Ready, Set, Read

SOME SIMPLE TIPS TO HELP YOUR CHILD DISCOVER A LIFELONG LOVE: READING

Reading is the most important skill children will learn. Children first learn to read and then read to learn. Anne Gallagher, retired fifth-grade teacher and Northwest United Educators–Retired member, says "Without strong reading skills, children may struggle in science, math, social studies and even the arts. As adults, we must read every day, no matter what type of job."

5 TIPS (to help your children develop a lifelong love of reading)

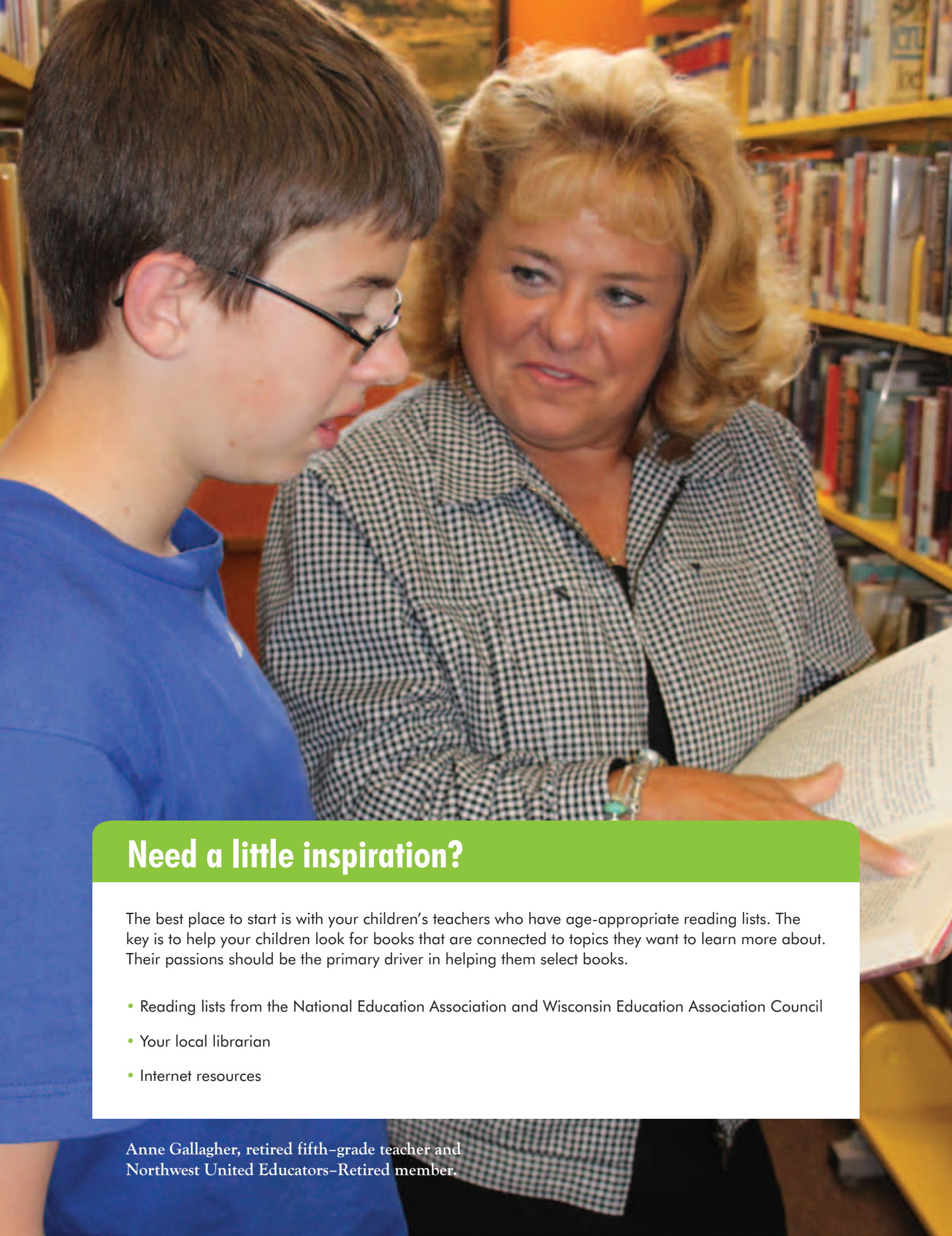
1. **Share reading.** Reading time is a great bedtime ritual and a middle-of-the-day treat. Talk about the pictures and read in funny voices. As your kids get older, keep reading to them if they enjoy it. Sometimes it might be the same book 50 or 100 times, but let them know that their favorite is also one of your favorites.

2. **Use their interests.** If they like baseball, find baseball books. If they love dinosaurs, then dinosaurs it is. Even if it's snakes, share the wonders of the reptile world. Don't make them finish material they might not enjoy, or they'll come to think of reading as a punishment.

3. **Read what they read.** Make sure the content is age-appropriate, and you also want to be able to have a conversation with your children about the book.

4. **Get your child a library card – and use it often.** Librarians are great resources for recommending books for any age. Check out your local library and see what resources are available.

5. **Write your children special notes.** Keep the notes simple, using words they know. Place them on their beds, in their lunchboxes or in special, secret places. It's reading and it's fun.



Need a little inspiration?

The best place to start is with your children's teachers who have age-appropriate reading lists. The key is to help your children look for books that are connected to topics they want to learn more about. Their passions should be the primary driver in helping them select books.

- Reading lists from the National Education Association and Wisconsin Education Association Council
- Your local librarian
- Internet resources

Anne Gallagher, retired fifth-grade teacher and Northwest United Educators–Retired member.