

By the end of year 6

The New Zealand Curriculum: Reading at school

Your child will be learning to:

- read longer stories more quickly, and read for longer periods of time
- find information and ideas easily in the story, as well as information that is more hidden – using clues in the story and what they already know
- work out words they don't know the meaning of by using clues in the story or pictures and diagrams
- quickly find important ideas and information by 'skimming' and 'scanning' (eg using sub-headings, key words or first sentences in paragraphs)
- know they sometimes need to read from several sources of information (books, magazines, the Internet) to get all the information they need for their work.

Reading at home - Make reading fun

- Have discussions together about books – read the books your child is reading.
- Encourage Internet research about topics of interest – notice what they are keen on.
- Make your home a reader-friendly home with plenty of books, magazines, newspapers that everyone can read – look for books and magazines at fairs and second-hand shops. Ask your family or whānau if they have any they no longer want.
- Share what you think and how you feel about the characters, the story or the opinions in magazines and newspapers you are reading. It is important that your child sees you as a reader and you talk about what you are reading.

TIP: Encourage your child to read every day. Make reading fun and praise your child's efforts, all the time.

Read together

- Reading to your child is one of the most important things you can do, no matter how old they are. You can use your first language – it does make a difference to your children's learning.
- When you are reading to your child, you can talk about words or ideas in the text that your child might not have come across before.
- Children are often interested in new words and what they mean – encourage them to look them up in a dictionary or ask family/whānau about the meaning and origin.

TIP: Keep the magic of listening to a good story alive by reading either made up, retold or read-aloud stories to your child – with lots of excitement through the use of your voice!

Keep them interested

- Help your child identify an author, character or series of books they particularly like and find more in the series or by the author.
- Talk about the lyrics of songs or waiata, or the words of poems your child is learning, and see if there are any links to who they are, and where they come from.
- Think about subscribing to a magazine on your child's special interest, eg animals, their iwi, kapa haka or sport, or check out the magazines at the library, or on the Internet.
- Go to your local library to choose books together. These might be books your child can read easily by themselves. They might be books that are a bit hard, but your child wants to read so you can help by reading a page to them, then helping them read the next.
- Play card and board games together – the more challenging the better.

TIP: Be a role model. Let your child see you enjoying reading – whether it's the newspaper, a magazine, a comic, a cook book or a novel. Read in the language that works best for you.

The New Zealand Curriculum: Writing at school

Your child will be learning to:

- choose the type of writing to suit the audience
- plan what they will write in different ways
- organise their writing logically using paragraphs as well as other features like headings, sub-headings, diagrams, pictures and captions
- choose words carefully to suit the topic or purpose and to make people want to read their writing
- check their writing to make sure it makes sense
- spell most words correctly and use appropriate punctuation.

Writing at home - Make writing fun

- Encourage your child to write about their heroes, tīpuna (ancestors), sports events, hobbies and interests to help keep them interested in what they are writing about.
- Play word games and do puzzles together. Games and puzzles such as crosswords, tongue twisters and word puzzles help build your child's knowledge of words, spelling, thinking and planning skills.

- Start a blog about a family interest. Find a topic you're both interested in and set up your own blog.

TIP: Be a role model. Show your child that you write for all sorts of reasons. Let them see you enjoying writing. Use your first language – this helps your child's learning, too.

Write for a reason

- Encourage your child to write.
- Suggest your child is responsible for the weekly shopping list, equipment list for weekends away and holidays, task lists for the week.
- Ask your child who they would like to write to or for – emails, letters, texts, postcards. It will help if some of what your child writes about is for others.
- Short stories or a journal – on paper or on a computer – can help them to write about their experiences and their own feelings about things that have happened at school, in their family, on the marae, in the world, at sports events and on TV.
- Report on a new baby or pet addition to the family. This might be a slide show, scrapbook, page on the computer.
- Make an argument in writing for a special request – trip, event, present etc.
- Draw up written contracts for agreed jobs; eg Every day I will...(make my bed, do one lot of dishes, and when I complete the contract I can choose...).

TIP: Keep writing fun and use any excuse you can think of to encourage your child to write about anything, anytime.

Talk about your child's writing

- Talk about ideas and information they are going to write about. Talk about experiences, diagrams, graphs, photos, treasures and taonga, waiata, pictures, whakapapa and material that your child is planning to use for school work. Discussing the information and main ideas can help their planning for writing and their understanding, too.
- Share enjoyment of their writing. Read and talk about the writing that your child does. Give praise for things they have done well and say what you liked and why – this all supports their learning.
- Play with words. Thinking of interesting words and discussing new ones can help increase the words your child uses when they write – look words up in the dictionary or on the Internet to find out more about what they mean. Talk to family and whānau members to learn more about the background and the whakapapa (origins) of the words.
- Share your own writing with your child – lists, planning for family events, song lyrics or letters and emails. You can help them to see that you too use writing for different purposes.

TIP: Talk about what your child writes. Be interested. Use it as a way of starting conversations. Listen to their opinion, even if you don't agree with it.

The New Zealand Curriculum: Mathematics at school

Your child will be learning to:

- solve problems (using +, −, x, ÷) that require them to choose the best method
- use repeated halving or known multiplication facts to solve problems involving fractions
- find the value of a given number in a pattern
- sort, create and identify 2D and 3D shapes
- measure time and find the area and volume of objects
- use grid references on maps and points of the compass to give directions
- draw objects from different view points
- explain results of investigations by identifying patterns
- experiment to work out the likelihood of an event happening.

This is a small part of the skills and knowledge your child is learning in order to meet this standard. Talk to the teacher for more information about your child's learning.

Focus on number

During year 6, 50–70 percent of mathematics teaching time will focus on number learning.

Mathematics at home - Talk together and have fun with numbers and patterns

Help your child:

- count forwards and backwards (starting with numbers like these fractions: $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, 1, $1\frac{1}{4}$, $1\frac{1}{2}$ then back again)
- talk about large numbers in your environment e.g., computer game scores, distances
- talk about the phases of the moon and link these to the best times for fishing/planting
- talk about the patterns in the night sky – summer and winter. What changes and why?
- talk about graphs and tables that are in your local newspapers.

TIP: Being positive about maths is really important for your child's learning – even if you didn't enjoy it or do well at it yourself at school.

Use easy, everyday activities

Involve your child in:

- making dinner at home, at camp or on a marae – look at how many and how much is needed for the people eating (potatoes, bok choy, carrots, sausages). Talk about fractions (half, quarter, fourth) to calculate how much to cook and cooking times
- helping at the supermarket – look for the best buy between different makes of the same item and different sizes of the same item (e.g., toilet paper, cans of spaghetti, bottles of milk)
- looking at the ingredients – fat, sugar, additives – and deciding on the healthiest choice
- practising times tables – check with your child/their teacher which tables you could help your child with.

TIP: Talk a lot to your child while you are doing things together. Use the language that works best for you and your child.

For wet afternoons/school holidays/weekends

Get together with your child and:

- play card and board games using guessing and checking
- cook – make a pizza, working out who likes what toppings, making and cooking it, and making sure the pizza is shared fairly – make a paper or cardboard container to hold a piece of pizza to take for lunch
- mix a drink for the family – measuring cordial, fruit and water
- make kites or manu aute using a variety of shapes and materials. How high can it go, how long can it fly for?
- make a family/whānau tree or whakapapa – number of cousins, aunts and uncles, grandparents and their relationships to you
- plan out the holidays. Look at each day's fun time, kai time, TV time, helping time, family time and bedtime
- plan to make bead necklaces and friendship bracelets – calculate the cost of the materials, the length of stringing material
- play outdoor games – frisbee, touch rugby, kilikiti, cricket, soccer, bowls
- do complicated jigsaw puzzles
- go on scavenger hunts – make a map with clues and see who can get there first.

TIP: Mathematics is an important part of everyday life and there are lots of ways you can make it fun for your child.

TIP: The way your child is learning to solve mathematics problems may be different to when you were at school. Get them to show you how they do it and support them in their learning.