Encouraging children who are more reluctant to read

Some children can be more reluctant to read and, here at St Francis CE Primary, that is something we try to address as quickly as we can.

There are generally two main reasons that children don't read books:

- They simply don't want to read them because they prefer doing other things
- They simply can't read them: their literacy skills are not developed enough

Is there really a problem?

Reading is monitored very carefully at St Francis; we are aware that children develop at different rates with their reading - as they do in all things - so it's not a reason to worry if your child seems just a little behind: the class teacher will provide the support for your child to develop to where they need to be.

However, if a child's reading age is well below the average for their age, it begins to affect them and further steps will be taken to move their reading on. If you think something is wrong, please speak to your class teacher straight away who will be able to reassure you and be able to help.

How can you help?

Children chose not to read books for a variety of reasons, but generally, it boils down to this – if they're not choosing books, it's because there is something else they would rather be doing in their spare time!

Magical overnight conversations are unlikely to change this - but whatever you do- ***please don't make it a battle***. If you do, reading joins eating sprouts, homework and the dentist!

We need to work together to get two messages across: reading can be fun (it all depends on finding the right book); and good books do exist.

The right book will:

- match their interest(s)
- match their reading age
- be appropriate for their actual age

If children want to read something, they will. If they don't, they won't. It is really important to try not to choose books ***for*** your children, instead choose ***with*** them.

How do they find the right book?

- Heavily illustrated books are a good place to start. We have some lovely illustrated/picture books in the school library specifically aimed at KS2 readers: you are never too old for an illustrated book!
- Shorter books are better than long books for instant reward
- Comic books are a good way in - make sure they are age appropriate though!
- Audio books are also an excellent tool

Where can we find good books?

Most children's books are designed to match the interest age and the reading age, and most books shops and libraries organise their books in the same way.

Some publishers specialise in books with interest ages higher that reading ages; ask in the library or book shop. Our school Librarian and your child's class teacher will also be delighted to help you.

We've found the book, what next?

It's all about confidence and turning reading into a habit.

- Read ***to*** them. Help them get into the book, perhaps alternate pages or if your child is tired, read the whole chapter.

- Read ***with*** them - share the enjoyment of the book. If you read with them, you can help with any difficult bits.

- Try to create a time when your child is happy to read: please don't stop them doing something they really enjoy to read!

And of course, reading books yourself sends the right message!

Please don't panic and do try to make reading time enjoyable. Your child's class teacher will be on hand to support you and also to guide your child towards books they may enjoy. Your child may not become an enthusiastic reader over-night but with the right steps we will get there!