



Reading and asking questions

Captain Vlad and the Mary Rose

The most important thing when reading with your child, is to make it feel like fun rather than a test. The first time you share a book, focus on reading it all the way through to find out what happens, and don't worry about asking questions. There is one exception to this:

What do you think will happen next?

Obviously this only works as a prediction if they don't already know the answer. So if there is a cliff-hanger or moment of suspense, it is good to use this one on the first read through.

After you have read the story once, read it again and think about the events and characters. Asking a question is a way into the discussion, and helps understand any facts or messages.

Here are some suggestions of questions you could ask. Don't ask them all at once, but use them each time you look at the book, and feel free to mix them up, alter them, or reverse roles and let your child ask the questions.

Who is really in charge of the ship?

Vlad thinks he is, but Captain Carew is in charge of the sailors.

What type of energy made the Mary Rose sail?

Wind blowing in the sails made the ship move.

What materials were used to make the ship and the oven?

The Mary Rose was made from wood and the ovens in the bottom of the ship were brick.

Why doesn't Vlad want a dog or a hawk on board?

Dogs were often brought on board to hunt rats, who would eat and spoil the sailors' food.

Where is the part of the ship called the Hold?

The Hold is the area in the bottom of the ship.

Do you think that Vlad always tells the truth?

Vlad often exaggerates and is not always totally honest (eg thinking he is in charge of the ship).

How did the sailors see what they were doing below deck?

They could open gunports and move the cannons, also use lanterns with candles.

Was it good that Vlad's plan was successful?

It was good for the rats, but not good for the sailors. The rats would eat the food now.

Would you like to have been a sailor in Tudor times?

It would have been a hard and dangerous life.

There is another history sheet outlining the general history - you can use it as an opportunity to find out more together as a follow up activity.

Finally, a good way to find out if your child has understood the story is to ask them to tell you the story in their own words. This often reveals any misunderstandings and is also good practise for shaping a story and helps them create their own writing.

Check the Reading Riddle website and YouTube channel for further advice on reading.

Have fun!

www.readingriddle.co.uk