

# Inculcate the habit of reading in your children



Famous American poet, Maya Angelou, once rightly said,

*“Any book that helps a child to form a habit of reading, to make reading one of his deep and continuing needs, is good for him.”*

Reading is more than a mere hobby. Books fuel the reader’s imagination, keeps their brain active and makes them more creative. Books have the power to transport the reader into a world of fantasy. There is no right age to pick up the first book, but the sooner we begin the better it is. It has a comprehensive effect on the personality and intelligence of the reader.

## So, why should children read books?

All good habits should begin from an early age and reading is no different. Exposing your children to the world of books will ensure they become smart, inquisitive and imaginative adults. They will tell children that there is a lot more to the world than they know at present.

The early years are crucial for a child’s development and hence it is an ideal time to inculcate reading habit into them. Children who read are more likely to have a more focused attention span, grasping power and memory. Not only in academics, but children who start reading since their early age have better interpersonal skills, vocabulary and a better hold on written and spoken language.

By reading books, your child will get to experience the world through the stories they read. A simple story like red riding hood or the snow white can teach your child to become a better human and accept everyone irrespective of the differences

## So, how to encourage your child to read books?

Some kids love to read. In fact, it can be hard to take a book out of their hands. But many a time it can be difficult to motivate a child who doesn’t love to read. It may even seem impossible. But it doesn’t have to be. Some kids hate to read. For these reluctant readers, it

may take a lot of extra cajoling and a bit of creativity to convince them to spend their time on reading. And it may take even more effort to help them enjoy reading.

## **So, here are some tips for parents to encourage their kids to read and turn a young reader's reluctance into enthusiasm.**

- **Develop children's oral language**

Depending on the child's language skill level, give him or her a story to read or have a story read to them. When the story is finished, ask your child to pinpoint favourite parts of the story. This will help your child to have fun picking out words and develop an interest to move to the next page.

- **Read several stories every day**

The more your child is exposed to literature, the more reading will become part of his or her daily life. With every story, your child will be introduced to new information, concepts, and phonemic awareness.

- **Surround your children with reading material**

Children with a large collection of reading resources in their homes tend to score higher and perform better on standardized tests. Provoke a reading habit in your child by having a large array of interesting books and magazines at their reading level.

- **Encourage a wide variety of reading activities**

Make reading an essential part of your children's lives. Let them read menus, movie names, roadside signs, game guides, weather reports, and other practical everyday information. Always try to make sure your children have something to read in their spare time.

- **Let them choose what they read**

Reading for pleasure is one of the best ways for a child to improve his or her performance at school. But teaching a child to love reading involves a lot more than simply handing him a book. Letting your children have choices in their reading material goes a long way in raising life-long readers. Kids who choose what they read, regardless of whether it's a novel, a comic book, or a magazine, are more engaged with what they are reading and more likely to retain the information.

- **Help them choose age-appropriate books**

Help your kids choose age-appropriate books on topics that interest them to spark a passion for reading. Take them to the library or even show them e-readers that provide entire libraries of options at the touch of the screen. Access to a wide

variety of options helps make it easier for you to help your children find the stories that give them that foothold into the world of reading.

- **Make use of gadgets and creative apps**

Your smartphone or tablets can be used to install useful reading apps where your kids can have safe spaces for reading without you having to parents worry about what they might come across online. With various apps and book readers like Kindle coming up, you can now choose what you want your children to access, as well as how long they can do different activities with timer features.

- **Show interest in your child's reading**

Your response or feedback has a strong effect on how hard they will try to become good readers. Always remember to give them genuine praise for their efforts.

- **Be a good (reading) example**

Even if your children are fascinated with books from an early age, their fascination will quickly dwindle if they do not see reading modelled in their homes. If you are not an avid reader yourself, make a conscious effort to let your children see you reading for at least a few minutes each day. Read a magazine, a cookbook or a novel. But show your child that reading is something that even adults need to do.

Reading for pleasure seems to give kids an advantage in school because they are used to be introduced to new ideas and can process them more quickly and effectively than their non-reading peers. E-readers have opened the doors to get the next generation back into reading. Easy access to an array of topics and stories is sure to spark an interest in even a reluctant reader, and increasing technology provides better tailored learning opportunities while increasing self-esteem and confidence in the classroom.