

## Helping your son with literacy

What do we know about boys and their reading?

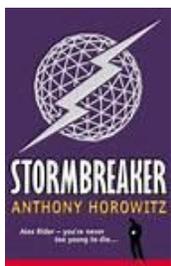
- Boys are less likely to talk about what they are reading so try to find ways to chat informally about a news story, magazine, book or film.
- Boys spend less time reading so don't be too harsh if it seems too little! Even five minutes a day can make all the difference.
- Boys choose different books to girls and tend to go more for humour, science fiction, action, even horror!
- Boys' interest in a topic really does seem to make a difference to their understanding so it really is worth choosing books that match their interests and hobbies.
- Boys are often put off by the size and length of books. It is worth considering a Kindle or other form of E-reader for gadget loving sons.

With these facts in mind, MOTIVATION and ATTENTION-GRABBING CONTENT have to be the top priorities if you want to get your son to read – and stick with it!

**Our top three popular choices for reluctant Year 7 and 8 boys are:**

### Alex Rider

Anthony Horowitz's series about a 14-year-old boy recruited by the British secret service has proved phenomenally popular: there are nine novels in the series.



### Young Bond

Similar to the Alex Rider books, written by Charlie Higson and suitable for ages 10 and over. They act as a compelling prequel to Ian Fleming's Bond series: here, we meet Bond as a 13-year-old at Eton in the 1930s



### The Cherub Series

Robert Muchamore's action packed series about a group of orphaned teenage spies focusing around a division of the British Security Service named Cherub.



**Speaking and Listening** is just as important in developing literacy skills as reading and writing. Boys need lots of praise. Often they see themselves as getting attention for all the wrong reasons. So, give your son lots of approval for all the right reasons! A good rule of thumb is to try to say three positive things to every negative.

### Talk!

If you want to help your son to do better, it's important to get him talking (and listening!) You can help in several ways:

- Show an interest in what your son is doing (even if the subject doesn't interest you!) and ask questions about it.
- Talk with him, rather than at him.
- It's important to be patient: listen with interest, keep the conversation going, ask questions and don't leap in with an answer. Easier said than done!

Boys often feel that mistakes equal failure. A boy's response is to say that he 'can't do it'. To help your son feel that he CAN do it, give him lots of encouragement when he does something well. It's also important to remember that mistakes don't equal failure; it's just the way we learn.