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Involving parents to champion reading in homes

The National Reading Coalition (NRC) acknowledges that while reading should be taught at schools, parents have an obligation reading in homes. While reading in school is foundational to learners' educational philosophy, reading at home encourages a lifelong mindset of reading. Below are tips to encourage reading in homes:

1. Read to your child

One of the most important things you can do to encourage your child to read to your child every day. Even as your children get older, making reading part of your daily routine will encourage a culture of reading in your family. As a parent, it's your responsibility to make this experience fun. Let your children pick books they enjoy. Use your storytelling skills (and character voices) to keep your child engaged. Fun voices and storytelling will also help younger children follow the story better. Remember, if you're bored or seem bored, your child will pick up on it.

2. Create stories or fun games

Play fun games with your child to help with sight words, phonics words, or spelling. Try a word scavenger hunt or a sight word game. Take turns reading poems in or find and follow a recipe together. You may engage children in story telling on why certain trees are useful in homes.

3. Have a wide variety of books available in your homes

Your child should see books in their home multiple times a day every day. There should always book nearby so your child can have the opportunity to read if he or she wants to. Stock your library with age-appropriate books about your child's interests, favourite characters, and favourite types of stories. Does your child love stories about other children, fantasy or science fiction? Books about talking animals? Any story with their favourite character?

4. Make reading a priority in your home

As a parent, you are the biggest role model in your child's life. Let them see you reading every day for at least 15 minutes. Pick up a book, newspaper, or magazine, and settle in for a few quality minutes of reading. If you can convince your child to sit down and read next to you, great! If you can't, don't worry about it. Even if they're not actively participating, simply letting your child catch a glimpse of you reading each day can impact their approach to reading.

5. Join a family Virtual Reading Club.

The NRC will host its fourth Virtual Reading Club on the 25th March 2021. Register on www.nrc.org.za so that you get more details.