

Encouraging Reading

Four strategies can turn your middle schooler into a reader

Is your middle schooler less than enthusiastic about curling up with a good book? Help him learn to enjoy reading. Not only will it improve his language skills, it may turn him into a lifelong book lover!

To encourage your child to read:

1. Lead by example. Research shows that your reading habits can have a huge impact on your child's reading habits. So let him see you reading for pleasure! Instead of turning on the TV when you get home from work, pick up the newspaper. On weekends, unwind with the latest bestseller.
2. Designate daily reading time. Set aside a short period of "quiet time" each day when the music, TV and computer are turned off. Suggest your child use the time to read. Don't force him, though, because it could backfire. Instead, kick back with your own book and see if he follows your lead.
3. Offer a book allowance. Give your child a small amount of money to spend on books each month. But when you take him to the bookstore, be sure he gets to choose what to buy. Comics and graphic novels may not be your idea of great literature, but if they inspire him to read, they're perfect!
4. Subscribe to a magazine. Whether your preteen is obsessed with race cars, outer space, sports or guitars, there's surely a magazine devoted to that very subject. So look for a quality publication and consider ordering a subscription for him. Each new issue means another opportunity to read.

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