

A PARENT GUIDE TO  
**READING ALOUD**



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# *why read aloud?*

## *For enjoyment*

- Reading aloud is the catalyst for the child wanting to read on his own.
- It motivates the child to read for pleasure.
- Reading aloud makes books so appealing to kids that it becomes a pleasure rather than a requirement.
- Pleasure is more often caught than taught - show your children how enjoyable reading can be by sharing stories with them.

## *To create family bonds*

- Read alouds are a highly interactive experience - it's a partnership between the reader and the listener.
- The stories that we read together act as a bridge when we can't seem to find another way to connect.
- Books give us the opportunity to discuss "tough topics" through a different lens.
- When we read with our kids, we step outside our busy lives and we are completely and totally present with them

## *To build social skills*

- Read alouds awaken a sense of empathy and demonstrate social skills.
- They are a way to help children understand different points of view and find their place in the world.
- Books allow kids to experience stories of those who are not just like them or look just like them.

## *To increase academic skills*

- Read alouds nurture the child's listening comprehension.
- The single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children.
- Boys who are read to by their fathers score significantly higher in reading achievement.
- Read alouds spur the imagination & encourage kids to develop their own thoughts & ask questions.
- Reading aloud to kids teaches them to think, make connections and communicate.

## *To address tough topics*

- Books help children understand that life will be difficult, but that they, like the characters, are capable of facing it.
- When we read aloud with our children, we help them encounter hard questions and practice living through hardships and unexpected situations so that they will be prepared to face their own difficulties.
- When teaching life lessons, a story can have a much larger impact than a nagging lecture from an adult.
- The right story, at the right time, can support a child through life's experiences.
- An adult can serve as a guide through the challenges that the characters face in their books.





# *Frequently* asked questions

## *I don't have enough time!*



- It's ok if you don't read a whole book or a chapter at once.
- If you don't have 30 minutes, try just 10!
- Be intentional about making read alouds a regular part of your life.
- Try listening to audiobooks in the car - you are still sharing a story together.
- Read during snack time or at the breakfast table.

## *My child can read on his own.*



- Reading alone and reading aloud are not mutually exclusive. We can and should do both!
- Children are able to listen to stories with more complex vocabulary than what they can read on their own.
- By sharing a book together, you are building strong bonds with your child.
- Reading aloud stimulates conversations that you might not otherwise have.

## *What books do I choose?*



- Start with topics that interest your child.
- Ask a librarian or your child's teacher for recommendations.
- The self-selection, self-interest factor is important - let kids read what interests them.
- 89% of kids say their favorite books are the ones they themselves have picked.

## *My child won't sit still.*



- Studies shows that for many children, actively engaging in something with their hands helps them to listen better.
- For some kids, information can go deeper into their brains when the child physically moves around
- Create a fidget basket with hands-on activities for your child to use while you read.



## *What do I say while I read?*

- Having one-on-one discussions will get children to reflect on their reading.
- We tend to overcomplicate things - it's okay if the questions are simple!
- Have a conversations about the book, as though you were talking about a movie.
- Talk as though you are in a cozy book club than a formal classroom.
- Keep it easygoing, friendly approach.



## *When do I read?*

- The most popular time is bedtime since it's a great way to relax at the end of the day.
- Use waiting times to pull out a book - at the doctor's office, before practice starts, etc.
- Listen to audiobooks in the car.
- The most important thing is to create a routine that works for your family.



## *My child doesn't like to read*

- Our attitude about reading and the atmosphere we create in our home matter.
- It's essential that we communicate with our words, actions and attitudes that reading is worthwhile for its own sake.
- Show interest in what interests your child.
- Kids benefit simply from the presence of books.
- Create a literacy-rich environment and expose them to role models who read often.



# *Tips & Tricks*

## FOR READING ALOUD

### VISIT THE LIBRARY

- Go to the library often.
- Ask the librarians for book suggestions.
- Allow your children to choose books that interest them.
- Visit both the fiction and non-fiction sections.
- Attend library sponsored events, which are often free!

### PUT BOOKS EVERYWHERE!

- Display books, face out, throughout the house
- Place books in areas where kids get bored - the car, the bathroom (yes!) and the kitchen.

### CREATE A FIDGET BASKET

- For many children, engaging in a hands-on activity will help them listen better.
- Fidget basket ideas:
  - coloring books
  - drawing paper
  - puzzles
  - play-doh
  - stickers
  - beads

