

Is your child a Reluctant Reader?

There are many reasons why children dislike reading, sometimes it is difficult for them and other times it is because they haven't found something they enjoy reading. I am going to share some helpful tips on ways to increase reading enjoyment. More time reading gives your reader more practice, more confidence, and improved fluency.

Set up a Special Reading Area- Consider setting up a tent in the corner of the living room for reading only. If there is no room for a tent, try a blanket over the table for the day filled with many pillows. Another idea is to create a comfortable nook using pillows and stuffed animals. The children may even enjoy reading to a favorite stuffed animal. A flashlight in bed is a simple way to encourage reading.



Book Box- Keep a basket next to the bed or on top of the dresser.

This is especially helpful if you have more than one child at home. Knowing that each child has his/her own special reading box inspires ownership and may lead to increased reading. Fill the box with a variety of different books, (comic books, joke books, chapter books, picture books, informational books) sticky notes, a notebook to write ideas down and a flash light.

Integrate Technology- Today technology is increasing and books can be downloaded to e-readers, i-pads, nooks, kindles, and even I-pod touches. One advantage to an e-reader is that the story can be read aloud. This is a great way to increase vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. When the child hears and sees the word at the same time, it taps into two different senses thus creating a deeper understanding. Another advantage is that unknown words can be pronounced and defined. Many websites offer free stories online. Don't forget about books on cds or tapes that can be used to follow along with. One last technology tip is watching television. Yes, watching tv can increase known words by turning the CLOSED CAPTION on during a favorite show.

Reading Habit - Consistent routines are very comforting to kids, whether it is a bath before bedtime or a story before bed; children crave routines. One important routine to incorporate is a daily reading time. Start with 5 minutes a day. Only five minutes you say? Yes, reading stamina needs to be built for success. If you try for 30 minutes a day and it doesn't work it becomes frustrating. By starting with a small time frame it becomes a fun routine. Continue reading for 5 minutes for two to three days and add 1 minute a day until 20 minutes is reached for Elementary aged children. Of course you can read to your child for longer but independent reading needs to be built up.



Break the Bedtime Rules- This is a great way to get kids reading. Once the kids are in bed, set the timer and let the kids read. Using a flashlight increases the fun.

Read with Others- Take turns reading with your child, you read a page, he/she reads a page. This can be done as long as your child wants to read with you, even into High School. Your child will appreciate the one-on-one time as well. Invite grandparents to come and read with your child or over the phone. Encourage your child to read with a sibling. Reading to a pet or stuffed animal can also be fun.

Visit the Library- Find something your child is interested in and visit the library. The library offers many books to rent for free as well as fun monthly activities. Special reading programs are offered every summer including AR testing at our local branch (Summer only).

Draw -Encourage your child to draw after reading. The setting, characters, and events in the story can be drawn to increase interest and be reviewed before taking a test.

Find a Series- Series books offer similar or the same characters and are often a way to increase reading especially if the child reads the book and finds success in taking a test with it.

Watch the Movie First- Often we think we should read the book and watch the movie. For some children it is easier to watch the movie first to keep the interest in the book. Don't worry our AR tests are designed to ask questions that are in the book and not in the movie.

Find the Humor- Read comic books, joke books, or funny books. There are many silly books that children enjoy. They may not be a Newbery Winner but they could increase reading.

Incentives- Consider offering a reward if your child makes a reading goal and meets it. It can be anything from getting a new book, to choosing a movie to watch, or even playing a game.