

TEACHING READING TO YOUNG LEARNERS

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Reading is essential and an integral part of learning. It is also an activity that requires practice and constant follow up to improve memory and strengthen minds. In our daily lives, there is always a need to use such skill like in reading street signs, instructions, studying in school, and doing jobs. However, in the past couple of years, reading abilities of learners had declined due to the disruption of classes. According to UIS data, most of the countries have missed to meet the education for all goal, decreasing adult illiteracy rates by 50% between 2000 and 2015. In the worldwide level, only 4% was increased in the adult and youth level. This situation is alarming but how are we going to teach young learners?

In teaching reading, it is essential that you give and follow consistent steps such as the following.

1. Provide more reading materials.

Making books available can arouse the interest of young learners. Children with easy access to books have greater opportunity and possibility to love reading.

2. Read with the child.

Young learners are easily motivated if they read with someone their parents. Since learning to read is a process, it is better to start from infancy. A child can appreciate reading if he is guided properly. As parents, it is necessary to create a habit of reading through providing a regular time that would not bore the children. The use of flashcards, pictures, and nursery rhymes can make reading easy and effective.

3. Be the Role Model.

If children are fascinated with books, it can dwindle if they do not see anyone around them who is fond of reading. Parents and teachers must make conscious effort to let children see them reading even for a few minutes. This creates enthusiasm in children, and they can develop the concept that reading is important.

4. Incorporate multiple levels of development

Children learn most if all the areas of development are included. Hands-on learning is more effective, more retentive, and meaningful. Knowing the child's interest will help you know what strategies you are going to apply to motivate them to read and learn.

5. Lessen the time for gadgets

It is challenging to make a habit of reading with gadgets around, so it is necessary to make rules on having more time on reading. Parents and teachers must provide fun activities about reading for children to enjoy it.

6. Giving Rewards

As to theory of B.F. Skinner on operant conditioning, behavior that is reinforced tends to be repeated. Positive reinforcement helps the young learner to feel appreciated and recognized. In this way rewarded children feel the encouragement to read.

Apparently, there is no magic formula for teaching children how to read. It is imperative to find and practice effective strategies to modify young learners. Furthermore, it is necessary to remember that teaching reading is a process and needs consistent practice to develop.

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