

Enlist everyone in some family reading fun



Reading is a wonderful activity for families to do together. Not only will your child be reading more, she'll also be spending quality time with you! To make family reading an enjoyable habit:

- **Read the same book.** Check out several copies at the library and take turns reading aloud. Have frequent conversations about what you're reading.
- **Read about the same topic.** Find several books or articles on the same general subject. Some can be fiction and others nonfiction. Have your child assign each family member a different book or article to read. When you've all finished, tell each other what you've learned.
- **Include long-distance relatives.** Technology makes it easy for everyone to communicate! Use video



chats and phone calls to include family members who live farther away in your reading adventures.

- **Keep a journal.** Encourage your child to write about your family's reading experiences—activities she liked, authors to read more of, etc. She can take pride in what you've accomplished together, and she'll have a record of all that she's read!

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Help your child connect with reading



Your child might be learning to read, but that doesn't mean he will automatically love the task. You can develop his interest by helping him make connections with what he's reading. For example, you can:

- **Ask questions that encourage your child** to relate. "The main character in your book had to face a fear. What similar fears have you faced? Did you and the character handle your fears in comparable ways?"
- **Be flexible about reading material.** If your child is not interested in reading a novel, have him read a comic book or a how-to article. Then talk about what he has read.
- **Create family routines that are based on reading.** Make it a habit to read together on a regular basis. Visit



the library together, hold regular reading nights, act out plays. When your child associates reading with family fun, he'll look forward to your reading activities.

- **Surround your child with positive messages** about reading. Keep a wide variety of materials around the house. Show him that reading is an important part of your life. Share interesting things you read and ask your child what he thinks.

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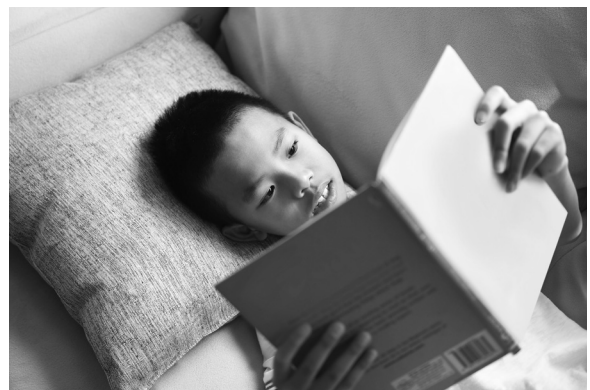
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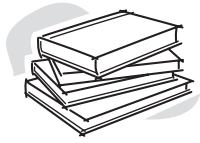
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Encourage your child to explore nonfiction



As your child gets older, she will be expected to read a variety of nonfiction materials, including essays, biographies and news articles. This type of reading

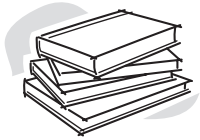
involves more complex thinking and requires a different approach. It's helpful to give your child some practice at home. Encourage nonfiction reading to:

- **Spark reading excitement.** If your child isn't excited about reading novels, she may be more interested in reading about the real world. If she enjoys one nonfiction book she reads, help her find more books on the same topic.
- **Introduce her to new kinds of writing,** such as how-to manuals or interviews. When your child has a writing assignment, suggest that she try using techniques she has noticed in her reading.



- **Assist with standardized test preparation.** Fiction and nonfiction passages are used in reading sections of exams, so it is helpful for your child to have experience reading both. To help your child think about nonfiction reading, ask questions like: "What did you learn from what you just read?" You can also connect reading to real life: "Let's look at the sky tonight and point out some of the constellations you learned about."

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Writing activities enhance reading comprehension



Encourage your child to use the books he is reading as inspiration for writing! He will get his creative juices flowing while he also builds his reading comprehension, or understanding, and analysis skills. Suggest that your child:

- **Write his own sequel.** What happens after the last page in your child's favorite book? Encourage him to write one more chapter. He might wrap up the story or perhaps send the characters on another adventure. He could also write a *prequel*—a chapter that comes before the book starts.
- **Write a letter to the author.** Have your child write a review in the form of a letter to the author. What did he like or dislike about the story? What would he have changed? Are there things that he would still like to know?



- **Keep a character diary.** Have your child imagine that he's a character in the story who keeps a diary. Have him write diary entries about several of the main events that happen throughout the course of the book. How would that character react to each event? (He can also try writing from the point of view of a minor character to encourage even further character analysis.)

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Use the newspaper for reading activities



The newspaper is a wonderful resource for reading activities for your entire family. To help your child keep up with current events and have fun at the same time, try the following activities:

- **What's the Story?** Cut out an interesting news story, and cut the paragraphs apart. Have your child read the paragraphs and put them in an order that makes sense to her based on the headline.
- **Fact or Opinion.** Read an editorial with your child. Have her underline all the facts in blue and all the opinions in red. How does she differentiate between fact and opinion?
- **Parts of Speech.** Have your child circle all the adverbs she finds while reading a story. Are there more adverbs in a local news story or a sports article? What about a story in the arts section?



You can also try this with adjectives, proper nouns or other parts of speech.

- **Scavenger Hunt.** Make a list of things for your child to find in the newspaper. For example: an advertisement for a local store, a map, a fraction, and a chart.
- **Comics and puzzles.** Read the comics section of the newspaper. Are there any games or puzzles to complete? Work together to solve one.

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Make reading a social event with a book club



Increase your child's excitement about reading by helping him start a book club! Talking about reading is an effective way to build comprehension and analysis skills—and your child and

his friends will also enjoy spending time together.

To help him organize a book club:

- 1. Choose members.** Have your child think of some friends who will take the book club seriously. It is also helpful if all the book club members are at approximately the same reading level.
- 2. Decide where to will meet.** The club could meet at your home or the public library.
- 3. Suggest a plan** for how members will choose the book each time they meet.

Once your child's book club is underway, suggest that they keep it interesting by:



- **Reading all the books in a series.** They'll be able to really immerse themselves in the books and get to know the characters well.
- **Having a theme night.** Each member might dress up as a favorite character from a book. They might come up with themed food ideas, too.
- **Watching the movie adaptation**—after they read the book!

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