



## Why Your Child Should Read 15 Minutes Every Day

“WHY CAN’T I SKIP MY 15 MINUTES OF READING TONIGHT?”

**LET’S FIGURE IT OUT...MATHEMATICALLY!**

<b>Student A</b>	<b>Student B</b>
Student A reads <b>15</b> minutes 4 nights of every week;	Student B reads only <b>5</b> minutes 4 nights...or not at all.
<b>Step 1: Multiply minutes a night x 4 times each WEEK.</b>	
Student A reads 15 minutes x 4 times a week = <b>60 minutes/WEEK.</b>	Student B reads 5 minutes x 4 times a week = <b>20 minutes/WEEK.</b>
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Student A reads <b>240</b> minutes a <b>MONTH.</b>	Student B reads <b>80</b> minutes a <b>MONTH.</b>
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Student A practices reading the equivalent of <b>6 whole</b> school days a year.	Student B gets the equivalent of <b>only 2</b> school days of reading practice.
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### WHY READ 30 MINUTES A DAY?

\*If *daily* 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, stories, and vocabulary development.

\*A kindergarten student who has not been read aloud to could enter school with less than 60 hours of literacy nutrition.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, America Reads Challenge. (1999) “Start Early, Finish Strong: How to Help Every Child Become a Reader.” Washington, D.C.

# How to Read with a Beginning Reader

By: Joanne Meier (2009)

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Most beginning readers are inconsistent. Learn more about the characteristics of a beginning reader and simple techniques and tips to nurture your child's skills and joy in reading.

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Sometimes parents of beginning readers wonder if their child is on track with reading. They don't understand why their child can't read a word today they were able to read yesterday. They think their child reads too slowly. They grumble that their child only wants to read the same book over and over again.

Most beginning readers are inconsistent. They may know a word one day but not the next. They may read a particular word correctly on one page, but they have to stop and sound it out again on the next page. When you listen to a beginning reader, you hear short, choppy words with little attention to punctuation. Sometimes a new reader can tell you very little about what they just read.

At the beginning stage of reading, all of these reading behaviors are to be expected. Beginning readers are building their fluency. This means they're working to make several skills, like matching a letter to a sound and decoding, more smooth, accurate and automatic. Without fluency, each word must be decoded, and that takes time and energy. This means that other reading behaviors like reading with expression and comprehension have less of a focus.

When reading with a beginning reader, it's important to do the following:

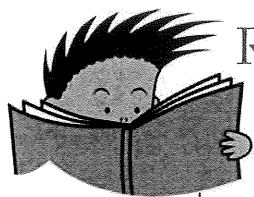
1. Give them time to read. Reading is a skill, and like many other skills, it takes time to develop. A beginning reader should spend at least 20 minutes a day reading to or with someone. The books read during this time should be relatively easy for your child.
2. Let them reread the same books. Rereading the same words over and over again helps build fluency. Over time, you'll notice that your child will stop less often to decode words.
3. Encourage attention to the print. If your child is stuck on a word, help him look at the first letter(s) and encourage him to sound it out. If it's a difficult word, or one that can't be sounded out, simply supply the word and continue reading.
4. Take turns reading. By listening to your fluent reading, your child will hear what good readers sound like. After you've read a short passage,

ask your child to reread the same passage. This provides a chance for her to practice reading with expression.

5. Have realistic expectations. For example, students should be reading approximately 60 words per minute correctly by the end of first grade, and 90-100 words per minute correctly by the end of second grade. Your child's teacher can help you learn your child's reading rate.

It's important to nurture your beginning reader in a way that helps make reading a daily habit and a lifelong love. By being aware of what's normal for a beginning reader, and by knowing how to help them progress, you're sure to instill those qualities in your reader.





# TIPS | for parents of First Graders

Give your child lots of opportunities to read aloud. Inspire your young reader to practice every day! The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

■ **Don't leave home without it.**

Bring along a book or magazine any time your child has to wait, such as at a doctor's office. Always try to fit in reading!

■ **Once is not enough.**

Encourage your child to re-read favorite books and poems. Re-reading helps kids read more quickly and accurately.

■ **Dig deeper into the story.**

Ask your child questions about the story you've just read. Say something like, "Why do you think Clifford did that?"

■ **Take control of the television.**

It's difficult for reading to compete with TV and video games. Encourage reading as a free-time activity.

■ **Be patient.**

When your child is trying to sound out an unfamiliar word, give him or her time to do so. Remind your child to look closely at the first letter or letters of the word.

■ **Pick books that are at the right level.**

Help your child pick books that are not too difficult. The aim is to give your child lots of successful reading experiences.

■ **Play word games.**

Have your child sound out the word as you change it from *mat* to *fat* to *sat*; from *sat* to *sag* to *sap*; and from *sap* to *sip*.

■ **I read to you, you read to me.**

Take turns reading aloud at bedtime. Kids enjoy this special time with their parents.

■ **Gently correct your young reader.**

When your child makes a mistake, gently point out the letters he or she overlooked or read incorrectly. Many beginning readers will guess wildly at a word based on its first letter.

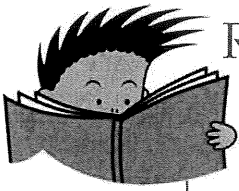
■ **Talk, talk, talk!**

Talk with your child every day about school and things going on around the house. Sprinkle some interesting words into the conversation, and build on words you've talked about in the past.

■ **Write, write, write!**

Ask your child to help you write out the grocery list, a thank you note to Grandma, or to keep a journal of special things that happen at home. When writing, encourage your child to use the letter and sound patterns he or she is learning at school.

Visit [www.ReadingRockets.org](http://www.ReadingRockets.org) for more information on how you can launch a child into a bright future through reading.



# TIPS | for parents of Second Graders

Find ways to read, write, and tell stories together with your child. Always applaud your young reader and beginning story writer! The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

■ **Tell family tales.**

Children love to hear stories about their family. Talk about a funny thing that happened when you were young.

■ **Create a writing toolbox.**

Fill a box with drawing and writing materials. Find opportunities for your child to write, such as the shopping list, thank you notes, or birthday cards.

■ **Be your child's #1 fan.**

Ask your child to read aloud what he or she has written for school. Be an enthusiastic listener.

■ **One more time with feeling.**

When your child has sounded out an unfamiliar word, have him or her re-read that sentence. Often kids are so busy figuring out a word they lose the meaning of what they've just read.

■ **Invite an author to class.**

Ask an author to talk to your child's class about the writing process. Young children often think they aren't smart enough if they can't sit down and write a perfect story on the first try.

■ **Create a book together.**

Fold pieces of paper in half and staple them to make a book. Ask your child to write sentences on each page and add his or her own illustrations.

■ **Do storytelling on the go.**

Take turns adding to a story the two of you make up while riding in a car or bus. Try making the story funny or spooky.

■ **Point out the relationship between words.**

Explain how related words have similar spellings and meanings. Show how a word like *knowledge*, for example, relates to a word like *know*.

■ **Use a writing checklist.**

Have your child create a writing checklist with reminders such as, "Do all of my sentences start with a capital? Yes/No."

■ **Quick, quick.**

Use new words your child has learned in lively flash card or computer drills. Sometimes these help kids automatically recognize and read words, especially those that are used frequently.

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# TIPS | for parents of Third Graders

Read about it, talk about it, and think about it! Find ways for your child to build understanding, the ultimate goal of learning how to read. The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

■ **Make books special.**

Turn reading into something special. Take your kids to the library, help them get their own library card, read with them, and buy them books as gifts. Have a favorite place for books in your home or, even better, put books everywhere.

■ **Get them to read another one.**

Find ways to encourage your child to pick up another book. Introduce him or her to a series like *The Boxcar Children* or *The Magic Tree House* or to a second book by a favorite author, or ask the librarian for additional suggestions.

■ **Crack open the dictionary.**

Let your child see you use a dictionary. Say, "Hmm, I'm not sure what that word means... I think I'll look it up."

■ **Talk about what you see and do.**

Talk about everyday activities to build your child's background knowledge, which is crucial to listening and reading comprehension. Keep up a running patter, for example, while cooking together, visiting somewhere new, or after watching a TV show.

■ **First drafts are rough.**

Encourage your child when writing. Remind him or her that writing involves several steps. No one does it perfectly the first time.

■ **Different strokes for different folks.**

Read different types of books to expose your child to different types of writing. Some kids, especially boys, prefer nonfiction books.

■ **Teach your child some "mind tricks".**

Show your child how to summarize a story in a few sentences or how to make predictions about what might happen next. Both strategies help a child comprehend and remember.

■ **"Are we there yet?"**

Use the time spent in the car or bus for wordplay. Talk about how jam means something you put on toast as well as cars stuck in traffic. How many other homonyms can your child think of? When kids are highly familiar with the meaning of a word, they have less difficulty reading it.

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# Reading Strategies for All Readers

Mrs. Zannini - KM Reading Specialist



*The following handout explains what independent reading strategies our children at KM are learning about. Use this information if you are looking for ways to reinforce their learning at home.*

- When reading with your child, you can focus your reading on one of these aspects. Your child should be able to tell you exactly what goal and strategy he/she is working on: "I am working on my accuracy" and his /her strategy: "I am looking for small words inside big words to help me read new words".
- Research shows that when students know exactly what they need to work on, and why, they are much more successful in meeting their goals! You can do this at home too! 😊 This is divided into 4 categories: Comprehension, Accuracy, Fluency, and Expand Vocabulary.

## Comprehension- "I understand what I read."

- **Check for Understanding:** We have learned that it is very important to not only do our best reading, but to also do our best thinking! We know it is necessary to stop often during reading to make sure we have understood what we are reading. Practice this at home by stopping every so often during the story. Your child should be able to give a quick summary of what they just read. Who was the story about? What has happened so far? Go ahead and use the words, "Let's check for understanding," with your child. They know just what it means! 😊
- **Back up and Reread:** Have you ever read a page or two of a book and suddenly realized that you don't have a clue what you just read? What do you probably do? You back up and reread it! This is a skill that children need to be taught over and over. This strategy is important for children to try when they have not understood something they just read. By backing up and reading a section or page over, they will hopefully take their time and focus in more which will lead to a clearer understanding!
- **Name the setting:** The setting is where the story is occurring and when it is happening.
- **Know the title, author and illustrator:** Your child should know how to recognize the title, author and illustrator (if there is one) in every book that they read.
- **Retell the story:** Tell what happened at the beginning, middle and end of the story.
- **Making connections:** We discussed 3 different connections that the student can make while reading.
  - **Text to Self:** The student tells how he/she has something in common with the characters or the story.
  - **Text to World:** The student makes a connection with the knowledge that he has with something in the book.
  - **Text to Text:** The student makes a connection between two books (same characters, setting, etc.)
- **Identify Fiction or Non-Fiction:** The student can tell if it is real facts (non- fiction) or a made up story (fiction).

- **Make predictions:** Your child is practicing stopping in the story and thinking about what might happen next. It should make sense with what is happening in the story but doesn't have to be correct.
- **Know author's purpose:** Your student can determine what the author's purpose was in writing the book (to inform, to entertain, etc.).
- **Use text features:** This is most important in non fiction text. The student can use titles, headings, captions, and graphics to understand more about what is happening in the book.
- **Ask questions throughout reading:** Your child is working on thinking and asking why while reading. They are realizing that good readers continue to ask questions throughout the reading process.

#### Accuracy- "I can read the words."

- **Cross-Checking:** Your child has been learning to stop when they have just read a sentence that doesn't make sense or if they get to a word that they just don't know. After they find that tricky word, they ask themselves some questions: "Does the word I'm saying (or thinking it could be) match up with the letters or picture I see on the page?" "Does it sound right?" "Does it make sense?"
- **Tap the word:** This is a strategy that we emphasize in Foundations (our phonics program) and use to read and spell words. Your child should be able to use their fingers to tap out each sound (it is a tactile way to sound out words).
- **Say it fast:** Your child is working on reading the words after tapping the word. Your child should get their mouth ready to say the sounds, say and tap each sound, and then say the sounds fast to say the word.
- **Know letters and sounds:** We have to know the sounds of the words to read and the letter names to spell.
- **Flip the sound-** This is a strategy that the students use as they begin to encounter words with long vowels. We have discussed short vowels so it is natural for them to read the words with a short vowel sound. If that way does not make sense in the story we say, "Flip the Sound." They then say the long vowel sound (it always says its name). Example: If the word "cake" is in the story, your child may say "cak". That does not make sense. So then, they should say the long vowel sound and say "cake". That word should make sense with the pictures or rest of the sentence.
- **Find Chunks in words:** This means that the student is finding smaller words or parts in the larger word.
- **Know trick words or sight words:** Your child is practicing reading our trick words in stories. Your child should be able to recognize these words automatically while reading.
- **Play with rhyming words:** Students can see a word like "cat" and know the words, "mat, hat, bat, etc.
- **Identify compound words:** Students notice that there are smaller words in larger words. For example, cupcake is a compound word that students can read if they break the word into its two words.
- **Skip the word and come back:** The student can skip the word and then come back after reading the rest of the sentence. It might give context to what the word is and how to say it.

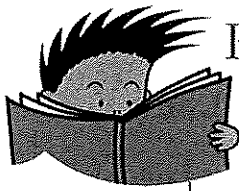


## Fluency- "I can read smoothly, with expression."

- **Choose Good Fit Books:** This is a BIG one for children! We have learned that it is SO important to spend time reading books that are good fit books for each of us (we used shoes to see how different people need different size shoes). It is very important for your child to be able to read books that they can read independently with very few to NO errors. We use the 3 finger rule- if they can't read more than 3 words on a page then the book is too hard right now. This will help them become smooth (fluent) readers. I meet with each child often so that they can show me the just-right books in their book tote. After your child reads a book to you at home, ask them to share how they felt about the book. Did the book feel too easy, too hard, or just right? Why?
- **Read and read it again:** Your child is learning that when you are reading sometimes you need to read it multiple times to read it the correct way. We have talked about how it sounds to read so that people enjoy listening to it and not like a robot.
- **Read and talk like the characters:** This means that your child is working on expression and making the book come to life. Add emphasis on different characters and what they are saying. If there is something exciting going on in the story, make it sound exciting and how the characters really would sound.
- **Read to the end of the sentence:** It always sounds good to read a book and not read choppy or word by word. As adults, we know that a sentence means to pause in reading. That is how we want our students to read. So, your child is working on reading the entire sentence without stopping. It may take a few times to get it right, but that is what practice is for. ☺ Make it like a game and see how many sentences they can read without stopping in the middle of the sentence.

## Expand Vocabulary- I know, find, and use interesting words."

- **Tune into Interesting Words:** We are excited to learn new words and figure out what words mean. When this happens at school, the word is explained and then added to a classroom Word Collector or wall. We refer back to the words often as this will deepen their understanding of them and expand their vocabularies. Perhaps you could keep a notebook at home to jot down interesting words that you and your child come across when reading.
- **Voracious Reading:** This is a strategy that we used to get excited about reading and finding new words while we read. Reading takes practice and is something we must do a lot to be able to read our best. We want to read as much as we can to get better in reading!
- **Ask for help defining the word:** Student can ask another person (adult or other student) if they come across a word they do not know. The student records the word and page number on a new words chart and then can ask when reading time is over (if it is silent reading time).
- **Use a tool- dictionary, thesaurus, or glossary:** The student can use a dictionary as a tool when they don't know a word while reading.
- **Use other words to help (context) and prior knowledge:** Students can use words within the rest of the sentence or paragraph to know what a word means.



# TIPS | for parents of Kindergartners

Play with letters, words, and sounds! Having fun with language helps your child learn to crack the code of reading. The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader.

Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

■ **Talk to your child.**

Ask your child to talk about his day at school. Encourage him to explain something they did, or a game he played during recess.

■ **Say silly tongue twisters.**

Sing songs, read rhyming books, and say silly tongue twisters. These help kids become sensitive to the sounds in words.

■ **Read it and experience it.**

Connect what your child reads with what happens in life. If reading a book about animals, relate it to your last trip to the zoo.

■ **Use your child's name.**

Point out the link between letters and sounds. Say, "John, the word *jump* begins with the same sound as your name. *John, jump*. And they both begin with the same letter, J."

■ **Play with puppets.**

Play language games with puppets. Have the puppet say, "My name is *Mark*. I like words that rhyme with my name. Does *park* rhyme with *Mark*? Does *ball* rhyme with *Mark*?"

■ **Trace and say letters.**

Have your child use a finger to trace a letter while saying the letter's sound. Do this on paper, in sand, or on a plate of sugar.

■ **Write it down.**

Have paper and pencils available for your child to use for writing. Working together, write a sentence or two about something special. Encourage your child to use the letters and sounds he or she is learning about in school.

■ **Play sound games.**

Practice blending sounds into words. Ask "Can you guess what this word is? *m - o - p*." Hold each sound longer than normal.

■ **Read it again and again.**

Go ahead and read your child's favorite book for the 100th time! As you read, pause and ask your child about what is going on in the book.

■ **Talk about letters and sounds.**

Help your child learn the names of the letters and the sounds the letters make. Turn it into a game! "I'm thinking of a letter and it makes the sound mmmmmmm."

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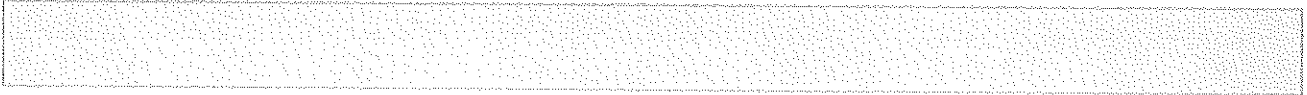
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# "Sight Words"

## Complete Dolch Word List Divided by Level

Pre-primer	Primer	Grade One	Grade Two	Grade Three
a	all	after	always	about
and	am	again	around	better
away	are	an	because	bring
big	at	any	been	carry
blue	ate	ask	before	clean
can	be	as	best	cut
come	black	by	both	done
down	brown	could	buy	draw
find	but	every	call	drink
for	came	fly	cold	eight
funny	did	from	does	fall
go	do	give	don't	far
help	eat	going	fast	full
here	four	had	first	got
I	get	has	five	grow
in	good	her	found	hold
is	have	him	gave	hot
it	he	his	goes	hurt
jump	into	how	green	if
little	like	just	its	keep
look	must	know	made	kind
make	new	let	many	laugh
me	no	live	off	light
my	now	may	or	long
not	on	of	pull	much
one	our	old	read	myself
play	out	once	right	never
red	please	open	sing	only
run	pretty	over	sit	own
said	ran	put	sleep	pick
see	ride	round	tell	seven
the	saw	some	their	shall*
three	say	stop	these	show
to	she	take	those	six
two	so	thank	upon	small
up	soon	them	us	start
we	that	then	use	ten
where	there	think	very	today
yellow	they	walk	wash	together
you	this	were	which	try
	too	when		warm

\* 'shall' has dropped out of use



## Reading Tips for Home

Learning to read is a very complex task. Each child learns at his/her own pace, but there are many things that parents and caregivers can do to help them become literate. Here are some ideas for you to use as you work with your child. I hope that you find them useful.

### 1. Echo & Choral Reading

#### Echo Reading:

This is a great way to help a child develop confidence and fluency. Read aloud a line of text. Ask the child to read the same line. Continue taking turns reading and rereading the same lines. When the child begins to read with more expression and fluency, suggest that he read aloud on his own.

#### Choral Reading:

This strategy helps children become more fluent and confident readers. Hold the book together and ask the child to read along with you. Begin reading in a voice that is slightly louder and faster than the child's. As the child becomes more comfortable with reading the text, lower your voice and slow down your reading speed. If the child slows down, increase your volume and speed again.

#### Paired Reading

1. Sit side-by-side with your child and position the book in between the two of you.
2. If your child has chosen a book that they have previously been reading, ask them to retell what they remember.
3. Begin by reading out loud together. Have your child point to each word with their finger as you both read.
4. Adjust your intonation and rate to your child's level. Read with an expressive voice that is slightly faster than your child would read independently.
5. If they make an error (or hesitate for a few seconds on a word), wait to see if they correct it. If they don't, pronounce the word and have them repeat it. Then continue reading. Discuss their errors at the end of your reading time.
6. Decide upon a silent signal that you will use with your child (e.g., a gentle elbow nudge, or finger tap on the table) so they can tell you they would like to read independently. When they give you this signal, you will stop reading out-loud or read in a whisper that "shadows" your child's reading.
7. When they make a mistake or encounter difficulty, begin reading out-loud again with your child until they let you know they want to be independent by using the silent signal.
8. Do this for about 10-20 minutes each day.

## Books on Tape or CD

If you don't have the time to pair read at home, try recorded reading. Give your child a book or other reading material on audiotape or CD and let them listen on their own while reading a print version of the text. Local public libraries are an excellent source for finding books on tape or CD. This approach has been widely used in schools due to the high volume of research that indicates it to be a strong strategy for children who struggle with fluency skills. If your child listens to a story, the book should be at a slightly higher level of difficulty for the child.

Teachers often refer to this as a child's "instructional reading level." Listening to a story at their instructional level will allow them to read higher level vocabulary with the right amount of support that they will need to feel confident. While your child listens to a story they should also be pointing to the words and following along with their eyes, while also reading out-loud in a whisper voice with the CD or tape. Seeing, hearing, touching, and saying the words simultaneously will benefit your child as they progress in their development as a reader.

## TV Captions

Since captioned television presents a printed text read by an expert reader, it can also be an excellent way to help support your child's reading skills. Studies have shown that people have difficulty keeping their eyes off the text when watching captioned television. This is a simple thing you can do at home to encourage your child to read and practice fluency!

## Repeated Reading for Fluency

1. Use this strategy for about 15 to 30 minutes.
2. Tell your child to pick a "good-fit" book, or a book at their independent reading level.
3. Have your child read out-loud for one minute.
4. After they read, have them write down the number of words they read.
5. Have them read the same exact passage again. Again, time them for one minute and have them count the number of words they read.
6. Have them repeat this process for about 15-30 minutes.
7. Have them see if the number of words they read correctly improves the more they practice the passage.

## The Neurological Impress Method

This has been extremely successful with many students who have reading difficulties and it is easy to do! Do this with your child during the time they read for their reading log.



- a. Seat your child slightly in front of you, so you can point to the words they are reading and read directly into their left ear. Have your child choose a book that they can read independently, with at least 85 to 95 percent of the words read correctly the first time.
- b. Tell your child to read out-loud with you as you point to the words. Then begin to read at a slightly slower-than-normal rate for you (*this will seem very fast for your child*). While you read be sure to point to the words as you read them (*this part is very important*). They may complain, at first, that they can not keep up with you. This should not prevent you from using this method. Explain that they are learning to become a better reader and may soon be able to keep up with you.
- c. Researchers suggest doing this for about 10-15 minutes about 2-4 times a day. A session should not last longer than 15 minutes.
- d. Continue reading out loud with your child, pointing to the words you are reading. If your child begins to read faster and is able to keep up with you, adjust your rate to be a bit faster than your child.

### What should I do if my child says a word that is incorrect while reading?

Because of the way reading used to be taught, many parents feel that the only way to figure out unknown words is to "sound them out." Research has proven that this can be one of the least effective ways to figure out a word. Too many words can not be sounded out (examples: *said, know, right, etc.*). When we read, we should use three sources of information to decode the text: **meaning, structure, and visual cues**. We gather *meaning* by thinking what the story is about, looking at the pictures, and knowing that what we have read makes sense. We use *structure* cues to determine if what we have read sounds right in the sentence. We use *visual* cues to know if what we have read looks right. It is important for any reader to know how to use all of these sources of information or cues. Fluent readers do this without thinking, but children should be taught and prompted to use these strategies.

When your child makes an error within a sentence, do not interrupt. Let him/her read to the end, because the child will often go back and self-correct the errors. If not, you can help them by saying...

- a. "You said\_\_\_\_\_. Does that sound right?"
- b. "You said\_\_\_\_\_. Does that make sense?"
- c. "You said\_\_\_\_\_. Does that look right?"
- d. "If this word were\_\_\_\_\_what letter would you see at the beginning?"

After your child self-corrects an error, have them go back and reread the sentence or phrase.

If your child stops within a sentence and does not know how to "attack" a word, ask them to think about the story, check the picture, and then get their mouth ready to say the word by checking the beginning sound or sounds of that word. Then they should go back and start at the beginning of the sentence (to gather meaning) and reread the sentence.

Encourage your child to look for small words or "word chunks" within the words to decode it.

For example: The word **or** helps with **more**, **like** helps with **bike**, **day** helps with **today**, etc.

Our goal is for children to monitor their own reading. If the parent or teacher always supplies the word or corrects them immediately, they will not learn to monitor on their own. It is very important to encourage your child each time you see that they use a strategy that helps them monitor their own reading. You might say...

"I liked the way you..."

- tried to figure that word out
- used the picture to help you figure that word out
- noticed that something wasn't right
- tried a word that made sense
- checked the beginning (middle or ending) letter of that word
- looked for word chunks you already knew in that word
- reread the sentence when it didn't make sense
- thought about the story

**My Child is always looking at the pictures and doesn't seem to be really reading. Should I cover the pictures?**

Experts have learned that good readers check the pictures for clues to the story. That is why we encourage your child to use the pictures for help. Being flexible in gathering information is just another tool to help a child be successful in reading. Covering the pictures would make his search for the correct word or phrase more difficult.

**Why does the teacher encourage my child to point to the words in the book?**

Pointing is one of the first strategies a beginning reader can use to check his reading. Teachers sometimes use words like "Self-Monitoring" to refer to this technique. This simply means that pointing helps to remind your child to really look at the words. Some children do not realize that words convey a message. Pointing helps the child to focus and to notice the details of our written language, for instance, where one word ends and another begins. As your child develops his reading skills and grows in confidence, you will see them pointing less frequently. Your child will be able to "point with their eyes." Eventually, their eyes will move quickly across the lines of print. Pointing is just another tool to help your child read.

Please feel free to contact me by phone or email if you have any questions about how to help your child at home with reading skills.

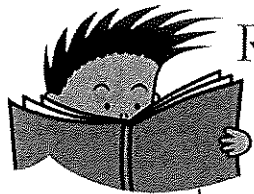
Contact Info: Kendra Zannini - Reading Specialist

Phone # (847) 599-5044

Email - [kzannini@bpd3.org](mailto:kzannini@bpd3.org)

Please visit my website for more information on how to help your child at home...

[www.kzannini@weebly.com](http://www.kzannini@weebly.com)



# TIPS | for parents of First Graders

Give your child lots of opportunities to read aloud. Inspire your young reader to practice every day! The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

■ **Don't leave home without it.**

Bring along a book or magazine any time your child has to wait, such as at a doctor's office. Always try to fit in reading!

■ **Once is not enough.**

Encourage your child to re-read favorite books and poems. Re-reading helps kids read more quickly and accurately.

■ **Dig deeper into the story.**

Ask your child questions about the story you've just read. Say something like, "Why do you think Clifford did that?"

■ **Take control of the television.**

It's difficult for reading to compete with TV and video games. Encourage reading as a free-time activity.

■ **Be patient.**

When your child is trying to sound out an unfamiliar word, give him or her time to do so. Remind your child to look closely at the first letter or letters of the word.

■ **Pick books that are at the right level.**

Help your child pick books that are not too difficult. The aim is to give your child lots of successful reading experiences.

■ **Play word games.**

Have your child sound out the word as you change it from *mat* to *fat* to *sat*; from *sat* to *sag* to *sap*; and from *sap* to *sip*.

■ **I read to you, you read to me.**

Take turns reading aloud at bedtime. Kids enjoy this special time with their parents.

■ **Gently correct your young reader.**

When your child makes a mistake, gently point out the letters he or she overlooked or read incorrectly. Many beginning readers will guess wildly at a word based on its first letter.

■ **Talk, talk, talk!**

Talk with your child every day about school and things going on around the house. Sprinkle some interesting words into the conversation, and build on words you've talked about in the past.

■ **Write, write, write!**

Ask your child to help you write out the grocery list, a thank you note to Grandma, or to keep a journal of special things that happen at home. When writing, encourage your child to use the letter and sound patterns he or she is learning at school.

Visit [www.ReadingRockets.org](http://www.ReadingRockets.org) for more information on how you can launch a child into a bright future through reading.

# TIPS | for parents of Second Graders

Find ways to read, write, and tell stories together with your child. Always applaud your young reader and beginning story writer! The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

■ **Tell family tales.**

Children love to hear stories about their family. Talk about a funny thing that happened when you were young.

■ **Create a writing toolbox.**

Fill a box with drawing and writing materials. Find opportunities for your child to write, such as the shopping list, thank you notes, or birthday cards.

■ **Be your child's #1 fan.**

Ask your child to read aloud what he or she has written for school. Be an enthusiastic listener.

■ **One more time with feeling.**

When your child has sounded out an unfamiliar word, have him or her re-read that sentence. Often kids are so busy figuring out a word they lose the meaning of what they've just read.

■ **Invite an author to class.**

Ask an author to talk to your child's class about the writing process. Young children often think they aren't smart enough if they can't sit down and write a perfect story on the first try.

■ **Create a book together.**

Fold pieces of paper in half and staple them to make a book. Ask your child to write sentences on each page and add his or her own illustrations.

■ **Do storytelling on the go.**

Take turns adding to a story the two of you make up while riding in a car or bus. Try making the story funny or spooky.

■ **Point out the relationship between words.**

Explain how related words have similar spellings and meanings. Show how a word like *knowledge*, for example, relates to a word like *know*.

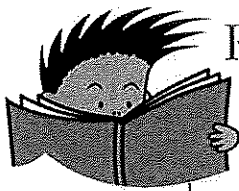
■ **Use a writing checklist.**

Have your child create a writing checklist with reminders such as, "Do all of my sentences start with a capital? Yes/No."

■ **Quick, quick.**

Use new words your child has learned in lively flash card or computer drills. Sometimes these help kids automatically recognize and read words, especially those that are used frequently.

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## TIPS | for parents of Third Graders

Read about it, talk about it, and think about it! Find ways for your child to build understanding, the ultimate goal of learning how to read. The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

### ■ **Make books special.**

Turn reading into something special. Take your kids to the library, help them get their own library card, read with them, and buy them books as gifts. Have a favorite place for books in your home or, even better, put books everywhere.

### ■ **Get them to read another one.**

Find ways to encourage your child to pick up another book. Introduce him or her to a series like *The Boxcar Children* or *The Magic Tree House* or to a second book by a favorite author, or ask the librarian for additional suggestions.

### ■ **Crack open the dictionary.**

Let your child see you use a dictionary. Say, "Hmm, I'm not sure what that word means... I think I'll look it up."

### ■ **Talk about what you see and do.**

Talk about everyday activities to build your child's background knowledge, which is crucial to listening and reading comprehension. Keep up a running patter, for example, while cooking together, visiting somewhere new, or after watching a TV show.

### ■ **First drafts are rough.**

Encourage your child when writing. Remind him or her that writing involves several steps. No one does it perfectly the first time.

### ■ **Different strokes for different folks.**

Read different types of books to expose your child to different types of writing. Some kids, especially boys, prefer nonfiction books.

### ■ **Teach your child some "mind tricks".**

Show your child how to summarize a story in a few sentences or how to make predictions about what might happen next. Both strategies help a child comprehend and remember.

### ■ **"Are we there yet?"**

Use the time spent in the car or bus for wordplay. Talk about how jam means something you put on toast as well as cars stuck in traffic. How many other homonyms can your child think of? When kids are highly familiar with the meaning of a word, they have less difficulty reading it.

*Visit [www.ReadingRockets.org](http://www.ReadingRockets.org) for more information on how you can launch a child into a bright future through reading.*