



Parent Academy Raising Readers at Home



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Welcome

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Goals for Tonight

- Understand why reading at home matters
- Learn simple, effective reading routines
- Get practical tips you can use tonight



Why Reading at Home Matters

Children who read at home regularly:

- Build stronger vocabulary
- Improve comprehension and fluency
- Develop confidence and a love of reading

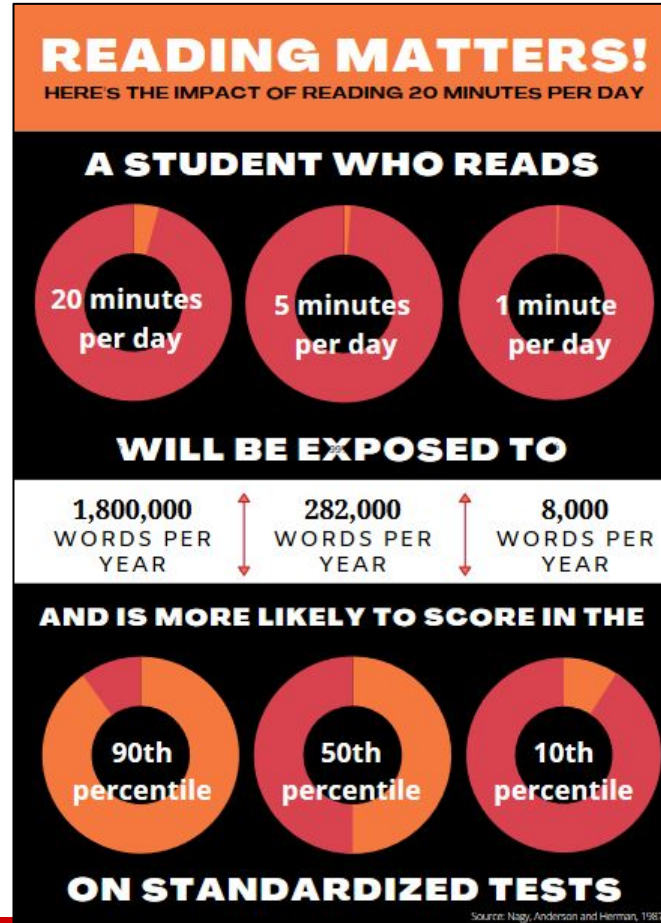
Reading together builds connection and conversation!

Research shows that early reading stimulates brain development. According to a study by the American Academy of Pediatrics, children who are read to regularly have significantly more activity in the parts of the brain that support language, literacy, and imagination.

Just 15–20 minutes a day makes a big difference!



Why Reading at Home Matters



Learning Words from Context:
Nagy, Herman, and Anderson, 1987

What Does “Raising a Reader” Really Mean?

Raising a reader is about:

- Enjoyment, not perfection
- Talking about books
- Exposure to many kinds of texts
- Building habits—not pressure



You do not need to have any special skills to help your child read.



Reading Looks Different by Grade Band

Grades K-1

- Listening to stories
- Learning letters and sounds
- Talking about pictures



Grades 2-3

- Reading aloud and reading together
- Retelling stories
- Beginning chapter books



Grades 4-5

- Independent reading
- Discussing ideas and themes
- Exploring different genres



The Power of Reading Aloud (All Grades!)

Reading aloud:

- Builds listening comprehension
- Models fluent reading
- Exposes children to rich vocabulary



Yes, read aloud even after your child can read independently!



How to Read With Your Child

Before Reading

Before you read
Get set for success!

Reading aloud can be a lifelong joy –

Start at birth and continue, sharing longer and more complex stories as your child grows.

Read widely – Books, comics, magazines, newspapers, blogs, newsletters. Read about familiar topics or something new.

Visit the library – Lots of stuff there and it's all free!

Find the time and place that works for you – and stick with it. Before bed is great, but other times and places work too!

Make it a habit – Have something on hand to read all the time!

- Look at the cover
- Make predictions



How to Read With Your Child

Simple Questions to Ask

Before Reading

- Can you look at the pictures and predict what will happen in the book?
- What makes you think that?
- What does the cover tell you about this book?
- What are you curious to find out about this book?
- What do you want to learn?
- Does the topic or story relate to you or our family? How?



How to Read With Your Child

During Reading

While you read
Enjoy the ride!

Set realistic goals – Your reading time will get longer the more you read.

Be expressive! – Use emotion to bring the story to life.

Vary your rhythm and pace – Have fun with the language in the book!

Engage with your listener – Look for details in illustrations, ask questions, discuss.

Expect some fidgeting – Your child doesn't have to be perfectly still to be listening. Give them something to do.

- Pause and talk
- Ask questions



How to Read With Your Child

Simple Questions to Ask

During Reading

- What do you think will happen next?
- When you were reading this part, what were you picturing in your head?
- Can you predict how the story will end?
- What would you have done if you were the character?
- How would you have felt if you were the character?
- Can you put what you've read into your own words?



How to Read With Your Child

After Reading

After you read
What's next?

Make connections – Find ways that the story connects with your child's life.

Find your next book – Look for...

- another book by the same author or illustrator
- a nonfiction book about a topic you want to know more about
- the next book in a series
- a book with similar characters or themes
- something completely different!

Your librarian is the key to finding the next great read aloud for your family.

- Retell the story
- Share favorite parts



How to Read With Your Child

Simple Questions to Ask

After Reading

- Why do you think the author wrote this book?
- What was the moral (or lesson) in the story?
- If you could change one thing in the story, what would it be?
- Can you retell the story in order?
- Is there a character that you could relate to in the story? How are you alike?
- Did you like the book? Why or why not?



SIMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK WHILE READING



BEFORE READING

Can you look at the pictures and predict what will happen in the book?

What makes you think that?

What does the cover tell you about this book?

What are you curious to find out about this book?

What do you want to learn?

Does the topic or story relate to you or our family? How?



DURING READING

What do you think will happen next?

When you were reading this part, what were you picturing in your head?

Can you predict how the story will end?

What would you have done if you were the character?

How would you have felt if you were the character?

Can you put what you've read into your own words?



AFTER READING

Why do you think the author wrote this book?

What was the moral (or lesson) in the story?

If you could change one thing in the story, what would it be?

Can you retell the story in order?

Is there a character that you could relate to in the story? How are you alike?

Did you like the book? Why or why not?



ahway Public Schools

Together, we build strong readers and confident learners.

Simple Questions to Ask While Reading



Supporting Struggling Readers at Home

- Take turns reading
- Read the same book more than once
- Use audiobooks + print together
- Praise effort, not speed

Focus on confidence, not correctness.



Building a Reading Routine That Works

- Choose a consistent time (bedtime, after dinner, morning)
- Start small: 10–15 minutes
- Create a cozy reading spot
- Let your child help choose books



Choosing the “Right” Books

Encourage:

- Books at your child’s interest level
- Fiction and nonfiction
- Graphic novels, magazines, poetry

If they love it—they’ll read it.



Encouraging Independent Reading

- Model reading yourself
- Talk about what YOU read
- Limit distractions during reading time
- Celebrate reading milestones



Reading Beyond Books

Reading includes:

- Recipes
- Directions
- Subtitles
- Menus
- Games and instructions



Everyday reading counts!



Common Parent Concerns

- “My child doesn’t like reading” → Try different formats
- “I don’t have much time” → Short, consistent routines matter
- “English isn’t my first language” → Read in any language



Take-Home Tips

July
17

Make It a Routine: Read together for 15–20 minutes each day at a consistent time.



Let Kids Choose: Any reading counts—picture books, comics, magazines, or graphic novels.



Reread Favorites: Familiar books build confidence, fluency, and expression.



Read Together: Take turns reading, read aloud, and talk about the story.



Use the Library: Free books, audiobooks, and digital resources for all ages.



Keep Books Visible: Store books where children can easily see and reach them.



Keep It Joyful: Focus on enjoyment, not perfection—praise effort and curiosity.



Talk About Books: Ask simple questions like “What was your favorite part?”



Any Language Counts: Reading together in any language builds strong literacy skills.



TIPS FOR RAISING READERS AT HOME

READING AT HOME HELPS CHILDREN BUILD CONFIDENCE, EXPAND THEIR VOCABULARY, AND DEVELOP A LOVE OF BOOKS. JUST 15–20 MINUTES A DAY MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE!

MAKE IT A ROUTINE

Read together for 15–20 minutes each day at a consistent time.

LET KIDS CHOOSE

Any reading counts—picture books, comics, magazines, and graphic novels included!

REREAD FAVORITES

Familiar books build fluency, confidence, and expression.

READ TOGETHER

Take turns reading, read aloud, and talk about the story.

USE THE LIBRARY

Free access to books, audiobooks, and digital reading resources.

KEEP BOOKS VISIBLE

Place books where children can easily see and reach them.

KEEP IT JOYFUL

Focus on enjoyment, not perfection. Praise effort and curiosity.

TALK ABOUT BOOKS

Ask simple questions like:

- What was your favorite part?
- Why do you think that happened?

ANY LANGUAGE COUNTS

Reading together in your home language builds strong literacy skills.



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Together, we build strong readers and confident learners.

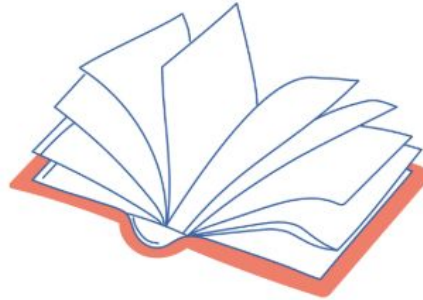
Tips for Raising Readers at Home



Reading Challenge

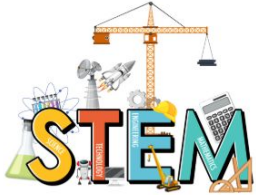
Reading Challenge Kick-off **January 22, 2026!**

Stay Tuned!



Future Parent Academy Nights

February 11, 2026



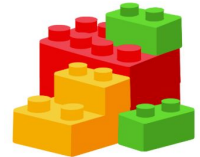
Math at Home and Family STEM Night

5:30 pm and 6:00 pm

March 25, 2026

Science at Home and Family Lego Night

5:30 pm and 6:00 pm



Resources

- [Read to Them Family Resource Page](#)
- [Tips for Raising Reader at Home Flyer](#)
- [25 Activities for Reading and Writing Fun](#)
- [10 Ways to Support Your Child's Literacy at Home](#)
- [Literacy Activities At Home](#)
- [Rahway Public Library](#)



Questions?

Thank you for supporting your child's
reading journey!

Rahway Public Schools

Together, we build strong readers and confident learners.

