



Welcome August!

New school year, new reading tip!

Change “reading to” your child to “reading with.” Familiar books hold the key for this activity. Encourage your little one to fill in words you think he or she is likely to know. Just the participation will increase for your child a love of books and reading.



**A schedule can be just what you need to get things going in new and wonderful way for the upcoming school year.** It provides structure. “When structure speaks, children listen.” By providing a simple daily schedule, you help your child to feel secure. It provides consistency. It is the beginning of the discipline process. Amid all the changes going on today, you will be able to accomplish as much as possible by following a routine. Here are some helpful guidelines.

\* **Make a specific play time for you and your child.** When you set aside time to enjoy play activities, you show that you value play and your time together. Open-ended play with items like Playdoh, crayons, craft materials, bubbles, blocks, building sets and other non-structured materials are ideal. Playing ball, circle games, and other activities that require moving around or running provide a natural way for your child to get exercise. The more you join in, the richer the experience is for your child.

\* **Keep food as part of the daily meal and snack schedule it was meant to be.** It is for eating at specified intervals at a table and preferably with others. Try to keep to those and avoid whenever possible offering food in the car, in a stroller, or while your child is playing, walking, or even standing. A regular eating time fosters positive nutrition and family bonding. In addition, it decreases overeating because the next meal or snack is soon to come. Remember that food is not a toy or a reward. It is part of dining and sharing time with others.

\* **You can even schedule telephone time.** Busy people recommend phone hours. It could be as much as one hour a day to as little as a few minutes every morning. Many parents do not answer the cell phone when they are with their children, during and after dinner, or while at home with their family. Most important is to have a system in place that works for you. Texting and e-mails can often be fit in as quick interludes at convenient times during the day.

\* **Did you notice that digital time for your child was absent?** Good catch! It needs to be scheduled too. Time on screens equates to time not being spent interacting with real people, the most important kind of developmental time of all.

My hope is that these four areas of scheduled time are just what you need to be prepared for the start of school. These specific guidelines are all designed to keep you **free** from as many difficulties as possible. How special is that!

Collect and use all past reading tips too.

**Tip One** - Read to your child often to give the finest preparation for learning to read. Rhythm, vocabulary, and feelings all play a role in this activity, and it is never too early to start.



**Tip Two** - Build your connection before starting any reading session. Getting your child's attention is the key. Books with simple sentences and inviting pictures are always appropriate.

**Tip Three** - Point to familiar words as you say them. This is a perfect way to help your child connect print with what you read out loud.

**Tip Four** - Set up a reading routine to create an enjoyable part of everyday. Before bed is a natural time to read together, but you may also want to add on another opportunity during the day when you both are less tired and more relaxed.

**Tip Five** -      HOP                      JUMP                      CLAP  
Write each word on a 3' x 5' index card. Then have fun with your homemade reading game. Take turns with your child picking a word card and then acting out what it says. The repetition of seeing the words is for reading vocabulary building, and the repeated actions will improve motor development.

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