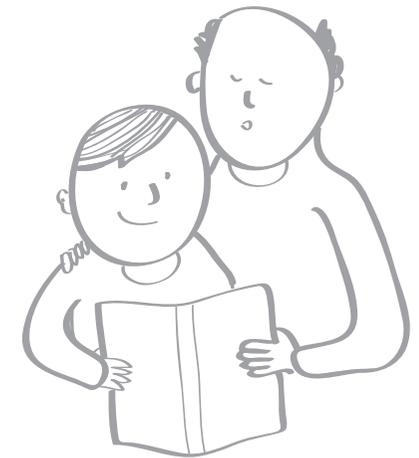


READING TO YOUR CHILD 10 REASONS TO DO IT



1 Intimacy

There is no better place for a child than the safe arms of an adult. Holding the child on your lap or under your arms while reading to them helps them to calm down and to recharge their batteries. The warmth of the adult's body and their heartbeat as well as emotional expressions strengthen the rewarding reading experience.

2 A shared pastime

Reading is shared time and a shared pastime. When children are small, you literally read together with them. When they learn how to read without the help of adults, a quiet read can be a new shared pastime for the whole family. Family members can all read their own book while lounging in the living room or on the sofa under a loved one's arm.

3 Linguistic skills

As the rather provocative saying goes, "Children are not born smart, they are made smart". There is a certain amount of truth in it, as many studies prove that interaction with adults correlates with the child's linguistic skills and academic achievement. Reading is the easiest way to increase the amount of heard language both at home and at day care.

4 Vocabulary

Home life with its familiar play time activities and daily routines tends to repeat itself. The vocabulary needed in those repetitive circumstances is surprisingly small - although extending it is certainly worthwhile. As the language used in books is substantially richer, reading is an excellent means of extending a child's vocabulary. The same, of course, applies for young people and adults.

5 Grammar and sentence structures

The same rule applies to the development of vocabulary and to the development of grammar and sentence structures: linguistic skills develop through experience. In everyday life, a child can easily manage on a very small vocabulary and minimum variation of sentence structures and grammar tricks. Books are excellent tools for the widening of grammar and sentence structure knowledge. Comics, too, serve their purpose as a source of complex linguistic structures.

6 Completing things

To learn from an early age that the book will always be read until the end or to an agreed point improves the child's tenacity to see things through. When the little one gets fidgety, you can try and make a deal: "Let's complete just one more spread or three sentences". It's ok to skip some pages, too!

7 Concentration and attentiveness

The ability to concentrate is an important skill, especially in school and working life. Reading improves concentration and strengthens the child's ability to orient attention and to stay attentive. If the child finds it hard to concentrate on a book, the book itself or the language that the adult uses is probably too complicated. Maybe the child could for a change look for just one favourite thing on the page or for a word starting with the letter A? Or would it be helpful if you changed your reading style?

8 Theory of mind

Theory of mind is the ability to understand that the other person's mind is not the same as mine: I have my own thoughts and they are not the same as yours. There is a strong link between the theory of mind and linguistic skills, i.e. pragmatic skills. Without the ability to understand that others do not have minds analogous to one's own, it is impossible to modify the language we use in different situations. Studies show that the reading of books and the development of the theory of mind are linked. People who read are more skilled in situations where you need to understand other people's views. That is because fairy tales and fiction teach us from an early age that other people may see things differently.

9 General knowledge and education

Can you think of a better way to expand your general knowledge and to educate yourself than reading? It always pays to read!

10 A lifelong friend

Parents' and home's positive attitude towards reading has, later in life, a beneficial effect on the child's literacy and attitude to books. Books can be a lifelong friend with whom you can rejoice, cry, broaden your perspective, be horrified and have great adventures. As the philosopher said: "The limits of my language are the limits of my world". In books, language and the world are limitless.