

Reflections on Reading

Give Me 20!

How is the nightly “20” going in your home? Many of our students are tasked with the “read for 20 minutes” homework assignment (or, gasp - for 30 minutes!) each night. And, for some students, 20 minutes is not enough. You have to rip the book away from your child’s hands! For other students, the 20 minutes is a struggle. Does your child need support in building his or her ability to read for a sustained period of time? Reading stamina, being able to read for a period of time without being distracted or distracting others, *can* be developed. Here are some tips!

1. Reading does not have to be a solo experience. Try having your child read aloud to a sibling or a pet. Reading includes listening to others read to you - audio books and websites count. Mix it up and the motivation may increase.
2. If your child is reading to him or herself, he/she should be able to decode almost every word in the book correctly. This is known as your child’s independent level - it is an easier level than what the teacher marks on the report card. Rereading a favorite book is okay, too, and helps build fluency.
3. Keep books in the car or take them with you on the bus. If the electronics are put away, many children find reading to be a preferred activity. No headphones needed!

4. Set goals and track the time together. If 20 minutes isn't happening at first, consider beginning with 10 minutes and work up from there. Add a few minutes to the daily reading time every week.
5. Have fun with books! Instead of focusing on the minutes your child reads, celebrate the wonder and joy that conversations about the book create! Share books with family members and take family trips to the library.

Building the capacity to read for longer periods of time is essential for all of our college and career bound children. [The 20 minutes a night does make a difference](#); hang in there!

~ Kristy Delikat,
Reading Specialist