Lindgren, Astrid
Pippi Longstocking
Lindsay, Norman
The magic pudding
Lurie, Morris
Toby’s millions, Grade 4.5
The 27th annual African hippopotamus race, Grade 3.4.5
Martin, J. P.
Uncle stories, Grade 4.5, 6
Milne, A.A.
Winnie-the-Pooh
Nesbit, E.
The railway children
Norton, Mary
Bedknob and broomstick
Pearce, Philippa
Tom’s midnight garden
Pullman, Philip
The scarecrow and his servant, Grade 4.5, 6
Selden, George
The cricket in Times Square
Smith, Dodie
The hundred and one dalmations, Grade 3.4.5
Travers, Pamela
Mary Poppins
Wang, Gabrielle
The garden of Empress Cassia
Wilder, Laura Ingalls
Little house in the big woods
Williams, Margery
The velveteen rabbit, Grade 1.2
Williams, Ursula Moray
The adventures of the little wooden horse, Grade 1.2

Also
King-Smith: The Fox-busters, Grade 4.5
White, E.B. Charlotte’s web, Grade 3.4.5.
Brown, Jeff Flat Stanley, Grade 1.2.
ENCOURAGING PHRASES FOR CHILDREN

Encouragement focuses on EFFORT ALONG THE WAY - NOT ON THE END PRODUCT.

- Thanks
- Thank you. I appreciate that.
- That really helps
- It looks as if you really enjoyed that!
- This place works a lot better with your help.
- It seems like you put a lot of effort into that.
- You must be really proud of that!
- I like the way you handled that.
- I like the way you...........
- I'm glad you enjoyed doing that.
- I'm glad you're pleased with that.
- Knowing you, I'm sure you'll do fine.
- Knowing you, I'm sure you'll work it out.
- I know I can rely on you.
- Knowing you, I'm sure you can handle it.
- I'm sure you'll figure it out.
- I have confidence in your judgment
- Since you're not satisfied, what can you do so you'll be pleased with it?
- It was thoughtful of you to........
- I need your help on........
- It looks as if you really worked hard on that.
- You have skill in.......... Would you help ...........
- It looks as if you spent a lot of time thinking that through.
- I see you've really made progress.
- I see you're moving along.
- Look at the progress you've made. (Be specific)
- You're improving in........ (Be specific)
- You may not feel you've reached your goal, but look how far you've come
- I know you can do it.
- I know you will try your hardest
- I know you will get there.
- I love the way you really try hard.
- Congratulations. You're really trying hard.
Fabulous. You're putting a lot of effort into this.
Wow! You're really getting stuck into this, aren't you?
You were able to do ............... before, so you can handle this.
Tell me what you've decided to do.
What do you intend to do next?
It's great to see you enjoying ............... so much!
It looks as though you've got that beaten!
You're on the right track now.
You're doing a good job.
You did a lot of work today.
Now you've worked it out.
That's right.
Now you have the hang of it.
That's the way.
You're really doing a great job.
You're doing fine.
Now you have it.
Nice going.
That's coming along nicely.
That's great.
You did it that time.
That's better.
Good job.......(name)
Keep it up.
Keep up the good work.
Much better.
Good for you.
Good thinking.
You make it look easy.
You're doing much better today.
You're getting better every day.
I knew you could do it.
Keep working on it, you're getting better.
You're doing beautifully.
That's the way to do it.
Keep on trying.
You're the best.
Nothing can stop you now.
You're very good at that.
You certainly did well today.
I'm very proud of you.
You're learning fast.
That's good.
I'm proud of the way you worked today.
I'm happy to see you working like that.
That's the right way to do it.
You're really learning a lot.
That's better than ever.
That's quite an improvement.
That kind of work makes me very happy.
You figured that out fast.
You remembered.
You're really improving.
I think you've got it now.
I couldn't have done it better myself.
Now that's what I call a fine job.
You did that very well.
That was first class work.
That's the best ever.
You really make my time in this class fun.
You must have been practising.
What a job you've done!
Perfect!
Fine!
Outstanding!
Sensational!
Right on!
Great!
Fantastic!
Terrific!
Tremendous!
Excellent! Super!
Wonderful!
Superb!
Wow!
Marvelous!