

# A Parent's Guide to Promoting Literacy

## Essential tips to encourage learning

- 📖 Talk to your child about daily events and take time to listen to what your child wants to tell you.
- 📖 Read aloud to your child -- every day -- and let your child read to you. The more children read, both in school and at home, the more they will improve their reading abilities. Read with children of all ages.
- 📖 Encourage your child to draw and scribble stories at home. This will increase confidence at school.
- 📖 Take your child to new and different places such as museums, historical sites, and nature centers. Talk about what you have seen.
- 📖 Supervise television viewing. Choose good programs and set some time limits. Talk to your child about what you have watched.
- 📖 Establish a regular time and place for doing homework, encourage your child's efforts, and offer praise when assignments are completed.
- 📖 Be generous in showing affection and express interest in your child's everyday activities and accomplishments.
- 📖 Monitor how your child spends his or her time out of school. Limit video games and television viewing and encourage reading, hobbies and other activities that provide learning and social opportunities.
- 📖 Be a role model for your child. If you read, your children will want to read.



## Home Environments that Encourages Literacy

- 📖 An inviting area or corner for reading
- 📖 A wide variety of books and magazines for all family members
- 📖 A regular time for reading
- 📖 A collection of books that help to do things ("how to" books including cookbooks, origami, gardening, etc.)
- 📖 Shelves, crates or boxes for storing books
- 📖 Places for writing messages
- 📖 Corner, refrigerators, and so on, to display notes, writings, and drawings
- 📖 Different kinds of paper for writing (ex. drawing paper, colored and white paper, lined paper, notepads ...)
- 📖 Crayons, markers, pencils, pens
- 📖 Comfortable chairs for reading
- 📖 A library card for checking out books



## Literacy Activities for Home

- 📖 Write family diaries
- 📖 Read video game directions
- 📖 Cook together and read recipes
- 📖 Design cards and invitations
- 📖 Collect grocery coupons
- 📖 Write letters to relatives

- 📖 Videotape family events
- 📖 Read TV guides and discuss good choices
- 📖 Make pictorial biographies
- 📖 Read and discuss news articles
- 📖 Write thank you notes
- 📖 Prepare a calendar of activities
- 📖 Create original stories
- 📖 Write messages to each other
- 📖 Read bulletins and letters from school
- 📖 Create photo album caption
- 📖 Sing together
- 📖 Write and file addresses
- 📖 Write a family history
- 📖 Make shopping lists
- 📖 Read menus
- 📖 Read bus schedules
- 📖 Write a family vacation journal
- 📖 Create a family bulletin board
- 📖 Tape record stories

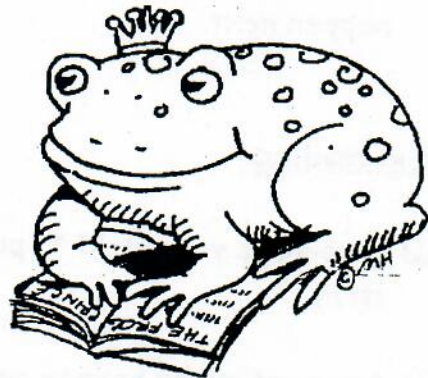
### Suggestions to help children become better readers

- 📖 Read aloud to your children everyday.
- 📖 Read and write often for authentic purposes to serve as a model to your children.
- 📖 Read a novel to your children on long car trips or tape-record books for them to listen to during the ride.
- 📖 Encourage your children to select books by interest and not necessarily by reading level. Children who are interested in a particular topic may enjoy a book on that subject that they might otherwise consider too easy or too difficult.

- 📖 Discuss books with children, seeking to know more about the book and how your child feels about it.
- 📖 Encourage your children to write a journal or diary from the perspective of the main character in the book being read.
- 📖 Have your children make hand puppets and act out a book they have read.
- 📖 Encourage your children to explore answers to questions by using informational books.

### Suggestions to the kinds of questions to ask while the child is reading to stimulate thinking

- 📖 Did this story turn out the way you thought it would? Why or why not?
- 📖 What made this book interesting?
- 📖 Is the main character someone you would like to have as a friend? Why or why not?
- 📖 If you were the author, how would you have changed the ending? How would you have changed the beginning? What other events would you have changed?
- 📖 Is this a book you would recommend to a friend? Which events would your friend enjoy most?
- 📖 What other events would you like to see happen to the main character?
- 📖 How would the story change if it took place in our town?



- 📖 Have you ever experienced some of the events or feelings that the main character did? Describe them.
- 📖 If you had the chance to meet the author of this book, what would you like to say?
- 📖 Would you enjoy reading other books by this author? Why or why not?
- 📖 What do you think would happen in a sequel to this book?

## Adapting Classroom Techniques

Activities that have been used in the classroom may be adapted for home. The following are suggestions that are appropriate for the child's age and the book being read.

### Before reading:

- 📖 Look at the title and illustrations together. Predict what the story will be about.
- 📖 Discuss what you both already know about the topic of the story.
- 📖 Read the first page aloud, and then ask your child to predict what might happen next.

### During reading:

- 📖 Encourage your child to picture in his or her mind what is happening in the story.
- 📖 Ask what might happen next in the story.

- 📖 Have your child change his or her predictions as the story provides new information.
- 📖 Ask how a character might feel.
- 📖 Talk about the illustrations.

### After reading:

- 📖 Have your child retell the story and create a new ending together.
- 📖 Retell the story from another character's point of view.
- 📖 Let your child illustrate his or her favorite part of the story.
- 📖 Think about the story together responding to prompts such as "I felt...," "I liked ...," "I didn't like ...," or "I learned ..."

## Age-Appropriate Activities

The following are suggestions that are specific for different age levels:

### Preschoolers:

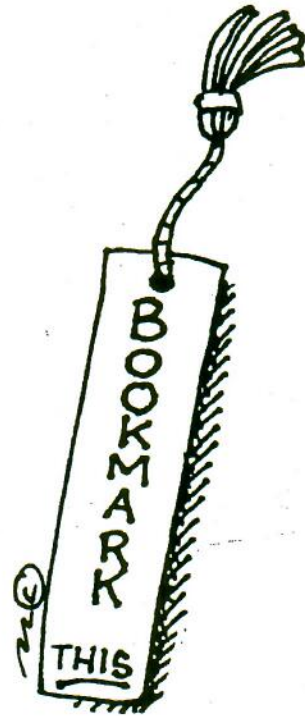
- 📖 Read a bedtime story.
- 📖 Read the same books over and over.
- 📖 Give your child markers or paper and pencils.
- 📖 Give your child a blackboard and chalk.
- 📖 Write messages to your child.
- 📖 Label your child's possessions.



- 📖 Make alphabet books.
- 📖 Put magnetic letters on the refrigerator.

### Five and Six Year Olds:

- 📖 You read to me and I'll read to you.
- 📖 Fill in the blanks. Read poetry and verse that rhyme and stop before the end of the line, having your child fill in the blanks.
- 📖 Play sound games. A simple starter is "Riddle, riddle, ree. I see something you don't see and it starts with a T."
- 📖 Make a calendar.
- 📖 Write a fill-in-the-blank story.
- 📖 Write a biography or autobiography.
- 📖 Make a jigsaw puzzle from a poster, book jacket, or picture postcard.
- 📖 Make a board game.
- 📖 Start a memory box.
- 📖 Cook from a book.



### Seven and eight year olds:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>📖 Write a book about something real or imagined.</li> <li>📖 Keep a journal.</li> <li>📖 Write a thank-you letter.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>📖 Make your own cards.</li> <li>📖 Write a letter to an author.</li> <li>📖 Write a letter from one character to another.</li> </ul> |
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📖 Create a newspaper.

📖 Make a book.

📖 Write a wish list.

📖 Read informational books together.

📖 Start a scrapbook.

📖 Interview your parents or grandparents.

📖 Explore your family letters and albums.

### Nine and Ten Year Olds:

📖 Read one character's dialog and have your child read another's.

📖 Read riddles.

📖 Play thinking games.

📖 Work on projects.

📖 Write a fairy tale from a different character's point of view. For example, write a Cinderella story from the stepsisters' point of view.

📖 Write a text for wordless books.

### Eleven and Twelve Year Olds:

📖 Put books in your child's room.

📖 Tell about a book you enjoyed.

📖 Start your child on a new series.



## Techniques to Help Parents Read Aloud

- 📖 Select books that you'll enjoy and that will spark your child's interest.
- 📖 Read unfamiliar stories silently first to note places that may need special effects (such as a knock on the door) to create drama.
- 📖 Don't read too fast and adjust your pace to the story and your child.
- 📖 Be responsive to your child's actions.
- 📖 Encourage your child's participation in the reading session -- joining in repeating phrases, making comments, asking questions, predicting what will happen, or actually reading parts of the story.
- 📖 Allow time after reading for a relaxed discussion. This should involve sharing reactions, not quizzing on facts.
- 📖 Make sure your child sees you reading for pleasure.
- 📖 Never withdraw reading aloud as a punishment. That may destroy all the positive effects of reading aloud.

