

Reading and writing at home boosts success

When kids spend time reading and writing at home, it benefits them in the classroom. What's more, it may pay off later in life.

According to research, kids who sharpen their literacy skills at home—even with activities that are just for fun—are more successful in school than other kids. And they become adults with strong work ethics who thrive in their careers.

Luckily, it's easy to encourage reading and writing at home. Here are three ideas to try:

1. Make books a priority. Don't save stories for bedtime—read them any time of day! Keep books out where your child can get to them. Visit the library often to find new titles. And set a good example: When you have some downtime, reach for a book instead of the remote. Your child will notice.
2. Start a family journal. Each weekend, have your child jot down something special about his week. It doesn't need to be long; a couple of sentences will do. After his entry, add your own. By the end of the school year, you'll have a written record of memories!
3. Play word games. Each round of Scrabble does more than entertain your child. It hones his reading and writing skills. Best of all, he won't suspect you're "teaching" him anything!

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