

READING GUIDE FOR PARENTS

Tips and Sites to Help Improve Your Child's Reading Abilities



Never Too Young to Start

By Crystal Barber

Most parents may think that the skill of Reading is all about letters, words, and stories. That is far from the truth. Parents can start introducing reading skills in their child's life as soon as they are born. Skills related to phonemic awareness are an important foundational piece of the reading puzzle that doesn't require your child to know any letter names or how to spell at all. It relates to recognizing and manipulating the individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words." (Reading Rockets)

Help your child by doing quick, fun activities like:

- * How Many Words? - Ask your child to help you think of as many words as they can that start or end with a certain sound.
- * Make up silly sentences with words that begin with the same sound.
- * Play simple rhyming or blending games.
- * Read books with rhymes.
- * Teach your child rhymes, short poems, and songs.
- * Have your child think of a sentence to describe their favorite thing to do. Count the words in the sentence.
- * Guess the Syllables - Say a word and help your child learn how to count the syllables of the word.
- * Secret Word - Break a word into individual sounds and see if your child can guess the word.

Another Early Reading Skill: Concepts of Print

When you read a book to your child make sure you start helping your child understand how print works in books. You can do this by:

- **Discuss the parts of the book** (front and back, top and bottom of the page, title page, author's name, etc.)
- **Describe how to read a book** (pages read from left to right, read the sentences from left to right while pointing to words as you read, etc.)
- **Discuss different letter/writing concepts** (show that letters make up words and words make up sentences, point to capital and lower case letters, model what to do with various punctuation marks, etc.)



Reading Strategies for Home

By Alison Wynne

These are ways you can help your child at home. Remember to stay positive to help build their confidence in their skills as they improve.

- Use books that are at their reading level.
- Help them find books that interest them. This helps keep them motivated.
- Introduce your child to poems, riddles, and joke books (reading is not just about stories)
- Take frequent trips to the local library and ask the librarians for suggestions of new authors or book series your child may enjoy.
- When you listen to your child reading, always follow along silently. If the child mispronounces a word or hesitates for longer than 5 seconds, tell your child the word, then have your student repeat the word correctly. This is called error correction.
- Be specific about good reading you see (e.g., "Great job of sounding out the words that you don't know. I love how you are pausing at commas and stopping at the periods.").
- Have your child re-read the same book for repeated practice.

Words, Words, Everywhere

Francie Alexander explained in a Scholastic article - "Words are the currency of communication. A robust vocabulary improves all areas of communication — listening, speaking, reading and writing."

Here are a few ways to incorporate vocabulary in everyday situations for kids of all ages:

- Use new and interesting words in natural conversations (dinner conversations, when shopping, when watching tv,...)
- Use gestures and facial expressions to help children make sense of new words
- Sing with children and recite poetry and rhymes to playfully introduce vocabulary.
- Read to children daily, taking time to go over new words.
- Talk with children and encourage children to talk with one another. Keep the conversation going by asking questions, making comments, and inviting children to think and share their ideas.



I DO IT, YOU DO IT, WE DO IT

Modeling and practice are key to helping young and/or struggling readers improve their skills. Try this strategy:

1. **"I do it"**- Parent models by reading the passage/paragraph/ page in the book as the student follows along
2. **"We do it"**- Parent and student read the same passage/paragraph/page in the book together
3. **"You do it"**- The student reads the same passage/paragraph in the book by themselves as the parent follows along corrects any errors made by student

Why Worry About Comprehension?



Reading is more than saying the words or getting from the beginning of the book to the end. To be successful readers, children need to be able to comprehend the text. Research has shown there are strategies we can model and teach our children that help them construct meaning and deepen their understanding of the texts they are reading. A few of these strategies are:

- Metacognition - Encourage your child to think about their thinking by modeling your thinking with thoughts like "When I read this part, I was thinking...", "This part really surprised me because...", "This part is confusing me because..."
- Inferring - The ability to infer helps readers get to the "why" of the story.
- Schema - When readers use what they already know or have experienced to help them understand new information
- Questioning - Ask questions about the text before, during and after reading. This helps activate their thinking and increases their engagement in the text.
- Determining Importance - Ask your child what the main idea and themes of the stories are that they read.
- Visualization - Encourage your child to imagine what the characters look like, what the settings look like or what a scene looks like.
- Synthesizing - Help your child combine what he/she knows with the new information gathered from the book – this combining helps children understand the text and adjust their thinking.

Elementary Websites

These websites are excellent for elementary children. They are backed by a tremendous amount of research into how kids learn to read and how they become fluent readers.

- Between the Lions
- Starfall
- StoryPlace
- Storyline Online
- ReadWriteThink Student Interactives
- PBS Reading Games
- WordWorld
- Storynory
- OxfordOWL
- ABCya

Other useful websites:

- National Geographic Young Explorers
- FunBrain
- International Children's Digital Library
- Book Adventure
- Bookwink
- Read Print
- Learn Out Loud



IS YOUR CHILD STRUGGLING WITH READING?

Contact Education Exchange LLC at 252-991-6668
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Information Sources

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