***But I’m not the teacher! What can I do?***



***Providing Reading Support at Home***

***Read Aloud:*** Choose a book that your child is interested in. It can be easy or hard and read it out loud. It does not need to be read all at once. Change your voice for characters. Ask your child to help you make a sentence sound “better”. Read a variety of things: fiction books, non-fiction books, poetry books for kids, websites, cereal boxes, magazines for kids, maps, menus, and anything else you can get your hands on. Your child is never too old for a read aloud- even in middle to high school!

If you aren’t confident enough to read aloud yet, go to the library and get books on tape or books on CD. They are free, fun, and can be listened to again and again.

***Ask Questions:*** Stop and ask questions or talk about the events in the book. Is there something in the book that reminds you of something in your life? Talk about it. Is there a question you might have about what is going on? Ask your child for their opinion about what might happen next. Ask your child if he or she would have solved the problem in the book the same way.

***Talking With Your Child:*** It may not seem like it, but conversations with your child actually help them read better! Engage your child in extended conversations using questions like Why? How Come? and What do you think? Model answering questions in complete sentences. The more you talk with your child, the more words they hear. The more words they hear, the better their vocabulary gets. The better their vocabulary gets, the better able they are to recognize words and communicate with others.

***Echo Read***: You read a word, sentence, paragraph, or page. Point to each word as you say it. Then the child echoes what you read. This provides support for unknown words and also lets the child hear “how” it should sound.

***Repeated Readings***: Reread the same book multiple times. It can be a very easy book or a slightly harder book. It is more than okay to reread the same book; studies have shown that children learn more when they DO read the same book repeatedly.

***Choral Read:*** After you have read a book a few times, read the book out loud together.

***Make a Recording:*** Another way to encourage your child to practice reading the same book is to make your own “book on tape”. Some cell phones have a recording function, so do some computers, or you can buy an inexpensive tape cassette recorder. Have your child read the book out loud while being recorded, then have them listen to the tape while looking at the book. They may want to do it again to make it “better”. They can add voices and sound effects.

***Whisper Phone***: Get two PVC elbow joints from Home Depot and attach them together to form a phone. Allow your child to read to himself using the whisper phone. This lets your child hear how he or she sounds when reading out loud.



***Buddy Read:*** Take turns reading pages in a book, let your child read out loud to someone else, or even to a pet or stuffed animal!

***Writing***: Writing and reading go together. A fun way to get your child to write is to have a “secret journal” where you communicate back and forth daily or weekly. Write in it, put it in a secret location, and wait for the response to come back. Make your own books and take turns doing the writing. Play word games like Scrabble Jr. or Boggle.

***“Take Five”:*** To decide if a book is too hard for your child, use the “take five” approach. Open the book to the middle and have you child begin to read aloud. Every time he or she encounters an unknown word, hold up one finger. If you reach five fingers before the end of the page, the book is probably too hard. But don’t worry, you can use this book as a read aloud!

***After Reading:*** Have your child retell the story or draw a picture of their favorite part. Have your child write what might happen next in the story or what they would have done differently if they were the author. Ask your child how they felt about the book. Did they like it? Why or why not? If they read out loud, ask them what they thought they did well and what they thought they didn’t do so well. Make sure you mix it up. You do not always need to do an after reading activity.

***Online Activities and Websites:***

[www.starfall.com-](http://www.starfall.com-) reading games and activities

<http://www.gamequarium.com/readquarium/> - games to help build vocabulary, letter skills, and comprehension

<http://resources.kaboose.com/games/read2.html> - reading puzzles for all ages

<http://www.primarygames.com/reading.htm> - reading, grammar, and writing games

<http://www.internet4classrooms.com/parents.htm> - links to help parents with additional resources

***A few more tips***: It is important for your child to see YOU READING and enjoying it. It does not matter what you read, but make sure you spend time reading so your child knows that it is important and fun!

The library is an important resource. Take advantage of the librarian’s expertise- they are there to help! Ask your child’s teachers for suggestions on what to do at home. Do not be afraid to ask to for examples.