

BES Tiger Tracks

BOOKS WORTH READING ALOUD TO YOUR CHILDREN

(Article from Barb's Books)

Many people have the idea that they don't need to read to children anymore once their children can read for themselves. Parents who feel this way deprive both themselves and their children of an enriching experience.

It is easy to lapse into watching television and videos for entertainment as children grow older, but these passive activities encourage parents and children alike to grow into couch potatoes who shut each other out so they don't have to talk. Reading books aloud together, on the other hand, encourages families to communicate and provides natural stimulation to discuss important issues

- Reading aloud helps to bond the parent and child.
- Reading aloud provides a shared family frame of reference.
- Being read to helps a child understand the purpose of the printed word.
- Being read to builds a child's vocabulary beyond what he is able to read for himself, and provides the background for a new reader to recognize new words he is decoding because he knows what they mean.
- Being read to helps a young child learn the connection between the written and printed word.
- Being read to entices a child into an exciting world of learning and entertainment
- Being read to helps a child absorb great amounts of information about the world and how it works, especially if parents lead children into discussing what is read.
- Being read to develops listening skills.
- Reading books aloud gives the family an alternative to the media for entertainment.
- Being read to helps the child develop a taste for excellent literature. Parents have an awesome responsibility and privilege to read the very best to their children in their limited time. What they choose may influence their children for the rest of their lives. Pick books that are interesting and above a child's reading level but well within his interest level.
- Pick books with well-developed characters that you wouldn't mind having your child play with or visit with at the dinner table. Those characters can influence him and affect his behavior for better or worse.
- If you have small children, pick books that won't bore you if you have to read them again and again.
- Pick books you really enjoy, that you will delight in sharing with your children. Your enthusiasm will be contagious. This may mean reading unfamiliar books by yourself before you read them to your children. How else will you know if the book is worth spending your time on?

Remember, you don't have to read just any book your child hands you or any book a friend or relative buys for your child. This is your precious time you are spending. Use it wisely.

A website for finding good books to read to or with your child is

www.barbsbooks.com: On the website, 1) Click on articles, 2) Then click on *Books Worth Reading Aloud*. 3) Under this title, click on Books for Preschoolers, Prima-ries, or Older Elementary. Under each category are listings of titles, authors, and summaries of books for each level. An example: **Amelia Bedelia**, everyone's favorite maid, always does exactly what she is told. She takes figurative language literally, and that is what entertains young readers so. These books are easy enough for the average first - third grader to read independently, but will be more fun if you read them with your child first and talk about them.

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