



Growing Our Readers

Volume IX: How to Foster a Love of Reading

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Learning to read is a foundational milestone in a child's life. Each year new research continues to show its compelling importance. Reading increases your vocabulary and writing skills, deepens your understanding and insight, expands your imagination, raises your happiness, improves your overall health and even boosts your memory. Here are a few tips on how you can develop lifelong reading habits and foster your child's love of reading.



1. READ



The first step to helping children love reading is to actually have them READ! The more they are exposed to books and have opportunities to read, they will begin to see the value of reading.

It is especially important to make sure we provide children with time to read for pleasure versus only as part of an assignment. As adults, we'd enjoy reading less if we always had to answer questions or write a response about the book - and it's the same for students!

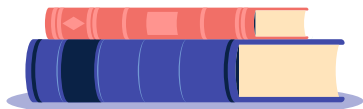
2. Model Reading Behaviors

Children need to see us reading. We can model how fluent reading looks/sounds and how reading can help us. Not only that, if we share our excitement about books, they'll get excited too!

D.E.A.R Time (Drop Everything And Read) can be a part of your family routine. Find time when everyone in your household can celebrate D.E.A.R Time together!

Going on a trip? Bring an audio book and listen to the book together in the car or plane.

Read together! As children are learning to read, partner with them and share the reading. Take turns reading pages. Children will build their reading skills while listening to the fluent reading that you model for them.



3. Create an Inviting Space



I don't know about you, but I cannot read unless my feet are all curled up beside me in a chair. Isn't that the very definition of "curl up with a good book?" Children are the same as us. They are more likely to enjoy reading if they are comfy.

Identify places in your home that are comfy for reading. Places may include a cozy chair, a quiet room in your home, the couch, a bean bag chair or inside a tent. Think about the colors, lighting, seating, textures, book display, and storage. Stock your reading area with a variety of reading materials.



4. Introduce Your Child to New Text

Part of modeling is introducing children to a wide variety of texts. Choose books that represent different genres and types of texts. Some children prefer audio books or graphic novels to the standard chapter books. But they'll never know what books they prefer if they don't know what options exist.

Genres include mystery, sci-fi, humor, informational, fantasy, and biographies. Books come in the format of picture books, chapter books, novels, comic books, magazines, audio books, and interactive e-books.

Sometimes all it takes is finding the right book to foster a child's love of reading. That one book/genre/author/series may open the door to other texts they enjoy reading.

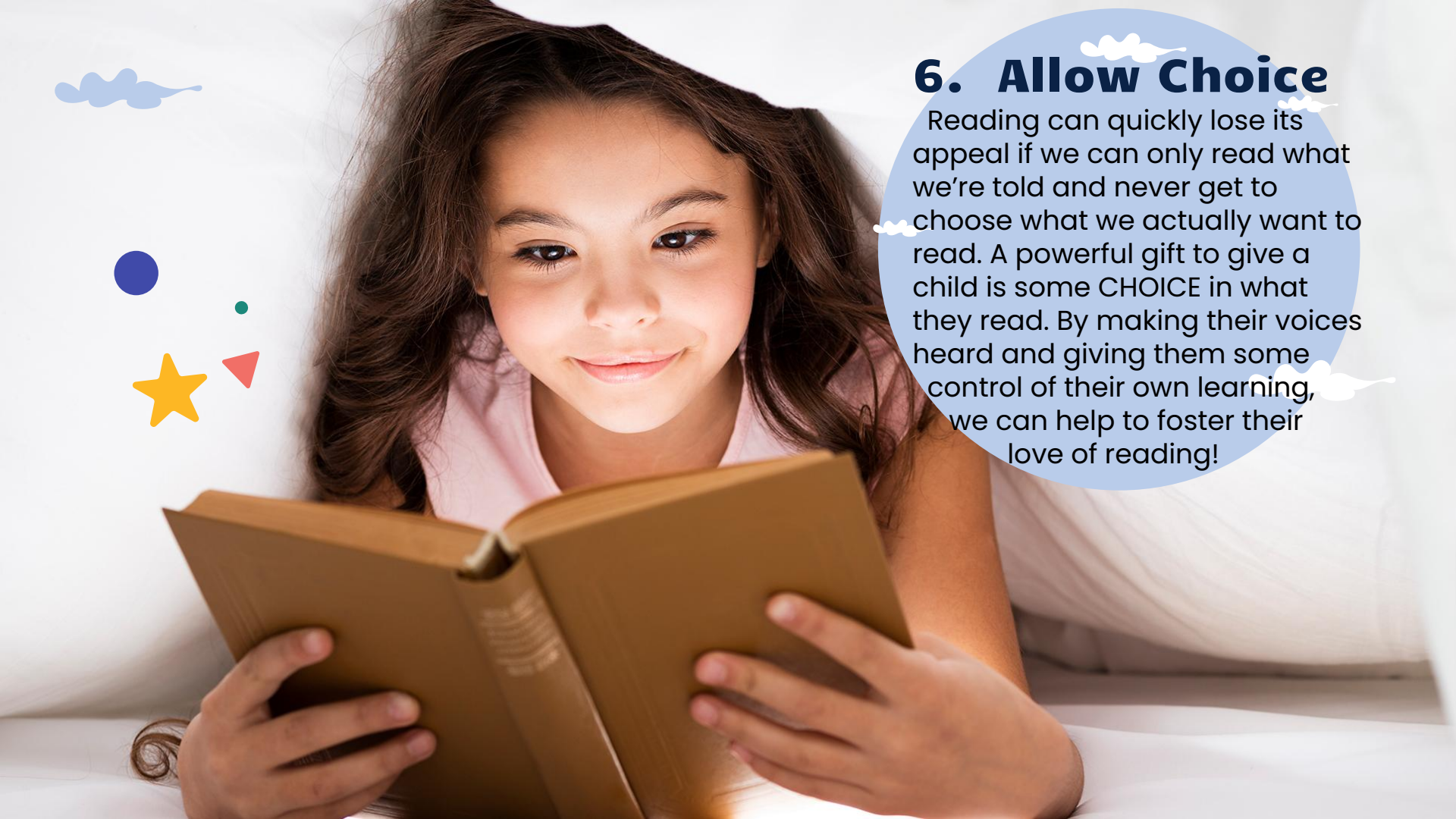


5. Pay Attention to our Child's Interests



Once you identify your child's interests, you can provide book recommendations based on their interests.

Aren't we as adults more motivated to read something that interests us versus something we are required to read?



6. Allow Choice

Reading can quickly lose its appeal if we can only read what we're told and never get to choose what we actually want to read. A powerful gift to give a child is some CHOICE in what they read. By making their voices heard and giving them some control of their own learning, we can help to foster their love of reading!



7. Shop For Books

Along with providing children with choice, allow them opportunities to shop for books they want online or in the Scholastic Book Order forms.

Children can also “shop” for books at the public or school library.

Book Swap: Looking for what to read next? Have kids swap books with a friend to discover peer favorites!

You can even download a few podcasts about books [here](#).



8. Talk About Books

Part of the joy of reading is the connections we make to the text. It is especially rewarding to share those connections with others! Hence why book clubs are so popular with adults. Organize a parent- child book club! Let the kids take the lead in choosing the book.

Integrate book talks into your everyday family living. Talk about your favorite children's book and ask your child, "What is your favorite book? Why?"

By providing children a chance to have authentic dialogue about a text it can foster their love of reading.



9. Support Your Child's Interest in...

1. Favorite Author

If your child has enjoyed a book by a certain author, help him or her find another book by the same author.

2. Book Series:

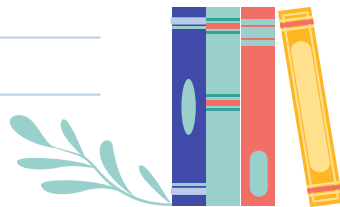
Is your child getting hooked in a book series? If so, encourage them to see the series through.

3. Read the book first

Great books are often turned into movies. Start a family tradition of reading the book together before watching the movie version. Talk about the changes that were made in the movie and which version you preferred.

4. Learn More About the Author:

Research the author online and learn more about that person. Notice what you have in common with the author.



10. Help Your Child Feel Successful at Reading

Many times the reason a child doesn't enjoy reading is because it is hard for them.

- Ensure your child is reading a text at a level that is appropriate. The five finger rule can help determine if a text is too easy, too hard or just right.



11. Build Background Knowledge

If children already know about the content of the text, it'll be easier and more enjoyable for them to read and comprehend.

Before reading a text:

1. Show photographs or video clips of the subject. Multimedia can introduce children to words and concepts in a highly motivating way.

2. Connect the topic to something your child already knows about- try using analogies (ex. Bird is to feather as dog is to.....fur)

3. Give children puzzlers, such as, "Is an artichoke a type of fruit?" Then ask why. Puzzlers help children think outside of the immediate context and consider the meaning behind the contrasts and comparisons.

