

10 Tips to help your child with reading

Tips for Kindergarten to Grade 3

1. **Cuddle up and read.** Quiet times together are opportunities to bond...and read. The cuddling can be as important as the reading. Make it exciting: put some drama into your voice or let your child read every other page. As you go, explain any new words or ideas.
2. **Public libraries today are worlds to explore so try to go regularly.** Your library has great resources – books, computer games, DVDs, CDs, magazines, newspapers and Internet access. There are also terrific in-house programs such as reading circles for little ones and homework clubs for older children. If you have access to a public library, talk to the librarian about what is available.
3. **Make your kitchen part of your "reading zone".** Have fridge magnets available so children can start making words and short sentences.
4. **Words are everywhere – take everyday opportunities to read with your child.** Your child's world is filled with words — on cereal boxes, street signs, stores, posters, subway ads, etc. Wherever you go, you can always find new words and point them out.
5. **Games can be great learning tools.** Board games or card games such as word bingo or memory and rhyming cards can be a fun way to learn about words, letter sounds, and reading. They can help children realize how much fun learning can be. Check out your local school fair or second-hand stores for gently used games. You can even create your own by cutting out pictures, writing words on cards and getting you child to match them.
6. **Computers are reader friendly too!** Though many worry that kids may spend too much time on the computer, there are some great games that help kids learn to read and allow them to create their own stories. Look for "parent approved" on the packaging in stores and in the library. Find some kid-friendly websites, like [TVOKids](#) and [Canadian Geollustrated for Kids](#), that have games you can play along with your child.
7. **Books make great gifts.** Ask family and friends to give a book instead of a toy as a gift. Make sure to tell them about your child's reading level and interests. To build up a home library find almost-new books at garage sales and school fairs.
8. **Subscribe to a magazine.** There's no substitute for the excitement of receiving mail. Let your kids subscribe to their favourite age-appropriate magazine and watch their eyes light up with the arrival of each new issue. Great magazines for younger children include *Chirp*® and *Chickadee*®.
9. **Be a reading role model.** When your kids see you reading, they will want to imitate you. It won't be long until they learn that reading is fun, interesting, and a "grown up" thing to do.
10. **Keep books, magazines and newspapers handy.** Keep a box in the kitchen or living room for easy access.

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Tips for Grades 4 to 6

1. **Keep reading with your child.** Kids are never too old to be read to—or let your kids read to you. Read a variety of material – magazines, newspapers, books, poems and comic books. Try cutting out or printing interesting or funny articles to share with them.
2. **Public libraries today are worlds to explore so try and go regularly.** Your library has great resources – books, computer games, DVDs, CDs, magazines, newspapers and Internet access. There are also terrific in-house programs such as reading circles for little ones and homework clubs for older children. If you have access to a public library, talk to the librarian about what is available.
3. **Read some of the same books as your child.** There are many books that are loved by people of all ages. Ask your librarian or child's teacher for suggestions. You can share your thoughts and ideas, and have great conversations about the characters, stories or topics.
4. **Ask your children what they're reading.** Ask what it's about and what is most enjoyable about the book. Ask your child to describe it to you.
5. **Tap into interests and hobbies.** Kids are more likely to read about what they find really interesting, like sports or crafts. Don't worry if it's a comic book, magazine or an illustrated novel, just remember all reading is good and tastes will change as they get older. When you go to the library, let them choose their own books.
6. **Find books that relate to TV shows.** Let's face it, TV and video games are part of life now and our kids benefit when we help them learn how to think about these messages too. We also know that some kids find TV and video games fascinating. You can use this to your advantage—introduce them to books or magazines that relate to their favourite shows, movies or games.
7. **Encourage your older kids to read to younger kids.** The older child will practice reading out loud and the younger child will enjoy being read to. Best of all, they get to enjoy spending time together.
8. **Play games together.** Trivia games and board games such as *Junior Trivial Pursuit*® or *Junior Scrabble*® can be a fun way to learn about words and reading. Children have such a good time playing they don't realize they are learning.
9. **Computers can be reading zones too!** Though we all feel that kids may spend too much time on the computer, there are some great games that help kids with reading and allow them to create their own stories and books. Look for "parent approved" on the box in stores and in the library.
10. **Give praise.** The best motivation comes from your positive feedback. Whenever your child finishes a reading or writing assignment, ask about what was read and praise your child's effort.