

Academic

School will be starting up soon enough, so it is important to get your child mentally ready for the rigors of the school environment. Over the summer, and especially during these last few weeks before school starts, refocus your child's attention on reading. Help him or her select books to enjoy, and try some of these creative ideas together:

- Read the same book your child is reading, and then talk about what you liked and disliked about the book.
- Get audio versions of books; listen to the stories before bed. This is also a good way to introduce the classics!
- Identify a favorite author and become an expert on him or her. Start by reading all of the books by your favorite author, then research the author's life for fun.
- Write a letter to an author with your child's questions or feedback about the book. Most authors will respond; hearing from an author can be inspiring.
- Ask your child what he or she would change to make a book better. Enjoy creating alternate endings together.

Once school starts, it is extremely important to set workable yet firm expectations for your child. Establishing clear freedoms and boundaries about schoolwork and homework will set your child up for a successful year. Implementing and keeping a homework routine helps build consistency and security. As you plan, remember that each child is different; each child has unique strengths and weaknesses. Know your child. How does he study best? Quietly, by himself or in the middle of the kitchen where all the action is? Is she a self-starter or does she work best processing with you? Does your child need short work times with frequent breaks in between or one long sitting to get everything done? Figuring out these dynamics will help when creating your homework plan.

By establishing clear expectations and providing the proper level of support you child can experience a productive and fulling homework time.

