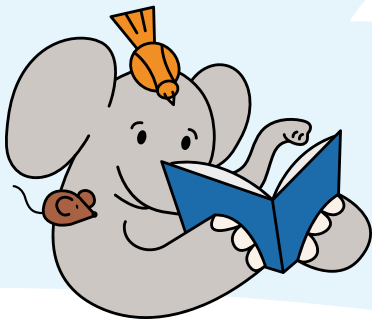




Growing Readers!

*Parent tips brought to you by
Reading Rockets and Colorín Colorado*

Read Like They're Watching: Modeling Reading in the Digital Age

Research shows that the reading behaviors of parents strongly predict their children's own reading abilities. When you choose to read instead of watching or scrolling screens, you're showing your child that you value putting your brain to work with a book. If your habits make books and reading a visible part of daily life, your child can see that you believe reading is both important and enjoyable.

Here are five great messages you send when you read in front of your child:

- 1. You read!** Your child needs to see you regularly engage with text—whether it's a physical book, an e-reader, a magazine, or a news article on your phone. That's easier to do when books and print materials are plentiful in your home. If you're using a screen for reading, make your reading visible to your child by explaining that you're reading a chapter of your book. If you listen to an audiobook on your commute, share that with your child too. Talking about what you're reading—no matter what the format—and how you feel about it helps your child see that you value reading.
- 2. Readers read for real purposes.** Let your child see you reach for text to solve a problem, answer a question, or get something done. Read the recipe out loud while you cook, look up reviews before making a purchase, or check the owner's manual of the car to troubleshoot dashboard lights. When children see reading as a tool adults actually use, they believe in its real-world power.
- 3. Reading can fuel their interests.** When you're curious or passionate about something, let your child see you turn to reading to learn more. Looking up tips for your garden? Researching a trip you're planning? Excited about your favorite team? Say it out loud and show your child how reading connects to things that matter to you—and can do the same for things that matter to them, be it dinosaurs, outer space, soccer, or cars.

4. Reading is relaxing. Unlike scrolling on your phone, reading signals to your brain that it's time to wind down. Getting lost in a good book shifts your focus away from daily stressors, eases muscle tension, and can help lower your heart rate. Demonstrate that calm in front of your child and you'll find it can be contagious. When you settle in with a book, your child will often want to do the same. The family that reads together relaxes together!

5. Readers have fun! Let your child catch you laughing at something in your book or hear you say, "You won't believe what I just read!" Seeing the delight books bring you makes reading aloud together something your child will look forward to even more—giggling over a silly character, doing voices together, discovering fun facts. And before you know it, your child isn't just watching you enjoy reading. They love it, too!

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