

Reluctant reader

- Find books with a connection to something they love. If they are football fans, look for footie fiction for teens – try *Booked* by Kwame Alexander; *Football School Star Players* by Bellos; or Dan Freedman or Tom Palmer's books. If they like military/action/war, then try the *Dog Tag* series by CA London or Andy McNab's teen books. If they like to watch Youtubers, try Zoella's book club. And if they are into gaming, try fast-paced chapter books or 'choose your own adventure' stories. (Tip: try teen/YA author Alex Scarrow's books – he was a professional video-game developer before he turned to writing; or Jeff Norton's *MetaWars* series, billed as 'a video game you can read').
- Look at our 'Recommended Reads' list: we have lists broken down by genre, specific reads for Years 7/8, Year 9, and for Key Stage 4. We also have lists to suit particular interests; if your child likes animals, for example, ask for our new 'animal fiction' booklist with books to suit all ages. Other booklists include ideas for those that enjoy 'visual' books; a list for Percy Jackson fans; dystopian fiction; tear jerkers; difficult issues and thrillers.
- Any type of reading is helpful, so try graphic novels. Graphic novel versions of *The Recruit* by Muchamore, *Silverfin* by Higson and *Stormbreaker* by Horowitz are popular. Likewise, it is absolutely fine to read *Wimpy Kid* books if this is what sparks the interest of your reluctant reader.
- Try Barrington Stoke books: these are produced with tinted pages, special fonts and spacing, thicker paper and editing to reduce comprehension barriers and/or issues resulting from dyslexia. <https://www.barringtonstoke.co.uk/>
- Visit the library with your child when you go into town. Ask your child to meet you in the library and then take your time selecting a book to read yourself.
- Try a 'phone free' hour. Eventually (out of boredom) he/she might started exploring books
- Be enthusiastic about what they are reading: Ask them to describe a character or to read aloud an exciting bit. You might read a teen/YA book yourself; the plot-driven nature of many of these books means they are relatively easy reads – perfect after a day at work.
- Let your children see you reading for pleasure, and talk about what you read and how you choose books.
- If you have younger children, ask your older (reluctant reader) child to read aloud to them. This is a big confidence booster and it helps with sibling bonding. Michael Morpurgo is a particularly good shared

read, as his books have something for everyone; I highly recommend *Kensuke's Kingdom* for sibling read-alouds.

- Offer incentives: Summer reading rewards programme for children works really well. For example, if they read a certain number of books or pages, you could take them to a theme park. Whilst we don't want our children to only read for rewards, but it works for summers or for times when a 'breakthrough' is necessary.
- Another idea is to find the book version of a movie: *Stormbreaker*, *Eragon*, *Harry Potter*, *The Book Thief*, *I am Number Four*, *The Princess Diaries*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *Percy Jackson*, *The Hunger Games*, *Divergent*, *Maze Runner*, *Fault in Our Stars*, *Twilight* and *Inkheart* and *Wonder* are all films based on children/YA books. Both of you can read the book, go to the movie together — then discuss the differences.
- Have them pick up a device – an e-reader! Then check with your local library about borrowing e-books or try the Kindle daily deal.
- Try audio books: Libraries have free, downloadable audio books plus Audible has a wide range of teen books. Many teens like the idea of being able to do something active while listening to a book. By listening to an audio book, your teen will pick up new vocabulary, hear complex sentence structures and engage with stories.
- Listening to audio books as a family is another good idea. Sharing a story together is a fabulous way to bond; *Stop the Train* by McCaugrean and *Mort* by Terry Pratchett are good places to start.
- Visit a bookstore and allow your child to select a book of their choice. The visually appealing marketing and layout of best-selling books can attract even reluctant readers.
- Try biographies/autobiographies that interest your child. Recent student favourites have been *Maddie Diaries* by Ziegler & *The Greatest* (Muhammed Ali) by Walter Dean Myers.
- Non-fiction books linked to a child's interests are a great way to spark a desire to read.
- Gentle encouragement works best.