



Literacy Tips for Families

ISLAND CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Supporting Students at Home with Reading



Help Your Child Understand What He or She Read

Explain things

Explain to your child how things work and what things are. Talk about music, politics, sports, history, or whatever interests you both. Conversations with adults help children build understanding.

Ask questions

Ask questions that make your child think about what he or she just read. Say something like, "Why do you think he did that?" or "What's happening now?"

Show your child new people, places, and things

As much as you can, give your child new experiences. Take him or her along with you to meet new people, go to different places, and see new things. Talk about what you see and do. Open up your child's experiences so he or she can draw on that knowledge when reading.

Talk about different word meanings

Play games with words. You can talk about how jam means something you put on toast as well as cars stuck in traffic. How many other words can your child think of that sound the same but have different meanings and spelling? When kids know what a word means, they have less difficulty when reading it.

Use a children's dictionary

Buy or borrow a children's dictionary. Show your child how to use it to look up the meaning of words. If you have access to the Internet, your child can also go to a [talking dictionary](#) to hear how a word is pronounced (in English).

Teach your child comprehension tricks

Show your child some tricks to better understand what he or she has seen or read. Four of these tricks are: summarize, predict, context, and monitor. Try these with your child with a TV show or sports game first. Then try it with a book. For example:

Ask your child to retell a story in just a few sentences (summarize).

Ask him or her to guess what might happen next (predict).

Show your child how to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word based on other words and pictures around it (context).

Explain how to pause while reading in order to ask himself or herself whether he or she knows what is happening, and if not, to re-read the sentence again (monitor).

Knowing how to do these things will help your child better understand what he or she reads!

English Language Learner Corner

Reading with elementary school kids

Encourage your child to read another one

Find ways to encourage your child to keep reading. If he or she likes one book, find another book with a similar subject or by the same author. Ask a librarian or teacher for book suggestions.

Take turns reading

Once your child can read, have him or her read aloud to you every day. You can take turns – you read one page and your child the next.

Make connections to your child's life

Help your child make connections between what he or she reads in books and what happens in life. If you're reading a book about a family, for example, talk about how what happens in the story is the same or

different from what happens in your family.

Give your child an incentive to read

At bedtime, encourage your child to read. Offer a choice between reading or sleeping. Most kids will choose to read, as long as you don't offer something more tempting (like TV).

Try different types of books and magazines

Encourage your child to read different types of books, articles, or stories. Some kids, especially boys, prefer nonfiction books. Others like children's magazines.

Turn on the closed captioning on your television

When watching a television show with your child, try turning on the closed captioning channel. This shows the words the characters are speaking on the television screen. Some people find it's a good way to learn English!