

# Everyday Reading Comprehension Activities for Parents and Kids

By: Diane Fitzpatrick

Reading comprehension helps children in all school subjects, gives them an advantage in standardized tests and can turn them into lifelong lovers of literature.

Parents and kids can do some fun reading comprehension activities at home to help improve their language and reading skills. Here are some everyday reading comprehension activities for parents and kids:

- **Read, read, read!** Read to your children every day. Make it part of your bedtime routine, an after-dinner activity, or a fun way to spend time together on the couch.
- **Set a good example by letting your children see you read.** Show them that reading is a good choice for leisure activity and sure beats watching TV. Talk about the book you're reading. Listening to you summarize your book teaches your children how to take what they've read, absorb it and condense it.
- **Use pre-reading comprehension techniques.** Before reading a book, have your child look at the cover and the inside pictures and predict what the story is about.
- **Read books together and discuss.** Read to your children every evening. At the end of each chapter, discuss what happened. Parents can still share books with older children by reading the same book separately. Ask your child every day, "Where are you in the book? Did you get to Chapter 5 yet? What do you think about what happened to Harry?" Allowing children to retell a story that they read lets them practice comprehension skills.
- **Play board games with your children.** Board games require putting into action everything that is read, and can help increase reading comprehension. Help your children read the instructions to a new board game or review the rules of an old favorite. Ask if they'd like to change the rules or game play slightly and implement their suggestions.
- **Cook or bake with a recipe.** Find a lengthy recipe for something that your children love to eat and make it together. Turn over recipe reading duties to your children and watch them take what they've read and turn it into something delicious.
- **Play Hangman.** The simple word game is a good way to build your child's vocabulary. It only requires a pencil and paper and can easily be played while waiting in waiting rooms or the car.
- **Use the book club discussion questions in the back of books.** Many chapter books include discussion questions for book clubs, which provide good discussion points for at-home book talks.
- **Play with inflection.** Try this with your young child: Read a line from a book and have your child repeat it back to you with dramatic expression, inflection and phrasing.

## Ways Parents Can Help Children With Reading Skills at Home

Many parents lament that reading has become a lost art in modern times. Thanks to modern technology, children have plenty of alternatives to reading, including television, video games and the Internet. Making sure that your children read well, however, can help them perform better in school and increase their confidence in their ability to communicate well. Parents can help children remain interested and excel in their reading abilities.

### Have Your Children Read to You

Have your children select their favorite book and sit down to read with you at a specific time each evening. Make reading an important part of each day, whether after dinner or around the time your children go to sleep. Letting your children select the book they want to read is a good idea as it ensures that they enjoy the experience of reading (even if they always select the same book). If they are unable to pronounce a particular word, be patient as you help them sound it out.

### Stock Your House With Reading Materials

Keep a wide variety of reading material available in your house. FamilyEducation.com reports that children who have a diverse assortment of books and magazines to choose from actually score higher on standardized tests. FamilyEducation.com recommends putting books and magazines in your bathrooms, bedrooms, cars, family rooms and next to your television.

### Make Reading Part of Daily Life

FamilyEducation.com suggests having your children read signs on the road, menus, weather reports, game directions, movie listings and other daily living items. This will help motivate your children to try to understand the importance and applicability of being able to read well. It can also encourage them to naturally expand their vocabulary through encountering certain words regularly in daily life.

### Be Aware of Reading Problems

Stay updated on your children's progress with their reading skills by keeping track of their report cards and standardized test results. Observe how well your children can sound out words, understand what they have read and use reading context to understand the meaning of new words. If it seems like your children have difficulty reading, get them help as soon as possible through tutoring or taking them to reading learning centers.

### Use Reading Aids

Purchase computer programs, games, textbooks and books-on-tape to help your children improve their reading skills. Try to use games as much as you can, as these can make children look forward to and enjoy the process of improving their reading ability. Make sure you are enthusiastic toward your children's efforts in reading.

Read more: <http://www.livestrong.com/article/79132-parents-can-children-reading-skills/#ixzz1FlgnXcgB>

## 8 WAYS PARENTS CAN PROMOTE READING AT HOME

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As a parent, you are your child's first - and most important - teacher. Here are eight ways you can help your child become a better reader.

**1. Read yourself.** Your actions really do speak louder than your words. When your kids see you reading the newspaper or curling up with a book, they will want to follow your example.

**2. Make sure your children read every day.** Reading - like shooting baskets and playing the piano - is a skill. Like other skills, it gets better with practice. Researchers have found that children who spend at least 30 minutes a day reading for fun - whether they read books, newspapers, or magazines - develop the skills to be better readers at school.

**3. Get the library habit.** Make sure everyone in your family has a library card. Schedule regular trips to the library. While you are there, check out a book yourself!

**4. Read aloud to the children.** In *\*The Read Aloud Handbook\**, Jim Trelease reports on research showing that this is the most important thing parents can do to help their children become better readers. Here are some tips from the book:

- Start reading to your children when they are young. It is never too early to begin reading to your children, according to Trelease.
- Don't stop reading to your children as they grow older. You will both enjoy the chance to do something together.
- Set aside some time each day for reading aloud. Even 10 minutes a day can have a big impact. Bedtime is a natural reading aloud time. Other busy families read aloud at breakfast or just after dinner.
- Read books you enjoy. Your kids will know if you are faking it.

**5. Here is a way to use your newspaper to encourage reading:** a scavenger hunt. Give your child a list of things to find in today's newspaper. Here are some ideas:

- A map of the United States.
- A picture of your child's favorite athlete.
- The temperature in the city where a family member lives.
- Three words that begin with "w".
- A movie that is playing at a nearby theater.

**6. Give books as gifts.** Then find a special place for your children to keep their own library.

**7. Make reading a privilege.** Say, "You can stay up 15 minutes later tonight if you read in bed." Or you might say, "Because you helped with the dishes, I have time to read you an extra story."

**8. If you are not a good reader, you can still encourage your children.** As your children learn to read, ask them to read to you. Talk about the books your children have read. Ask a friend or relative to read aloud to your children.

# Top 10 Ways to Help Your Kids Get A's

by Peggy Gisler, Ed.S. and Marge Eberts, Ed.S.



## Parental Involvement Is the Answer

Study after study has shown that parental involvement is the number-one determinant of how well all children -- regardless of their background -- do in school. Here are ten ways you can help your kids succeed in the classroom -- and beyond.

### 1. Create an environment in your home that encourages learning.

This will be a major influence on how well your children do in school. Provide them with many different opportunities to become excited about learning. Make sure that appropriate materials from puzzles to paints to computers are available to stimulate their curiosity.

### 2. Provide your children with a well-balanced life.

A stable home, filled with love, serves as a solid foundation for getting straight A's. Establish routines so your children get enough sleep, eat regular nourishing meals, and receive sufficient exercise. Limit excessive TV-viewing and the playing of video and computer games.

### 3. Read to your children every day.

Most of the learning your children do in school involves reading. Read to your kids to teach them about reading, expand and enrich their vocabularies, and broaden their experiences. Reading aloud exposes them to materials that would be difficult for them to read on their own.

### 4. Encourage them to read extensively.

As your children progress through school, as much as 75 percent of what they learn will come from the printed page. The more children read, the better their reading skills become. Make sure there is a wide variety of interesting reading materials in your home to encourage the reading habit.

### 5. Show your children how to be organized.

Children who are organized find it much easier to succeed in school. One of the best ways to teach organizational skills is through example. Show your children how to use such organizational tools as assignment pads, calendars, notebooks, binders, and backpacks.

### 6. Teach them effective study skills.

Good study skills are absolutely essential to get A's. Make sure your children know how to read their textbooks, prepare for tests, memorize facts, and use their time efficiently. Encourage them to have a regular time for studying, and provide a study place that is free of distractions.

### 7. Urge your children to listen and participate in class.

Listening in class is the easy way for children to learn. Advise your older children to take notes, which will help them concentrate on what is being said. Encourage your children to participate in class -- it will greatly increase their interest in what they're learning.

### 8. Help your children learn how to tackle homework.

Doing homework reinforces what your children learn in school. Show them how to do it so that homework quickly becomes their responsibility. Help them learn what assignments to do first and how to plan their time. Encourage them not to rush through their homework but to consider every assignment a learning experience.

### 9. Talk to your children about school.

Your children spend hours in school every day. A lot can happen during that time. Show that you are genuinely interested in their day by asking questions about what they did and talking with them about the papers they bring home. When problems occur, work with your kids to find solutions.

### 10. Develop a good relationship with your children's teachers.

Good communication between home and school helps children do well in school and makes it easier to address problems. Be sure to attend parent-teacher conferences, visit your kids' classrooms, and volunteer to help their teachers. And don't forget to express your appreciation to teachers for all that they do for your children.

Read more on FamilyEducation: <http://school.familyeducation.com/parents-and-school/37624.html#ixzz1FIhTncTa>

