



Just for Parents: Open a World of Possible Reading Resources & Tips

Open a World of Possible is an initiative to help children become lifelong independent readers –and as parents, you can be champions for bringing the power and joy of reading into your children’s lives. Scholastic has many reading resources and tips for parents. Here’s what you can do to Open a World of Possible:

- › Check out the [Raise a Reader blog](#) daily to find tips for developing reading skills at home, book recommendations, reading activities, and more great ways to support reading for kids of all ages.
- › Create an inviting book nook that’ll inspire your kid to get lost in a story! Check out the Aug./Sept. issue of *Scholastic Parent & Child* magazine for more [expert advice about creating spaces in your home that inspire kids to read, discover, and use their imagination.](#)
- › Sign up for the [Scholastic Parents Newsletter](#). Every month you’ll receive children’s book recommendations, expert reading tips, and at-home activities that inspire a love of reading and learning.
- › Download the [Educator’s Guide](#) (with parent-specific tips!) to the free ebook, [Open a World of Possible: Real Stories About the Joy and Power of Reading.](#)
- › Find [book lists and recommendations](#) for children at every age! With curated lists of books based on passion topics, relevant age-based themes, genres, favorite characters, and award winners – there’s a book for every age and interest.
- › [Join our parent community on Facebook](#) to find daily inspiration, practical tips, LOTS of great books, expert reading advice and parent-to-parent input on reading at every age and stage.



Here are our top five reading tips for parents with children at any age:

- 1. Fill your home with books and reading materials** – magazines, newspapers, comic books, how-to guides, or reading materials that will tap your children's interests and passions. Make sure your kids have lots of opportunities to grab a book or magazine for road trips, picnics at the park, days at the beach, and all the other days in between, too!
- 2. Be a reading role model for your children.** Let them see you reading every day.
- 3. Read aloud to your child** – kids are never too old for read-alouds! Kids love to be read to and the longer you can read to them, the more you will show your kids that reading is fun and entertaining and something to choose to do because you love it. It also has the added benefit of building their vocabularies and developing background knowledge they will need to understand meaning and texts when they read on their own. Most importantly, it inspires a lifetime love for reading! Fiction, non-fiction, news, poetry...it all counts!
- 4. Let your kids be in charge of what they read.** Studies show that 91% of kids aged 6 to 17 are more likely to finish a book that they choose themselves. Allow your kids to choose the books and topics that interest them. Exerting too much control over the content of your child's reading risks fueling the perception that reading is a chore. It is important to know your child's reading level (ask his teacher if you're unsure) to help him make a choice that will avoid the frustration that comes from books that are over his head – but let him choose.
- 5. Build reading into your child's daily schedule** – starting from [birth](#). As they head off to school, camp, sports practice each day, be sure they pack a favorite book for down time or travel time. For little ones, always have a book nearby when you're on the go and they are in the car or stroller. Try a morning reading routine – 30 minutes before the busy day starts or as a great way to unwind at the end of long day. By creating reading routines at home -- and on the go -- the habit of reading, and independently choosing reading, will grow with them over time.

We also have tips to Open a World of Possible with reading at any age –check out our best tips for a variety of age groups below.

For a comprehensive guide to reading for every age, with “what to expect” at this particular stage of reading, suggested reading activities and book recommendations for that age, check out our Raise a Reader resources here:

- [Ages 0-2](#)
- [Ages 3-5](#)
- [Ages 6-7](#)
- [Ages 8-10](#)
- [Ages 11-13](#)



Top Tips for Ages 0-2:

1. Use Your Voice

Animal noises. Tongue-clicking. Raspberries. Songs! No one loves funny sound effects more than your baby does. Don't be afraid to go over the top with weird noises as you read. Your baby will start to imitate you, and your first "conversation" may ensue.

2. Visit the Library

Once your child can hold books on her own, bring her to your nearest library. Offer her a selection of books and see which ones she picks up, and which ones she pays attention to for the longest time. You can check out her favorites (at this age, stick with board books) and enjoy them together at home.

3. Familiar Faces

Find a plastic-coated baby's photo album that you can put pictures into. Your baby will love leafing through pictures of her loved ones. Be sure to include lots of pictures of your baby, too. As you "read" the photo album, tell her stories of the fun things she has done with the person she's looking at. Pretty soon, she will be able to leaf through the book and identify every picture.

4. Look it Up

You are driving in the car and pass a construction site. As a jackhammer rips through the pavement, a backhoe lifts dirt from a pit. From the car seat in the back, you can hear your son go wild. This is a kid who needs a book about construction vehicles! Whether your little one demonstrates an interest in dogs, flowers, or balls, there will be a book with pictures that will fascinate him.

5. Be a Role Model

Your baby is playing on his own. You're eyeing that magazine you had to put down when he got up from his nap. Your baby is happily amusing himself with a toy. Feeling too guilty to read while your baby is awake? Grab that magazine and relax! One of the top tips for building literacy in kids is to be a role model and show him how you love to read, too. You may be surprised to find your baby leafing through a pile of books by himself as well.

Top Tips for Ages 3-5:

1. Fun With Letters

Children enjoy copying words out onto paper. Write your child's name and have him copy it himself with alphabet stamps, stickers, or magnets. Encourage him to "write" his own words using the letters. Your child will write letters backwards, spell seemingly randomly, and may hold his marker strangely — it's "all good" at this age when a child wants to communicate in writing of any kind.

2. What Word Starts With...

The letter-sound connection is one of the first steps to reading. Play a guessing game about your child's favorite words. What letter does "p-p-p-pirate" start with? How about "M-m-mommy"? Once your child guesses one correctly, see how many words you can come up with together that start with the same letter.

3. Your Child the Author

Three-year-olds can be chatty, and by age 4, it can be hard to get a word in edgewise. Take advantage of your child's interest in talking by writing a book together. Start out with something simple, like describing a fun day at a park or visiting friends. Staple a few pieces of paper together, and write out one or two of your child's sentences on each page. Then, read the story to her and let her illustrate it.

4. A Different Way to Read

Reading to your child is great — but what's even better is something called "dialogic" reading. That's when you ask your child to participate in the story. Before turning the page, ask your child what he thinks will happen next. You can also ask your child what other way the book could have ended. For example, with the classic book *Corduroy*, what would have happened if the little girl hadn't come back to take *Corduroy* home from the toy store?

5. Take Letters Outside

Kids are tactile and enjoy few activities more than poking things with a stick. Many preschools encourage kids to make letters out of Play Doh or draw them into sand or clay. The next time you are out in the park, or at the beach, or in the snow, use your surroundings to play with letters. Take turns writing letters in the snow, dirt, or sand.

6. Just the Facts

Try getting your child interested in nonfiction books. At the library or bookstore, find books on your child's favorite topics. Cars, dinosaurs, dogs, and other topics are covered in on-level books with plenty of pictures, designed especially for kids this age.

Top Tips for Ages 6-7:

7. Taking Turns

At 6-7, many children are interested in chapter books that are a bit more challenging than they can handle on their own. Let your child pick a book she would love to read, and take turns reading paragraphs or pages to each other. If your child gets tired of reading, you can always read aloud as she follows along. You'll enjoy talking about the characters and plot of the story that you are experiencing together.

8. Double Diary

As your child's writing skills increase, consider keeping a double diary with her. You can write her a special note every day or every week, and she can write a note to you as well. A Brooklyn artist took this idea to creative heights with his collaborative art and writing project with his son. Check out their work at www.wandermonster.com.

9. Book Review

Make reading rewarding by asking for your child's ideas and opinions about books. You can even help your child create a video "book talk" about a favorite book. Just turn on the camera, and ask him to say the title and author and to describe the story. Then, ask him to explain what he did and didn't like about the book. When he doesn't know what to say, ask him a question like, "What was your favorite part?" or "What could the characters do if the story kept going?"

10. Shopping Adventure

Shopping with kids can feel like a chore. But if your child feels like he is contributing to a team effort, you may be surprised by his change in attitude. Ask your child to help you create a shopping list. Then, at the store, ask him to find the item and cross off each item as it is put in the cart. He'll have to read stores' signs and product packaging to find the items.

Top Tips for 8-10:

1. Audio Books

Share audio stories with your kids. Pass the hours you spend in the car with a book on CD. Pick a funny story read by an actor with a talent for voices — [The Fantastic Mr. Fox](#) read by author Roald Dahl is a home run as are the Harry Potter audiobooks read by Jim Dale.

2. Magazine Subscriptions

Children can find magazines on almost any topic - sports, animals and nature, travel and more! Does your favorite magazine publish a kid-friendly version, such as [Scholastic News](#)? You can look at magazines online together, ask your child's teacher if their classroom subscribes to in-classroom magazines, or consider a home subscription – your child will enjoy getting mail addressed to him. Magazines are great reading material for new readers who are reading alone or with a parent. Offering your kids access to magazines at home is not only a novel way to get them to read, but it also hones their skills at reading non-fiction as well.

3. Board Games

Board games are a great way to firm up recognition of sight words, as well as spelling and vocabulary skills. Try favorites like *Scattergories*, *Password*, *Blurt*, *Boggle Jr.*, *Smartmouth*, *Scrabble*, *Snatch It*, *Apples to Apples*, and *Buzzword Junior*.

4. Joke Books

Reading can induce giggles! What 9-year-old doesn't appreciate a good pun? Find a book of jokes at a library or bookstore. Encourage your child to memorize a few of her favorites and entertain her friends and family.

Top Tips for Ages 11-13:

5. Book Club

Start a book club with your pre-teen/teen. Invite her to choose a book you'll each read, and then you choose the next one. You'll both be motivated to pick something the other will really enjoy. Don't shy away from books that your child picks. Showing an interest in her literary taste — whatever it might be — is a sign of respect and reinforces your interest.

6. The Behind-the-Scenes Story

As your teen looks forward into his own future, he might start to identify with various celebrities. He may want to become a pro ball player, an artist, a musician, a scientist. Help him find age-appropriate biographies so he can learn all the facts about what it takes to succeed in the fields he is interested in.

7. Let Them Steer the Way

Planning a family vacation? Make choices on destinations together and then let your child help you make the plans. Ask her to research accommodations, possible driving routes, bus or plane schedules, places you want to be sure to visit or stop along the way. She will take pleasure in helping to make decisions for the family. You can translate this activity into research for buying a new television or finding a new public park to visit or local restaurant to try.