

## Discover the Magic of Reading Aloud

### Reading is Love

You are your child's first and most influential teacher. The parent-child relationship that begins with reading aloud can develop into a lifetime of learning together. Here are some practical tips for making it happen.

### Find a consistent time or two

Quality reading requires concentration so think about moving the reading routine to earlier in the evening. The main point is to have a routine that adult and child can look forward to.

### Learn tricks that add drama

- Believe it or not, reading slowly can be better. Children's authors read their own work slowly and with lots of expression.
- Long descriptions are hard to read aloud. If you own the book, pencil out or bracket these parts and skip them.
- Use toys, food or pictures as props to help read, tell or retell the story.
- Sometimes give the fidgety child some paper to draw pictures about the story as you read it.
- You can 'write' yourself and your child into new versions of favourite tales and enjoy performing these together.
- Think big! Take your children beyond the words on the page into the author's world.

### Plan for a lifetime of learning

Young children, learning to read on their own, need lots of encouragement and benefit from repeated practice with easy books. As children mature, so can the book talks between parent and child. Reading together gives the parent and the older child a shared experience, and talking about the ideas in the book develops the mind. What began as simple language play with babies evolves into a learning connection with adolescents. Great minds don't just happen; they are carefully nurtured within close relationships.



### Choose the right books together

Parents need to consider their child's interests but they also have a role to play in choosing books. What's too hard to read aloud? Any reading material that is beyond your child's emotional or social maturity level is too hard.

### Talk about the book

Use these questions and sentence starters to encourage your child to clarify and extend his or her thinking.

#### Sharing the Learning:

- That's exactly what I was thinking.
- Oh, now I see what you mean.
- I'm not sure. What do you think?

#### Making Predictions:

- Let's look at the pictures. I wonder...
- I wonder what would happen if...
- What questions do we have right now?

#### Supporting Comprehension:

- Let's make a list of...
- Let's retell the story from the pictures.
- Well, we now know...
- Does that make sense?

#### Making Connections:

- Does that remind you of anything? Anyone?
- That reminds me of the time we...

#### Words for having fun:

- I love the sound of those words. I'm going to read them again.

Adapted from: Peel District School Board

### Contents:

The Magic of Read Aloud	1
Note to Parents	2
Connect with your teen	2
Getting Results - AATs & Diploma Exams	3
Parent tips	4



*“Children are made readers on the laps of their parents.”*

*- Emilie Buchwald*

## Note to Parents

Parents are a child's first teacher. You play a key role in helping your child achieve success. The research is clear: students whose parents are actively involved in their education achieve higher grades, have better attendance and have higher graduation rates. (New Wave of Evidence, 2002).

Although you may already receive a newsletter from you child's school, the focus of *Partner Talk* is to provide you with practical ideas and suggestions you can use to help your child be successful in school and in life. Each of the ideas presented will focus on how parents and schools can work together to support students and each other.

Adapted from: Peel District School Board



## 10 ways to stay connected with your teen

As your teen becomes more independent, you may find that you're spending less time together. Here are some ways you can stay in touch with your teen:

- Find interests you share and activities you can do together.
- Show an interest in your teen's friends and encourage them to get together at your house.
- Show an interest in your teen's music. Find out who her favourite artists and songs are and what she likes about them.
- Help your teen understand the different stages of life by visiting friends and family members of all ages.
- Eat together; listen to what your teen has to say.
- Keep up to date and involved with your teen's activities. Show your interest by asking about her soccer game or movie he just watched.
- Make sure your teen knows she can share her problems with you. Help her benefit from your successes and mistakes.
- Read together as a family and discuss what everyone is reading.
- Keep track of family successes in a journal for each year.
- Write your teen a letter. Let him know what he does that makes you proud, how you see him growing and maturing. Use the letter to express emotions you may have trouble telling him directly.

Adapted from: Peel District School Board



*Education starts in the home; it's not something that only happens in school.*

### **SSDEC Literacy Results 2009:**

- 71% of South Slave Students were reading at or above the national average (up from 65% in 2007)
- 98% of South Slave students who completed all of their homework passed to the next grade

## Getting Results

# Helping Your Child Prepare for AATs and Diploma Exams

### **What are AATs?**

The Alberta Achievement Tests (AAT's) for Math and Language Arts are administered every May and June to students in grades 3, 6 and 9. These tests help schools monitor student progress and improve classroom instruction by identifying strengths and stretches. The AAT's will also tell parents what their child is expected to learn according to the territorial curricula, and how well they are doing in relation to other students writing the test.

### **How can I help my child prepare?**

#### **Stay positive**

- Celebrate child's successes and efforts each day.
- Limit your child's absences from school.
- Schedule appointments at times other than the assessment period.
- Ensure your child gets a good night's sleep and eats a healthy breakfast and lunch.
- Make sure your child arrives at school on time.
- Speak positively about the test. Say things like 'Try your best'.

#### **Learning for life (not just for AAT's)**

- Establish a daily homework routine
- Support your child with homework but don't do it.
- Encourage your child to show his/her thinking while working through activities. Have your child consider the following questions:
  - Have I done what I was supposed to do?
  - Can I add any details to show my thinking?
  - Have I communicated what I wanted to?
  - Have I checked my work over?

Check out the link below for parent guides  
<http://education.alberta.ca/parents/resources/exams.aspx>

### **What are Diploma Exams?**

Students registered in grade 12 Diploma Exam courses for Language Arts, Math, Sciences and Social Studies are expected to write a standard final exam developed by Alberta Learning.

The purpose of these exams is to ensure that standards of achievement are maintained for those courses no matter where a student attends school. Students who are enrolled in Diploma Exam courses must write the exam at a prescribed date and time as determined by Alberta Learning. Contact your high school principal for diploma exam dates and times. Final report card marks for these courses are made up by combining the school awarded mark and the diploma exam mark.

### **How can I help my child prepare?**

#### **English Language Arts (ELA)**

- Diversity - in addition to texts studied in class, encourage your child to explore a wide variety of texts: articles, poems, films, theatre and visual arts.
- Interpretation - when reading literary text, encourage your child to ask questions about what the author intended to communicate, pay attention to details that communicate feelings and how specific details contribute to theme and character motivation.

#### **Social Studies**

- The best way to prepare is to participate in class discussion and attend regularly.
- Keep up to date in world events.

#### **Math and Science**

- Develop a positive attitude and good study habits.
- Attend class regularly; actively participate in class activities and labs.
- Complete all course assignments.

Check out the link below for more specific information on Diploma Exams  
<http://education.alberta.ca/students/exams/guides.aspx>

## SSDEC and you

# Meet your DEC members

The South Slave Divisional Education Council (SSDEC) is the regional governing body for education in the South Slave. It is made up of representatives from each local District Education Authority (DEA) within our region. The five members (from Fort Resolution, Fort Smith, Hay River, K'atl'odehche First Nation and Lutselk'e) meet regularly to create policy and make decisions regarding such items as the SSDEC budget and regional priorities and goals. Over the next several issues, we will profile the individual members who represent each of our South Slave communities.



## Parent Pointers: Communicating with Older Children

- Stay involved with your child.
- Know what is going on at school and with friends in your child's life.
- Spend more time listening to what they have to say. Don't interrupt them when they are talking. That way, they'll spend more time listening to you.
- When communicating with your older child, be brief. Avoid the use of words such as guilt, never and always.

©Copyright EducationWorld.com

## Parent Pointers: Emphasizing the Importance of Reading

- Let your children see you reading: parents who read usually have children who read.
- Reduce TV and video game time, and increase reading time.
- Set aside a time each day when you and your child will read.
- Read aloud to your child. Reading with expression shows a child that you love books and that you enjoy reading them.
- Share what you have read with your child and ask your child to do the same with you.

©Copyright EducationWorld.com

South Slave Divisional  
Education Council  
P.O. Box 510  
Fort Smith, NT  
X0E 0P0

Phone: (867) 872-5701  
Fax: (867) 872-2150  
www.ssdec.nt.ca

