

FOR THE LOVE OF read•ing



SARAH SCHNUELLE SHARES SIMPLE IDEAS ON HOW TO BUILD READING SKILLS:

Ask your child to tell you three things that made for an interesting day.

Ask your child to talk about the weather. It's simple, but weather includes many vocabulary words necessary for reading.

Have printed materials around the house – from junk mail to recipes. When kids are exposed to print, they'll often read it or ask you to read it to them, and everyday reading materials evolve emergent literacy skills.



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SARAH SCHNUELLE IS A FIRST-GRADE TEACHER AND WEAC MEMBER IN PALMYRA, WIS., AND FROM THE SOUNDS OF HER CLASSROOM, HER STUDENTS ARE ALL ON THEIR WAY TO BECOMING EXCELLENT READERS AND WRITERS.

Often, parents might be stuck as to how they can best help their children along the reading road – from children just learning to read to children who may need more of a challenge. Ms. Schnuelle shares some tips on reading:

HOW CAN PARENTS OF EARLY READERS HELP THEIR CHILDREN?

This stage often involves reading to a child or having the child read with you. If your children get stuck on a word, have them look at the picture to see if it helps. Parents sometimes want to rush their children into reading non-picture books, but picture books are a wonderful way for new readers to get connected to words and context.

WHAT IF MY CHILDREN ONLY WANT TO READ A BOOK THEY HAVE MEMORIZED?

That's a really good thing! If your child is at a lower level of fluency this is really important. Repeated readings also provide for confidence building, which is true at every age. As parents and teachers we want to promote reading for enjoyment at every age.

Parents are sometimes concerned, too, if their child only wants to read "easy" books or a specific series of books. Research shows that this tends to be a phase. If your children are enjoying the books, encourage this action and eventually they will move onto something else.

WHAT ABOUT PARENTS WHO DON'T HAVE TIME FOR STRUCTURED READING WITH THEIR CHILDREN?

As much as you can, listen to audio books which help build vocabulary and comprehension. Engage them in conversation. Ask them about their friends and why they like them. Ask them to talk about current events. Talking and processing help stimulate the brain for reading.

For those parents who can't sit down with their children regularly, remember that even reading one page every now and then is positive. Visit the library often and allow your children to pick any books that look to be of interest. They will come to see the library as a special place.

DID YOU KNOW?

The NEA hosts an annual Read Across America challenge. Visit nea.org/readacrossamerica for ideas on how to bring this program to your school.