

Top 10 EASY Ways to Help your Child Learn at Home:

1. Read EVERY Day! Seriously, it works!

Make sure your child is reading books, magazines, or graphic novels that are easy for him/ her to read without help every day. If your child struggles with more than 5 words on a page, have them choose another book. Find books for free at the library or online! Check garage sales, too!

2. Read the Book, See the Movie!

Awesome books are available as movies on DVD for free at your library or for \$1.20 at Redbox. Read the book before or after seeing the movie then talk about how the book and the movie were different. Telling how things are alike and different is an important learning skill.

3. Look at Maps!

Road maps, maps to the mall or grocery store, and even old theme park maps are great learning tools! Show your child how to read and follow a map. Your child could even make a map of your house or neighborhood. Get creative!

4. Play Board Games or Cards!

Have your child read the directions! Or, have them teach you how to play the game and go back to the "rules" if there is a question. Your child can keep track of points and penalties. Playing cards, board games, and solving puzzles together boosts math AND reading skills.

5. Talk in the Car!

You've got them trapped, so take advantage of it! Play games like, "Who can spot a purple car first?" or, "Who can count 20 road signs first?" Singing and storytelling is great, too! Tell your child the name of the road you will turn onto next and see if they can spot it in time. Older students can help you navigate while reading the GPS or GOOGLE MAP directions.

6. Cook in the Kitchen!

So what if you are not a gourmet chef? Have your child write down the names of ingredients you are using and the steps needed to create a recipe. They can also measure and mix to build math and science skills. Talk to your student about the kinds of foods you are using. Even if you're serving a boxed or frozen dinner, make sure your child is the one reading the directions!

7. Collect Words!

Your child can keep a post-it note deck, index cards or a notebook full of new words that are discovered at school or at home. When you find a great new word, write it down, tell what you think it means, and then look it up in the dictionary or online. Words can come from songs on the radio, T.V., stores, family, etc. Keep using the new word as often as possible!

8. Shop till you Drop!

Take your children shopping with you! Have them make a list of items needed and let your child help you shop. Talk about budget and estimate the costs of the items in your cart. Show your child how to locate items in a big box store by using aisle markers like “frozen foods” or “household items”. Explain why the items are categorized that way. In malls, have your child find stores from the directory that will have the items you need. Reading fast food menu boards at the food court is another great way to incorporate learning!

9. Turn the T.V. and Video Games Off! Or at least turn off the sound!

If your child MUST watch more than an hour of T.V. a day, turn off the sound! Let them read the closed captions at the bottom, or make up their own story from what they are seeing. This is actually a really fun family activity. While some video games might be educational, most are not. Why not make a fair trade? After every 45 minutes of a video game, your child reads for 20. You'll both be happy!

10. AND... Let them see you read!

Even if you HATE to read, let your kids see you reading online, magazines, recipes, menu boards, the comic strips, directions... anything! You don't have to be the world's best reader to model reading. Research shows that children who have parents that VALUE reading learn faster and do better in school than children who don't. Be the parent that takes 5 minutes a day to make a difference!

For more information on awesome ways you can help your student at home, visit the following websites:

<http://www.readingrockets.org/audience/parents/>

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/education/read/>

Or contact Mrs. Maeker at: pmaeker1@kleinisd.net