



# Did You Know...?

# # 35

## About Raising A Reader

*Parents Reaching Out connects with families, schools and communities in New Mexico. We offer information from many reliable sources. We thank the Parent Education Network, a project of Parents Helping Parents of Wyoming, Inc. for permitting us to share their PEN Notes publications in this information series.*

**Learning to read happens over time in a developmental sequence.** Children will use several strategies for reading within the same sentence such as sight, sound or how the word fits in the sentence. Many experiences and activities help children learn to read, such as talking and interacting, recognizing and connecting sounds and letters, life experiences themselves, and being exposed to all types of reading materials throughout life.

**Reading is the written form of language.** Children need vocabulary and word recognition skills; phonics skills; and ways to see if what they read makes sense. Toddlers and preschoolers learn about reading by being read to and by early attempts to write and translate what they have written. The correct translation can be written below the scribbles and read back to the child. Reading and writing go hand in hand, and plenty of reading and writing materials should be available in the home. These materials say reading is important, but it goes beyond this. Children must be discouraged from watching too much television and encouraged to do other activities such as homework, playing games, and having conversations with family members.

**To be successful readers,** children need to spend lots of time reading or being read to. Parents can make reading fun for children by having a regular routine for reading—before bed each night, after dinner, before school or any time during the day for preschoolers. The important thing is that it happens regularly and that it is a *positive* experience.

### "Understandings" About Reading

- Reading is a construction of meaning from written text and involves thinking and feelings.
- Background knowledge and prior experience are critical to reading.
- Social interaction is essential to learning to read.
- Reading and writing develop together.
- Reading involves complex thinking.
- Environment should be filled with reading and writing experiences.
- Children must be interested and motivated.
- Children's understanding of print is different from adult's understanding.
- Children develop phonic awareness and knowledge of phonics through experiences and opportunities.
- Children need to be taught many different reading strategies.
- Children need the opportunity to read, read, read, and it is important that they are monitored and assessed.

## Ages and Stages

### Infants:

- Enjoy action nursery rhymes
- Fall asleep to nursery songs & lullabies
- Listen to stories as they are rocked
- Make the sounds of animals in books

### Toddlers:

- Like to read the same books over
- Pick favorite books from the shelf
- Can name objects in books & magazines

### Things To Do:

- Expect them to munch on books
- Provide books with heavy pages
- Talk about the books to them
- Repeat nursery rhymes
- Listen to children's music & move to it

### Preschoolers:

- Hold books correctly
- Are able to write some letters in name
- Pretend to read own "writing" & books
- Can tell difference between print & picture
- Know some letters and point to them

### Kindergarteners:

- Recognize individual letters & words
- Can read & write name & some words
- Use illustrations to tell a story
- Can say some rhyming words that start with sounds such as "t", "m" & "d"

### First-graders:

- Recognize and know letters & sounds
- Write some small words from memory
- Can read "easy to read" books

### Things to do:

- Read daily to your child & visit the library
- Reread the story and let her tell the ending
- Let child tell story from his drawing
- Let child read aloud & make mistakes

### Second-graders:

- Take pride in showing off their reading
- Can read early reader & "transitional"
- Are able to read silently
- Can work out unknown words

### Third-graders:

- Use encyclopedia, computer & atlas
- Read assignments & follow directions
- Make predictions to outcome of story

### Things to do:

- Follow your child's interest
- Play games that involve reading
- Continue to read harder books
- Get blank books for writing experience
- Limit television viewing

### Fourth-graders:

- Read familiar text with ease
- Can tell fact from opinion
- Can read silently for extended periods
- Read & understand instructions/recipes

### Fifth-graders:

- Read for new information
- Use tables of content & reference material
- Choose to read for leisure

### Things to do:

- Keep reading aloud to your child
- Link movies & TV shows to books
- Have the child look for phone numbers

By the time children are in the sixth, seventh and eighth grades, they are fluent, independent readers who use reading as an important part of their everyday lives. They read for entertainment, information and learning. Remember to model reading and give gifts that encourage reading.

*"Did You Know...?" fact sheets are developed by Parents Reaching Out in collaboration with the New Mexico Public Education Department under a grant from the US Department of Education Office of Innovation and Improvement. Views expressed do not necessarily represent the policy of the US Department of Education and should not be assumed to be an endorsement by the Federal Government.*