

Growing Our Readers: Building Strong Reading Habits

**A Parent's Guide to Supporting Reading at Home
Volume: XII**

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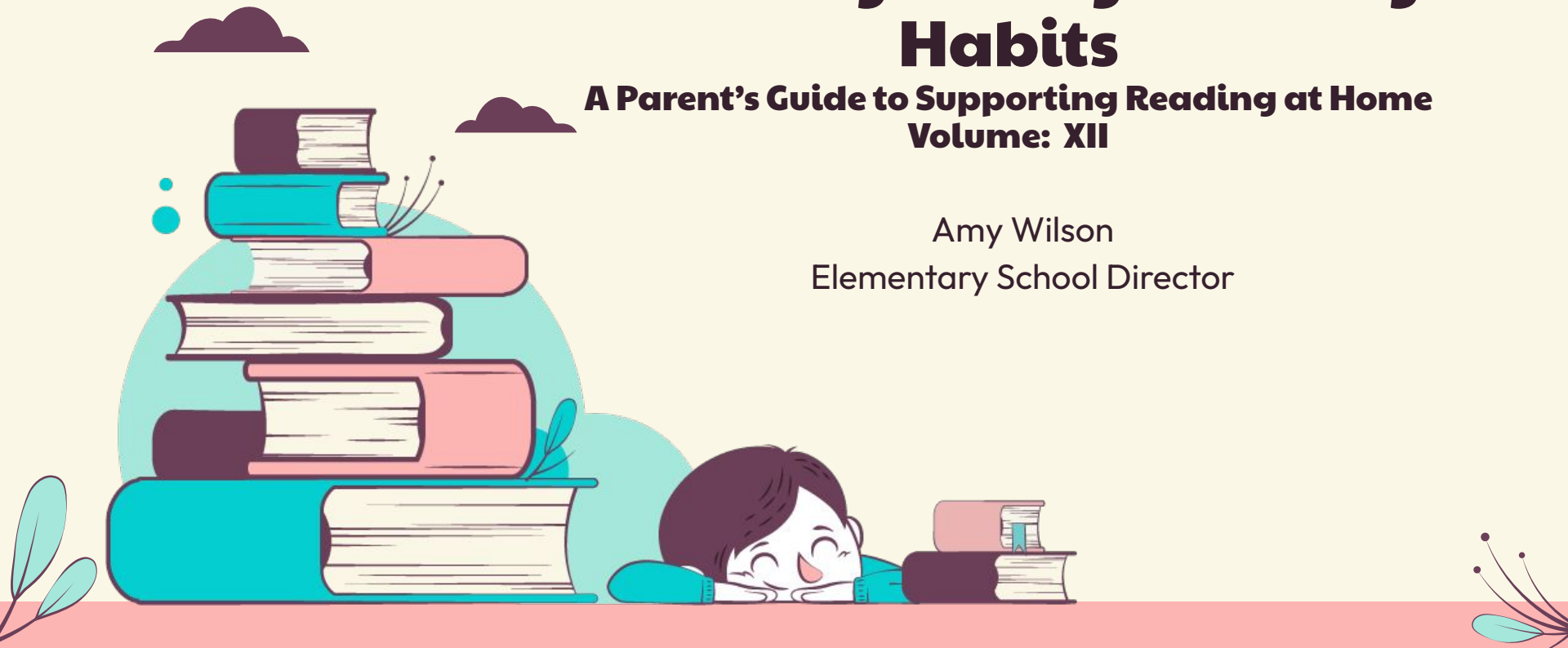




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Why Reading Matters!

Reading.....

- Builds vocabulary and language skills
- Improves focus and comprehension
- Strengthens imagination and empathy
- Sets the foundation for academic success



Our Focus

- How to support reading by grade level
- How to motivate reluctant readers
- Where to find free and engaging books



Kindergarten & First Grade Readers



What Reading Looks Like in K-1

- Learning letters and sounds
- Recognizes and uses “word families” (words that share certain letters and may also rhyme, for example: *bat*, *hat*, *rat*, *sat*).
- Recognizing sight (heart) words
- Beginning to read simple (decodable) books
- Listening to read-alouds and retelling stories
- Correctly answers questions about stories read aloud.
- Makes predictions based on illustrations or portions of stories.
- Connects information and events in texts to life and life to text experiences.

How Parents Can Help

- Read aloud daily, even 10 minutes makes a difference
- Play rhyming, sound, and letter games
- Practice blending sounds into words. Ask “Can you guess what this word is? m - o - p.” Hold each sound longer than normal.
- Use picture books to build vocabulary
- Let your child “read” by looking at pictures and retelling the story
- Go ahead and read your child’s favorite book for the 100th time! As you read, pause and ask your child about what is going on in the book.
- Celebrate small wins: “You read that word!”

Second & Third Grade Readers



What Reading Looks Like in Grades 2–3

- Reading longer texts independently
- Using phonics strategies and decoding new words
- Reading multisyllabic words
- Understanding the meaning of the root word, prefix and suffix
- Answering questions and making predictions
- Developing fluency and comprehension

How Parents Can Help

- Ask questions during and after reading (“What do you think will happen next?”)
- Let them choose their own books (even comics!)
- Read a page, they read a page
- Keep a small reading log or sticker chart to show progress
- Use audiobooks alongside print books to boost confidence
- Talk about everyday activities to build your child’s background knowledge, which is crucial to listening and reading comprehension.

Fourth & Fifth Grade Readers



What Reading Looks Like in Grades 4–5

- Reading to learn, not just learning to read
- Reading multisyllabic words
- Understanding the meaning of the root word, prefix and suffix
- Building critical thinking and analysis
- Exploring different genres (fiction, nonfiction, poetry, etc.)
- Comparing texts and expressing opinions



How Parents Can Help

- Have thoughtful conversations about books
- Show your child how to summarize a story in a few sentences or how to make predictions about what might happen next. Both strategies help a child comprehend and remember.
- Model your own reading habits
- Encourage reading before screen time
- Explore book series, graphic novels, or interest-based texts
- Visit the library or set up a home reading nook

Motivating Reluctant Readers

Strategies That Work

- **Choice is key:** Let kids pick what they want to read
- **Make it fun:** Reading games, scavenger hunts, or themed nights
- **Use interests:** Sports, animals, Minecraft, jokes, etc.
- **Find the reading and writing in everyday things.** Take the time to show your child ways that adults use reading and writing every day. Grocery lists, notes to the teacher, maps, and cooking all involve important reading and writing skills.
- **Talk, talk, talk.** A child's vocabulary grows through rich conversations with others. No matter your child's age, narrate what you're doing, talk in full sentences, and sprinkle your conversations with interesting words.
- **Celebrate effort, not perfection**
- **Buddy reading** with siblings or parents
- **Graphic novels and audiobooks** count too!





Free Resources for Reading Material

Online Reading Resources

-  **Epic!** – Free during school hours
-  **Storyline Online** – Celebrities read books aloud
-  **Unite for Literacy** – Free picture books with narration
-  **Open Library** – Thousands of free eBooks
-  **Libby/OverDrive** – Use your public library card for free eBooks and audiobooks



Local and School Resources

- Your child's classroom and school library
- Public library storytimes and reading challenges
- Book swaps or Little Free Libraries in your neighborhood
- Ask your child's teacher about leveled readers or take-home books



A top-down view of numerous books of various colors (red, green, blue, gold) arranged in a large circle on a light gray surface. In the center of this circle is a light pink rectangular box with a thin black border, containing the text 'Final Tips' and a bulleted list. In the bottom-left corner of the image, there is a small teal-colored graphic of a plant with three leaves.

Final Tips

- Make reading part of your **daily routine**
- Create a cozy, quiet reading space
- Be patient—reading confidence grows with practice
- Stay involved: Talk about books and show interest
- Your encouragement makes a huge difference!

Please fill out this [brief survey](#) to help us better serve your child's needs. We thank you for your feedback!

