

# WAYS TO SUPPORT LITERACY INSTRUCTION

## AT HOME



*"You're never  
too old, too wacky, too wild,  
to pick up a book and  
read to a child."  
-Dr. Seuss*

# 30 x 6

*Students should be reading 30 minutes a night, 6 days a week.*

## WHAT SHOULD YOUR CHILD'S READING ENVIRONMENT LOOK LIKE AT HOME?

- Comfortable
- Well-lit
- Free of distractions - television, cell phones, headphones, etc.
- Don't let reading always be the the last assignment of the night.

## BUILDING STAMINA

Not every child will be able to read for 30 consecutive minutes in one sitting, so that is a goal to work towards. A conversation with your child might sound like, "Let's try to read ten minutes tonight. Then we'll take a break and read ten more..."

## HOW DO YOU KNOW YOUR CHILD HAS DONE THE READING?

- Check the number of pages read nightly.
- Read alongside your child for 30 minutes.
- Read the same book.
- Have a conversation with your child about the book. Use the questions attached as a guide.

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

- + What has been happening in the book that you are reading?
- + Who is the main character? Why is this character important to the story?
- + What is the main character like? Can you relate to the character? Why or why not?
- + Discuss what the character learned about himself, his family, or his friends.
- + If you could be friends with any character in the book, who would it be? Why?
- + Can you tell me about the main problem in the story?
- + Describe a conflict between two characters. How was the conflict resolved? What did you learn about these characters based on their actions?
- + In what kind of place is the story set? How does this affect the mood, characters, or events in the story?
- + What does the title have to do with the story?
- + What do you think the author is trying to say? Can you provide examples from the text to support your thinking?
- + What do you like or dislike about the book?
- + What other books have you read that had a similar theme or message?
- + What is something else you have read this year that relates to this story?
- + What surprised you most about the story? Why was it surprising?
- + How did the story change your thinking?
- + Would you recommend this book to anyone? Why or why not?

### Asking Questions



Good readers ask questions  
to help them understand  
what they read.

## HOW DO YOU KNOW IT'S NOT WORKING?

- Talk to your child about the book he or she is reading. Is he/she able to discuss the book in detail? Is he/she able to answer questions that require more than a simple "yes" or "no" answer?
- Your child is not "in a book."
- Your child is not "getting" the book he or she is reading.
- Your child should be finishing a book equivalent every two weeks (one book equivalent = 200 pages).

## WHAT TO DO IF IT'S NOT WORKING

- Change the reading environment.
- Encourage your child to reread tough portions of books, particularly in the beginning. This is a valuable activity.
- Read aloud. Take turns reading aloud.
- Read alongside your child.
- Read the same book that your child is reading.



## HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD CHOOSE A BOOK

- Identify a book that your child enjoyed reading; find another book in that series or another book by that author.
- Explore books in the same genre.
- Obtain recommendations from your child's classmates, friends, or siblings.
- Ask your child's teacher.
- Ask the librarian at NMS or your local library.
- Refer to the websites and resources listed on the Additional Resources/Websites page.
- Consult websites like [Barnesandnoble.com](http://Barnesandnoble.com), [Goodreads.com](http://Goodreads.com), [readingandwritingproject.org/resources/book-lists](http://readingandwritingproject.org/resources/book-lists), and [Scholastic.com](http://Scholastic.com).

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES/WEBSITES

Conversation Starters

Questions to Ask Your Student Before, During, and After Reading

North Middle School English Department Website

<http://englishnms.weebly.com>

Scholastic.com

Newsela.com

ReadWorks.org

ReadWriteThink.org (Parent & Afterschool Resources)

GreatNeckPublicLibrary.org (Young Adult Programs)

Time Magazine Top 100 Young Adult Books

<http://time.com/100-best-young-adult-books>

What Should I Read Next?

[www.whatshouldireadnext.com](http://www.whatshouldireadnext.com)

National Geographic <http://kids.nationalgeographic.com> also has high interest non-fiction articles on a variety of levels. The more skilled readers may prefer the <http://www.nationalgeographic.com> regular site.

Many museums in New York, and throughout the nation, have wonderful websites!

The New York Historical Society <http://www.nyhistory.org/education> and the New York Public Library <http://www.nypl.org> are two places that are fun to explore on line and in person.