

Reading at school is the number three predictor of reading achievement worldwide. The number two predictor is reading at home.

-Postlethwaite and Ross (1992)

The amount of time upper elementary-grade students spent reading in and out of school was related to gains in reading achievement.

-Taylor, Frye, and Maruyama (1990)

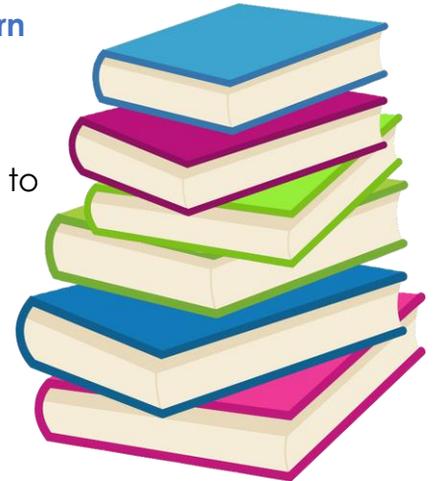
Parents' engagement with their children's reading life has a positive impact on their children's reading performance.

-Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) by the OECD (2010)

We've always known that parents play an important role in their children's academic success. As an educator for 15 years, I am always asked, "What can I do at home to help my child perform better in school?" The best thing to do is to make sure your child is reading every day. Sometimes that seems impossible with all their afterschool activities.

Let me fill you in on basis of teaching reading. **Teachers learn that reading is broken down into 5 pillars: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and**

**comprehension.** Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear and manipulate sounds. An example is when children learn to rhyme. Phonics refers to matching letters to those sounds. It also includes spelling. Fluency isn't just the speed of reading, but it also entails expression and phrasing. Vocabulary is learning the meaning of words and comprehension is understanding what is being read.



Now, here are some ways to embed these pillars in your everyday routines.

### **Phonemic awareness**

- Read poetry (Jack Prelutsky is a beloved children's poet)
- Sing songs
- Clap beats and syllables in words
- Play rhyming games – "How many words can you rhyme with the word *cat*?" You can also play *Go Fish* with rhyming words on index cards.

### **Phonics**

- Play games like *Scrabble* and *Hangman*
- Have students write their own stories or even write about what they did that day
- Have them practice building words with magnetic letters or trace words in sand. You can even fill a bag with shaving cream or gel, and have children write words that way, too! (make sure the bag is sealed tightly. You may want to double bag it, too!)
- Label objects around the house

## **Fluency**

- Read aloud to your children. Listen to them read aloud, too!
- Let your child reread their favorite books and poems
- Let your child record themselves reading and share it with a family member
- Model reading for fun and pleasure
- Act out a book or story (Reader's Theater)
- Read a sentence and then let your child read it after you (Echo reading)

## **Vocabulary**

- Have tons of conversations with your children
- Keep a dictionary at hand
- As you read together, point out words and let your child tell you what they mean
- Play games like *Scattegories* and solve crossword puzzles
- Go on a scavenger hunt inside the house and around the neighborhood

## **Comprehension**

- Ask questions about what your child is reading
- Ask them to predict what might happen next in a story
- Ask who, what, where, when, and why questions (in books and movies!)
- Have conversations about what they are reading in school
- Ask what the main idea or message of a book might be
- Ask why characters did what they did
- Let them write about their book. Would they recommend it to a friend?
- Have them draw a comic strip summarizing the book

Try to make reading fun for your children. Take them to bookstores and libraries. They can also read comics and magazines. It is also important for them to see you read, as well! Adding any of these tips to your everyday routine adds to the reading success of your children!

Happy reading!

***Information adapted from the International Literacy Association***

Visit the National Center of Families Learning for some fun daily activities.  
<http://30days.familieslearning.org/>