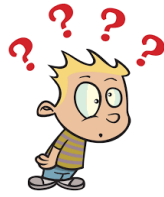


How to help your high school child with reading.



Reading difficulty:

Reading is an important skill for life, relaxation and academic success but not all children find reading easy.

Fact: 10% of every class is likely to experience some difficulty with reading.

Reading difficulties are likely to impact a young person's self-esteem and confidence. It is therefore important to help your child understand that having a reading difficulty does not make them stupid. Many famous, successful people have experienced reading difficulties: Agatha Christie, Richard Branson, Andy Warhol, Steven Spielberg, Albert Einstein, John Lennon, and Jennifer Aniston to name but a few.

Some students who find reading difficult will be dyslexic but not all students who find reading difficult are dyslexic.

Some young people struggle with every aspect of reading. Some find the mechanics of reading difficult but are able to put together the clues to have some understanding of what is written. Others seem to read very well but have little understanding of what they have read.

Avoid blame. The difficulty is unlikely to be your child's fault, the teachers fault or your fault but working together, we can make a difference.



Helping your child with reading:



It is important to feel good at something: —

To help your struggling reader maintain their confidence and self-esteem it is important to help them to identify their strengths and find the things they are good at. Developing skills at sports clubs; learning an instrument or singing; drawing, painting; knitting, sewing; baking; learning mechanics; photography, are all things your young person could try.

The knowledge that they are good at something will help maintain their resilience to persevere with the thing that they are struggling with. Encourage your child to find what they are good at and develop those skills.



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Make reading normal within your home:

- Take regular trips to a library or bookshop with your young person to choose books for both of you. This can be an enjoyable experience
- Read regularly yourself. Let your child see their parents reading. Read alongside your child. Be their role model. Your family could have reading times when you all sit down and read. Talk together about what you are reading.



How to choose a reading book:

- To choose a book that is of the right level use the five-finger test. The young person reads a page from the centre of the book. For every unknown word or error, a finger goes down. If the young person makes more than five errors on the page the book is too difficult and should be left on the shelf
- Avoid reading snobbery. Just because a novel is highly rated and recommended, it does not mean that it is right for your child. Go with your child's reading interests and they will be more willing and likely to read. Once the reading habit has been established, then the young person can be encouraged to try a range of genres and extend their reading experience



How to improve a young person's ability to read:

A non-reader or emergent reader:

- Sit **daily** with your child and hear them read. To ensure and improve their reading comprehension, ask your child questions about what they have read and ask them to predict what will happen next. This is just as important as simply hearing them read.
- Make reading time a nice experience by sitting somewhere quiet and comfortable with your child. This is precious time when they have you to themselves. Have a cup of hot chocolate together
- Have an agreed daily time to sit and read. There are less likely to be arguments or avoidance and the reading habit will be easier to establish

An intermediate reader:

- It is still important to hear your child read daily in the same way that you would with a non-reader or an emergent reader

- If the young person feels the need to have more pace in their reading to move the story on, they read a page then you read a page and continue with this pattern. When you are reading your child must continue to follow the text, in this way the young person will also be reading whilst listening to you. This joint reading can improve a young person's enjoyment of the story by moving it along. This can also help to avoid frustration
- If a young person wants greater independence around their reading or if they want to read books of a higher reading level than they are ready for, try a Kindle. The young person can listen to the story using headphones whilst following the text. The young person can enjoy the story and their own reading will be improved as long as they follow the text.
- If you are a member of the Suffolk Library Service you can download the Libby App for free. This App provides you with access to free books and includes functions such as definitions for unknown words. This App also provides you with audio books.

A fluent reader:

- Reading daily remains important
- Some young people appear to read fluently but have little understanding of what they are reading. To check your child's understanding, ask them questions about what they have read. Talk with them about the story or text.
- Be a reading role model. Read yourself. Talk about your own reading with your child
- Once a reading habit has been established, encourage your child to read a range of genres



Happy Reading!