

The Literacy Link

Connecting home to school

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Intermediate Edition

Reading Aloud

Reading aloud to children is one of the best ways to help them discover the joy of reading. And it's never too early—or too late — to start. All children, even infants and teens, can benefit from listening to you read aloud.

How to read aloud with your young reader:

- ♥ Take turns reading paragraphs or entire pages.
- ♥ Help your child with troublesome words. Ask what word would make sense in the story, or supply the correct word so he or she can move on and read the rest of the sentence.

- ♥ Be encouraging. Praise your child for doing a good job.
- ♥ Talk about the book as you read together. Ask questions that allow your child to express ideas and opinions.



Dads make great reading partners

Reading for Joy

Let your child select the book he or she wants to hear. Choose a time when your child is alert and contented. Eliminate distractions such as television, radio or telephones. Find a comfortable spot and sit close together. Look at the cover of the book. Read the title, author and Illustrator. Use these terms with your child to create familiarity with them and what they mean. If there is a dedication, read that and explain what it means to dedicate your work to someone.

Use a calm, gentle inviting voice. Ask questions about the title that will engage a child's curiosity and willingness to hear what happens. For example, "Why do you think the author named the boy Jan?" Asking questions that are open and require thinking will

make your child ready to listen and learn.

Read the book with enthusiasm and interest. Your voice communicates your level of attention and enjoyment. Use different voices for different characters. Vary the pace of your reading to match the story, when it is exciting read a bit more quickly. Modulate your voice to add to the meaning. Ask questions as you go along that help anticipate what will happen next. Give your child time to think and respond. Allow him to discover the story; there doesn't have to be a right or wrong answer.

Sometimes children want to hear the same story repeated many times. This is important in their development as they understand that there is predictability to life. Be patient, keep reading and offer a vari-

ety of books.

Watch your child's reaction. Never force a bored child to sit still and listen. It's OK to lose interest. Take a break and begin again at a time when your child is attentive and interested. Keep offering books in a positive and loving way. Your child will learn that reading means special times with you.

He or she will find the joy in reading and develop a love for learning!

References: Read for Joy Claudia Quigg, Baby Talk Publications, 1993.
The Read Aloud Handbook JimTrelease

Quick tips

- ◆ Take books everywhere (the car, waiting rooms, etc.), and make the most of every minute.
- ◆ Read everyday items aloud: food labels, maps, menus, cereal boxes, etc.
- ◆ Ask your local librarian to help you find books that meet your child's interests and needs.
- ◆ Set up a home library. A few inexpensive books on a special shelf is a great start.

Clark County Schools, Winchester, KY

Literacy Coaches/Title I teachers::

Fannie Bush: Rachel Adkins, Paula McDonald

Central: LuAnn Cummings

Hannah McClure: Lyngle Lawson

Pilot View/Trapp: Kim Smyth

Shearer: Jan Niblack, Mary Beth Philips, Karyn Rice

Strode Station: Mary Faris, Debbie Wheeler

District: Jennifer Bernhard

Why Dads should be involved in reading

Research shows that when dad gets involved, their sons' and daughters' achievement is enhanced.

Dads are important since reading is often thought of by boys as a "girly" thing to do. Dads and other male family members are boys' main role models in life. Seeing them enjoying reading will help boys to realize that they too can enjoy reading - they might just need help in finding the right thing to read. Given that girls outperform boys in literacy tests at all ages throughout school, and are much more likely to say they don't enjoy reading at all, this is particularly important. Children who have favorite books when they are young, tend to do better in school.

Regular reading for pleasure and enjoyment of a wide range of materials can be the foundation for educational achievement and a lifelong reading habit.

What you can do

Even dads who support their children's learning in other ways can be unsure of where to start when it comes to reading. Your most important role should be in teaching them that reading is fun and will support their other interests, and is not just a "skill" that must be learned in order to do well at school or get a good job.

You don't have to only think of reading in terms of "proper" children's story books. Many boys (and their dads) prefer to read non-fiction, including books, magazines and websites. Sports programs, sports reports, 'how to' manuals and comic books are often great places to start. Your children can benefit just as much if you talk to them about this type of reading and what they enjoy. Start with interests you share with your child, and use these as the basis of your shared reading. Dads are sometimes good at bringing stories alive either by using different voices or humor.

From: <http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/>

"Words are things, and a small drop of ink falling like dew upon a thought produces that which makes thousands, perhaps millions, think." Lord Byron

Building your child's vocabulary

The number of different words a child is exposed to in the early years is a key predictor of future reading and academic success.

Try these ideas from www.bicworld.com for expanding your family's word wealth:

◆ Word of the Weekend

Designate a "Word of the Weekend," post it on the fridge, and challenge each other to "slip it in" to casual conversation. The first person to do so gets to pick the following weekend's word.

◆ Play Word Games

The classic ways to become word savvy, like playing Scrabble and doing crossword puzzles, are still fun and effective. Add them to your family's repertoire.

◆ Vocabulary Vertigo

Write your child's weekly vocabulary words (or make up themed lists of your own) on large index cards in bright, colorful letters, and tape them to the ceiling over his or her bed. Decorate them with stars and expand your child's linguistic galaxy!

◆ Ransom Letters

Have your child cut up old magazines or newspapers, choosing words or letters with big, fun fonts, and paste them together, creating words or stories or phrases with eye-catching appeal.

<http://www.edlettr.org/past/issues/1997-ja/language.shtml>

The Dr. Musgrove Moment

As I read this new newsletter about literacy and all the important ideas or strategies tied to reading, I reflected on my own thirty-two year public school experience. I began my educational career in 1976 teaching remedial reading to seventy students in grades K-6. Of course, there were only ten students at a time in each of those classes. Many of the same ideas I see here we tried or actually used—we just called that strategy a different name or it had a different title. However, today, as in 1976, the two main themes I zeroed in on were those about the role dad plays in creating the environment where reading is important and practical every day as well as selecting reading materials that children truly find enjoyable. While I believe I was a pretty good dad, I absolutely know I am a better grandpa. Both of my grand kids have read with grandpa and we still visit the library two or three times a week when they come for extended visits. Naturally, I am just as proud that I taught both of them how to fish, build a campfire, people manners and respect for their elders and some other valuable lifestyle skills. The main activity that I began when I became a grandpa and still practice today with the youngest one is to read at least three books just before going to sleep and talking about those stories. Sometimes Paige and grandpa can be heard laughing all over the house making up our own endings or recreating how some animal should have acted in the story. Through me, I want my grandchildren to enjoy reading - even making up new endings—and understand the importance of reading throughout their lives. All of us could tell our own success stories. This just happens to be one of mine.

Tips for Parents: How to Help Your Child With Writing

- Talk with your child about places you visit, work you do, books you read, or television programs you watch together.
- Encourage your child to read, especially things he or she chooses, and let your child see you read.
- Praise your child's efforts at writing. Be primarily interested in content. Emphasize your child's successes. For every error your child makes, there are a dozen things done well. Resist the tendency to focus only on errors of spelling, punctuation, and other mechanical parts of writing
- Provide a suitable place for your child to write such as a flat surface, good light, a comfortable chair.
- Give gifts (and encourage others to do the same for birthdays and special occasions) associated with writing: pens, pencils, pads of paper, stationery, a dictionary or thesaurus, erasers—even stamps.
- Encourage your child to write away for information, free samples, travel brochures, etc.
- Be alert to occasions when your child can be involved in writing. Writing for real purposes is rewarding, and the daily activities of families present many opportunities for purposeful writing (telephone messages or notes to family members).



Helpful questions you can ask your child

About **Purpose and Audience**:

- What do you want to write about? Why?
- Who will want or need to read this?
- What do you want your reader to know or do?
- How will you present it to the reader?

About **Idea Development/Support**:

- Do your details help the reader understand

- Are they the best details and examples for the reader and your purpose? Have you explained important ideas?
- Do your examples focus on the main ideas?
- Do your details make the ideas clearer?

About **Organization**:

- Did you stick to your plan throughout the piece of writing?

- Does the order of the ideas make sense?
- Does all of your information fit together?
- Do your ideas lead the reader easily from one to another?
- Will your reader be able to follow all of your thinking?

“How do I know what I think until I see what I say?”

E.M. Forster

Questions to ask about mechanics

About **Sentences**:

- Do your sentences have different lengths? Different beginnings? Different structures?
- Or do they sound too much alike?
- Do your sentences express complete thoughts?

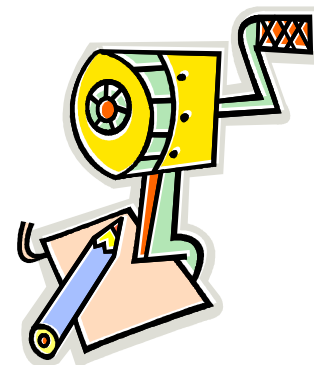
About **Word**ing:

- Have you used a variety of words to make your meaning clear?

- Do the words say what you mean?
- Are all of your words used correctly?

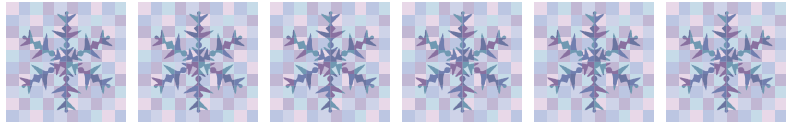
About **Correctness**:

- Have you made any mistakes in spelling?
- Do you see any punctuation problems?
- Have you used capital letters correctly?



From *Tips for Parents: How To Help Your child With Writing* provided by KDE

Snow Day Fun



If the weather outside is frightful, create an inside Scavenger Hunt

- ◆ Decide what kind of prize to have at the end of the hunt.
- ◆ Create a list of things to find. The list can include easy-to-find items, such as a stick of gum, pencil, needle and thread, or harder-to-find items, such as a certain recipe in a book or photo in an album.
- ◆ Give your children a list of items and set a time limit.
- ◆ When the time is up, count the number of items. The one with the most items wins.

Glow-in-the Dark Hunt

- ◆ Use small tubes and/or bottles of glow-in-the-dark paint available in Wal Mart's craft department or at many craft stores. The paint hardly shows when you put it on, so test your items in a dark room before you hide them to see how they look and to be sure they've had enough exposure to light.
- ◆ Paint several small objects like a penny, a ruler, an apple, etc.
- ◆ Allow the items time to dry and to get plenty of exposure to light.
- ◆ Make a list to hand out, hide the items and invite your children to find them in a specified amount of time.

Scrambled Letters

- ◆ Paint letters on several different objects around the house which spell a clue or secret word.
- ◆ Tell the children how many letters they have to find and set a time limit for unscrambling them.

If the weather outside is delightful, create a cold weather treat

Snow Ice Cream

Ingredients

- 3 cups loose clean snow
- 2 tbsps. milk
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract

Directions

Mix all the ingredients and sample the result. Add more sugar and vanilla extract to taste.

"Oh! the snow, the beautiful snow, Filling the sky and earth below, Over the housetops, over the street, Over the heads of people you meet..." J.W. Watson

Dear Ms. Littie,
What can I do to help my 9 year old when he gets stuck on a word while he's reading?
A concerned parent

Dear concerned parent,
 There are several ways to become "unstuck." We have included a bookmark that you can cut out for your son to use. We are sure he will find this helpful.
 Ms. Littie

When I Read ...

I can look at the picture.	
I can think about what makes sense.	
I can read the sentence again.	
I can get my mouth ready for the first sound.	
I can skip the word and read on.	
I can look for chunks I know.	
I can ask for help.	