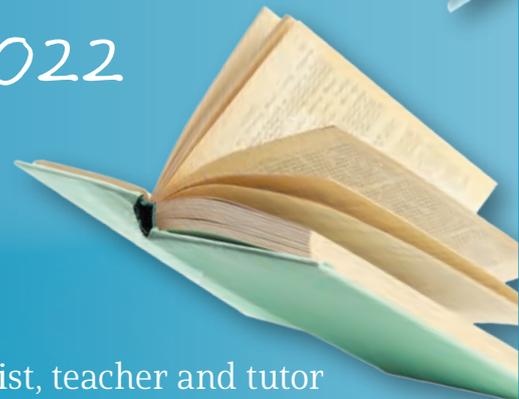


8 Ways to Improve Your Child's Reading Level in 2022



Reading specialist, teacher and tutor reveals her top practices to get readers back on track in 2022, after Covid interruptions

Every parent knows that academic success is anchored around literacy. School disruptions have meant that millions of children have fallen behind in their reading skills. Bringing them up to speed is incredibly important ~ for ALL learners, not just those who are struggling.

These eight tips reveal the best practices teachers use themselves – derived from Tanya's two decades of teaching and tutoring English.

While each child is unique, Tanya says these teacher-approved tips generally help give a child's reading level a boost. For even more information, check out Literacy for Boys (www.literacyforboys.com.au) and Literacy for Kids (www.literacyforkids.com.au).

FROM PREP TO GRADE 3

These early years are really important as a lot of learning takes place! Students will gain the ability to identify letters, decode letter sounds, blend sounds in a word, build on their spelling skills and establish a large bank of sight words.

Try these teacher strategies to boost your child's reading skills.

1) Decode mystery words

Read part of a book out loud to your child, leaving out one "mystery word" that is frequently used (like 'because' or 'about'). Introduce clues about the mystery word, including the number of letters it has, a letter that it contains or even a certain sound in the word. Ask your child to guess the word! Celebrate solving the mystery by a final reading, and clap if that word is read. I have used



post it notes to cover words and kids LOVE this! Uncovering the word with a flourish adds terrific fun to the reading process.

2) Personalise a story

Ask your child to narrate a short personal story to you and write it down for them. Work together to read it aloud. This is a great technique to help your child learn to put their thoughts in order.

FROM GRADE 3 AND UP

Reading comprehension skills are key at this time! Kids are now moving on from learning to read, to reading to learn. Children will have to collect information from several sources and summarize it. They need to be able to focus on both reading and writing skills and show the ability to edit and revise their work. So if your child is struggling, it's important to address it.

For all readers in this range, try these three teacher tips to improve their literacy skills.

3) Context is important

"I just don't get it!"

This is a repeated frustration by many students (even for the proficient readers who are unpacking a tricky text!). If your child is starting on a new text, provide a bit of background knowledge and context about the book's topic if you can. This will support your child in the reading ahead. I urge parents to read their child's class novel as you can add context and information if they are struggling. Visit the link for Tanya's article on helping students to comprehend new texts. (<https://bit.ly/3J8Ammv>)

4) Discuss essential words

If you're providing background knowledge for a book/text, talk about any essential words that they will come across. Give your child an example of the word or an illustration/photo to clarify. For example, if the topic was 'deserts', you could discuss words such as 'survival', 'arid' or 'camouflage'. If your child can volunteer an answer or share knowledge with the class, this boosts their reading confidence. Equipping your child with topic vocabulary is a win win!

5) Ask questions to clarify

Asking your child questions at the end of a story (without making it an interrogation or 'check up') is important. Approach this more like a conversation. Ask them about the characters and story in a way to encourage them to build on their ideas eg Why do you think character X chose to do that? Would you have changed where the story took place?

FOR ALL AGES

6) Maximise time spent reading

You can visit the link for six Strategies to Get Kids reading <https://bit.ly/3I6evf6>. Most parents are struggling to get actual books in their children's hand rather than a device. Encourage your child to take a book with them into bed, on a car trip or any opportunity to get a little extra time to read. Think of this fact: even just reading 20 minutes a day equates to 3 600 minutes per school year – which is nearly 2 million words a year! (TIP: Allow your kids to 'catch' you reading ~ modelling reading is a huge motivator.)

7) Let your kids choose

Give your children (and especially teens) the chance to choose the books they read. If they aren't engaged, reading becomes a chore. Great movies have sprung from books, so watching the film after the book is a great reward. Visit the link for great children's books that have been made into films <https://bit.ly/3qzxT7h>

Don't forget magazines as an option or audiobooks.

8) Have reading material available

"Research supports that children who grow up with books around tend to read more," says Ms Grambower. "This can be time consuming finding a book that your child enjoys but persevere. There is no better reward than when a child finds a book that they really enjoy."

Leave texts around the house. Include comic books, graphic novels, first books in a popular YA series, magazines.

For more tips on improving your child's literacy, visit the websites <https://www.literacyforkids.com.au/> and <https://www.literacyforboys.com.au/>

You'll find helpful advice and insights plus content that is kid-centric. Schools and parents are seeing huge results in student literacy. Read about us in The Educator magazine (<https://bit.ly/3rr7M9Z>) ■

AUTHOR:
Tanya Grambower
Founder
Literacy for Kids