

Sample HIGHLIGHTS Document: PDF for Web site posting

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“Raising Life-Long Learners and Avid Readers”

A webbybites™ Video

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- 1. What is the most powerful way I can prepare my child before they enter school?
- How can I best support my child’s education while he or she is in school?

The power of reading aloud to our children

Research shows that the seeds of reading and school success are sewn in the home, long before the child ever arrives at school.

Parents often ask: What’s the best SAT preparation for my child?

“The best SAT preparation course in the world is to read to your children in bed when they’re little. Eventually, if that’s a wonderful experience for them, they’ll start to read themselves.”

Tom Parker, former admissions director for Williams College, now at Amherst College

“The single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children.”

Richard C. Anderson, Elfrieda H. Hiebert, Jurdith a. Schott, and Ian A.G. Wilkinson, *Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading*, U.S. Department of Education (Champaign-Urbana, IL; Center for the Study of Reading, 1985), p. 23.

Just how powerful an effect does making a commitment to reading aloud to your child have?

Slide #1

How much did 155 fifth graders read outside of school?

- **90th** percentile read **30** minutes a day
- **50th** percentile read **11** minutes a day
- **10th** percentile read **1** minute a day

The discrepancy: 219 hours a year which equals 2.25 million words a year.

Recommended Parent Resource books

- Read Aloud Handbook, by Jim Trelease
- Raising Lifelong Learners, by Lucy Calkins

Three important reasons we read aloud to our children?

1. Reading aloud to children expands their vocabulary.
2. Reading aloud to children exposes them to structures of language that they will then be able to read and write themselves.
3. Reading aloud to children promotes a love of reading.

1. Reading aloud to children increases their vocabulary

- “There is one prekindergarten skill that matters above all others, because it is the prime predictor of school success or failure; the child’s vocabulary upon entering school.”

Trelese, pg 13, 2006

Slide #2

	Number of Rare Words Met Per Thousand
Adult to child, 3 years	9.0
Adult to child, 10 years	11.7
Prime time TV	22.7
Children’s book	30.9

Source: Hayes and Ahrens, *Journal of Child Language*

The Gigantic Turnip, by Aleksei Tolstory & Niamh Sharkey

Charlotte’s Web, by E.B. White

Sylvester and the Magic Pebble, by William Steig

2. Reading aloud exposes children to structures of language that they will be able to utilize as they learn to read and write themselves.

Slide #3

A 6 year olds journal response

The time has come Madelyn said. To talk of many thing. As Melissa our peace and everything in vain and Melissa sitting on my legs and her elbow. In my chest. Everything in fine except all the rest.

The end

3. Reading aloud to children promotes a love of reading

“What we teach children to love and desire will always outweigh what we teach them to do.”

-An education adage

For many children learning to read is a difficult process. Consistently creating pleasurable associations with books keeps the desire to keep reading alive.

- Stay up late
- Let your child overhear you talking with friends about books
- Both parents read tonight's book because neither one can bear to miss the story.

When is my child too old for me to be reading to him/her?

- A child's reading vocabulary doesn't catch up to his listening vocabulary until about 8th grade. Don't stop just because your child can read!

Some practical suggestions:

Not everyone has time or energy to read aloud at home

- It's not how much time or money it's what you do with your time.
 - Using mass transit-it's time to read
 - Reading aloud can mean a single poem
 - A special treat on weekends
- Adapt to your schedule.
 - Read while kids wash the dishes
 - Your child reads to you while you cook dinner
 - Siblings read to each other
 - Family reading hour/ half hour
- Make it fun
 - Make a reading fort
 - Reading parties in the living room. Get the whole family committed to 10-15minutes. Everyone gets a blanket.
- Use props

Do we do it everyday?

- Make it a treat
 - Saturday mornings
 - Vacation traditions

It does not have to be a formal sit down.

- Share a bit from your own book.
- Share a newspaper article

When someone says they don't have time they don't have an understanding of the importance of hearing language.

- Books on CD count and are so effective.
- Comic books count.

Get the babysitter involved!

- Read what you love

The best way to strengthen children's learning is to let children live like richly literate people.

- Improving Our Children's Oral Language
 - We enrich our children's vocabulary by enriching their lives.
 - Relish language play.
 - Rhyme