

How to Help Your Kids Increase Their Literacy



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GIRL SCOUT GOLD AWARD PROJECT

Why is literacy important?

- Literacy is defined as the ability to read and write. Reading and writing don't come naturally like speaking, they must be learned.
- Results from the M-STEP (Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress) showed that nearly 34% of Michigan third-grade students are not proficient in English Language Arts.
- Many problems can come from struggling with literacy, including low self-esteem and unemployment.
- The first five years of school are thought to be very important in laying the foundation of literacy (Better Health Channel, Children and Literacy).
- Access to books has been shown to increase literacy rates in children with positive outcomes, including higher graduation rates.
- Having more books at home can help a child with future academic growth and job attainment by increasing literacy (Scholastic).

"Today a reader, tomorrow a leader."

--Margaret Fuller

Resources to increase access to books and literacy

Free Scholastic summer reading program

www.scholastic.com/summer

- During summer, Scholastic offers access to eBooks, the chance to earn virtual rewards, and more for free.

Southfield Public Library

www.southfieldlibrary.org

- Get a free library card to get access to online resources by visiting the library.
- Summer reading program
- More resources under Kids' Programs on website

Little Free Library: www.littlefreelibrary.org

- Find a place to trade books with others in your community.

Free eBooks: www.funbrain.com

- Organized by grade. Has games and videos.

eBay, Craigslist, Facebook Marketplace

- Can find free or inexpensive books

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

<https://imaginationlibrary.com>

- Mails a high quality, age-appropriate book every month to kid from birth to age five at no cost. Check to see if available in your area.

Tips By Grade

Kindergarten

When reading aloud to your child, be expressive and exciting to grow their interest in reading.

Take turns reading parts of the book or have your child read words they know.

Reread favorite books to grow your child's vocabulary. A growing vocabulary is an important part of success in reading.

Play a rhyming game, such as coming up with words that rhyme to ones in the book.

Look for and point out familiar words on signs and have your child read them.

Before reading a book, look through the pictures and talk about them. Ask child to retell story in own words after finished reading.

First and Second Grade

Encourage reading in different, such as recipes, magazines, game instructions, cards, and more.

Help your child to create their own story book or letter on paper or a computer.

Suggest that your child and their friends read the same book to share the fun of reading.

To help your child connect sounds with letters, try saying three words that begin with the same sound then name the letters and their sound. For example, say "chicken, cheese, cherry" for the letters *ch* and the sound /ch/.

After and during reading, ask questions: **Where** and **when** does the story take place? **Who** is the main character? **Why** did that happen? **What** do you think happens next?

Tips for Supporting Reading

Reading aloud to children has been referred to as the most important activity for building the knowledge required for success in reading.

Encourage your child to pick out their own books. If they don't know what they want to read, try checking out a variety of genres so they can discover their interests.

Keep a book on hand at all times- like in the car or on your phone through a reading app.

Create a comfortable space in your home dedicated to reading. Include sticky notes, coloring supplies, and anything else that your child can use to engage with their reading.

Encourage daily reading by setting aside time each day. This is especially important for school breaks when students aren't reading in the classroom. Start with 20 minutes to reduce frustration and maximize focus.

Be a role model for your child. If they see you reading, they will want to do the same.

As your child grows out of being read aloud to, get creative and read them passages from your book, magazine articles, or interesting online posts. Ask them to do the same to you.



Tips By Grade

Third through Fifth Grade

Play the antonym game (ask your child to come up with the opposite of a word you say).

Look up unfamiliar words that you come across while reading together. Show your child how to use a dictionary or thesaurus so they can look up words on their own.

Ask your child what opinions they have on the book they're reading. Ask them for a summary of the book or read it yourself so you can discuss it together.

Continue to read aloud together.

Sixth Grade and up

Read the same book and discuss your opinions, like a book club.

Read books with movie or series adaptations to watch after they finish reading. Discuss the similarities and differences between the two.

To help your child with understanding the material in their textbooks, suggest that they come up with and answer questions while they read to reinforce what they are learning about.

Sources

Armbruster, B.B., Lehr, F. & Osborn (2006). *A Child becomes a reader: Proven ideas from research for parents: Kindergarten through grade 3*. Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy. Download: www.nifl.gov

Scholastic Education Solutions: My Books Summer Program Guide, 2023