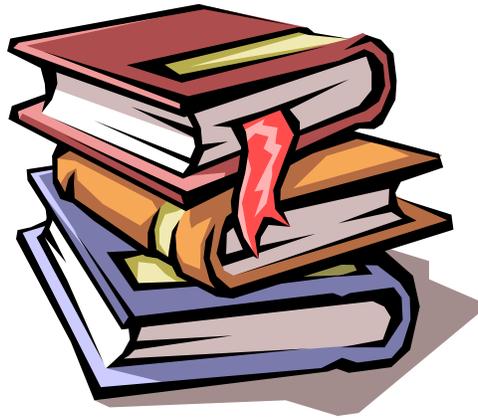


10 Ways Families Can Help Their Children Become Better Readers...



Richard Allington, a national expert on literacy spent a decade studying exemplary elementary classrooms. What Professor Allington learned about effective reading instruction is that **in order for students in grade 8 and beyond to read at grade level, they must read an average of three to four hours a day.** St. Francis students read an average of two hours a day. This includes independent reading, and all other class time reading (textbooks, primary source materials, technical reading, etc.). Therefore it is vital that all students read a minimum of 30-45 minutes a day at home, during the weekdays, and even more on the weekends. This might sound a bit much; however, if you think for a moment about the time your child spends watching television, playing video games, listening to music, and texting each day. One or two hours of reading per day is not much time at all to ask of them...

A 2004 study by the American Academy for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry states the following frightening facts:

- ✚ Children in the United States watch an average of three to four hours of television a day
- ✚ By the time of high school graduation, a student will have spent more time watching television than they have in the classroom
- ✚ Time spent watching television takes away from important activities such as reading, school work, playing, exercise, family interaction, and social development
- ✚ Children who watch a lot of television are likely to: have lower grades in school; read fewer books; exercise less; be overweight.

10 Ways Families Can Help Their Children Become Better Readers...

1. Make sure your child reads every single night for a minimum of 30-45 minutes.

- No exceptions
- The best way to become a better reader is to read more

2. Read as a family.

- Model reading
- Read to or with your child
- Have older children read to younger ones
- Read the same book as your child
- Create a quiet space
- Establish a set time to read
- Establish a family book club

3. Ask your child about what s/he is reading and discuss the book or article with him/her.

- What is happening “so far” in the book/article?
- What do you “predict” will happen next or later?
- What does the book remind you of?
- Who is your favorite character and why?
- What is the message or author’s purpose?
- Why did the author write the book?

4. Have reading materials around the house and in your child’s room.

- Books
- Magazines
- Newspapers
- Build up your child’s library
 - Barnes and Noble
 - Public Library discard sale
 - Scholastic Book Club
 - Give books and magazines as gifts

5. Visit the library or bookstores with your child.

- Use bookstores as libraries
- Make an afternoon of it
- Make sure everyone has a library card

6. Encourage your child to learn and use new words.

Learn new words from...

- Reading
- Television
- Music
- Movies
- Advertisement and signs
- Conversations

Own a dictionary and thesaurus that are age and level appropriate

7. Find ways to integrate reading into other fun activities that interest your child.

- Movies, music, television
- Sports, cooking and other hobbies
- Travel and vacation

8. Track reading and establish incentives.

- Set goals:
 - Nightly
 - Weekly
 - Number of books
- Keep list and charts
- Reward completion and progress
- Praise your child for reading

9. Understand your child's favorite types and genres of books and his/her appropriate level.

- Look for trends in your child's reading: favorite genres, authors, topics, etc.
- Remind your child that independent reading should be at a comfortable reading level
- Allow your child to abandon books that do not seem to be a good fit

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