

10 Tips for Reading with Beginning Readers

Read with your child every day! Reading with your child is just as important now as it was when they were preschoolers. Let your child read out loud to you, and continue reading to them as well.

Set limits on television, computer and video game time. Along with setting aside daily reading time, determine how much time your children spend in front of the television, computer and gaming system.

Do as I do (and as I say)! If you want your children to become readers, let them see you reading, too. Children learn by example, and will get the message you value reading if they see you reading books, magazines, and newspapers.

Offer a range of reading material at home. Have a variety of reading choices for your children in your home, including picture books, chapter books, non-fiction, how-to books, magazines, word games, puzzles and comic books

Get your child a library card A regular trip to the library is the most economical way to fill your child's world with books. Borrow some for your own reading as well.

Discuss what you read. Help your child explore new concepts and ways of seeing the world by talking about the pictures and ideas in the books they are reading.

Have a family game night. Spend an evening playing board games such as Scrabble Junior, Boggle Junior and Taboo Junior. These and other word games are a fun way to help your beginning reader.

Give books as present and treats. Consider books, comics, or a magazine subscription when it's time to buy a present.

Talk to your child's teacher. Staying in regular contact with your child's teacher will keep you informed of your child's progress, and give you a chance to ask for the teacher's input on helping your child's reading at home.

Encourage with praise. Praise your child as they practise reading out loud. Let them know it is okay to make stumbles and mistakes as they go along.

Learn about immersion. As with every other area of endeavour, the more comfortable, positive and supportive you are the more confident and motivated your child will be. www.pei.cpf.ca

Take advantage of free resources: Canada flag pins are available from your member of parliament. Free bookmarks are available from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, www.cic.gc.ca. Free posters are available from the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, www.officiallanguages.gc.ca/en

If your children take piano or ballet lessons, encourage them to use French music.

Celebrate success! Hang up artwork and projects. Celebrate great test results.

Consider pen pals from French-speaking countries or with other French immersion or francophone students in your province or in Canada.

Encourage your children to dance to the music and put on shows or you. It will help them remember the songs.

All kids like food! Suggest to your CPF Chapter /school/French Club the idea of organizing a French Canadian celebration around food. Consider a *soupe aux pois* luncheon where everyone eats soup and French bread at lunch time. Other possibilities include a French Canadian potluck luncheon with French recipes; a *Journée des Crêpes* or a *Croissant et Café au Lait* day for older students.

If your community organizes a fall fair, a winter festival, a Christmas walk or parade, suggest your child's class sing or perform in French.

Check out summer camps –day Camps, residential camps and even family camps! Encourage your child to participate Check the CPF web site or Francophone Associations near you

Encourage children to start a scrapbook or collection of “something French” — French cassettes, or CDs, stamps, money, postcards, pictures, fashion ideas, hockey cards of French players, French soccer players, French recipes, Eiffel Tower, etc.

Create open, **regular** lines of communication with your children's teachers.

Try listening to French radio in your home or in the car.

More ideas.....

- Try to make learning – including learning and using French – fun and interesting, not just a chore. Try hands-on activities, games, and stories.
- Read to your child often, in your home language. Let him see you enjoy reading. Make reading seem so interesting that they really want to learn how. Expose your child to those stories from your own culture that he might miss in school.
- Monitor for progress in terms of skills, acquisition of information and independence. Reward progress with praise.
- Help your child develop positive self-esteem through their non-academic achievements.
- Don't give up too soon. Your child didn't learn English overnight (after all, English language arts is a required subject to the end of high school), and they will not learn French overnight either.
- Provide out-of-school opportunities for your child to reinforce and expand their knowledge of French. Do things you'd do anyway, just do them in French!
- Your support and interest are far more important than your poor accent. Accept that this is one area where your child will surpass you very quickly, and celebrate this together.
- Help with homework by helping your child become an independent learner: to make it their own responsibility to understand what is expected and to complete it on time and correctly. Your role is to facilitate, encourage and supervise.
- Focus on what your child is learning, not the language in which it's being taught. Find ways for your child to experience and explore those same concepts outside of school.
- Maintain good communications with their teacher. Use your child's school agenda to send brief messages, and phone or make an appointment if you have any concerns.
- Don't expect immersion to be any more "perfect" than you would an English program. You and your child will experience, over 13 years, the same number of ups and downs as those in any public school – but they will finish with the addition of functional fluency in French.

HELPING YOUR CHILD SUCCEED

The earlier children are exposed to language and literacy through activities like reading and writing, the more likely they are to do well at school. This is the case no matter what language they are exposed to in their early years.

Even before they start school, children acquire thinking and communication skills that enable them to learn other languages and to succeed in school. They learn those skills by hearing and speaking the language of their home – whether it is English or Portuguese, Farsi, Urdu or Chinese.

You don't need special skills to help your child learn French. Spending time with your child – talking about what he or she is thinking about and doing in his or her everyday life – will make a difference.

Homework Help Tips



As your child begins to participate in decisions about his own education, be sure he knows about the benefits and opportunities that await those with strong French-language skills, from leisure pursuits to employment.

Encourage your child to remain in the program as long as possible. Most immersion students fell truly fluent only after taking high school courses in French. These courses provide opportunities to discuss abstract concepts, thereby broadening a students' ability to use the French language.