

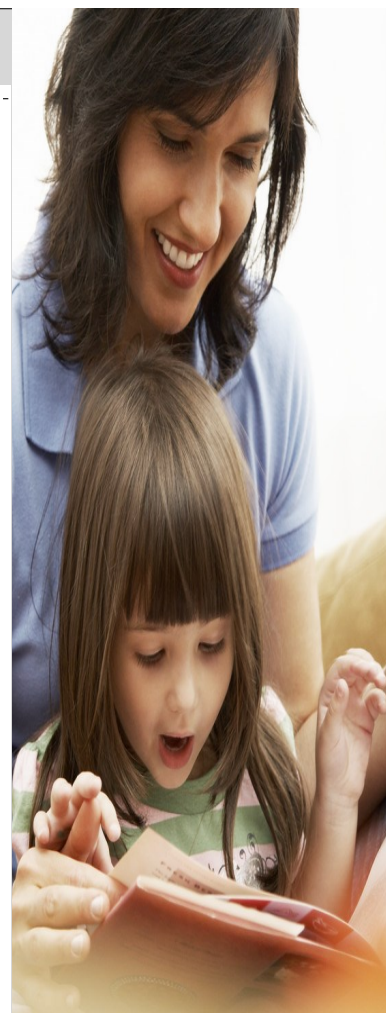
Falcon Flyer

THERE'S VALUE IN READING ALOUD TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES

Written by: Deanna Leitz, GCMS 6th Grade Reading Teacher

In a hectic world, where many families run from one commitment to the next, we often find it impossible to fit one more activity in the day. There's just no time! Wouldn't it be nice to find an activity that was so beneficial to the good of the entire family, that you just couldn't, not do it? The answer is so simple we often miss it! Reading aloud to our children! The benefits are both social and academic, and set the stage for kids to be lifelong readers!

1. **Quality bonding time:** Curling up on the couch with a good book, blanket, and your little one can be a time of peace and security for kids. Spending uninterrupted, one on one time reading a funny story or a favorite nursery rhyme will be memories that kids will never forget.
2. **Gain life experiences:** Kids who spend time listening to, or reading books can gain life experiences without the pain of experiencing them. Books portray characters who deal with loss, grief, relationships and more, before kids struggle to deal with their own feelings in a personal situation. From picture books to novels, there are plenty of great books available to address many of life's struggles.
3. **Model fluency:** Kids begin mimicking parent's speech and actions at a very young age. When kids hear parents reading, as fluent readers, they begin to copy that action. We see this when small children point to pictures and "create" a story of their own. As kids get older, they will copy tone of voice, inflection, and emotion as they read. All of this helps kids become fluent readers.
4. **Improve vocabulary:** When reading aloud to a child, stop and discuss challenging words and talk through the process of understanding the meaning. By modeling the strategy of using context clues aloud, students will be better able to understand and use those "three dollar words" when needed.
5. **Becoming lifelong readers:** Ultimately, the main support for reading aloud with children is to foster a love of reading. In turn, kids will look back on reading as a comforting and enriching activity that will stick with them throughout life. Most kids will go through phases of less reading, but those who have a love of reading instilled at a young age, will usually make their way back!



DID YOU KNOW?

- * There are 2 parent representatives on our Curriculum Coordinating Committee
- * According to the 2016 GCMS Survey of Parents and Families, 97.1% of parents in our district feel welcome when visiting the school
- * An average of 95% of elementary parents, 73% of middle school parents, and 37% of high school parents attended Parent Teacher Conferences last month.

FAMILY TIME

Written by: Cathy Walker-Steidinger, Parent Liason

If there is one thing we can all agree on it is this -- Life is busy. We all have full calendars and lists of “to-dos” that need to be accomplished every day. One of the challenges we face as parents is learning to balance our crowded schedules with meaningful support for our children – no matter their ages.

There is no magic formula or one “right way” to best support kids. Each child, each family, each situation is unique. However, it doesn’t have to be complicated, nor expensive. Here are two ideas your family might want to consider as we head in to Fall and Winter...

Eat together. Study after study shows numerous positive benefits for kids of all ages who regularly eat meals with their families. Is busy-ness crowding out family meal times? Then be creative! Maybe work and activities make eating dinner together impossible; could your family meal be breakfast? Or perhaps you can find time on the weekends to eat together? The purpose isn’t to eat a fancy 10 course meal, but to spend time together in conversation and catch up on one another’s lives.

Take a Technology Timeout. We have all seen the stories of families going cold-turkey for a week (or more!). Maybe the thought of that makes you break into a cold sweat! ☺ However, could you try an evening of screen-free fun? Make cookies, play a board game, visit friends or family... there are many meaningful things that could replace the screens for an hour or two. In today’s world, we all need to learn to manage our technology and media use, AND teach our children those skills.

WAYS PARENTS CAN GET CONNECTED:

- Join PTA and attend one of their monthly meetings! Check out the PTA webpage for more information: <https://sites.google.com/site/gcmspta5/announcements>.
- Share your opinions and ideas by completing the GCMS Survey of Parents and Families this spring.

Update your email address! 67% of parents prefer to receive email communication from school but many parents do not have an email address on file. If you have not been receiving emails from school this year, please contact Don Worthington at djworth@gcmsk12.org to update your email address.

- * November 3: STEAM Family Night at Elementary School
- * November 4: Variety Show at High School @ 7:00 p.m.
- * November 11:
 - Veteran’s Day Assembly @ 9:00 a.m.
 - 11:30 Student Dismissal
- * November 22: 2:20 Dismissal
- * November 23-27: Thanksgiving Break
- * December 5-16: MAP Testing ES and MS
- * December 20: Elementary Christmas Program at High School
- * December 21:
 - 2:20 Dismissal for Christmas Break
 - End of Quarter 2
- * December 22-January 2: Christmas Break
- * January 3: Teacher Institute Day--No Student Attendance
- * January 4: First Day of Second Semester

