

# Use the newspaper for reading activities



The newspaper is a great resource for reading activities for your entire family.

Try some of the following activities with your child:

- **What's the Story?** Cut out an interesting news story, and cut the paragraphs apart.

Have your child read the paragraphs and put them in an order that makes sense to him based on the headline.

- **Fact or Opinion.** Read an editorial piece with your child. Have him underline all the facts in blue and all the opinions in red. How does he differentiate between fact and opinion?
- **Parts of Speech.** Have your child circle all the adverbs he finds while reading a story. Are there more adverbs in a local news story or a sports article? What about a story in the arts section?



You can also try this with adjectives, proper nouns or other parts of speech.

- **Scavenger Hunt.** Make a list of things for your child to find in the newspaper. Some examples may include an advertisement for a local store, a map and a chart.
- **Comics and puzzles.** Read the comics section of the newspaper. Are there any games or puzzles to complete? Work together to solve the crossword puzzle.

# Develop your child's lifelong love of books



When children see reading as a chore, they resent it—and never want to pick up a book or magazine just for fun. Make sure that this doesn't happen with your child! To build your child's love of reading:

- **Designate nightly family reading time** (or at least several times a week). You can read a story together or everyone can read on their own.
- **Visit the library together often.** Take advantage of activities that your library offers, such as book clubs, author presentations or other special events. And don't just limit your browsing to books! Check out magazines, audio books and other materials.
- **Make reading a late-night treat.** Allow your child to stay up a little later some weekend nights—as long as he's reading!



- **Suggest your child read from a series.** There are always books that you wish didn't have to end—and with a series of books, they don't have to! Plus, your child will already be familiar with the characters.
- **Be a reading role model.** When your child sees you reading often, he'll see that it's important for your family. Keep a supply of books, magazines and other reading materials wherever your child may be—in his bedroom, in the car, even in the kitchen!

# Incorporate reading into math and science



When it comes to math and science, the way students read and process information is a little different than it is in language arts and social studies. Studies show that when reading for math and science classes, students must be able to:

- **Decode mathematic and scientific signs**, symbols and graphs.
- **Read text** that is organized differently than in other subjects.
- **Understand information** presented in unfamiliar ways, such as in tables or number lines.

Help your child develop the specific skills she needs to read in math and science. Encourage your child to:

- **Build on prior knowledge.** What does your child already know about the subject? Activating prior knowledge helps her make connections.



- **Focus on vocabulary.** Encourage your child to put new words into context (the way they're used and what they relate to) instead of just learning the definition.
- **Look at structure.** Math and science texts are not often written in the familiar way that others are. The main idea may be at the end of a paragraph instead of the beginning. Help your child break down word problems until she understands them.

Elementary School

**BUILDING**  **READERS**

© 2013 The Parent Institute® [www.parent-institute.com](http://www.parent-institute.com)  
May be reproduced by *Building Readers*® newsletter subscribers.

**Reading**  
*Extras*

# Writing activities enhance reading comprehension



Encourage your child to use the books he is reading as inspiration for writing! He will get his creative juices flowing while he also builds reading comprehension, or understanding, and analysis skills.

He can:

- **Write his own sequel.** What happens after the last page in your child's favorite book? Encourage him to write one more chapter. He might wrap up the story or perhaps send the characters on another adventure. He could also write a *prequel*—a chapter that comes before the book starts.
  - **Write a letter to the author.** Have your child write a review in the form of a letter to the author. What did he like or dislike about the story? What would he have changed? Are there things that he would still like to know?
- **Keep a character diary.** Have your child imagine that he's a character in the story who keeps a diary. Have him write diary entries about several of the main events that happen throughout the course of the book. How would that character react to each event? (He can also try writing from the point of view of a minor character to encourage even further character analysis.)



# Make reading a social event with a book club



Increase your child's excitement about reading by helping her start a book club! Talking about what you read is a great way to build comprehension and analysis skills, and your child and her friends will also enjoy spending time together.

To help her organize her book club:

1. **Get a group together.** Have your child think of some friends who will take the book club seriously. It is also helpful if all the book club members are at approximately the same reading level.
2. **Decide where the book club will meet.** You could meet at your home or the public library.
3. **Suggest a plan** for how the club will choose the book each time they meet.

Once your child's book club is underway, suggest that they keep it exciting by:



- **Reading all the books in a series.** They'll be able to really immerse themselves in the books and get to know the characters well.
- **Having a theme night.** Each member might dress up as her favorite character from a book. They might come up with themed food ideas, too.
- **Watching the movie adaptation**—after they read the book!

# Strategies can improve reading comprehension



It can be challenging for students to remember what they have read for school. More difficult textbooks and higher-level novels may cause your child to throw up her hands in frustration.

Help your child remember what she's read with these reading comprehension strategies:

- **Story Map.** If your child is reading a novel, have her write the title at the top of a sheet of paper. Then have her draw a box for each chapter, writing the chapter name at the top of the box. She should draw a picture or write a few words in the box that will help her remember the main idea and events of that chapter.
- **Knowledge Chart.** If your child is reading a textbook, have her fold a piece of lined paper in half, so she



has two columns. Label the left-hand column "Prior Knowledge" and the right-hand column "New Knowledge." Before reading, she can fill in the left-hand column with facts she already knows about the topic of a textbook chapter. Afterwards, she can fill in the right-hand column with new information she has gained from reading the chapter. This will also make a great study guide when it comes to test time.