



Activities to Promote Reading at Home Grades 6 - 8

Model positive reading habits

- Let your children see you read for pleasure.
- Share your excitement for reading with your kids. Talk about what you are reading and why you're reading it.
- Give books as presents for holidays or as rewards for special accomplishments.

Make reading part of regular family activities

- Schedule time into your daily/weekly schedule for the whole family to sit down and read.
- Take a trip to the local bookstore, or an online bookstore, and shop for books as a family.
- Visit the library as a family; help each other select books to read.
- Attend readings by favorite authors at local bookstores and libraries. If possible, purchase the book and let your child get the author's signature.
- Encourage older children to read to younger children (siblings, cousins, neighbors, etc.).

Read aloud to each other

- Ask your child to read his/her book aloud to you. If they seem resistant, ask them to read a smaller section such as a paragraph, or page from their book.
- Read aloud interesting articles from newspapers, magazines, or online sites. "Listen to this, the Mayor thinks we should..."
- Incorporate these read alouds into your daily/weekly routines: while doing the dishes, making food, etc.
- Read aloud an instruction manual, or ask your child to read it aloud to you, as you put together a new item in your home.

Create a reading environment in your home

- Set up a comfortable space in your home for reading, free from distractions like TV/computer/games/phones. Placing pillows or cushions on the floor is an easy way to make your regular space into a reading space.
- Have reading materials (books, magazines, newspapers, etc.) throughout your home and easily accessible to your children.
- Subscribe to a magazine and have the magazine sent directly to your child. Some popular magazines include: Sports Illustrated for Kids, National Geographic Junior, National Geographic, J-14, GL, Boys' Life, Discovery Girls, Latina, Latinitas (online), Newsweek, Time, Time for Kids, J-14, and Muse.
- Use reading as a vehicle for learning. Research and read about topics that come up naturally in conversation. ("I wonder when the subway was built—let's look it up.")
- Ask relatives and friends that don't live near you to send letters or emails to your child.
- Remind your child to bring a book on public transportation and when they anticipate having to wait in a line (like at the doctor's office).
- When traveling, buy bookmarks as souvenirs (they're inexpensive and promote reading!)

Talk about books

- At dinner, or other informal times, ask your children about the book they are reading.
- Use reading questions to have deeper conversations about books.
- Share your childhood memories about reading and books. Talk about your own favorite books and authors from middle school, your struggles/successes with reading, etc.

Provide books aligned to your child's interests

- Notice what your child is most interested in reading and provide them with more reading materials on that topic/genre.
- Encourage relatives to give books as gifts. Suggest topics in which your child is interested.
- Ask a teacher or librarian for book suggestions—they usually know the new and popular reading material for children of different ages.

Help adolescents balance reading with their active social lives:

- Set aside a span of time every night that is just for reading (turn the phone and TV off).
- Make a schedule with your child to help plan out when reading can be done (the bus ride on the way to karate lessons is a great time for reading).
- Buy a couple copies of a book and encourage your child to invite his/her best friend to read it together.

