

# Raising a Reader



When parents and caregivers read with their child during the elementary school years, they provide a valuable gift — the lifelong advantage of literacy.

Here are some reasons why it's important to read together **at least 20 minutes every day**:

- Young students need lots of practice and encouragement as they learn to read.
- Reading aloud improves your child's speaking, reading, listening, thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Experience with various kinds of books, like poetry or non-fiction, broadens your child's knowledge and curiosity
- Vocabulary grows as your child hears new words and ideas in new stories.
- Reading together daily creates a special bond that strengthens relationships; your child discovers that reading is enjoyable.



*Your child learns to read and then reads to learn*

## Reading with your School-Age Child

Five key skills that predict future success are phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension.

**Phonological Awareness** is the awareness of individual sounds within words. Playing games with your child can help them become aware that words are made up of sounds. For example, change the sound /t/ in "cat" to the sound /p/ for the new word "cap."

**Phonics** guides your child to focus on letter(s) sound connections rather than guessing at the word. Help your child use their knowledge of letter(s) sound connections to make a word. Play word games while reading. For example, when you see the word "cat," ask your child to think of a word that rhymes (hat-sat), or change a letter to make a new word (car-cap).

**Vocabulary** is all the words your child uses or understands. Students who have the biggest vocabularies are the best readers. Pause to explain a new word or concept while reading together. Make a list of new words at home and watch it grow longer.

**Fluency** is the ability to read with speed and accuracy. Listening to your child read aloud helps him increase fluency. When you read, he hears how smooth reading sounds. Pause to clearly say new, different or difficult words, and ask your child to repeat them. Fluency and vocabulary are important for comprehension.

**Comprehension** involves understanding, remembering and talking about the text. When reading with your child, occasionally ask questions or talk about a character. Let your child guess or predict what might happen next or explain the plot. Can they retell the story: what happened in the beginning, middle and end?

The Children's Reading Foundation <https://www.readingfoundation.org/>



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