
I N S I G H T S

FOR FAMILIES



Help your child learn to read



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INSIGHTS FOR FAMILIES is provided by your child's school in recognition of your role as a partner in education. Insights is produced by Marcia Latta, communications consultant.

The ability to read is essential for student achievement – in all subjects. First students learn to read, then they read to learn. Age and the rate of academic progress in building reading skills are important indicators of future academic success.

Long-term reading benefits

Students who are able to develop strong reading skills build confidence in their academic ability and are more likely to be high achievers. And, as a bonus, early readers are more likely to find a lifelong passion for reading.

More likely to graduate on time: Students who are still struggling readers in third grade are four times less likely to graduate by age 19 than a child who reads proficiently in third grade. Even worse, students who live in poverty and can't read by third grade are 13 times less likely to graduate on time. <http://bit.ly/2gAedSv>

More likely to live longer: A study by Yale University researchers found that people who read books live longer. Study participants, who were over age 50, had a 20 percent reduction in the risk of mortality over the 12 years of the study compared to participants who did not read books. <http://wapo.st/2wzbG4a>

More likely to develop a passion for reading and choose to read independently during free time: Students who read well are more likely to choose to read, which builds reading skills. According to a study published in the Research Journal of the American Association of School Librarians, “the amount of free reading done outside of school has consistently been found to relate to growth in vocabulary, reading comprehension, verbal fluency, and general information.” <http://bit.ly/2gGrJI5>

Tips to help students build reading skills

Reading is clearly an important skill, but some students are slow to learn it or struggle to keep up with grade-level benchmarks. Fortunately, there are many ways parents can help their children improve reading skills.

The U.S. Department of Education provides tips to help early readers in its publication, “Reading Tips for Parents.” Download the pdf for more information: www2.ed.gov/parents/read/resources/readingtips/readingtips.pdf

“Putting a few simple strategies into action will make a significant difference in helping children develop into good readers and writers.”

(Over)

Through reading aloud, providing print materials, and promoting positive attitudes about reading and writing, you can have a powerful impact on children's literacy and learning.

- Invite a child to read with you every day.
- When reading a book where the print is large, point word by word as you read. This will help the child learn that reading goes from left to right and understand that the word he or she says is the word he or she sees.
- Read a child's favorite book over and over again.
- Read many stories with rhyming words and lines that repeat. Invite the child to join in on these parts. Point, word by word, as he or she reads along with you.
- Discuss new words. For example, "This big house is called a palace. Who do you think lives in a palace?"
- Stop and ask about the pictures and about what is happening in the story.
- Read from a variety of books, including fairy tales, song books and poems.

Helping your older child read better

Many of the tactics to help younger children read will also work with older students. The key is supporting your child, building an interest in reading and practicing, which includes reading aloud to kids and giving them a chance to read to you.

Even older kids like story time. According to a Kids and Family Reading Report by Scholastic, "Only 17% of parents of kids ages 9–11 read aloud to their children. Yet 83% of kids ages 6–17 say being read to is something they either loved or liked a lot." www.readbrightly.com/importance-of-reading-aloud-to-big-kids/

Benefits of reading to older children are modeling fluency, appealing to their love of a story, expanding vocabulary and exposing them to new authors and genres.

Problems that hinder reading success

Reading disorders: If your child struggles to learn to read, check into possible learning disorders, like dyslexia, that can cause significant learning difficulties. Schools can connect parents to experts who will assist with diagnoses and provide interventions and support to help children learn to read.

Print vs. digital: Some studies suggest that we may understand and retain more of what we read when we read books in print rather than on screens, especially if it is something longer than a page of the book or screen, usually more than 500 words. The cause may be the greater demands of scrolling, the glare of the device or the distractions from the page caused by the phone, computer or reading device. <http://bit.ly/2eEEvpY>