

Reading Magic

by Mem Fox

WHY READING ALOUD
TO OUR CHILDREN
WILL CHANGE THEIR LIVES
FOREVER



**Recent brain research has revealed
that the early years of life are more
critical to a child's development than
we ever realized! (Mem Fox)**

By the age of two, toddlers' brains are as active as those of adults. The metabolic rate keeps rising, and by the age of three, toddlers' brains are two and a half times more active than the brains of adults -- and they stay that way throughout the first decade of life (Shore, 1997). One can compare the working rate of a toddler's mind to an adult's mind as that of a supercomputer to an abacus.

(Experiences in Language Arts by Machado P. 216)



“The fire of literacy is created by the emotional sparks between a child, a book, and the person reading. It isn’t achieved by the book alone, nor by the child alone, nor by the adult who’s reading aloud – it’s the relationship winding between all three, bringing them together in easy harmony.”



**Reading problems are difficult
to fix but very easy to prevent.**

Children who have not been regularly
talked to, sung to, or read aloud to from
birth find life at school much more
burdensome than they otherwise might.
In particular, learning to read becomes a
major stumbling block rather than a
surprising delight.



Experts tell us that children need to hear a 1,000 stories read aloud before they begin to learn to read for themselves.

1. 3 stories a day will deliver us a thousand stories in one year alone ... so it's possible in the 4 or 5 years before school.
2. Three stories a day can be: one favorite, one familiar, and one new



Vocabulary grows more from reading than from any other activity!


- As parent: choose books a little above their reading level ... it expands their vocabulary
- Read all kinds of books (poetry, history, scientific)
- Point to the words as you read
- Flash whole words, not just letters
- Don't stop reading with them after they learn to read.
(have them read to you or partner read)



Bonus: The time spent reading together provides clear evidence to a child of a parent's love, care, and focused attention. And it gives the parent a chance to close off the rest of the world, relax, and connect with the child wonderfully!

**There is no exact way to read
aloud, other than to try to be as
expressive as possible.**

The ups and downs of our voices
and our pauses and points of
emphasis are like music, literally, to
the ears of young children, and kids
love music.



We can do at least seven things with our voices:

1. loud

2. soft

3. fast

4. slow

5. high

6. low

7. p-a-u-s-e



**Children who are read to early
and regularly quickly acquire the
skills of listening, concentration,
and focus.**

**Read-aloud sessions can happen
anytime, any where.**

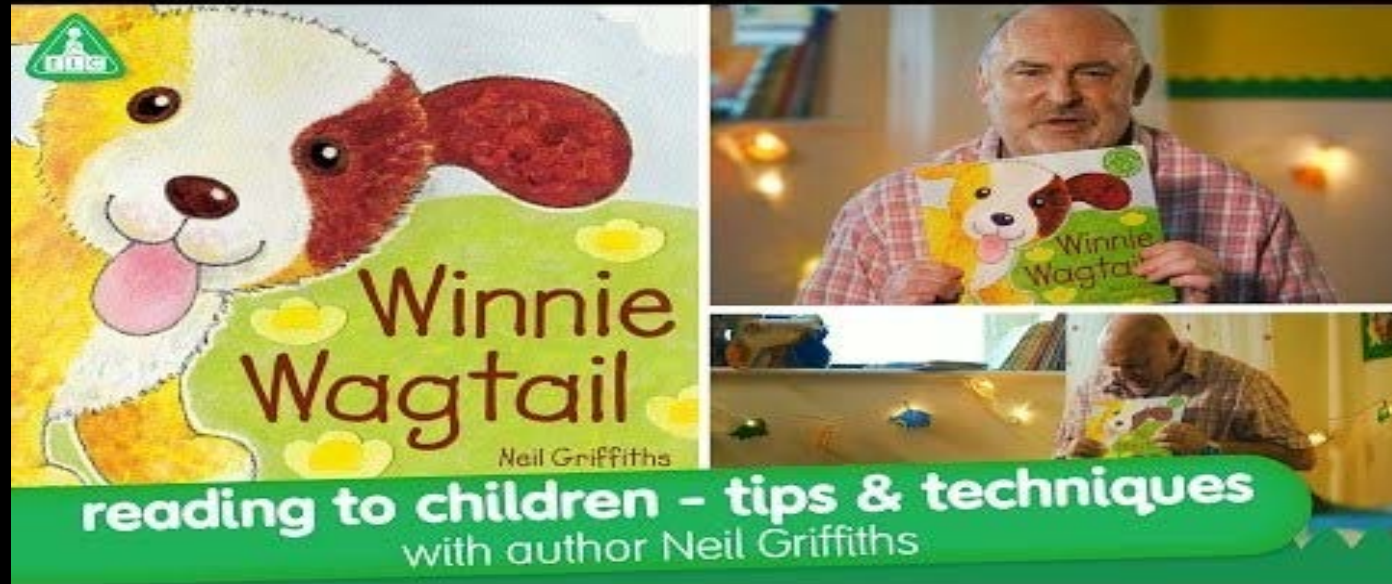
But one of the best times is bedtime!



Here are a few of the first things your child learns to do when he watches you read:

- Hold a book right side up
- Turn to the front of the book to begin
- Turn pages at the appropriate time when the the story is being read
- Point to words instead of pictures when reading
- Pick out a favorite book from a shelf of books

Reading Sample





Phonics First Approach or whole word?

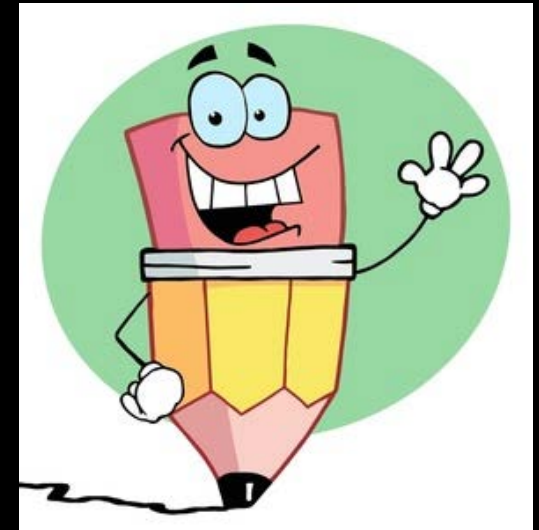
Mem proposes:

1. Start with whole stories
2. Advance to whole words
3. Advance to individual letters and their sounds (before & during Kindergarten)



**Being able to correctly
identify the individual
letters of the alphabet
before school is a great
predictor of a child's
future success as a
reader.**

**Amazing as it may
seem, trying to
write is one of the
fastest ways
children teach
themselves to
read.**





Reading is tricky.

Reading is complex.


**Reading is being able to make
sense from the marks on the page.**

Reading is getting the message!



Three Secrets of Reading

1. The ability to make sense of the squiggles on the page, in other words ... understands the print
1. If one wants to read a language, it is necessary to understand the language
1. The magic of general knowledge ... understands how the world works



**Aoccdrnig to rscheearch at an Elingsh
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oredr the ltters in a wrod are, the olny
iprmoetnt tihng is that the frist and lsat
ltters are in the rghit pclae: the rset can
be a toatl mses but you can still raed it
wouthit a porbelm. This is bcuseae we
don't raed ervey lteter but the word as
a wlohe.**

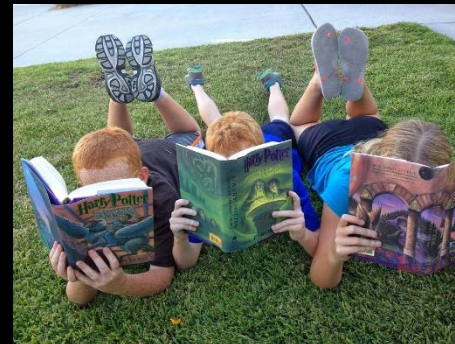
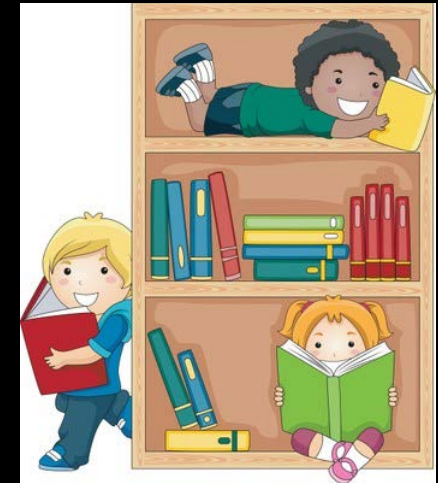
**So, hey, waht does this say about the
improtnace of phonics in raeidng?**

**The faster we read, the easier
it is to read because we can
hold in our memory all we've
read so far.**



**The slowness of our progress
overloads our memory and
blocks out meaning.**

We shouldn't expect children to read easily unless they have books in the house, car, everywhere!





**In school, every child
knows who the best
readers are – and the
worst.**



Scaffolding

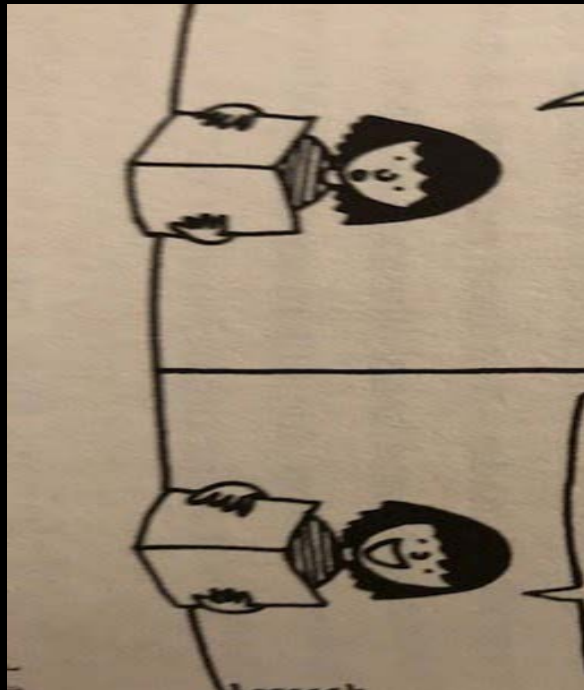
1. Parents read to kids
2. Parents and kids can read together
3. Kids read with parents telling them the words they don't know
4. School age: Kid reads, allow a short time to sound out the unknown word, then tell them



Boys

1. Catch them early (essential)
2. Bedtime – excellent
3. Special time with dad
4. What are their interest?

**They will love books too, if they
are exciting, fun, appealing and
grabs their interest!**

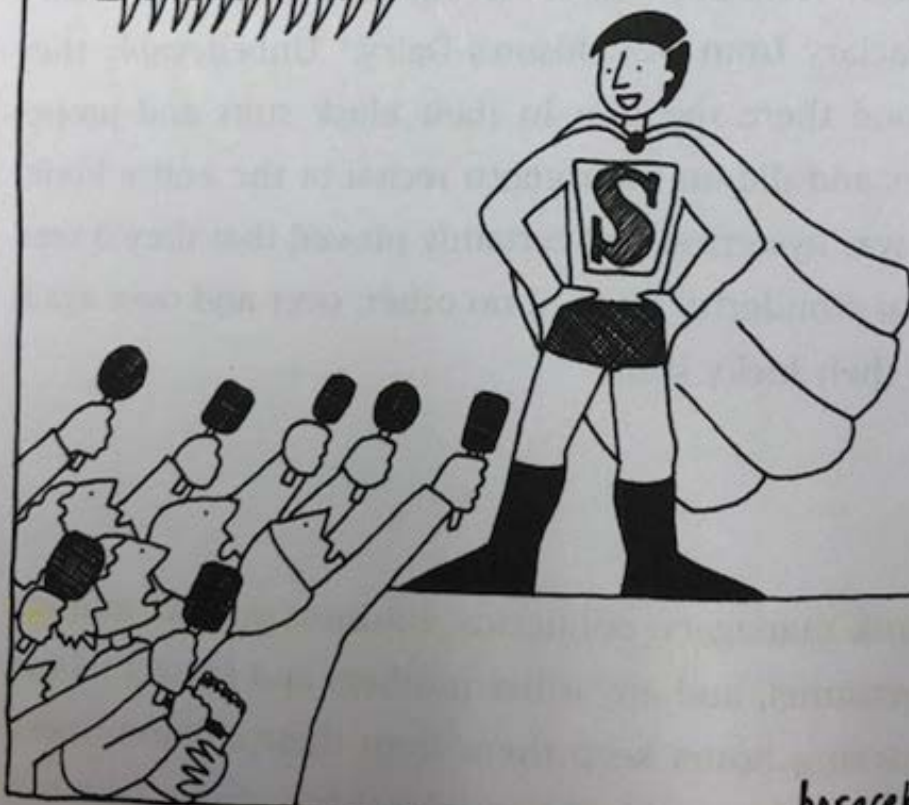




**The aim should be to make
reading seem as fabulous as
it is for most of us: fun,
hilarious, thrilling, useful,
interesting, amazing,
essential and desirable.**

Tell us the
secret of
your success,
O Superman.

I was read
to as a baby.



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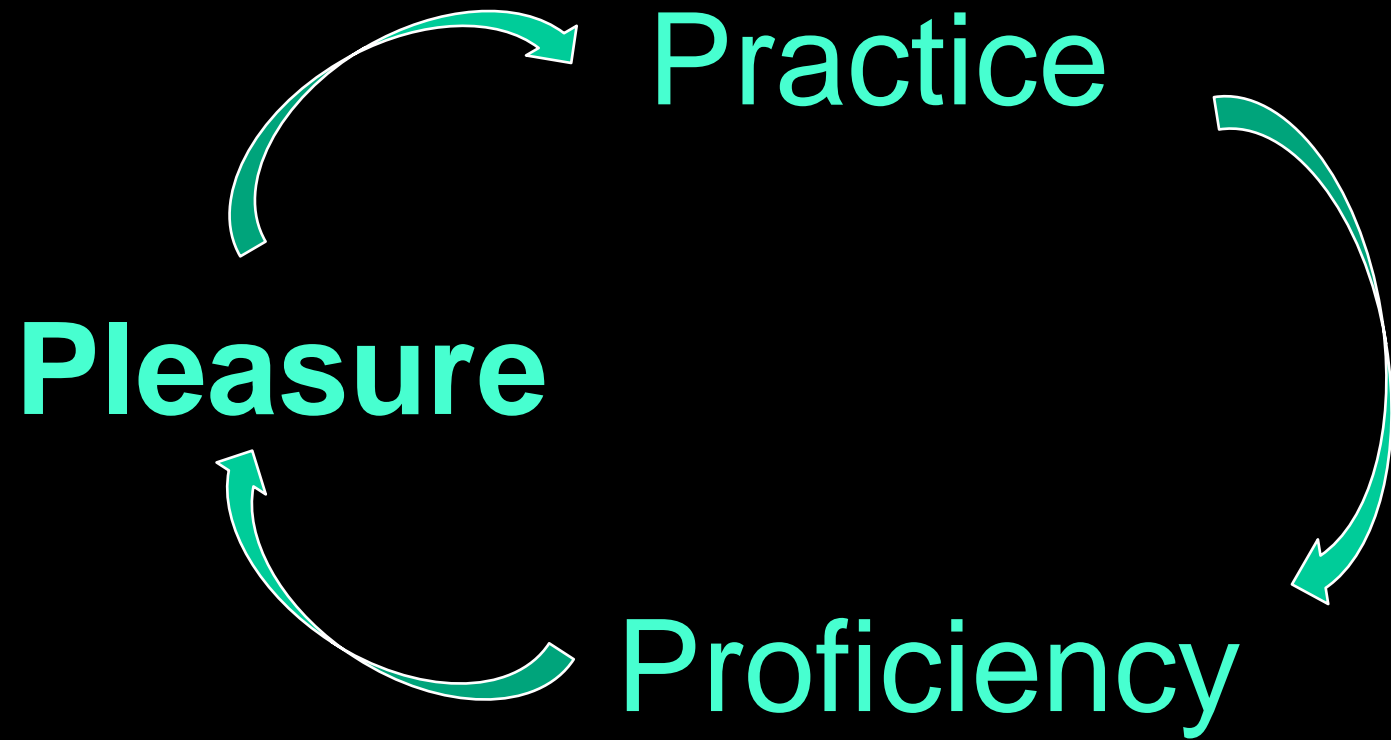


If you teach your children to love to read, you are handing them down a special gift that will enrich their lives. Your children will:

- Improve as readers
- Do better in school
- Gain confidence
- Become more independent
- Appreciate a larger, richer world



You are your
child's first and
most important
teacher!



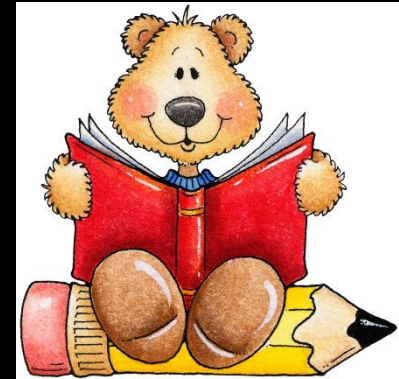
Success Cycle



Getting Started

1. Keep books handy.
2. Choose books your child will like.
3. Set a special time to read ... bedtime.
4. Don't panic if you miss a day.
5. Read 20 minutes a day.
6. Talk about the story you read.
7. Talk about things in the story.
8. Mention the author and illustrator.
9. Get others in the on the reading act.
10. Share your reactions to the book.

Reading and Writing Go Hand- in-Hand



1. Allow children to try writing – have paper, crayons & pencils available.
2. Label some objects around the house.
3. Write them a short message each day.
4. Put magnetic letters on the fridge & spell a word each day. Let them try words on their own.

“The more you **read**
the more **things** you know.

The more that you **learn**
the more **places** you’ll go.”
-Dr. Seuss