



## Support Your Child's Literacy Learning All Year Long

### The Importance of Reading and Writing Beyond the Classroom

#### Why are reading and writing important?

As adults, we know how important reading and writing are in all parts of our lives. We also know that the love of reading and writing can help children and teens find ways to understand themselves and the expanding world we all live in. Writing helps children find ways to work through and communicate their hopes, fears and dreams.

#### Why read and write beyond the classroom?

Research tells us that children and teens who do not read and write outside of school -- especially during long breaks, such as summer vacation -- face a big loss in their literacy growth compared to those children and teens who do continue learning all year long. This means the summer months and other breaks from school offer wonderful opportunities for your family to help improve your child or teen's reading and writing.

#### What can you do as a parent?

How can you, as a family member, help your child or teen read and write more often outside of school? There are some simple things you can do to help develop a lifelong love of reading and writing:

- Get caught reading and writing. Let your child or teen see you engaging in everyday literacy activities, like reading the newspaper or making a grocery list, and talk about what you do.
- Read and write to your child or teen. Snuggle up with your child and read a good book before bed. Share audio books with your teen on car trips. And don't forget writing. Leaving short notes in a lunch box, a nighttime message on a pillow or an email expressing your pride in an accomplishment encourages reading and demonstrates the power of words.
- Share a love of reading and writing together. Read some of the books, magazines or websites your child or teen is reading and then discuss together. Write a journal, scrapbook or blog as a family, taking time to record daily events. You can even write group emails or letters to family and friends.

**Come read with us!**  
Visit [JustTake20.org](http://JustTake20.org) for more fun reading activities!

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