

## THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY READING DEVELOPMENT IN LOWER GRADES

*by:*

**Jaydee J. Rodiguez**

*Teacher I, Kabalutan Elementary School*

Reading is a fundamental skill that serves as the foundation for a child's academic success. In the lower grades, developing strong reading skills is crucial as it paves the way for learning across all subjects. Establishing good reading habits at an early stage not only enhances literacy but also fosters cognitive, emotional, and social development.

### Why Early Reading Matters

**Cognitive Development** Early reading exposure stimulates brain activity, strengthening neural pathways related to language, memory, and critical thinking. Young learners who engage in regular reading activities tend to develop better problem-solving skills and an expanded vocabulary, which are essential for higher learning.

**Improved Academic Performance** Studies show that children who develop strong reading skills in the lower grades perform better in various subjects, including mathematics, science, and social studies. Reading comprehension allows students to understand instructions, analyze texts, and express their thoughts effectively.

**Boosts Confidence and Communication Skills** When young learners read fluently, they become more confident in expressing their ideas. Reading aloud enhances pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension, enabling them to communicate better with peers and teachers.

Encourages a Lifelong Love for Learning Children introduced to reading early on tend to develop a love for books and learning. This intrinsic motivation encourages them to explore new knowledge, develop curiosity, and cultivate creativity.

## Effective Strategies for Enhancing Reading Skills in Lower Grades

Creating a Print-Rich Environment Surrounding children with books, labels, charts, and visual aids encourages early reading habits. A literacy-friendly environment sparks interest and curiosity, making reading a natural part of daily life.

Reading Aloud and Shared Reading Reading aloud exposes children to correct pronunciation, tone, and expression. Shared reading, where teachers and parents read with children, fosters engagement and interaction, helping them grasp meanings and concepts more effectively.

Phonics and Sight Words Practice Teaching phonics—the relationship between letters and sounds—enables children to decode words efficiently. Meanwhile, memorizing high-frequency sight words helps young readers recognize common words instantly, boosting fluency.

Interactive and Multisensory Approaches Engaging students with songs, games, storytelling, and digital resources makes reading fun and interactive. Multisensory learning methods, such as using flashcards, illustrations, and movement-based activities, cater to different learning styles.

Encouraging Independent Reading Providing age-appropriate books and allowing children to choose their reading materials fosters independence. Encouraging silent reading and giving time for book discussions help reinforce comprehension and appreciation.

Parental Involvement and Support Parents play a vital role in reinforcing reading habits at home. Reading bedtime stories, asking questions about books, and setting a daily reading schedule create a supportive literacy environment outside the classroom.

## Conclusion

Developing strong reading skills in the lower grades is essential for a child's academic and personal growth. By implementing effective reading strategies, educators and parents can nurture confident, curious, and capable readers. Instilling a love for reading at an early stage sets the stage for lifelong learning and success in all areas of life.

## References:

Solari, E., Hall, C., & McGinty, A. (2021). Brick by Brick: A Series of Landmark Studies Pointing to the Importance of Early Reading Intervention.

Reading Rockets. (n.d.). Seven Strategies to Teach Students Text Comprehension.

EduTopia. (2024). 6 Schoolwide Strategies to Improve Reading Skills. Retrieved from