

Literacy Tips for Parents of Middle Schoolers

- 1. Read. Read. Read** – the most important means of improving reading skills is to encourage reading of all kinds. Read the back of the cereal box, the newspaper, billboards. Have your child read things to you. You read to him or her.
- 2. Visit places where reading is featured** – the library, museums, bookstores, etc.
- 3. Talk to your child about what he is reading or learning** – not how he is doing in it, but the actual content. Have him summarize or paraphrase what he is reading.
- 4. Bring books along everywhere** - the doctor's office, the store, on trips, between games. Instead of a video game, bring a book. Or download a book application and order free books.
- 5. Help your child understand the difference in types of reading material.** – “Just as middle-schoolers must adjust to juggling multiple classes and more difficult assignments, they must also adapt their reading skills. Science, social studies, and English each have their own vocabulary and structure, and students need to move from answering simple questions about content and plot to reading longer, more complex texts that require gathering and analyzing information.” (<http://www.greatschools.org>)
- 6. Read the same books your child is reading.** – Then talk to them about the book. Ask Why and How questions not just factual questions.
- 7. Work with your child on skimming and scanning** – Not every piece of reading needs to be read completely. Have your child scan a newspaper article to get the main idea. Read the piece ahead of time and tell you child to find a particular point. Have them look for subheading, main ideas in paragraphs, etc. Discuss when skimming or scanning might be necessary as opposed to reading every page. (dictionary, encyclopedia, phone book)
- 8. Have fun with words.** – Increasing vocabulary is one of the most effective ways to improve reading. Play with words. Learn a new word a day with your child. Do crossword puzzles.
- 9. Help your child determine at what level she is reading and find books at that level that interest her.** As she reads more, she will increase her speed. Slowly increase the reading level of the books she is reading.

10. **Encourage the middle schooler to read to a younger sibling.** Reading at bedtime with ensure your child reads everyday. The younger sibling's enthusiasm for story time may be contagious.
11. **Play games that utilize reading.** Word and vocabulary building games like Scrabble, Boggle, or crossword puzzles provide opportunities for learning new words and for spelling practice.
12. **Encourage writing-** Suggest your student write letters to friends or relatives or keep a journal. Writing supports reading!
13. **Listen to audiobooks in the car-** builds listening skills as well.

Everyday situations involve reading and writing activities. These activities provide students AND parents the opportunity to practice reading skills.

Household Activities	Reading and Writing Opportunities
Recipes	To follow step-by-step instructions
Menus	To select what to eat from a list
Coupons	To decide where to buy an item and create a savings plan
Buying Guides/Ads	To learn about items on sale and understand the uses of products
Product Labels	To learn about ingredients, what are harmful products, learn about the uses of products
Letters	To receive billing information, to communicate about job-related issues, to send a claim, resolve a problem...
Forms	To apply for a job, loan, college, school, program, etc.
Newspapers	To learn about global trends, local and worldwide news, sports, etc.
Internet	To acquire and send information, to investigate or research, to learn about places and things, to communicate
Chore List	To follow a list of household duties

