



Supporting Literacy Development At Home



What Your Fourth/ Fifth Grader is Learning In School

Students need choice at this age about what they read. They generally have increased reading responsibilities from school and are participating in extra-curricular activities. Carving out time to engage in literacy activities can be difficult but should remain a priority. In Fourth and Fifth, informational texts are increased. For example, many texts may be based on true stories about historical figures. Stronger themes are introduced in literature such as survival and relationships.

In grades three through five, students begin developing a deeper understanding of word parts and how words relate to each other. Specifically, they learn about common affixes, suffixes, and roots to determine the meanings of words.

Students are required to make inferences regularly based on the texts they read. Making inferences means understanding what the text of a book actually says and what it implies. When working with this higher level skill, students should return to texts to support their reasons for drawing an inference.

As students turn to novels, fewer pictures are accessible to help understand the text. When students are able to construct a mental image from the text, their understanding of the text deepens and their engagement with the topic increases. Visualizing (creating the mental image in their mind) allows students to draw conclusions, create interpretation of

the text, and recall details and elements from the text. Exposing students to a variety of different types of texts or genre helps students understand writers have different purposes in mind. For example, historical based texts such as grade level appropriate biographies, autobiographies, and narratives about historical events help readers understand history but that the writer has also written the text to inform the reader.

Engage your student in conversation:

- Parents can support their student at home by gathering picture books, poems, lyrics and websites that align with content already being covered and discussing the connections.
- Consider asking students to summarize the most relevant information they learned in a particular subject. .
- Engage your student in discussion about a story that was read in school. Ask how it relates to other content area subjects being studied.
- Look for scenarios in the content they are reading that require them to grasp larger concepts. For example, if they are working with an experiment at school, ask them why it's important to know this? How does it relate to other content they know?
- Consider any content your child is learning that lends itself to a problem. Ask how they would solve it, what was the logic behind the decision, or what was the effect did this problem have on others? Allow them to utilize good judgement.



How to Stay Involved with Literacy Development When Read Aloud Time Winds Down

Aside from building a stronger relationship with you, there are many benefits to reading aloud. But as your child ages, (s)he may not wish to engage in this practice. Do not force reading time together with your student as this can create a negative attitude toward reading. Individuals who see parents that value reading are more likely to engage in independent reading activities as well. Model for your child by reading independently in front of them. Visiting the library and asking a child what their interests are and how they go about picking a book for themselves is another important practice..

THE MORE YOU READ, THE MORE THINGS YOU WILL KNOW.
THE MORE YOU LEARN, THE MORE PLACES YOU'LL GO!
~DR. SEUSS.



Sixth and Beyond: What Your Student is Learning

In middle and high school, schedules and time constraints prevent many parents and students from engaging in literacy activities. Research indicates that children's reading abilities don't catch up to their listening abilities until Eighth grade. (CCSS, Appendix A). Continuing to independently read at home is still very valuable.

Comprehension increases for children who have wide reaching vocabulary development. The largest influence on students' vocabulary is the sheer volume of reading they do, especially wide reading that includes a rich variety of texts. This presents a particularly difficult challenge for underprepared high-school students who lack the reading habit. Encourage students to increase the amount of independent reading time at home and then stimulate a conversation. Being cautious not to quiz your child, choose one or two of the following for discussion purposes only:

Literature

- Tell me a little bit about your text. What was the main problem and how was it solved?
- Describe the characters for me. Who did you like the best?
- Were there any parts that made a movie in your head? What were they?

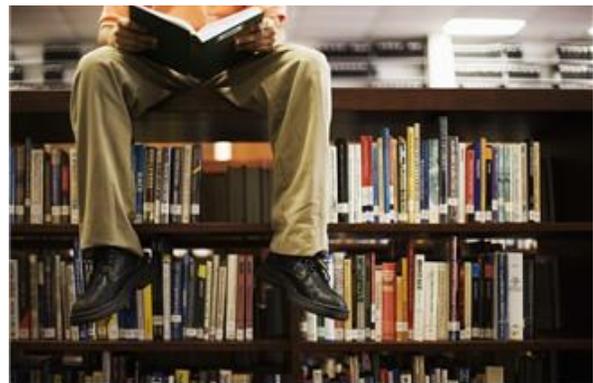
Informational Text

- Does this text seem like anything else you have learned?

- Were there any parts that were confusing?
- Recall the main idea and details the author was explaining in the text.

Reading provides time for extended discussion and connects to other content areas such as science or history. Books allow young people to develop awareness of others outside their experience and develop a sense of empathy.

- Many picture books now cover adult themes such as war, debates, and other content reserved for more mature audiences. Consider having some of these on hand from your local library as it relates to topics your child is currently studying.
- Ask your child to make connections to the content and then examine the material from several perspectives. .
- Consider reading up on material that your student is working with so that deeper conversations can be had. Your student may be more open to discussing material at home, in private than in the classroom.
- If your student is reading a piece of literature, model reading at home by independently reading the same book. Again, discussing the book will encourage your student to ask questions they may have or to help clarify what might be confusing .



References and Resources:

www.corestandards.org
www.readingrockets.org

www.pageahead.org
www.greatschools.org

www.phschool.com
ww2.kqed.org
www.heinemann.com