

Parents in the Know

Focus on Reading

Improving Comprehension

Here are some things that your child can do to help improve her comprehension.

- Make predictions while reading.
- Make connections with prior knowledge.
- Use the story's content to figure out unfamiliar words.
- Review pictures, headers, and any other extra information.
- The acronym TELLS can help. Look at:

- T- Title
- E - Examine the text
- LL - Look for unfamiliar words
- S - Think about the setting

Another helpful technique is to identify the main character, action, and outcome while reading. Don't introduce all of these strategies at once. Choose one that you think will help, and see what happens!

Based on: Joanna P. Williams, "Improving Comprehension for Students with LD", LD Online, www.ldonline.org/article/86



Meet Jan Brett

Jan Brett is the award winning author and illustrator of over thirty-five books including The Mitten, The Hat, and The Wild Christmas Reindeer just to name a few. Her books are known for their detailed illustrations and borders that often provide clues about the story being read. Jan lives in Massachusetts with her husband and pet hedgehog, Buffy.

To learn more about Jan Brett, visit her website at www.janbrett.com. Here you can find an extensive list of activities your child can do with Jan's books.

Oral Reading Fluency

Oral reading fluency is the ability to read something aloud with proper speed and accuracy. Repetition is a great way to improve a child's fluency. However, children usually don't want to read the same passage again and again. Here are some ways around that!

- Books on Tape.** Tapes provide an excellent model for students.
- Cumulative Tales.** Cumulative tales like I Know an Old Woman Who Swallowed a Fly are naturally repetitive.
- Poetry:** Poems are often short, include rhyming verses, have a natural rhythm to read aloud, and are often humorous.
- Read Aloud:** Reading aloud to your child will improve her fluency by providing a good model of both speed and accuracy.

Focus on Phonics

Everyone knows the rule "i before e except after c", but did you know:

1. A "c" is used before a, o, u (as in cat), a "k" comes before i or u (as in kit).
2. G usually makes the "j" sound when followed by e, i, or y (as in gym).
3. When a syllable ends in a vowel, and it is the only vowel in that syllable, the syllable is usually long (says its name) such as the "a" in pa/per
4. When a syllable ends in a consonant, and has only one vowel, the vowel is short (as in dog).

What Research Says

There is extensive research detailing the benefits of parent involvement. Parents who are actively involved in their child's education have:

- * higher achievement
- * better attendance
- * higher graduation rates
- * better test scores
- * more positive attitudes towards school
- * improved behavior and fewer suspensions
- * better communication with their child's teacher



Based on: "Benefits of Parent Involvement: Parent and Family Involvement and Student Success", National PTA/Building Successful Partnerships, www.geocities.com/syrepta/Formsanddocs/PTABenefitsofVolunteering.pdf

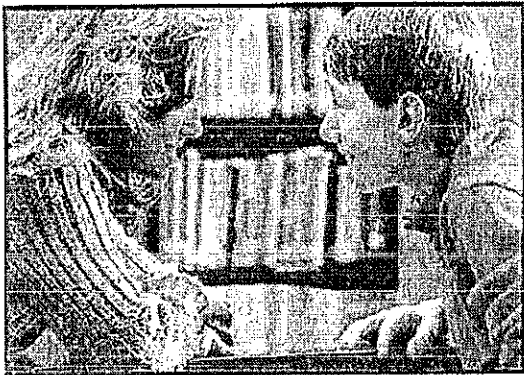
Focus on Reading

Helping Your Child Succeed

There are many things that you can do to help your child improve his or her reading skills.

1. Read with your child daily.
2. Limit TV time, and watch what your child is watching!
3. Have a structured homework time and routine.
4. Talk with your children, and make sure that you also listen!
5. Set high expectations, and help your child meet them.
6. Keep in touch with your child's teacher.

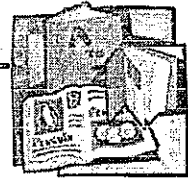
Based on: "Get Involved: How Parents and Families Can Help Their Children Do Better In School", Partnership for Family Involvement in Education <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/PFIE/families.html>



Reading Tips

1. Snuggle up and read to your child daily.
2. Reread children's favorite books whenever requested.
3. Encourage your child to make predictions as you read.
4. Take turns reading with your child.
5. Enjoy the illustrations while reading.
6. Look for other books by the author of your child's favorite books.

Based on: "Family Literacy Project: Tips for Reading to Your Child", Irvine Unified School District, http://www.iusd.k12.ca.us/parent_resources/tipsreading.htm



Books for Early Elementary

Amazing Grace, by Mary Hoffman

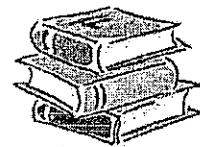
The Polar Express, by Chris

Van Allsburg

Math Curse, by Jon Scieszka

Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge, by Mem Fox

Lily's Purple Plastic Purse, by Kevin Henkes



Books for Upper Elementary

Number the Stars, by Lois Lowry

The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, by C. S. Lewis

Maniac Magee, by Jerry Spinelli

Tuck Everlasting, by Natalie Babbitt

The Great Gilly Hopkins, by Katherine Paterson

Based on: "100 Best Books", TeachersFirst.com, <http://www.teachersfirst.com/100books.cfm>

"To learn to read is to light a fire; every syllable that is spelled out is a spark." ~ Victor Hugo

Activities to Try in the Car

Story Time: Use car trips to tell stories, listen to books on tape, or even better, make up stories together!

A Little Bit of Life: Take advantage of "car time" to talk with your children.

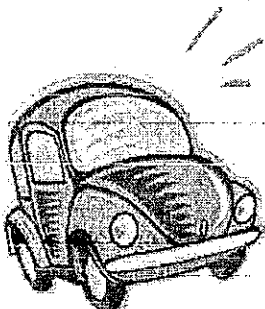
Making Words: Make words out of the letters that you find on billboards, license plates, or street signs.

Word Watch: Look for things that begin with a certain letter. The person that finds the most number of objects beginning with the chosen letter wins!

I'm Thinking Of: Say the sentence, "I'm thinking of a word that begins with ____." Then let your child ask questions (Does it have an A?) to figure out the word.

License Plate ABCs: Look for license plates that begin with the letters of the alphabet. Find a plate that begins with A, then B, etc....

Based on: "Car Games", Family Education, <http://www.familyeducation.com/whatworks/item/front/1.2551.1-13172-3199.00.html>



Images provided by clipart.com