

Volume XV

# Growing Our Readers: Building Reading Stamina

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# Table of contents

**01**

## **Introduction**

Why Reading Stamina Matters  
Research  
Beneficial for Test Taking

**03**

## **Age Specific Strategies**

Kindergarten/First Grade  
Second/Third Grade  
Fourth/Fifth Grade  
Tips to Build Test Stamina

**02**

## **Tips for Helping at Home**

General Tips for all  
Elementary Students

**04**

## **Monitor your Child's Progress**

Signs Your Child's Stamina is  
Growing  
When Reading Feels Like a  
Struggle



**01**

# Introduction

Why reading stamina matters  
The research says...  
Beneficial for Standardized Tests



# Building Lifelong Readers

Strong readers are built through consistent, meaningful reading practice over time. One important skill that supports lifelong reading success is reading stamina—a child’s ability to stay focused, engaged, and actively thinking while reading for longer periods.

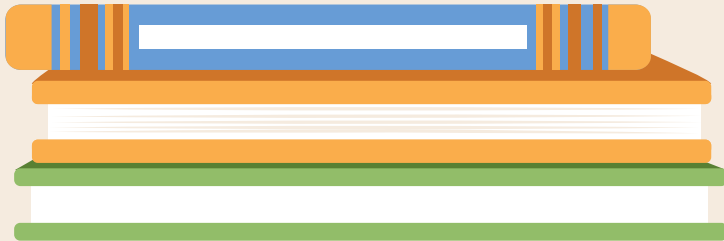




# Literacy Research Highlights ..

- students who read more frequently and for longer periods develop stronger comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency (Allington, 2012).
- the concept of “reading volume”—the amount of time spent actually reading—is one of the strongest predictors of reading achievement.
- according to Richard Allington and Lucy Calkins, students need extended, uninterrupted time with “just right” books to build both stamina and confidence.

Just like building physical endurance, reading stamina grows gradually with practice, encouragement, and the right conditions.



# Reading Stamina & Standardized Tests

Did you know that reading stamina

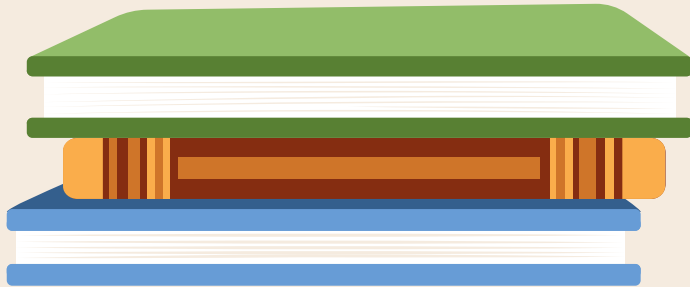
- \* helps students maintain focus during long testing periods
- \* reduces fatigue and improves comprehension under time constraints
- \* allows students to read complex texts carefully and efficiently
- \* supports confidence and persistence when questions are challenging



02

# Tips for Helping at Home

General Tips for all Elementary Age Students



# How can parents help at home?



- Create a consistent daily reading routine (same time each day helps build habits).
- Provide access to high-interest, “just right” books (not too hard, not too easy).
- Reduce distractions (turn off TV, quiet space).
- Encourage choice—students are more engaged when they pick their own books.
- Celebrate progress, not perfection.

03

# Age-Specific Strategies

Kindergarten & First Grade Students

Second & Third Grade Students

Fourth & Fifth Grade Students

Building Test Focused Stamina



# Kindergarten & First Grade Students

**Goal:** Build early engagement and enjoyment with books (5-15 minutes)

Young readers are developing foundational skills and attention spans.

## What does it look like?

- Looking at pictures, retelling stories, pretending to read
- Listening to read-alouds
- Short bursts of independent reading
- Reading decodable texts where words are mostly phonetic

## How can parents help?

Read aloud daily and model fluent reading

Practice “turn and talk”:

- “What do you think will happen next?”
- “What is your favorite part?”

Build stamina slowly:

- Start with 5 minutes and increase by 1-2 minutes over time

Use a reading buddy (stuffed animal, parent, sibling)

Praise effort: “*You stayed focused the whole time!*”

# Second & Third Grade Students

**Goal:** Increase independent reading stamina (15–30 minutes)

Students begin transitioning from learning to read → reading to learn.

## What does it look like?

- Sustained independent reading
- Beginning chapter books
- Thinking about characters, setting, problem/solution and plot

## How can parents help?

Set a timer for reading and gradually increase duration  
Encourage stopping only at natural breaks (end of chapter/page)

Ask comprehension questions:

- “What problem is the character facing?”
- “What do you think will happen next?”

Support book selection:

- If a child struggles with many words, the book may be too difficult

Model reading at home—let your child see you read

# Fourth & Fifth Grade Students

**Goal:** Strengthen endurance and deep comprehension (30–45+ minutes)

Students are expected to sustain attention and think critically about text.

## What does it look like?

- Reading longer chapter books and novels
- Tracking plots across multiple chapters
- Making inferences and connections

## How can parents help?

Encourage longer reading sessions with minimal interruptions

Teach simple strategies when focus fades:

- Take a quick break, then return
- Jot a quick note or thought while reading

Discuss reading more deeply:

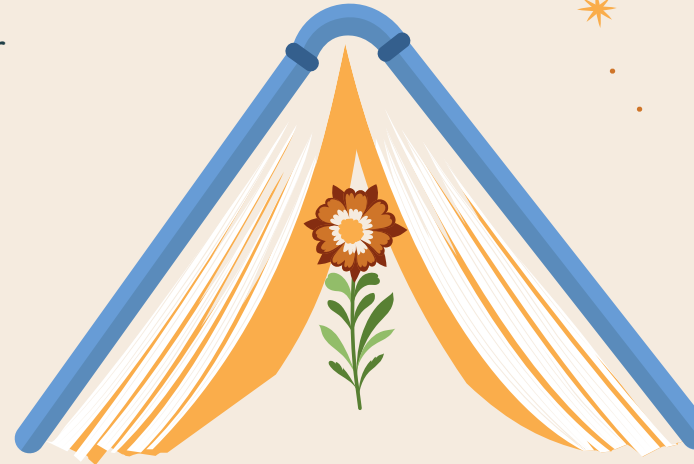
- “Why did the character make that choice?”
- “What is the theme or message?”

Encourage a reading log or goal setting

Introduce series books to maintain interest and momentum

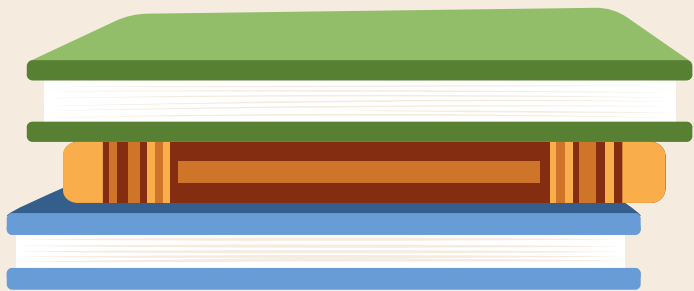
# Practical Tips for Parents to Build Test Focused Stamina

- Practice longer reading sessions gradually at home
- Simulate test conditions: quiet space, minimal distractions, limited breaks
- Teach children to pace themselves with a timer
- Encourage note-taking or highlighting key points while reading
- Discuss texts afterwards to build comprehension and reflection
- Incorporate short comprehension quizzes for practice
- Balance practice with positive reinforcement and breaks



# Monitor Your Child's Progress

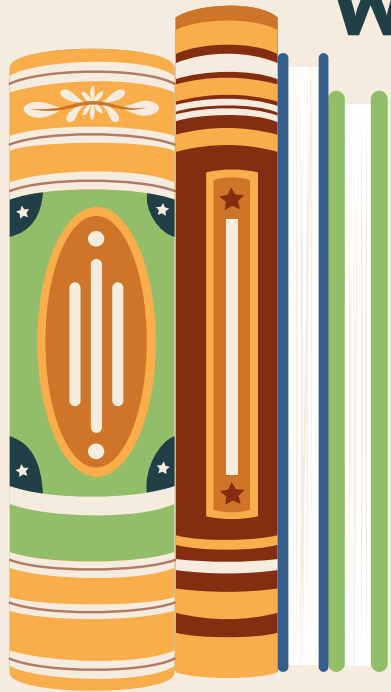
Signs Your Child's Stamina is Growing  
When Reading Feels Like a Struggle  
Motivating a Reluctant Reader



# Signs Your Child's Stamina is Growing

- Reads for longer periods without reminders
- Stays focused and engaged
- Talks about books with excitement
- Transitions easily into reading time

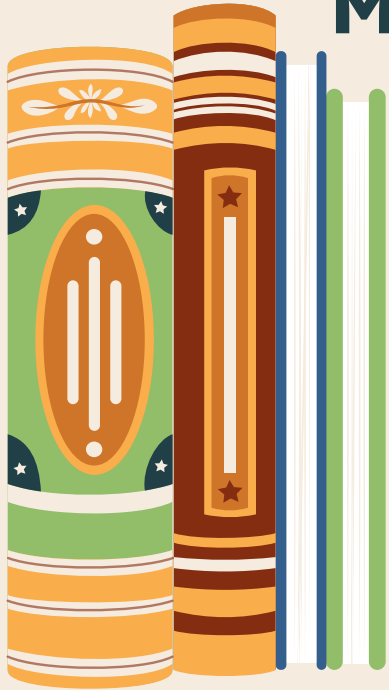




# When Reading Feels Like a Struggle

If your child avoids reading or tires quickly:

- Shorten reading time and rebuild gradually
- Let them choose easier or more engaging books
- Partner read- child reads a page, parent reads a page
- Mix in audiobooks (paired with print when possible)
- Keep the tone positive—avoid turning reading into a punishment



# Motivating a Reluctant Reader

- Let your child choose books they find interesting
- Incorporate graphic novels, comics, or audiobooks to spark interest
- Set small, achievable goals with rewards for progress
- Read together and make it social: buddy reading, family reading time
- Celebrate effort and progress, not just completion
- Connect reading to hobbies, games, or favorite topics
- Use technology or apps that make reading fun and interactive

# Final Thought for Families

Building reading stamina is a journey, not a race. The goal is to nurture a child who not only *can* read for extended periods—but *wants* to.

Your support at home makes a tremendous difference. Even a few extra minutes of reading each day can lead to lasting growth.



# We value your feedback!

Please fill out this [brief survey](#) to help us better tailor these resources for you and your child.

