**5 ways to inspire kids to read for fun**

* Posted by Marianne Stenger |

**These days it seems like children prefer to sit in front of screens rather than engage with old-fashioned print. Here are a few easy and effective ways you can encourage kids to pick up a book and read.**

Reading enriches our lives in so many ways, from [its ability to reduce stress](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/health/news/5070874/Reading-can-help-reduce-stress.html) and help us relax to the way it exposes us to new experiences, cultures and emotions.

Researchers have even found that [reading for pleasure](http://www.cls.ioe.ac.uk/library-media%5Cdocuments%5CReadingforpleasurestoppress.pdf) is more important to a child’s cognitive development and life achievement than a parent’s level of education or social class.

So with [Children’s Book Week](https://cbca.org.au/cbca-childrens-book-week) just around the corner, what can you do to inspire your kids to read more for fun? Here are a few practical ideas.

**1. Track down the book version of their favourite movie or TV show**

Most kids have a long list of movies or television shows they love to watch again and again, and there’s a good chance that the plotlines of at least some of these movies or TV shows are adapted from books.

So if you’re trying to encourage a book-shy child to start reading more regularly, start by researching which of their favourite movies or shows are based on books and then track these books down.

Some examples include the Harry Potter series, the Chronicles of Narnia and How to Train Your Dragon. There are plenty of others out there, though, so check out this [list for more ideas](https://www.timeout.com/new-york-kids/movies/best-kid-movies-adapted-from-childrens-books).

**2. Find books written by or about their role models**

Does your child have a hero or role model they idolise and love talking about? It might be a celebrated athlete like Muhammad Ali or a TV personality like Bear Grylls. Many famous people have written their own autobiography or have been the subject of a book.

Getting these types of books for your kids is another great way to get them excited about reading in their free time. Just make sure to check the book’s reviews beforehand so you can gauge whether or not the content would be age-appropriate.

**3. Start carrying books when you leave the house**

If you want to encourage your kids to read more, get into the habit of carrying books with you whenever you leave the house. This way, whether you’re waiting at the doctor’s office or driving to school, your kids can pass the time by reading instead of fiddling with a phone or tablet.

For younger kids, picture books work well, whereas for older kids, a collection of short stories like Enid Blyton’s Summer Stories, The Witch’s Vacuum Cleaner by Terry Pratchett or even one of the Winnie-the-Pooh story collections by AA Milne make for easy reading while on-the-go.

**4. Make time for reading at home**

Kids are more likely to read if they see their parents reading, so if you want to encourage your kids to read more in their free time, try leading by example. You can set aside a specific time of day for reading, such as after dinner or right before bed.

If your kids are younger, you can start by reading a chapter or a few pages of a storybook together each evening, but older kids will enjoy just sitting together and immersing themselves in their own book while you do the same.

**5. Set up goals and put rewards in place**

The [gamification trend](http://www.opencolleges.edu.au/informed/features/using-gaming-principles-to-engage-students/) in learning is still going strong, so why not try it for reading? You can set up some reading goals together and put a few rewards in place as an incentive.

Goals are best when they’re realistic and specific, and although older kids are usually capable of working towards longer-term goals and rewards, younger kids often need more immediate rewards in order to stay motivated.

For example, a goal could be to read at least two pages of a book each day or to finish two nonfiction books in one month. Rewards could include anything from visiting a bookstore together and picking out a new book to going out for a meal and a movie.