

Reading role models can motivate kids



Lots of factors have an impact on children's love of reading, but one of them may be closer than you realize. It's an older sibling! Kids who see an older brother or sister reading for pleasure are more likely to seek out books themselves.

It's not just that book-loving older kids model good reading habits. They're also great resources when it comes to sharing books, suggesting new stories to explore and talking about literature.

To expose your child to reading role models:

- **Make reading a family affair.** Set aside a weekly reading time. Snuggle up on the couch, and read together. Include older siblings, cousins or friends.
- **Visit the library together.** After your younger child chooses books, browse the "big kid"



section while an older sibling finds a new book. No older sibling? Explore the preteen section with your child anyway. Point out the bigger kids browsing the shelves and reading in the aisles.

- **Involve the babysitter.** The next time you go out, ask the babysitter to bring along a book. Seeing how enjoyable reading is to the sitter may inspire your child's interest in it, too!

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Turn reading into an enjoyable family habit



Does your family have certain routines that are “just the way you do things”? Do you have breakfast together every day? Eat pizza together every Friday night? Do you take walks as a family on the weekends? Why not make

reading one of those habits, too?

Here are a few fun ways to add reading to your family’s schedule:

- **Visit the library weekly.** Pick a day to be your library day and stick to it. Explore different sections to add variety and interest.
- **Make reading a treat.** Let everyone stay up later to read on weekend nights.
- **Read on the go.** Keep books in a tote or in your car so your child can regularly read while heading to and from activities. Listen to age-appropriate audiobooks while traveling together.



- **Schedule weekly reading dinners.** Have family members take turns selecting a book and reading aloud. Or, discuss a book that everyone has read. You can also enlist your child’s help in planning theme dinners based on books you have read together. Adding reading to your family’s routines is likely to lead to more reading and increased enthusiasm for books and learning!

Elementary School
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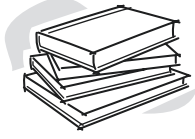
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Encourage your child to read by making it fun



Some children seem to have their noses constantly in a book. But others haven't yet discovered the joy of reading. Here are some ways to motivate your child and foster

a love of reading:

- **Create a special reading nook.** This can be in your child's bedroom, on a pillow in the living room or anywhere that's cozy with good lighting.
- **Consider your child's interests.** From scary stories to adventures, there are books that appeal to every child's taste. Ask the librarian or your child's teacher for recommendations of titles.
- **Track the books your child reads.** Create a sticker chart and add a sticker for each book your child completes. Or, have your child make a paper chain—one link for each book read.



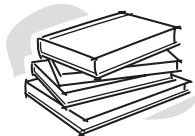
- **Go on a library scavenger hunt.** Make a list of questions and tasks for your child to complete in the library. *How many books can you find about Peru? Ask the librarian to show you how to reserve a book on the computer. Find a recipe you'd like to try.*
- **Give your child reading coupons.** Some might be for an extra 20 minutes of reading with you. Others might be good for a trip to the library.

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Easy activities expand your child's vocabulary



A strong vocabulary helps build a solid foundation for reading. Boosting your child's word smarts can be fun for the whole family. Here are some activities to try:

- **Play a variety of games.** Try Scrabble, Boggle, Outburst, Balderdash or any game that requires players to come up with words.
- **Do crossword puzzles** and word searches together.
- **Select a word of the day** and have your child look up its definition. Encourage family members to use the word throughout the day.
- **Help your child create a personal dictionary.** When your child comes across a new word—a spelling word, a vocabulary word or a word in a book—have your child add the word and its definition to the dictionary.



- **Read a poem aloud.** Ask your child to guess what the next rhyming word will be.
- **Go on a word scavenger hunt.** Select a news article and ask your child to look for five interesting words and underline them. Ask, *What do you think the words mean, based on how they are used in the article?*
- **Give family members a word,** such as *big*. Ask each person to name a synonym (*colossal*) and an antonym (*minuscule*).

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Boost your child's reading confidence



Sometimes children read quickly without understanding or guess at words. They get frustrated when they can't sound out a word. If this sounds familiar, your child may have reading anxiety—which makes

reading for school more difficult.

To reduce your child's stress about reading:

- **Read aloud together every day.** Make it a pleasant, cozy activity so your child will develop a love of books.
- **Encourage—but don't force**—your child to read to you. If your child wants to, great! If not, say "OK, next time."
- **Set an example** by keeping reading material around and reading for pleasure yourself.
- **Act out scenes from stories** to build your child's confidence with words.



- **Choose books to read together** that aren't too challenging. If it's too hard, your child may give up and stop trying. You can read more difficult books aloud.
- **Make audio recordings of challenging materials** so your child can listen and read along.
- **Be patient and encouraging.** Without pressure, your child can learn to love reading. If problems persist, talk privately with the teacher and ask how you can help at home.

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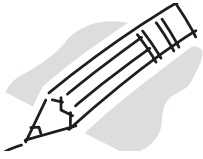
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Writing activities enhance reading comprehension



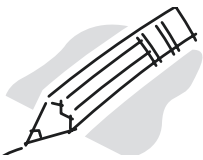
Encourage your child to use reading as inspiration for writing. When students write about something they've read, their creative juices start flowing while they strengthen reading comprehension and analysis skills. Suggest that your child:

- **Write a sequel.** What happens after the last page in a favorite book? Encourage your child to write one more chapter. Your child might wrap up the story or perhaps send the characters on another adventure. Or, your child could write a *prequel*—a chapter that comes before the book starts.
- **Write a letter to the author.** Have your child write a review in the form of a letter. What did your child like or dislike about the story? What would your child have changed? Are there things that your child would still like to know?



- **Keep a character diary.** Have your child imagine being a character in the story who is keeping a diary. Your child can write diary entries about several of the main events that happen throughout the course of the book. How would that character react to each event? (Your child can also try writing from the point of view of a minor character to encourage even further character analysis.)

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