

The Literacy Link

Connecting home to school

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Primary 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, regardless of age, can benefit from listening to you read aloud.

T.W.I Model

As you read with your child at home, we encourage you to use the ***T.W.I.*** model. This stands for "To, With, Independently." Read one page or short passage at a time, following these steps:

♥ TO

Read the page **to** your child. Many times we feel like we are "cheating" if we read to them, but it is extremely helpful for children to hear good reading modeled—from any kind of text, even textbooks. They need to hear phrasing, expression, and fluency to

help them break free from the choppy, monotone, word-by-word reading they use as beginning readers.

♥ WITH

Then go back to that same page or passage and read out loud together **with** your child. This is called "choral" reading.

♥ INDEPENDENTLY

Have your child go back and read the same passage **independently** out loud to you. If they are struggling, you may want to go back and read it to and/or with them again.

♥ ***T.W.I*** Again!

Repeat ***T.W.I.*** with the next page or passage until you finish the selection.



Getting off to a good start in reading is the single most important factor in determining a child's success in school. In fact, a recent study found that parental involvement in children's reading is the #1 predictor of reading achievement worldwide!

Quick Tips

- Take books everywhere (the car, doctor's office, etc.) and make the most of every minute.
- Read everyday items aloud: food labels, maps, menus, cereal boxes, road signs, 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 books on a special shelf is a great start. Used book stores, yard sales, and flea markets sell books that children will treasure for years.

Reading Aloud Tips

Get Comfortable

Give your children soft mats or pillows to sit on. Let them have a snack or drink before you start.

Remove distractions

Make your reading spot as quiet as possible so your child can focus on the story. Turn off the TV and phones!

Encourage participation

Children are likely to enjoy reading more when they're invited to join in. If there's repetition in a story, challenge them to recite the key phrases with you. ***T.W.I.*** is a great means of active participation.

Keep it appropriate

If your child is having trouble

following the language or plot, the story may be too difficult. Look for books that are closer to their reading levels.

Read regularly

It only takes 15 to 20 minutes a day to build reading skills for a lifetime!

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

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Building Your Child's Writing Skills

Remember, your children are watching you! Children who see their parents using the written word become more comfortable writers themselves. Here are some tips from a published writer and editor for sending the "write" message:

- ♥ Share your story, or better yet, write it! Encourage your children to interview you, asking about your childhood, your dreams, your fears, your funny or embarrassing experi-

ences. Write an informal family history, even if just in a spiral-bound notebook. Get grandparents to contribute too.

- ♥ Write your child notes and hide them in lunch boxes, under pillows, or in the bathroom drawer. Ask them questions so they will write you back.
- ♥ Keep a journal, and let your child see you writing in it.
- ♥ Encourage written thank-you notes, and let your child see you

write them as well.

- ♥ Use a dictionary and keep several handy around the house.
- ♥ Be encouraging, not critical, of your child's written work.
- ♥ Limit TV and computer use as much as possible. Listen to books on tape when driving so children can begin to hear well-written language.

Stephanie Hunt, www.bicworld.com

The writing skills your child is learning in school

In the primary years, your child's writing will change in dramatic ways.

In the beginning some children will pretend to write, just like they may pretend to sing like a movie star or to steer an airplane like a pilot.

Soon these youngsters will be labeling their pictures with labels that each contain a letter or two. Once those labels become more complete, they will learn to write sentences under their pictures.

A child's first sentences will be hard to read because the child won't yet have learned to leave white spaces between words, but like everything else, that will change. The sentences will become easier to read as the child leaves spaces between words, learns and uses a repertoire of familiar words, and becomes more skilled with using phonemic awareness and phonics. They will, of course, be taught letters, sounds, and the spelling of high-frequency words.

Your children are learning to write like published authors which means they are usually writing *something* for *someone*. By the end of primary they will have written stories, book reviews, poems or how-to books. They will have written for each other, for readers across the school, or for you. Like authors, they will have chosen their own

topics and written rough drafts, which they have revised and edited before publication.

This foundation will enable Kentucky's young writers to write personal narratives, memoirs, short stories, poems, and articles. In 4th grade they will choose which 3 pieces to place in their writing portfolio which is assessed by the state. In 5th grade they will be tested on their independent writing skills in an On Demand test.

How You Can Help

Provide a suitable place for your child to write: a flat surface, good light, a comfortable chair.

Praise your child's efforts at writing. Be primarily interested in *what* is being written, not *how* it is written. 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.

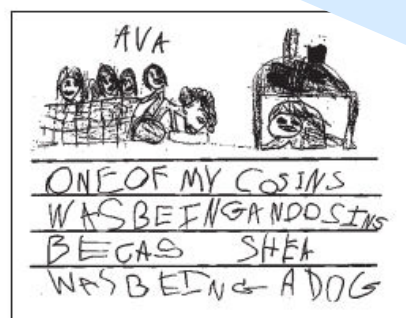
Selected comments from Lucy Calkins and Beth Neville, from *Resources for Primary Writing, Units of Study for Primary Writing: A Year-long Curriculum*,

Heineman: Portsmouth, NH



"Your children are learning to write like published authors—they are writing something for someone."

A "small moment" story in early primary



One of my cousins was being a nuisance because she was being a dog.

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.

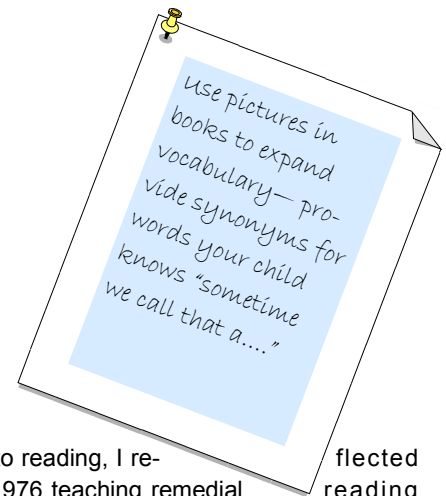
You don't have to only think of reading in terms of "proper" children's story books. Many boys (and their dads) prefer to read non-fiction, including books, magazines and websites. Sports programs, sports reports, 'how to' manuals and comic books are often great places to start. Your children can benefit 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.

"Start with interests you share with your child, and use these as the basis of your shared reading."



Dads make great reading partners

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



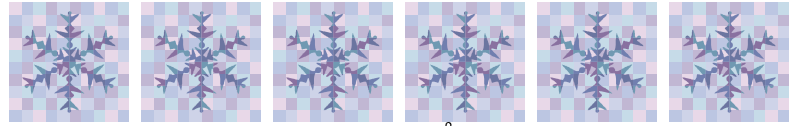
"Words are just black ink on a page until a reader comes along and breathes life into them."

Louise Rosenblatt

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.

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

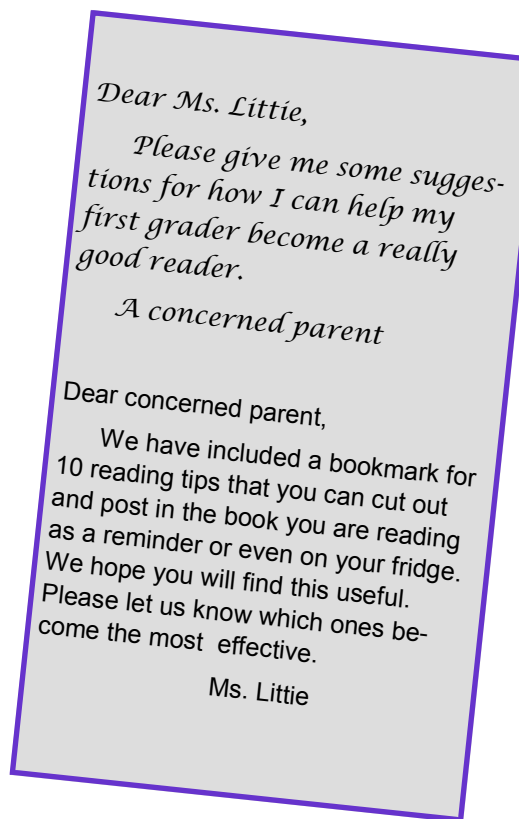
Ingredients

- 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



10 reading tips for parents

1. Give your "junk mail" to children to pretend read.
2. Let your child "read" you the pictures in a familiar picture book. Ask: Why? What happens next? Then what? Where did it go?
3. Help your child organize knowledge by reviewing related words. (What other train words can you think of? Food words? Feeling words?)
4. Encourage your child's personal response to stories. Ask "Do you think that was a good idea? Would you want to do that, too?"
5. Help develop attention and memory using books with lots of repetition by pausing for your child to supply the repeated word.
6. Treat books as though they are special. Your child will also.
7. Pick a letter for the day. Draw a large one, and then have your child find more of them on a page from a discarded magazine. The child can mark it with a highlighter.
8. Use a book character as the theme for a party.
9. Use similes to help define a new concept. This helps bridge something your child knows to understanding something new. "It's like a train but it has..."
10. Play OK/No Way: Tell your child to listen carefully to what you say, and then make up sentences, including some that make no sense. After each sentence, the child says "OK or No Way!" For example: John sleeps in a bed. (OK) Mary put her toys away in the lamp. (No Way!).