

A NOTE TO PARENTS

Reading Aloud with Your Child

Research shows that reading books aloud is the single most valuable support parents can provide in helping children learn to read.

- Be a ham! The more enthusiasm you display, the more your child will enjoy the book.
- Run your finger underneath the words as you read to signal that the print carries the story.
- Leave time for examining the illustrations more closely; encourage your child to find things in the pictures.
- Invite your youngster to join in whenever there's a repeated phrase in the text.
- Link up events in the book with similar events in your children's life.
- If your child asks a question, stop and answer it. The book can be a means to learning more about your child's thoughts.

Listen to Your Child Read Aloud

The support of your attention and praise is absolutely crucial to your child's continuing efforts to learn to read.

- If your child is learning to read and asks for a word, give it immediately so that the meaning of the story is not interrupted. DO NOT ask your child to sound out the word.
- On the other hand, if your child initiated the act of sounding out, don't intervene.
- If your child is reading along and makes what is called a miscue, listen for the sense of the miscue. If the word "road" is substituted for the word "street," for instance, no meaning is lost. Don't stop the reading for a correction.
- If the miscue makes no sense (for example, "horse" for "house"), ask your child to reread the sentence because you're not sure you understand what's just been read.
- Above all else, enjoy your child's growing command of print and make sure you give lots of praise [for the hard work they are doing]. You are your child's first teacher - and the most important one. Praise from you is critical for further risk-taking and learning.

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TIPS FOR IMPROVING READING COMPREHENSION

- 1) Do Pre-Reading - Looking at the cover and title, ask the child:
 - “What do you think the book will be about?”
 - “What do you already know about that topic?”
 - “What would you like to learn about the topic?”
 - “What story have we read that was similar to this?”
- 2) Take Turns with the Decoding - If the reader struggles for fluency with the level of text chosen, alternate reading sentences, paragraphs or pages to increase the flow and speed of the reading and give the child a break from the work of decoding.
- 3) Re-Read Texts - If a reader is still working on decoding text, have them repeat books. One day, you read the book to them, the next day, they read it to you.
- 4) Stop Often to Discuss - Ask the child to predict what will happen next, reflect about how a character feels (helps with emotional intelligence and sympathy, in addition to reading comprehension), note what other choices the character could have made, note what in the child’s life may be similar, etc.
- 5) Stop Often to Summarize - Ask the child to explain what has just happened. Go over the plot, characters, setting, and problem/conflict of the book. Note the sequence of events.
- 6) Do Vocabulary Building - Every page or two choose a word important to the context and make sure the child knows the meaning, and can explain the meaning or use the word in context. If the child does not know the word either explain the meaning or use it as an opportunity for practicing dictionary skills.

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