

Raising Readers: Tips for Parents



What Can I Do to Help at Home? Simple, Effective Strategies to Share with Parents

Adapted from: Elish-Piper L. (2009). What Can I Do to Help My Child with Reading at Home? Simple, Effective Ideas to Share with Parents. *Illinois Reading Council Journal*, 37(4), 51-54.

Ideas to Build the Reading Habit

Many parents worry that their children do not like to read and do not choose to read during their free time. Parents and teachers are concerned that children will fall behind in reading if they do not get enough practice. With busy schedules, families may find it difficult to promote reading at home. However, teachers can share two simple strategies with parents to build the reading habit in children at home— Family Reading Time and Making Reading Materials Accessible.

Family Reading Time

When parents set aside a daily reading time, they help children get into the habit of recreational reading. The list

below offers practical suggestions for implementing a family reading time that will be easy, fun and effective.

Setting Up a Family Reading Time

1. Pick a 15-30 minute time that works with your family's schedule. For example, right after dinner or before children's bedtime may work for your family.
2. Have Family Reading Time at least four to five times per week.
3. Post the schedule for Family Reading Time on the refrigerator or family calendar so everyone knows when it will take place.
4. Everyone reads during this time, including parents. Family members can read independently, with a partner or as a group.
5. Family members should choose fun, interesting things to read.
6. Take a few minutes to discuss what you are reading during Family Reading Time.



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Jerry L. Johns Literacy Clinic

College of Education

Making Reading Materials Accessible

If children have access to interesting, engaging reading materials, they are more likely to read and to enjoy reading. How can parents make reading materials accessible to their children? Families can visit the public library on a regular basis. It is a free family outing that can support children's reading development. Many libraries also offer story times, book clubs and special interest programs that are free of charge. In addition, librarians can help children find books and magazines that match their interests and reading levels. Bookstores are also a great resource for making reading materials accessible. Some bookstores offer story times, author presentations and family activities. In addition, families can take a special outing to a bookstore so their children can select a new book or magazine for their own birthday or holiday gift. Another idea to make reading materials accessible is for parents to get a magazine subscription based on a child's interest.

Magazines for Children

- *American Girl* (News stories, crafts and party ideas, ages 8-12.)
- *Appleseed* (Adventure and exploration for readers ages 6-9.)
- *Ask* (History, science and various topics about the world for readers ages 6-9.)
- *Calliope* (World history magazine for readers ages 9-14.)
- *Click* (Science and exploration for readers ages 3-7.)
- *Cricket* (Stories, poetry, cartoons, crossword puzzles, crafts and recipes for readers ages 9-14.)
- *Discovery Girl* (Middle school challenges, inspiring stories about exceptional teens, sports, contests, quizzes and fashion for readers ages 9-12.)
- *Dogs for Kids* (Information, games, puzzles and activities related to dogs for readers ages 8-12.)
- *Faces* (World cultures magazine for readers ages 9-14.)
- *Kids Discover* (science, social studies, English language arts.) **kidsdiscover.com**
- *National Geographic Kids* (Animals, entertainment, science, technology and current events for readers ages 6-12.) **kids.nationalgeographic.com**
- *Nickelodeon* (Fascinating facts, celebrity interviews, comics, pullouts, puzzles, activities and the inside scoop on Nick for readers ages 6-12.)
- *Spider Magazine* (Stories, poems and activities for readers ages 6-9.)
- *Sports Illustrated for Kids* (Stories, interviews, games, comics and puzzles about sports for readers ages 8-12.) **sikids.com**
- *Time for Kids* (K-6 current events.) **timeforkids.com**

We're here to help

Jerry L. Johns Literacy Clinic: 3100 Sycamore Road, Suite 2003, DeKalb, IL 60115
815-753-1416 — literacyclinic@niu.edu