

Ten Benefits of Reading for your Child

1. Children who read often and widely get better at it

Practice makes perfect in almost everything we do and reading is no different from anything else!

2. Reading exercises our brains

Reading is a much more complex task for the human brain than, say, watching TV is. Reading strengthens children's brain connections and actually builds new connections.

3. Reading improves concentration

Children have to sit still and quietly so they can focus on the story when they're reading. If they read regularly, they develop the ability to do this for longer periods. This in turn helps their learning in school.

4. Reading teaches children about the world around them

Through reading, children learn about people, places and events outside their own experience. They are exposed to ways of life, ideas and beliefs about the world which may be different from those which surround them. This learning is important for its own sake; however it also builds a store of background knowledge which helps younger children learn to read confidently and well.

5. Reading improves a child's vocabulary and leads to more highly-developed language skills

This is because children learn new words as they read but also because they unconsciously absorb information as they read about things. For example, like how to structure sentences and how to use words and language effectively. All of this knowledge also feeds into their writing.

6. Reading develops a child's imagination

This is because when we read our brains translate the descriptions we read about people, places and things into pictures. When we're engaged in a story, we're also imagining how the characters are feeling. We use our own experiences to imagine how we would feel in the same situation.

7. Reading helps children develop empathy

Children begin to identify with the characters they are reading about and therefore start to understand how those characters are feeling.

8. Children who read do better at school

Children don't just do better in subjects like reading, English and History. Research has shown that they do better in all subjects... and they do better all the way through school.

9. Reading is a great form of entertainment

A book (or a comic) doesn't take up much space in a bag. Your child can take it anywhere and never be lonely or bored. They can read while travelling in a car, waiting in a queue, sitting in the doctor's waiting room.

10. Reading relaxes the body and calms the mind

This is an important point because these days we all seem to have forgotten how to relax and especially how to be silent. The constant movement, flashing lights and noise which bombard children's senses when watching TV, looking at a computer or playing an electronic game are actually quite stressful for their brains. When children read it has a very calming effect since the black print on a white page is much less stressful for their eyes and brains.