



## When Your Child Reads to You

### Why should I have my child read to me?

- Parents who listen to their children as they read out loud help them become better readers.
- Children love to have someone listen to their reading and appreciate and praise their developing skills.
- Oral reading will help your child develop reading fluency.
- Fluent oral readers become fluent silent readers.
- The shared enjoyment of reading together will continue to strengthen your child's interest in and enjoyment of reading.

***“It’s such a wonderful feeling to watch a child discover that reading is a marvelous adventure rather than a chore.”***

**– Zilpha Keatley Snyder**

### How can I support my child when they read out loud?

- Listen attentively when your child reads.
- Make sure that your child is reading something at their reading level. Too many errors means the book is too difficult.
- At first, use materials familiar to your child and then gradually encourage something more challenging.
- Provide help whenever your child asks for it.
- Take turns reading paragraphs. As your child becomes more at ease with reading aloud, take turns reading a full page. This helps keep the pace going and the story alive for children who are just beginning to read independently.
- Remember that it’s important this reading experience be a positive and enjoyable one for both you and your child.

### How can I tell if a book is too difficult?

Use the **Three-Finger (or Five-Finger) Rule** to see if the book is too difficult. Have your child open the book somewhere in the middle and read the page out loud, holding up a finger for each word they don’t know or has difficulty reading. Three or more fingers indicates that the book might be too challenging for independent reading.

## What to do when...

### YOUR CHILD WAITS TO BE TOLD UNKNOWN WORDS.

- Wait a moment and see if your child will attempt the word.
- If the word seems out of reach for them and this is interrupting the flow, give them the word.
- If you think your child can discover the word, ask them to go back a few words and see if they can get a clue about the word. Encourage your child to make a good guess that makes sense based on the meaning of the passage. If you find that you have to repeat this process again and again, the reading material may be too difficult at this time.

### YOUR CHILD READS ON BY INSERTING A WORD THAT HAS NO MEANING IN THE SENTENCE CONTEXT.

- Sometimes children can do this and still get the meaning, but the helper's job is to get the child to focus on the meaning of what they're saying. Try asking, "Did that sound right to you?" to focus your child's attention.
- Use the **read around technique** as a practice in making meaningful substitutions. "Skip that word, read on and see what makes sense." If this happens repeatedly, the material is too difficult.

### YOUR CHILD KEEPS READING BY INSERTING MEANINGFUL SUBSTITUTIONS, LIKE MOM FOR MOTHER.

- That's perfectly alright - no need to correct them.

### YOUR CHILD KEEPS REPEATING (SELF-CORRECTING) IN ORDER TO MAKE MEANING.

- Repetitions are frequently healthy signs! If they become constant, your child is likely reading materials that are too demanding. Let your child know that these repetitions are part of an effective strategy.
- Some children repeat when reading orally because of their desire to be perfect. They may repeat less when reading silently.

## What else can I do?

- Support the read-at-home program already in place in your child's classroom.
- Talk to your child's teacher to get specific strategies for reading with your child as well as book suggestions.
- Be aware of the developmental nature of reading. Don't compare your child's reading with that of other children. Look for and note your child's progress and skill development.
- Sincere and specific praise is a wonderful gift to children. There is an amazing difference between "Good!" and "Wow, you read the whole book to me!" or "I think your reading is getting smoother, don't you?" Praise helps build your child's self-confidence, which leads to more success.
- Ask your child what they're learning about in subject areas like science or math. If they struggle with reading textbooks, ask their teacher if you can have copies of them to take home to read together.
- Even 10 minutes a night of freely chosen reading at home makes a big improvement in a child's performance at school.
- Realize that there are many roads to reading. Good readers routinely use many ways to decipher print and gain meaning from what they read. Instead of always asking, "Can you sound the word out?" suggest other strategies, like, "Does the picture help?" or "Read the sentence again up to that word. What might make sense?" or "Skip the word and keep on reading. Then go back."
- Strive to make reading a rewarding experience for both of you! Should you find that a negative attitude is working its way into at-home reading, step back and consider what would help. Could another adult come in with a fresh outlook? Could your child read to younger children of friends or family? Could you encourage your child to choose more interesting and appropriate books through more frequent trips to the library? Try different things to see what works best.

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