

Creating a Strong Reader

Like any other skill, reading proficiency comes from practice and encouragement. No children are born ready to read. Read on to learn more about how you and your family members can become stronger readers.

Many parents assume their children are receiving all of the reading instruction they need when at school. In order for children to learn and master all of the skills that are used in the reading process, their education must continue when they arrive home from school. Families can participate in at-home activities to strengthen elementary and middle school children's reading abilities.

Reading Books

Reading with your children helps them develop and strengthen their reading skills. It is recommended to read with your children each day. This can become part of a daily bedtime or morning ritual, and will be a time you will cherish with your children, that they will come to cherish as well! Tips for reading with your child include:

Choose the right book. When reading to a younger child, choose a book with large print and try to point to each word as you read. This will help your child build vocabulary and word recognition skills. Pointing to words is effective when you use your child's favorite books. Since he is familiar with the story, your child will be able to focus more on each written word.

Learn new words. When reading aloud to your child, encourage them to stop you when you use a word they do not understand. Explain what the word means, how it's spelled and what it looks like. Helping your child comprehend words early in his or her school education will help them build a larger vocabulary. It also instills the importance of definitions and correct word choice.

Listen to your child read. Older students may be encouraged to read aloud to you. Listening to your child read will help you monitor his or her progress in reading and communication skills. The more practice your child gets at home, the better they will perform when called upon to read in class.

Let your child choose books. Having a family library day once a week or a few times a month is also recommended so parents can allow their children to pick out their own books. This will expose your children to a variety of book types and difficulties. Encourage your children to try more difficult books as they grow more confident with their reading abilities.

Read more than books. Parents should also introduce children to reading mediums other than books. Encourage your children to read magazines and help them to read news stories. It is important for children to understand that reading has many purposes; it is not just for reading stories. As you introduce them to each new medium, discuss the purpose of that type of literature. Ask your children what they may expect the reading experience to be like. After reading a newspaper, magazine, or any other new writing style, discuss what you do and do not like about the text. Ask your children if they experienced difficulties with any aspect of the reading and discuss together ways you can work to improve reading.

Tutoring

Internet tutoring can be as effective as its traditional counterpart; students enjoy computer based lessons because they often get to play fun computer games as part of their tutoring sessions. Online programs offer reading lessons to children in the fourth to ninth grades. They teach skills such as vocabulary acquisition, reading for patterns, textbook reading, fiction reading, prefixes, suffixes and roots. These lessons provide children with measurable results in their confidence, grades and attitude toward learning!