

Ideas for Goals from Home

Reading Comprehension

As you read together, ask questions such as “How is this character like (or different from) the one we read about in the last book?” Finding similarities and differences helps to show understanding of the stories read.

Keep reading aloud to your child, no matter what age they are. Reading aloud gives you a chance to stir your child’s imagination and help him/her develop a sense of language and story. It also gives you an opportunity to help your child increase his/her vocabulary and comprehension skills, and it allows you to demonstrate correct pronunciation and expressive reading.

After reading a story, ask your child to tell about the main characters. Ask what story details helped your child understand each character. Ask about the setting with questions such as: Where does the story take place? Does it take place today or long ago?

After reading a story, ask your child to retell the events in order. On index cards, create picture cards illustrating scenes from the story and have your child put the events in order.

Give everyone in your family a newspaper or a section of one. Have each member find an article that interests him/her and read it silently. Come back together as a family and have everyone summarize their article and explain why they chose it.

When reading picture books with younger children, it is helpful to look at the pictures first with your child and help them make predictions about the books content. Ask questions where there is more than a “yes” or “no” answer. Predictions can heighten interest and gives the child a purpose for reading.

Don't always use picture books when reading with young children as it takes away their chance to form their own imagery. Read several pages of picture books and then share the pictures while asking your child how the book's images differ from their own. This will also heighten their comprehension skills as they will be listening more intently if they have to share their version of the book's imagery.

Create a purpose for your child's reading.

1. Ask your child questions that require reading to answer.
2. Make predictions about the book.
3. Before reading discuss an activity he/she can do after reading the book (draw your favorite scene, favorite character, compare this book to another book or character). This will help them focus on the details of the story.

Without a purpose a child loses focus more easily.

One of the marks of a good reader is a strong vocabulary. Memorization and exposure to new words (through books, newspapers and conversation) are great ways to build vocabulary. Look for these milestones as your child increases his store of words:

- Figures out word meanings from clues in text
- Uses synonyms and antonyms correctly
- Uses new words appropriately in his/her writing
- Uses knowledge of prefixes, suffixes and root words to expand vocabulary
- Understands the vocabulary of different content areas such as science materials

This website lists multiple comprehension websites that students can go to for comprehension practice at home. <http://www.literacy.uconn.edu/compre.htm#websites>

Comparing one book to another deepens your child's understanding of his reading. Challenge him with questions like:

- How is this one different?
- How is this like other books you've read?
- Would you recommend this book to someone else? Who? Why?

When you hit a tricky word: Before telling your child what the word is, ask her some key questions:

- Look at the pictures, any clues?
- Are there any parts of the word you recognize?
- What is a word that starts with that beginning sound and would make sense?
- What word would make sense?

When reading with your child, take time to discuss each other's reactions to the text. After each page, chapter, or section, stop and "say something" to each other about the reading. Knowing he/she has to be ready to share a thought keeps your child more focused.