



Neptune Township School District  
Elementary English Language Arts Department

---

## LITERACY TIPS FOR PARENTS OF FIFTH GRADERS



Fifth grade reading is a period when children are reading more fluently and thinking more deeply about what they're reading than ever before. They'll be challenged to read independently from nonfiction texts and to consider plot and theme in novels. Reading will also overlap content areas, for example writing essays and social studies. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

- Take Advantage of Informational Reading. Reading is chock full of interesting information. Make use of that high-interest material with these reading and writing strategies:
  - Have maps and charts on hand for your child to read and discuss with you.
  - Make a game out of discovering structural elements in reference books (such as the index, glossary, title page, introduction, preface, and appendix).
  - Have your child explain familiar historical events in chronological order.
  - After she reads a nonfiction passage or chapter, have your child verbally summarize the main ideas and details to you.
  - Read opinion and fact-based articles from the newspaper or news websites together and discuss the differences between fact and opinion.
- Study Literature and Poetry. Fifth grade reading usually involves looking at elements of a book's plot, including the setup, rising action, climax, and resolution. Your child will learn to analyze characters and settings, as well as recognize the author's purpose for writing. Here are a few tips to help your scholar navigate the waters of great literature:
  - Be familiar with your child's independent reading choices so you can help her compare and contrast stories.
  - Read the same novel together and discuss what conflict or challenge the main character experienced.
  - Help your child stop and enjoy vivid language by reading to him often and visualizing dramatic descriptions and words.
  - Encourage the use of metaphor (a comparison between two seemingly unrelated subjects) in an everyday way by saying things like, "Are you cold? I'm an icicle!" or "The mall was a zoo today!"
  - Ask your child what he believes the author wanted the reader to feel or think at the end of a book. This will help your child consider the story's theme.

- Build Vocabulary. Fifth grade reading skills involve understanding sophisticated vocabulary. Your child will move forward by learning about prefixes, suffixes, root words, antonyms, synonyms, and word relationships. Here are some ideas to help boost word-play:
  - Play word games like Scrabble and hangman, and encourage your child to use big words. This helps spelling and enhances vocabulary skills.
  - Help him find cool word games online to play on his own.
  - Encourage him to compile his own word list by finding challenging words from books he's reading and writing definitions in his own words. Writing the meaning of each word in his own way will help him use these words in speaking and writing.
  - Have him create lists of subject-specific words and their definitions from science and social studies units.
- You Can't Read too Much. The most important way you can support fifth grade reading is to make sure your child has plenty of time and encouragement to read for pleasure. Having a life-long love for reading is the key to unlocking many doors in life.