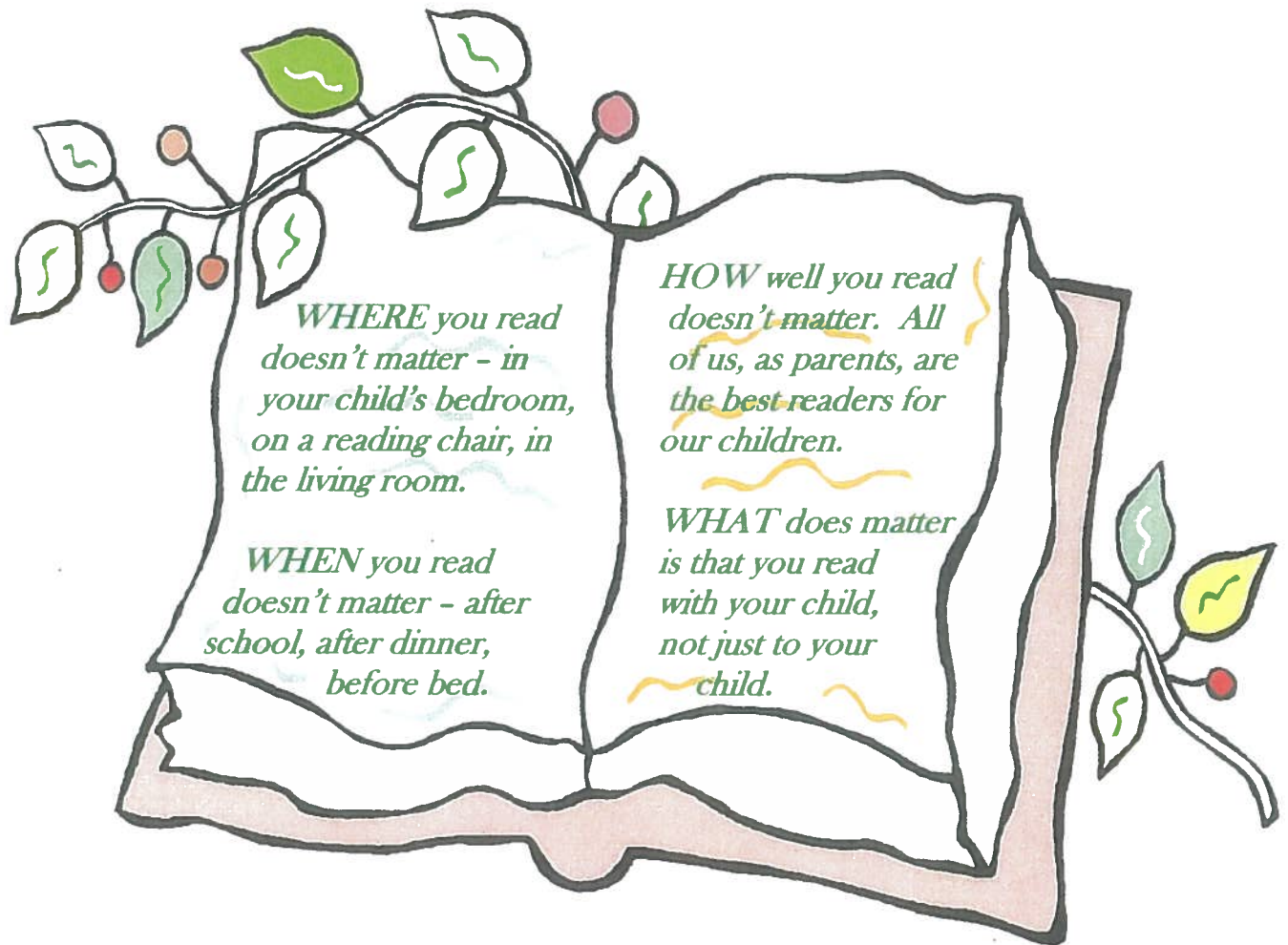
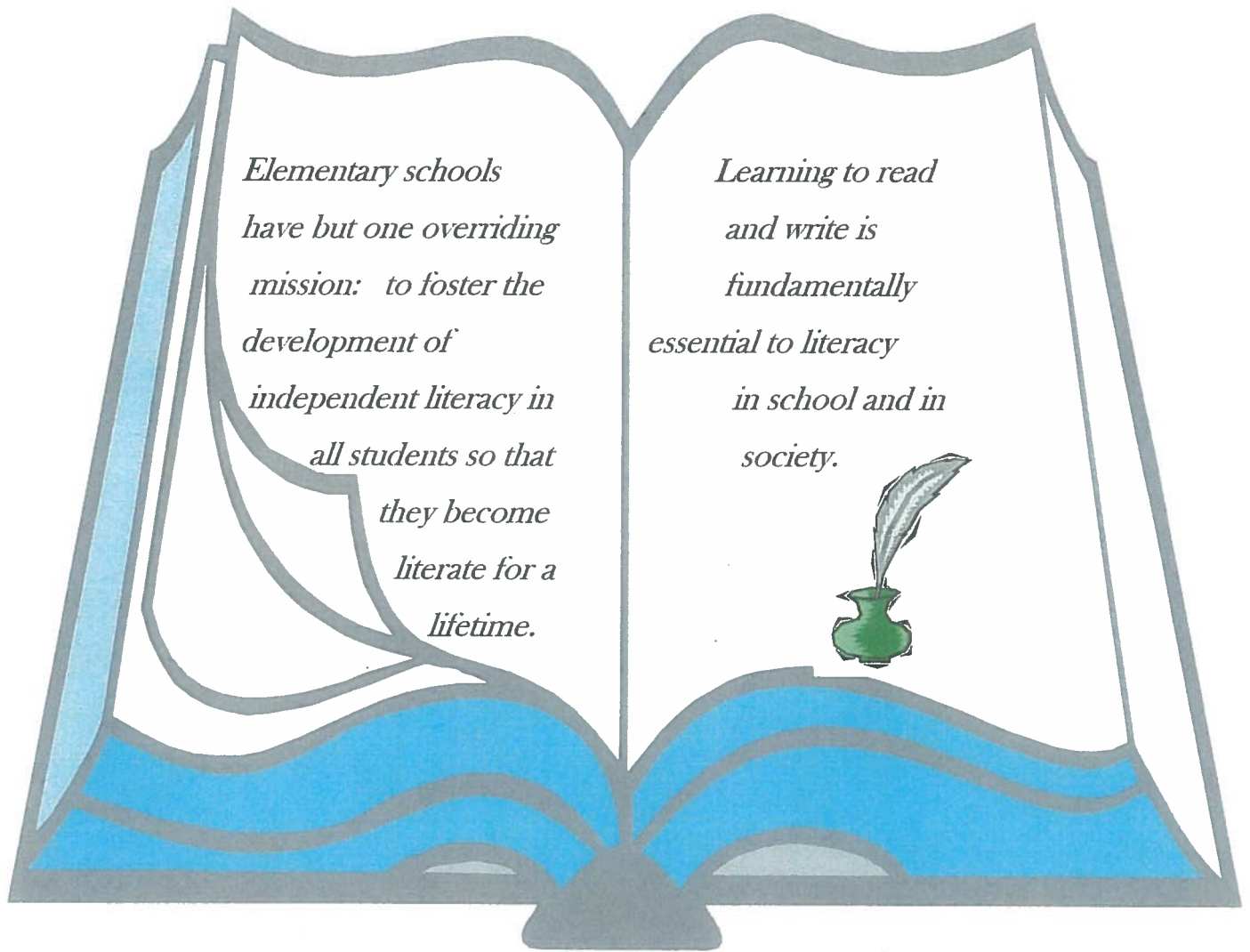


# Parent Literacy Handbook



*How to make your child a reader for life..*

*Paul Kropp*



*Elementary schools  
have but one overriding  
mission: to foster the  
development of  
independent literacy in  
all students so that  
they become  
literate for a  
lifetime.*

*Learning to read  
and write is  
fundamentally  
essential to literacy  
in school and in  
society.*



*(Allington and Cunningham, Schools that Work:  
Where All Children Read and Write, viii)*



*To all  
who adore children  
and want to instill  
a love of literature.*

This handbook was initiated by the AISI Coordinators and the Aspen View AISI Team as part of the Alberta School Initiative for School Improvement, with contributions from parents and staff. Special thanks to Cassie Lewis for the compilation of this handbook.

Our goal is to foster life long learning and the development of a better understanding of reading and writing.

*It has a lot of great ideas for making literacy fun at home. ✍️*

*Very well organized, easy to use and understand. ✍️*

*Tips are great, routines and "fun" in car activities are so helpful. ✍️*

*This handbook is a good guideline. I never realized how many opportunities I missed. ✍️*

*Great reminder of all the confidence building and positive ways of letting children know when they've done well. ✍️*

## Inspirational Quotes

*The information and tips are excellent and easy to implement. ✍️*

*The idea of bringing language in all forms is essential for learning yet is sometimes forgotten. ✍️*

*My hopes are that my children will be more literate than myself and my husband are. ✍️*

*This handbook is great, lots of valuable info in short, to the point format. ✍️*

*Ideas are clear and good goal setting etc. . . . and they come from a variety of sources. ✍️*

*I love the suggestions given in the handbook! Great ideas 😊 . ✍️*

*I found it to be an awesome tool, with lots of great ideas for me to try at home. ✍️*


*This book offers great ideas for literacy learning at home. ✍️*

*I did not know how much reading to your child really means. ✍️*

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*Routine helps  
children feel secure.*

## **Routines Worth Rehearsing**



*Routine develops trust.*



*Routine develops confidence.*

## SUGGESTED STEPS

### FOR AN

### ORGANIZED

### DAY !!

**Good Morning ! ...**(About the same time every day, with plenty of time)

- rise and shine
- eat a healthy breakfast
- brush teeth
- wash face
- comb hair
- get dressed
- make bed
- discuss daily activities
- pack lunch
- check backpack
- goodbye, kiss and hug

#### After school.....

- check and clean out backpack
- post papers on the fridge -- kids vs. adults
- repack with necessary items (gloves, signed agenda, extra socks)
- mark calendar with important dates, quizzes, etc.
- ask about the day (What was the best part of your day? Did anything else happen?)

#### After supper.....

- complete homework
- read
- make lunch
- talk about next day activities
- set backpack out near door for the next day
- pick out clothes

#### Bedtime (about same time daily)

- have a snack
- have a bath
- brush teeth
- read
- give thanks/blessing
- snuggle
- night light on
- lights out \* 10 to 12 hours/night

## TIPS

- Make listening to your child part of your daily routine.
- Listen and share about today's activities & tomorrow's.
- Share the planning and the work.
- Use a family planning calendar.

- Visual checklist -sample

	Agenda
	Lunch
	Homework
	Keys
	Outdoor Gear



**LISTEN, PLAN, SHARE**

# BE COOL!

# PREPARE FOR SCHOOL!

# Learning Routines

**You are invited to do your schoolwork:**

## Where?


- ↪ kitchen table
- ↪ your desk
- ↪ your special place



## When?

- ↪ after school
- ↪ after snack
- ↪ after supper

## What?

- ↪ pencils, crayons, markers, erasers, white out
- ↪ paper (lined/unlined), scribbler, index cards, notebooks 
- ↪ books, dictionary, thesaurus, bookmarks
- ↪ calculator, tape, scissors, glue, pencil sharpener, ruler
- ↪ pictures, stickers \* a shoebox or a designated drawer is the perfect place to keep your supplies

## How?

Children learn in different ways:

- ↪ quiet
- ↪ background music, etc.
- ↪ work alone or with help
- ↪ be positive
- ↪ take breaks

## Why?

Research shows that students who do homework regularly:

- ↪ have increased skills
- ↪ do better in school
- ↪ are more responsible

**Pick the ones that work for you to establish your daily routine.**





# Teachable Moments

**Never underestimate the power of a teachable moment:**

- ↪ driving in your car
  - reading billboards, signs, maps, license plates, singing songs, rhymes, spelling, reading books, books on tape, games such as: "I Spy", word games
- ↪ shopping
  - lists, comparing, reading labels
- ↪ cooking
  - recipes, measuring, following directions
- ↪ eating in a restaurant
  - menus, signs, ordering for themselves
- ↪ going for a walk
  - environmental print, singing songs, rhymes, word games

- ↪ at home
  - passing messages, using phone books, reading labels on packages, lunch kit messages, board games, crossword puzzles, oral language games, organizational calendar or planner, lists (chores, wish lists, shopping, birthday lists, phone numbers), letters, invitations, thank-you notes, and cards
- ↪ when distractions occur use them to your advantage



# Make Reading a Routine!

Let your child see you enjoying books, newspapers, etc. Make literacy a part of your family's busy day.

**Enjoy reading, writing, and talking together, using:**

- ↪ books – fiction and nonfiction
- ↪ newspapers
- ↪ comics
- ↪ magazines
- ↪ maps
- ↪ manuals
- ↪ directions
- ↪ labels
- ↪ computers
- ↪ games/puzzles
- ↪ letters/mail
- ↪ music
- ↪ a library card
- ↪ brochures
- ↪ poems



Books, magazine subscriptions, games ... make great gift ideas!

**Parents are Models for Their Children!** (Make reading part of your routine, too!)

*Although it seems that most teaching is done away from home, the most important lessons are learned in the family atmosphere. Learning at home is more interesting with fun and games.*

*Sally Krause*

**Celebrate  
Your  
Successes**

# Communication

## A More Successful Student:

- ↳ listens carefully and responds appropriately
- ↳ talks easily with friends and adults
- ↳ can retell a story or an event in his/her own words
- ↳ can take and give directions
- ↳ can tell between important and unimportant information
- ↳ has a large vocabulary
- ↳ enjoys borrowing books from a library
- ↳ looks forward to being read to
- ↳ is able to give his/her full attention and show interest
- ↳ has good reasoning and problem solving skills



## How to Encourage Communication:

- ↳ Encourage your child to start conversations.
- ↳ Maintain eye contact.
- ↳ Give your child some control over the conversation.
- ↳ Talk together frequently about real life experiences and discuss the world around them.
- ↳ Recite nursery rhymes and sing together - - add actions.
- ↳ Acknowledge and respond to your child's comments and stories.

Read Together

- *Have fun.*
- *Make it a habit!*
- *Listen attentively!*
- *Be a good role model.*
- *Celebrate your child's successes, display accomplishments!*

Read Together

## How to Get Your Child Talking

- ↳ *What did you read today?*
- ↳ *What are you proud of?*
- ↳ *Tell me a story.*
- ↳ *Draw me a picture from your favorite book.*
- ↳ *Sing your favorite song for me.*
- ↳ *What can you teach me that you learned today?*
- ↳ *What made you feel excited today?*
- ↳ *Can you make a rhyme for "hook"? What makes them rhyme?*

Source:

"The Basics of Success: How to Give Your Child An Edge in School"

by –

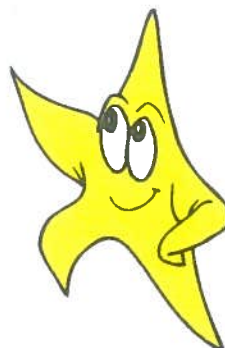
Sheelagh Schulze and Ethna Henning  
ISBN 0-9698692-0-7)

## What Research Says . . . .

***Children who come to school with previous experience with books have a wealth of knowledge in reading and writing.***

- ↳ Children already understand that book language is different from everyday language.
- ↳ Children understand how stories are structured – title, author, characters, setting, beginning, middle and end.
- ↳ Children use their knowledge to help tell, read and write their own stories.
- ↳ As they begin to explore books children need to learn how to use what they already know to help them with their reading.

***Making the connection between oral and written language is essential !!***



## Ideas to Foster the Development of Communication and Listening Skills in Children

### Home

- ↪ Buy a set of magnetic letters and allow your child to form words.
- ↪ Put a chalkboard in a convenient place for your child.
- ↪ Perform puppet shows at home.
- ↪ Write and draw stories to display or give away as gifts.
- ↪ Sing along with your child.
- ↪ Use recipes to connect between the practical and the fun side of reading.
- ↪ Read stories, poems, newspapers, etc. to your child.
- ↪ Let your child read to you.
- ↪ Make a chart together of daily chores they can help with.
- ↪ Take 5 to 10 minutes nightly to write down the memorable events of the day.
- ↪ Start a story with your child and add to it the next night, and so on.
- ↪ Invent a pleasant dream before bedtime or create a nightly blessing.

### On the Road

- ↪ Create a museum with things your child likes to collect. Upon arrival at home, set up a display and attach a card with its description, where it was found and its uses.
- ↪ Keep a small book or two in the glove compartment.
- ↪ Spell the names of things you see and let your child guess what you are spelling.
- ↪ Choose an alphabet letter, take turns naming things that begin with that letter.
- ↪ *Grandmother's Trunk* – Begin with an item that starts with "A" and take turns adding to the list. Continue through the alphabet recalling items previously named.





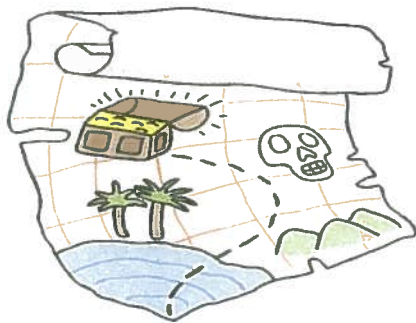
## Out and About

↪ When you go out to eat, let your child help pick out the restaurant. Look through the yellow pages or newspaper advertisements to help make the choice.

↪ At a restaurant, make sure that your child gets a menu. Encourage them to order for themselves, pointing out the things they might be interested in.



↪ When running errands take your child with you. Explain the names of the places you are going to and the directions for getting there. Have them try to draw a map.



## When You Are Away

↪ Record their favorite story or leave your own message. Tell them where you're going, what you're going to do and when you will return.

↪ Bring home interesting items from your travels to share such as: brochures, placemats, menus and other information trinkets.

↪ When you return home from a trip, spend some special time with your child by walking, talking and sharing together. Make this a homecoming routine.

# Reading



What difference can reading aloud for a child for 30 minutes per day make?

- ↳ If reading begins in infancy, by the time the child is 5 years old, he or she has been fed roughly 900 hours of brain food.
- ↳ Reduce that experience to just 30 minutes a week and the child's hungry mind loses 770 hours of nursery rhymes, fairy tales and stories.
- ↳ A kindergarten student who has not been read to could enter school with less than 60 hours of literacy nutrition.

No teacher, no matter how talented, can make up for those lost hours of mental nourishment.

[www.ed.gov/inits/americanreads/families\\_feedme.html](http://www.ed.gov/inits/americanreads/families_feedme.html)

## What Should Your Child Be Able To Do?

### ✎ Kindergarteners can .....

- ✎ enjoy being read to and retell simple stories
- ✎ use language to explain and explore
- ✎ recognize letters and letter sounds
- ✎ rhyme and recognize beginning sounds
- ✎ understand reading happens left-to-right and top-to-bottom
- ✎ match spoken words with written ones
- ✎ begin to write letters of the alphabet and some common words

### ✎ What parents and family members can do ....

- ✎ visit libraries and book stores
- ✎ stay in regular contact with your child's teachers
- ✎ encourage children to use and enjoy a variety of print (such as recipes, directions, games and sports)
- ✎ talk and listen to one another

### ① First graders can .....

- ① read and retell familiar stories
- ① reread, predict and question when there is a lack of understanding
- ① use reading and writing for various purposes
- ① read aloud with reasonable fluency (smoothness)
- ① connect letters and sounds, identify word parts and use what they know from the story to figure out new words
- ① read many words by sight
- ① use sounding out strategies when spelling a word
- ① write about what they know
- ① attempt to use some punctuation and capitalization

### ① What parents and family members can do ....

- ① daily read and reread a variety of stories
- ① encourage attempts to read and write
- ① participate in activities that involve writing and reading (ex. cooking, making grocery lists)
- ① play games that involve instructions (ex. "Simon Says" "I Spy")
- ① have conversations during mealtimes and throughout the day

### ② Second graders can .....

- ② read with greater fluency
- ② use rereading, predicting and questioning more efficiently when there is a lack of understanding
- ② continue to connect letters and sounds, identify word parts and use what they know from the story to figure out new words with greater ease
- ② identify an increasing number of words by sight
- ② write about many topics to suit different audiences
- ② use common letter patterns and spelling rules to spell words
- ② punctuate simple sentences correctly and proofread their own work
- ② spend time reading daily and use reading to research topics

### ② What parents and family members can do ....

- ② continue to read to them and encourage them to read to you
- ② engage in activities that require reading and writing
- ② become involved in school activities
- ② show interest in their learning
- ② display their written work
- ② visit the library regularly
- ② support specific hobbies or interests with reading materials and references



**③ Third graders can .....**

- ③ read smoothly and enjoy reading
- ③ use many strategies to understand what they have read
- ③ use word identification strategies appropriately and automatically when encountering unknown words
- ③ recognize and talk about different types of stories and their parts
- ③ make connections between different types of stories
- ③ write with emotion in many different forms (stories, poems, reports)
- ③ use rich vocabulary and sentences that are well suited for their writing
- ③ revise and edit their own writing during and after writing
- ③ spell words correctly in final writing drafts



**③ What parents and family members can do .....**

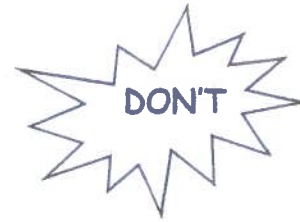
- ③ talk about favorite storybooks
- ③ read to your child and encourage them to read to you
- ③ suggest that your child write to friends and relatives
- ③ bring to a parent-teacher conference evidence of what your child can do in writing and reading
- ③ encourage your child to share with you what they have learned about their writing and reading

Source: "Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children".  
*The Reading Teacher* 52: 193-216.  
Copyright 1998 International Reading Association.

# Confidence Building



- DO** build confidence ... encourage, encourage, encourage !!!!
- DO** give plenty of praise
- DO** be patient
- DO** choose books that interest your child
- DO** keep sessions short and interesting
- DO** read for meaning and understanding
- DO** make sure each session is enjoyable for you both
- DO** choose a time when you can be relaxed and give your undivided attention
- DO** have fun!



- DON'T** get anxious about your child's reading --- everyone reads at their own pace
- DON'T** expect instant results – learning to read is often a very gradual process
- DON'T** set rigid goals
- DON'T** pressure them into reading specific books
- DON'T** try to read when either you or your child is not in the mood
- DON'T** criticize your child's reading
- DON'T** make comparisons with other children's progress
- DON'T** spoil a story by making it a word recognition contest
- DON'T** insist that every word is correct

(Help Your Child Learn To Read, Betty Root, Usborne Publishing)



# Focus on the Positive

**"I like the way you**

- ↳ recognized that long word so quickly. How did you do it?"
- ↳ put the beginning, middle and end sounds together and said that word without sounding out each letter".
- ↳ stopped reading when that sentence didn't make sense".
- ↳ said that part. It sounded just the way that Little Red Riding Hood would talk to the Big Bad Wolf".
- ↳ made a movie of the story in your head so you could retell it so well".
- ↳ retold the story of Tom Thumb to Grandpa. You must have really listened to the details when we read it".



**"I liked the way that you**

- ↳ made that beginning sound to put in the word that fit".
- ↳ take those Franklin books and read them by yourself after we have shared them. You really enjoy that series don't you?"
- ↳ can tell me the meaning of new words by how they are used in the story".
- ↳ brought that book home for us to share. I didn't know that eels always go back to the Saragasso Sea to spawn".

(Reading Is More Than Phonics ....  
Vera Goodman)

# Choosing the Right Book

Children need to look at books as a source of pleasure. Reading the same book over and over is a good thing. Even if your child gets hooked on one book, it can lead to a love of reading forever. Here are some ideas to help you and your child choose the right book



## KIDS

- What are they interested in?
- Picture books – a source of discussion.
- Check for numbers on the bottom corner of the back cover – for example RL2.4 means that in the publisher's opinion, this book would be suitable for a child to read independently at a mid-grade 2 level.

- Use the 5-finger rule:



- Have your child read one page of the book.
- Whenever they come to a word they don't know or they're unsure of, they put up one finger.
- If all 5 fingers are up by the end of the page, the book is too difficult for them to read on their own right now.
- The book may still be a good choice for paired reading or for a real-aloud.

(Smart Learning (p.16) by Dr. Antaya-Moore & C.M.Walker, 1996, Edmonton, AB: Smart Learning)

## PARENTS

- Any time that you spend reading with your child is beneficial.
- Even when your child can read alone, continue to read aloud to them.
- Choose books that are a bit above their reading level, but ones that they can still understand and enjoy.
- Ask for help from teachers, librarians and bookstore staff for advice on books that are appropriate for your child's age and reading level.



## READING ALOUD

*Be a role model. One of the most important things is for children to see their parents enjoying reading. They'll learn that reading is important and valuable.*

# Mem Fox's 10 Read Aloud Commandments

- ◆ Spend at least ten wildly happy minutes every single day reading aloud.
- ◆ Read at least three stories a day; it may be the same story three times. Children need to hear a thousand stories before they learn to read.
- ◆ Read aloud with animation. Listen to your own voice and don't be dull, or flat, or boring. Hang loose and be loud, have fun and laugh a lot.
- ◆ Read with joy and enjoyment; real enjoyment for yourself and great joy for the listeners.
- ◆ Read the stories that the kids love over and over and over again, and always read in the same 'tune' for each book. i.e. with the same intonations on each page, each time.
- ◆ Let children hear lots of language by talking to them constantly; or sing any old song that you can remember; or say nursery rhymes in a bouncy way; or be noisy together doing clapping games.
- ◆ Look for rhyme, rhythm or repetition in books for young children, and make sure the books are short!
- ◆ Play games with the things that you and the child can see on the page, such as finding the letters that start the child's name and yours, remembering that it's never work, it's always a fabulous game.
- ◆ Never ever teach reading, or get tense around books.
- ◆ Read aloud every day because you just love being with your child, not because it's the right thing to do.

# Figuring Out Words

## How to Help When Your Child Reads to You

A beginning reader often gets stuck or makes mistakes on words when trying to read out loud to you.

**If your child is stuck on a word here are some strategies that might help.**

1. Wait 5 seconds.
2. Ask your child to try one or two of the following strategies:

- ☺ Think about what you know about the topic that might help you predict the word.
- ☺ Use picture clues.
- ☺ Look at the beginning of the word and make the first sound.
- ☺ Look for a little word inside the word.
- ☺ Look for a part of the word that you know.
- ☺ Sound the word out.
- ☺ Reread the sentence out loud.
- ☺ Make a movie in your head.
- ☺ Skip the word and read on. Go back, and see what word fits.
- ☺ Ask someone.
- ☺ Ask yourself "Does it look right? and sound right? Does it make sense?"

3. If all that fails, (everything above might take 20 seconds), tell your child the word.

(Grades 1-2 Teacher's Resource Book  
.....Miriam P. Trehearne)



**If your child makes a mistake on the word here are some strategies that might help.**

- ☺ If the mistake makes sense and the reading continues, ignore it.
- ☺ If the mistake doesn't make sense and your child hesitates (this is a good sign, incidentally, it means your child is reading for meaning), wait 5 seconds.
- ☺ Point at the word in question and ask "Does that make sense?" then, "Maybe we should look again at this word."
- ☺ Try rereading the sentence using a blank for the word.
- ☺ If all that fails, tell your child the word.



(How to Make Your Child a Reader for  
Life ..... Paul Kropp)

# Understanding

**Your child's understanding of what he/she reads depends on 3 things ---**

1. the ability to recognize single words
2. the ability to understand the meanings of words
3. the ability to read fluently



(Helping Children Read and Learn  
..... Schwab)

**It is important to ask good questions to improve understanding ---**

1. Good questions encourage different levels of thinking.
2. Avoid questions that require only a "yes" or "no" answer.



Who? What?  
When? Where?  
Why?

**Questions to ask your child when you read ---**

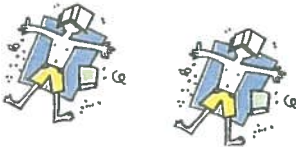
1. Is there anything more you can tell us?  
Remember not to leave anything out.
2. Facts (It's on the page.) The answer is in the story and it's usually easy to find.
  - ↪ How many?
  - ↪ What color?
  - ↪ What did he do next?
  - ↪ Where did the story take place?
  - ↪ When did it happen?
3. Think and Search (Some questions can be answered by searching for the parts and putting them together.)
  - ↪ Tell me who the characters are.
  - ↪ Tell me about the characters.
  - ↪ Give me the main events in order.
  - ↪ What will happen next?



4. **On Your Own** (It's off the page.)  
Some answers are not found in the story, but in your child's head. Your child needs to use his/her own experiences, ideas and opinions to answer the questions.

- ↪ Why did the author write this?
- ↪ What would be a good title?
- ↪ What is your favorite part?
- ↪ What was the most exciting part?
- ↪ Who was your favorite character?
- ↪ How did this story make you feel?
- ↪ Does this story remind you of any others?

## READING SIDE BY SIDE



Reading fluently helps your child to understand what they read. Fluent readers read smoothly without hesitation and they make sense of the text. You can help your child to become a more fluent reader by ---

- ↪ rereading familiar stories and books
- ↪ echo reading (reading aloud together)
- ↪ for more details to improve your child's fluency - Paired Reading Video is available from your school library

## 3 R's

1. **R**ead with your child everyday.
2. **R**each into your wallet to buy books, magazines and other reading material for your child and yourself.
3. **R**ule the media. Put a reasonable limit on television, video, computer time, and video games so there will be time for reading in your child's life.

(How to Make Your Child a Reader For Life .... Paul Kropp)

### Encouraging second language

- ↪ Support your child's effort to read in a second language
- ↪ Use pictures as a guide to ask him simple questions about the text. Eg. What does the teacher call this animal? Name the color of the house in this picture.
- ↪ Find opportunities for him to experience their second language. Eg. T.V. programs, plays

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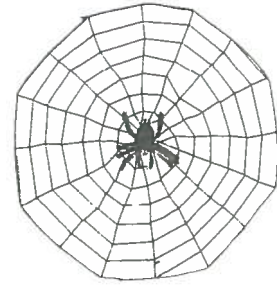
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[www.cbcbooks.org](http://www.cbcbooks.org)  
[www.kidnews.com](http://www.kidnews.com)  
[www.stonesoup.com](http://www.stonesoup.com)  
[www.kidsource.com](http://www.kidsource.com)  
[www.parentsoup.com](http://www.parentsoup.com)  
[www.read2kids.org](http://www.read2kids.org)  
[www.familit.org](http://www.familit.org)  
[www.starfall.com](http://www.starfall.com)  
[www.abcteach.com](http://www.abcteach.com)  
[www.readinglady.com](http://www.readinglady.com)  
<http://teacher.teach-nology.com/index.html>  
<http://sitesforteachers.com/index.html>  
[www.ed.gov/inits/americanreads/families\\_feedme.html](http://www.ed.gov/inits/americanreads/families_feedme.html)  
[www.caringforkids.cps.ca/behaviour/reading.html](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/behaviour/reading.html)  
[www.memfox.com](http://www.memfox.com)  
<http://www.readinga-z.com>  
<http://www.parentschoice.org/awardsportal.cfm>  
<http://www.rutlandherald.com/04/Story/81635>  
[www.fld.jaf.ca](http://www.fld.jaf.ca)  
<http://literacy.kent.edu/Midwest/FamilyLit>  
<http://www.nifl.gov>  
[www.abc-canada.org](http://www.abc-canada.org)  
<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/Reader/indew>  
[www.scholastic.ca](http://www.scholastic.ca)  
<http://www.region15.org/pes/classactivities.htm> (website for suggested reading lists for school-age children)

*Dear Parents,*

*Your input is valuable to us. Would you please fill in the following information.*

1. What did you learn from the Parent Literacy Handbook? How has the handbook changed the way you interact with your child?

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2. Is the format easy to read? User friendly? If not, what suggestions would you give?

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3. Which sections of the handbook are most useful to you?

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4. Comments.

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Thank you for taking the time to complete this form. Please return to the classroom teacher.