

Parents Can Reduce Reading Anxiety

A Guide for Parents of Middle Schoolers



Children become more self-conscious as they grow older. So when middle schoolers have trouble reading, they can feel especially embarrassed. If your children are anxious about reading, keep these suggestions in mind:

- ☆ Encourage, but do not force your children to read aloud to you. Wait until they are comfortable with this idea. When they do read aloud, be positive and supportive.
- ☆ Avoid insisting that your middle school children read difficult material. Allow them to read what they like-- even magazines or comic books. They will practice reading more often if they are given opportunities to read what they enjoy.
- ☆ If your children do not understand the instructions on their homework, refrain from reading the instructions to them. Have your children reread the instructions. If rereading the instructions does not work, try using tape recordings. You can tape yourself reading the instructions, then let your children read along to the taping.
- ☆ Set an example by keeping interesting reading materials around the house. Spend time reading yourself.
- ☆ Contact your children's teachers if problems continue.
- ☆ Be supportive. Never let your children hear you complain about their reading skills. With encouragement, you can help them grow to love books.☆

Source: Sylvia Rimm, Dr. Sylvia Rimm's *Smart Parenting: How To Raise a Happy, Achieving Child*, 1996, Crown Publishers. Adapted by the Title I Dissemination Project, with permission, from "Parents Can Reduce Reading Anxiety" in *Parents Still make the difference* © Middle School by The Parent Institute, a division of NIS, Inc (2003).