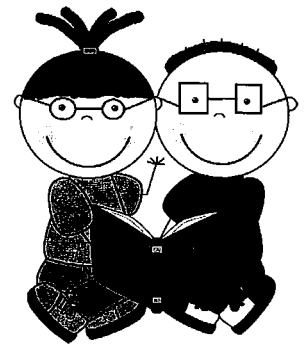


LOVE READING AND LOVE LEARNING
ADD AUDIO TO YOUR READING TOOLKIT



The Importance of Reading:

A child that reads for 20 minutes per day after school will read approximately 1.8 million words each year and will be ranked in the 90th percentile for student achievement. (Sally Shaywitz, 2005)

1. The more time students spend reading independently, the higher their gains will be in reading achievement.
2. Children's books have 3 X more vocabulary than normal conversation. Reading helps to develop a stronger vocabulary. This, in turn, helps students' comprehension and assists in academic success. (Irvin, 1998)
3. Reading volume is directly connected to reading success for **all students**, regardless of ability. (Cunningham and Stanovich, 1988)
4. Talking with children paired with reading has a very strong effect on literacy learning success. During reading, encourage lots of talking. Make predictions, discuss feelings and actions as you are reading to your child or as your child is reading independently. Discuss the *Who, What, Where, When, Why* and *How*. Children learn language best by actively constructing meaning (Vygotsky, 1962; Lindfors, 1987) and oral language engagement lies at the root of constructing meaning. The interactive oral discussions around the dinner table, in the car, at bath time and at bedtime, are all essential learning opportunities that enrich language and learning. (Snow, 1996)
5. The importance of decoding in teaching children to read needs to be considered. However, understanding the message, thinking critically about the content, using imagination and making connections is at the heart of what it means to be a reader and why kids learn to love books.

Why pair audio/digital text with reading text, especially for students with vision loss?

1. Audiobooks have proven to be successful in helping students to access literature/enjoy books.
2. This pairing develops good listening skills. Being able to efficiently comprehend text through audio takes skill and lots of practice. This skill must be developed from an early age.
3. Assists with the process of becoming better readers. Always pair audio/digital text with print or braille so the young child continues to strengthen reading skills. As they become proficient readers and they have more content to read, they can become skilful at accessing and comprehending audio text.

***Reading audio books should never replace instruction in reading print or braille.**

4. Reading is too important to compromise or abandon because of vision loss! As reading demands and interests increase, **visual fatigue** may become a factor. Audio books provide the reader opportunities to take breaks from the visual demands of reading as required.
5. Access to digital books and curriculum materials has never been easier at home and at school. Access the public library and use the many free sites with audio books. A few sites have been listed below for your convenience to get you started on zooming into a life of reading and learning!
6. Experimenting with a variety of formats encourages the use of technology, which is an important career and life skill in the Expanded Core Curriculum: <http://www.vision.alberta.ca/resources/curriculum/>

Starfall: <http://www.starfall.com> is a free children's website that teaches basic English reading and writing skills (preschool to Grade 2)

Tumbleweed books: <http://www.clarington-library.on.ca/ecollection> includes animated audio picture books, chapter books, videos, fiction and non-fiction titles and books in French and Spanish. (Free from this library site)

TumbleBookCloud Junior <http://www.tbclr.com> is an online collection of e-books and read-along chapter books, non-fiction books, graphic novels, educational videos and audio books! This database is a great option for adventurous young readers from Grade 3 to Grade 6.

TumbleBookCloud: <http://www.tumblebookcloud.com/ViewByCover.aspx?categoryID=211> features over 400 titles for middle-schoolers and teens. It features YA novels, classics, poetry, short stories, YA/Teen audiobooks, graphic novels and videos from *National Geographic*.

BookFlix is a remarkable interactive literacy resource that builds the love of reading online. BookFlix pairs fiction books with related non-fiction. LearnAlberta has paid for this subscription. Each of the fiction/nonfiction pairs includes lesson plans and curriculum correlations (subscription paid by LearnAlberta). How to log on:

1. Go to www.learnalberta.ca
2. Look for login button (small button in upper right hand corner)
3. Login: LA05; Password 3403

Go to the "online reference centre" tab

Scroll down to BookFlix

Raz Kids: <https://www.raz-kids.com> Online guided reading program with interactive e-books, downloadable books and reading quizzes. Many schools buy a subscription and families are allowed to use for no additional fee.

Tar Heel Reader: <http://tarheelreader.org> is a collection of free, easy-to-read, and accessible books on a wide range of topics. Each book can be speech-enabled and accessed using multiple interfaces, including touch screens, IntelliKeys with custom overlays and 1 to 3 switches. Adapted books are searchable by a wide range of topics and also as a resource for writing books (free).

Reading tips for parents: <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/reading-tips-parents-11-languages> One page reading tips for parents has suggestions and tips for parents in 11 different languages (free).

Public Library

- Ask about a special card from Diversity Services.
- Audio books available through download directly onto iPad or laptop/CD.
- Once registered at your local library, go to www.calgarypubliclibrary.com or local library website.

Bookshare/CELA/CNIB: <http://www.bookshare.org/home?c=ca> is the world's largest online library for individuals with print disabilities, offering a wide range of books including bestsellers, novels, children's books, mysteries, science fiction, nonfiction and more Braille books and tools for downloading.

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- Can download as many books as you want
- Over 14,000 children and adult books available to Canadians
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