

Literacy Tips for Parents of High School Students

There are many ways parents/guardians can support their students' reading development and encourage them to maintain positive reading habits in high school.

Three Components of Reading Support

- **Vocabulary**—words students must know to communicate and read effectively
- **Fluency**—the capacity to read text accurately, quickly, and smoothly
- **Comprehension**—the ability to understand and gain meaning from what has been read

Why is it important to improve reading skills?

- High school students need strong vocabulary skills and reading comprehension skills to perform well on state assessments such as ACT, SAT, Regents, and End of Course exams.
- Having strong reading skills is critical to success in college, careers and in life.

What can parents/guardians do?

Help students increase their *vocabulary*.

- ✓ Encourage your students to ask about new words they hear or read.
- ✓ Students learn new words through verbal interactions with others. Find ways to increase conversation time at home. Adults should make a conscious effort to use more complex language in their conversations with their students.
- ✓ Play word games.
- ✓ Visit museums, zoos, historical sites and plays. Through these experiences, students will gain exposure to new vocabulary words.
- ✓ Provide books and magazines at home.
- ✓ Visit the library.

Help students improve reading *fluency*.

- ✓ Model fluent reading by choosing a section of a book, magazine, or newspaper, and then read it effortlessly and smoothly to your student.
- ✓ Try “repeated reading” where you will read a passage and then ask the student to repeat the reading. The student should practice the passage until he/she reads the passage effortlessly.
- ✓ Try “echo reading” by reading a line or sentence from a book, and then have the student read the same line, trying to mimic the adult’s expression and fluency.

Help support the development of *reading comprehension* skills.

- ✓ Read the books that your student is assigned so that you can discuss the book and check for comprehension.
- ✓ Encourage your child to be an active reader, which means that reading should be done with one hand on the book and the other holding a pen. Students should note details about characters, whether it’s in the book itself or in a separate notebook
- ✓ Remember the importance of location, location, location. Reading for school should be completed at a desk in room that doesn’t have a TV, computer, or cell phone. Reading comprehension for texts that are more challenging requires careful attentions and structure.