

Reading at Home

Ways to Help Children Build a Reading Life Outside of School



READING OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL

The more opportunities children get to read outside of school, the more they will grow as a reader and writer. Our goal at CES is for all children to become lifelong, avid, and strategic readers. Here are some ways you can help your child develop a powerful reading life outside of school:

- When you're out and about with your child, make time to sit and read, or to visit a library or bookstore. The more they are around books, the more kids want to read.
- Find a quiet place and a quiet time for your child to read. Our lives are often so busy, it's so important for our children to slow down for at least 20 minutes each day to read.
- Ask your child what kinds of books or topics they enjoy. If they're not sure, let them explore the library or a bookstore.
- Check in with your child to see how they're enjoying their reading. Maybe even grab yourself a copy of the text so you can have a chat about it as your child reads the text.

- After reading, have your child retell the text in their own words (Ok to use pictures).
- Readers should retell the important parts or facts by naming characters, setting, big events in order, or big ideas for nonfiction texts.
- As readers grow, they should be able to name big facts and details, character feelings, explains what motivates a character to act in a certain way, and explain how a character changes and learns a life lesson.
- When your child moves into early chapter books, encourage your child to retell each section or chapter after reading.
- Encourage your child to jot down big ideas or main events, important words, or unfamiliar words on a post-it note to discuss together.

SHARING & TELLING STORIES

Tell lots of stories to your child and encourage your child to tell their own stories. Tell stories about when you were the same age as your child. Tell them to your child as a "bedtime story." Tell stories that are joyful, or scary, or about times when you were nervous, proud, or when you learned about something. Tell family stories as well. Show your child how your life, like theirs, is filled with significant life moments. This will help when your child writes about their small, true stories from their own lives.

HOMEWORK BOOK BAGGIES

Book baggies are full of carefully chosen books that your child can read independently on their own. The books inside these baggies change once a week.

K-2 students should read each night for up to 20 minutes. Here are some things that you can do to help these book baggies come to life:

- Encourage your child to read these books every night, sometimes more than once. This will build their fluency.
- While your child is reading, sit nearby to listen in and give reminders about using strategies.
- Ask questions like, "Which text is your favorite?"
- If your child is stuck on a word, say something like, "Hmm...what could that be? Let's reread to find out." Or you might say, "What would make sense here?"

READING ALOUD

Children learn a huge amount from being read to. They learn about story and language structures, as well as literary and academic vocabulary. Children learn life lessons from characters as they face trouble. From nonfiction, they learn about the world. Here are some things that you can do while reading aloud to your child:

- You can read any kind of text aloud to your child.
- Reread well-loved familiar storybooks over & over. Enthusiasm increases the more times children hear a book read aloud.
- You can be silly or serious as you read aloud. Kids love when adults step into the role of characters and sound like or act like a character.
- You can choose to read about topics you'd love to start conversations about with your child.
- Your child can read along with you when they recognize a familiar word or phrase.

BUILDING STRONG WRITERS

Students write daily at school throughout the day in all content areas and during writing workshop. Writers have sustained time to independently write and they get regular feedback from their teacher in a small group or when conferring individually about their writing structure and development. It's important to us that your children love writing, and that they grow as writers throughout the year. Here are some ways you can support writing outside of school:

- Ask often what your child is writing about in school. This is an opportunity for your child to orally rehearse with you what they're writing about or planning to write about.
- Say, "Tell me the story you're writing about," or "Tell me about the teaching book (nonfiction) you're writing about to teach others?"
- Writers study familiar mentor texts, so as you're reading to your child, talk about how an author used a strong word to show emotion, used bold words to teach, or made their writing clear.
- Our young writers revise and edit their own writing by adding more details and using more precise words.

- They use spelling and grammar skills that are developmentally appropriate. Not every word will be spelled perfectly or be grammatically correct. But as they progress as writers, you'll notice closer approximations to more accurate spelling and editing skills.
- Make a big deal about published pieces. Put them up in your home proudly so your child sees that their writing is important to you and give compliments about their finished piece.

WHEN YOUR CHILD MISREADS A WORD & DOESN'T FIX IT INDEPENDENTLY, OFFER A REMINDER OF THESE 3 CUES

Does it make sense?

Does it sound right?

Does it look right?

Other prompts you might say:

- Check the picture and think about what this story is about.
- Reread it to make sure it makes sense, sounds right, and looks right.
- Try that again and make sure it matches.
- Look at that word....
 - What do you notice about the 1st letter?
 - What do you notice about the middle vowel or last letter?
 - Is there a word you already know that is just like that word? (use analogy to solve unknown words)
 - Is there a little word inside the bigger word?
 - Can you make that word smaller with your finger to break that word apart? (compound words & multi-syllable words)
 - Look through to the end of the word and make it match (noticing suffix endings).
- Why did you stop? What did you notice?
- What strategy can you use to fix it?
- Read that again and make your reading sound like a storyteller, like the character is talking, or use a teaching voice.