

## How to Raise a Reader

How do parents turn their children from novice or even struggling readers into kids (and later, adults) who will consistently turn to reading as a source of pleasure? There are several rules of thumb that the experts agree are building blocks to raising enthusiastic readers.

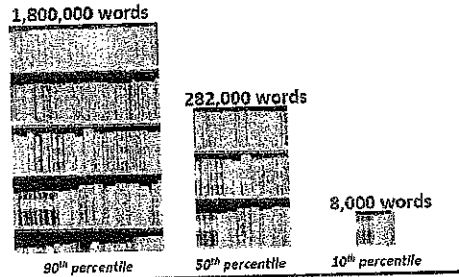
- **It all starts with reading aloud.** And reading aloud should start from birth. The more words your child hears from the beginning of her life, the bigger her vocabulary will be — which will pave the way when she learns to read herself.
- **Have plenty of books in the house.** Keep books in the bathroom, on the bedside table, in the backpack. Get your child a library card as soon as she is old enough, then take weekly or biweekly trips to the library. If the thought of frequent trips to Barnes & Noble sounds like a budget-buster, visit a used bookstore.
- **Model reading for your children by being a reader yourself.** Make a point of reading a book or the newspaper while your children are in the room. As your child gets older, look for areas of common interest and read together. If your preteen son is an athlete, read the sports section together or get him a subscription to a sports magazine.
- **Let your kids be in charge of what they read.** Allow your kids to select their own books, even if they're too easy. And it's OK if she wants to read junk once in a while, as long as she's reading a variety of things. Parents who try to exert too much control over the content of their kids' reading risk fueling the perception that reading is a chore.

Another tactic that can be effective for children who are struggling with reading (or just beginning to get the hang of it): giving small rewards. For frustrated or new readers, the intrinsic pleasure in reading just isn't there yet, so it's OK to offer extrinsic rewards, such as movie tickets, TV privileges, or even a dollar or two, in exchange for concentrated reading time.

## Reading Every Night

### Why Can't I Skip My 20 Minutes of Reading Tonight?

Student "A"	Student "B"	Student "C"
reads 20 minutes each day	reads 5 minutes each day	reads 1 minute each day
3600 minutes in a school year	900 minutes in a school year	180 minutes in a school year



By the end of 6<sup>th</sup> grade Student "A" will have read the equivalent of 60 whole school days. Student "B" will have read only 12 school days. Which student would you expect to have a better vocabulary? Which student would you expect to be more successful in school...and in life?  
Hoagy & Herzman, 1937

### Why Can't I Skip My Twenty Minutes of Reading Tonight?

Student A reads 20 minutes every night.  
 Student B reads only 4 minutes a night... or not at all

Multiply minutes a night X 5 times a week.

Student A - 20 minutes X 5 = 100 minutes.

Student B - 4 minutes X 5 = 20 minutes.

Multiply minutes a week X 4 weeks a month.

Student A reads 400 minutes a month.

Student B reads 80 minutes a month.

Multiply minutes a month X 9 months.

Student A reads 3,600 minutes in a school year.

Student B reads 728 minutes in a school year.

Student A reads the equivalent of ten whole school days a year.

Student B reads the equivalent of only two whole school days a year.

If by the end of 6<sup>th</sup> grade Student A and Student B maintain these same reading habits....

Student A will have read the equivalent of 60 whole school days and Student B will have read the equivalent of 12 school days.

One would expect the gap of information retained will have widened considerably so, undoubtedly will school performance. How do you think Student B will feel about him/herself as a student?

Which student reads better?

Which student would know more?

Which student would have a better vocabulary?

Which student would be more successful in school and life?

Reading 20 Minutes