

Breaking the Code

The Better Start Literacy Approach aims to enhance the early reading, writing and oral language skills of all children. It is based on research and has been successfully trialled in New Zealand schools.

The Ministry of Education is supporting this approach for implementation in junior school classes throughout the country.

Remember:

- 📖 You and the rest of your whānau are an important part of your child's reading and spelling journey.
- 📖 Any reading that you do with your child in another language you are fluent in, will help and support your child's literacy journey.
- 📖 There are new Ready to Read books to help your child learn to read, and these will be used differently than the early reading books sent home in the past.
- 📖 Make sure to make reading fun and interesting!
- 📖 Reading is not just about the books that come home from school. Written words are everywhere. On street signs, on the road, on packets, in magazines and on your phone! Bring your child's attention to print and help them read words wherever you see them!
- 📖 Give your child plenty of praise for their reading and writing attempts. It's not easy to learn to read and write a language, so plenty of encouragement and praise will help motivate your child to keep trying hard.
- 📖 Lots of modelling. Show your child letters and say the sound that they make. Show your child how to sound out a word that they are stuck on, and then blend it back together with them. When they want to know how to spell something, model how to segment (break up) the word into sounds, and give them help with the letters if they need it.
- 📖 Your child's teacher will let you know where your child is at with their reading and writing, what the next steps might be and how that might look at home.
- 📖 Remember to look out for the weekly Better Start Literacy Approach Whānau Handout.

Please feel free to ask questions and to discuss the things you love and the things that you are finding tricky.

The Better Start Literacy Approach has been developed by Prof. Gail Gillon, Brigid McNeill and their team of researchers at the Child Well-being Research Institute at the University of Canterbury. There is information and resources about the approach on the website <https://www.betterstartapproach.com/families>.

The researchers have also developed a free online course that is suitable for parents. See the link below

FREE: A Better Start to Reading Online Course
<https://www.edx.org/course/a-better-start-to-reading>

