



12 More Family Activities to Support Literacy

The more kids read, the better readers they become, and, when kids are better readers, they are more successful in school. Here are a dozen ways your whole family can enjoy reading and reading activities together to boost literacy.

- 1. Tell family stories.** [Reading Rockets](#) reminds families that it helps children to know that some stories are about real people and real events. Your *own* [family stories](#) help illustrate that point! Whether at home or via video chat or phone call, the older members of the family can reminisce about special holidays, family vacations, school days, even everyday life. Family photographs are a great jumping off point for storytelling. Using a special family story and copies of photos or drawings, children can make a book to share with the whole family!
- 2. Start a family book club.** Is there a book your child is looking forward to reading? Why not read it together as a family? Be sure the chosen book works for all reading levels. Family members can read sections on their own each day and come together in the evening to discuss. (Or, you can make the book a [read-aloud](#) for the whole family.) Use conversation starters to get the ball rolling. *Who is your favorite character? Why did the character do...?* (You may be able to find a teacher or book group guide online for popular, new books.)
- 3. 50 amazing ways to read!** Use this [checklist](#) (English and Spanish) to encourage young readers.
- 4. Ready! Set! Read!** Check out [“Launching Young Readers.”](#) a 30-minute PBS show for parents, teachers, and caregivers that is dedicated to helping children learn to read. And, just for kids (ages 7-12), don’t miss a hip look at the joys of reading with [“Reading Rocks!”](#)
- 5. Go to a Book Festival (online).** The Library of Congress is celebrating the best of the annual [National Book Festival](#) with [author talks](#) from years past. Fridays are dedicated to talks with authors who write for kids and teens.
- 6. There’s an app (or website) for that!** [Common Sense Education](#) offers the [best in educational apps and websites](#) that support core literacy skills— phonics, fluency, vocabulary, spelling, comprehension, and writing.
- 7. Grab the Mic: Tell Your Story!** Once a reluctant reader and now a best-selling and award-winning Young Adult (YA) author, [Jason Reynolds](#) is all about storytelling. Jason’s also the National Ambassador for Young People’s Literature. The Library of Congress recently launched his new twice-weekly video series— [“Write. Right. Rite.”](#)— where Jason will offer creative writing prompts and more. Find Jason’s [videos](#) and [newsletters](#) online.
- 8. April is National Poetry Month.** There are at least [30 ways](#) to celebrate this annual observance of verse! Here are just a few... [“Dear Poet”](#) encourages students in grades 5-12 to interact with poems and poets (including former U.S. Poet Laureate [Nathasha Trethewey](#) who teaches at Emory University). Sign up for [Poem-a-Day](#) to receive a new poem in your in-box daily, featuring new works by contemporary poets. Try your hand at writing a poem in a form that’s new to you. (Use this [glossary of poetic terms, forms, and techniques.](#)) Enjoy the [Poem-a-Day Podcast](#). Find a favorite poem to memorize for [Poem in Your Pocket Day](#) (April 30). Find more poetry resources from the Library of Congress, including the [“From the Catbird Seat” blog](#) and [“The Poetry of Home.”](#) a weekly video series featuring U.S. Poets Laureate. For younger students, check out [Poems for Kids](#), a curated list arranged by theme. (Here are more [great poetry resources for young readers.](#))
- 9. Book it.** Children (ages 5-12) will enjoy [making a mini-book](#), demonstrated here by Library of Congress staff.
- 10. Wonder(ful) ways to boost curiosity.** Create a family “wonder” and post on [Wonderopolis](#). See if there is a “wonder” that has been posted by someone else that might answer a question your family has had.
- 11. Dinner Talk.** Have everyone at the dinner table discuss what he or she are reading. Take turns asking questions like these— *What is the main topic of the book? Where is the story set? How do you know? What do you think will happen next? How does this book compare to another book you have read?*
- 12. Create and maintain a parent and child dialogue journal.** Start by writing something about your child, asking him or her to read and respond. Daily entries should take no more than 5-10 minutes. You might write or draw about happy events, special occasions, family memories, etc., focusing on the positive. As your child continues to read and respond, the journal takes the form of a written conversation!

We'll be sharing more tips so watch for the next installment of DLD Daily Dozen!

