MTSS Update

January 2023

District's Strategic Plan:

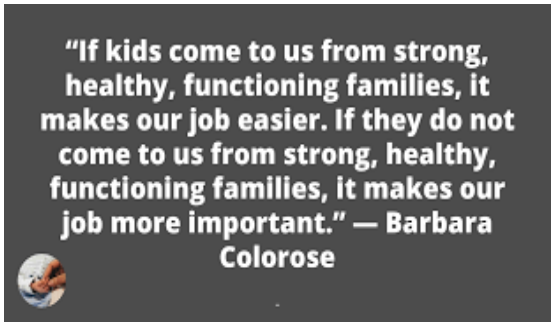
Sweetwater County School District #1 will nurture a positive learning climate and culture.

- Promote positive behaviors and relationships among students, staff, families and the community.
- Ensure schools are safe and secure.
- Proactively support physical, mental and emotional health.

A large portion of the information contained within monthly updates will be borrowed from other locations. I will cite the location where the information is gathered and encourage you to look up the original source if you desire more information.

The updates will be sent out district-wide. If you in anyway touch the lives of a child/student you are an educator and this newsletter is meant for you.

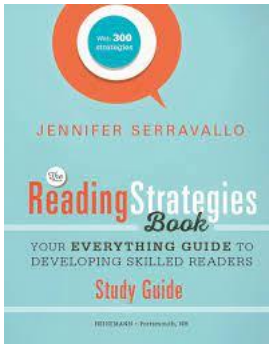
If you have questions or I can be of assistance please don't hesitate to call or email.



Tina Johnson
Academic and Behavior Coordinator
johnsonti@sw1.k12.wy.us
352-3400 ext. 1240

Within this newsletter

- *Ten Surefire Tips for Maximizing Student Reading Stamina* by Laura Robb
- *5 At-Home Reading Strategies Guaranteed to Improve Reading* Skills by Hannah Cleveland
- *Reading Strategies Book Your Everything Guide to Developing Skilled Readers* by Jennifer Serravallo
- Healthy Habits - Hydration
- Mandt Moment - Wait: Model Cognition



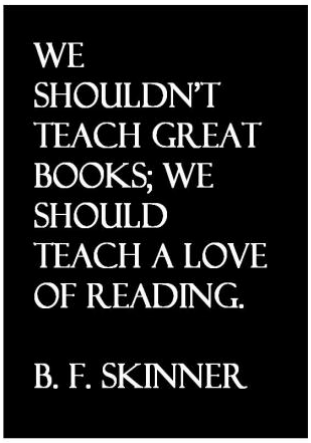
Ten Surefire Tips for Maximizing Student Reading Stamina

Reading stamina is having the energy and the concentration to focus on reading for at least thirty continuous minutes a day. For children who lack stamina, reading is often a frustrating and unpleasant experience, so they tend to read as little as possible. Laura Hobbs writes about how you can help students boost their reading stamina at school and at home by using the following ten tips:

1. Value Independent Reading – Set aside time to read in the classroom and at home. Teach students to select books that are enjoyable as well as manageable will motivate them to read.
2. Use Classroom and School Libraries – Classroom libraries should contain between 1,000 to 2,000 books on various levels, range of topics and genres. School and/or community

libraries should be visited weekly. Also, if your classroom or home library is still a work in progress, students should be checking out multiple books from the school or community library.

3. Read Self-Selected Books – Well-known educators such as Donalyn Miller and Richard Allington agree that children need to select their own books if we expect them to be motivated readers.
4. Diminish Distractions – The fewer distractions, the easier it is for a child to concentrate on a book. Eliminate hallway noise, television, etc.
5. Create Comfortable Reading Spaces – Avoid requiring students to read for pleasure sitting at their desks and/or the dining room table. Invite them to find a comfortable place in the classroom and/or home. If you have a limited number of "comfy" locations create a rotation system so that everyone gets a turn.
6. Advertise Great Reads – Establish a system that fosters sharing book suggestions. My son graduated high school in 2010 and we still talk about "good" books and "wonderful" authors.
7. Set Monthly Goals – Research by Donalyn Miller and Steve Krashen find that reading 40 independent books a year can enlarge a child's vocabulary and expand their knowledge base. If you are maintaining a log, books of 500 or more pages count as two to three books.
8. Take Brain Breaks – A child will need time to relax and re-energize after reading for thirty minutes. Allow time for students to chat and stretch following a reading session.
9. Hold Small Group Discussions – Organize students into groups to discuss books from the same genre (type, kind, category). Students can discuss literary elements, text features, and/or structures.
10. Have Students Self-Evaluate – Have students self-evaluate their reading stamina and set reasonable independent reading goals; such as to extend the time spent reading at home, read longer books, dry a different genre, or read additional books by a favorite author.



Teaching children how to self-select "just right" books is a colossal step toward improving a child's reading stamina. Choice creates engagement and nurtures a student's desire to read. Celebrate small but consistent improvement. All students will not improve their reading stamina at the same rate. To read the entire article by Laura Robb, please go to:
https://edublog.scholastic.com/post/ten-surefire-tips-maximizing-student-reading-stamina

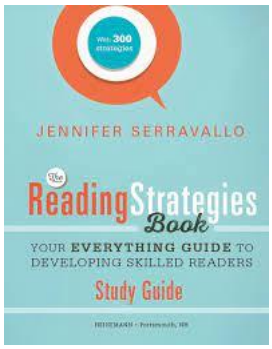
At-Home Reading Strategies to Improve Reading Skills

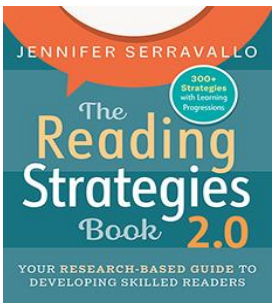
1. Model a positive reading experience. As with other behaviors, modeling is the first step to getting kids interested in and excited about reading. When a child sees that a parent has a positive relationship with reading, it signals that reading can be a fun and enjoyable experience.
2. Set aside designated reading-together time. One-on-one, individualized attention is highly effective, and demonstrates to a child that reading is important
3. Fill your home with books. Research shows that having books at home can create a positive learning environment. It is also shown to link to higher standardized test scores.
4. Support and encourage the learning process. Learning to read can be a difficult process for some children. It is important to create a safe environment in your home where children feel they can make mistakes and learn from them.
5. Make reading part of daily life. It is important for children to understand that reading is a part of everyday life. Read the back of cereal boxes, road signs, packages etc. Exposing your child to this type of reading gives them frequent practice and expands their vocabularies.

Literacy skills are the foundation for all other types of learning. Learning how to read can unlock amazing opportunities in every aspect of life. If you would like to read the entire article, *5 At-Home Reading Strategies Guaranteed to Improve Reading Skills* by Hannah Cleveland, it can be found at https://readingpartners.org/blog/5-at-home-reading-strategies-guaranteed-to-improve-reading-skills/

Strategies for Engagement

Trista Stamness is our District's reading consultant. During her last on-line session, she utilized a book entitled *The Reading Strategies Book Your Everything Guide to Developing Skilled Readers* by Jennifer Serravallo. This is a text that Northpark Elementary School has used as a school-wide book study. The book's chapters cover a reading goal, reading skills, and reading strategies. Each page is divided into a strategy, teaching tip(s), and prompts to accompany the strategy. In addition, it has the level of text the strategy should be used with, the genre or text type that it suits and the skill(s) it addresses. One chapter in the book focuses on student engagement in text. It includes 27 strategies that specifically address engagement in a book. A handful of the prompts that accompany the engagement strategies were:





- What do you think you need from your environment to get the most reading done?
- I noticed you backed up to reread when you got distracted.
- Can you picture what's happening?
- Is your mind on the book, or just your eyes?
- What part seems fuzzy? Can you go back and reread to retell?
- That's what happened. What question can you ask about that?
- Tell me about the conversation you're having in your mind.
- What are you thinking as you read?
- What are you loving about this book?
- What do you like outside of reading that you think might help you find a good book?
- Based on what you like to do, what kinds of books do you think you'd want to read?
- Stop here. Use your senses.
- Read a bit and let's talk.
- Can you hear the voice of the character? Describe it.
- That's what the text says, what are you picturing?

Strategy 2.16 Choose Books with Your Identity in Mind p.63 "books have levels, readers don't have levels".

To obtain additional prompts and knowledge of the strategies that they address, read the complete book or the new addition which will be released in January. This book is a marvelous resource to have for effective student/teacher or child/parent conferences and book talks.

Healthy Habits

One habit within our control, that we often neglect during the holiday season is proper hydration. Drinking enough water is critical to keep our body and brain functioning optimally. Water helps flush out toxins, maintains brain functioning so you can think clearly and helps joints and skin stay healthy and strong. In addition, drinking water may steer you away from mindless snacking and overeating. To stay properly hydrated, men need approximately 15.5 cups of water a day and women 11.5 cups.

Mandt Moment

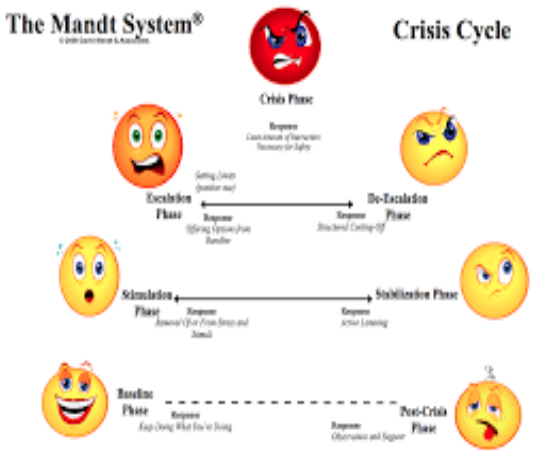
When a student challenges an educator in front of other students it is often difficult but essential to maintain self-control. Losing control results in a loss of respect for you as an educator and brings you down to the offending student's level. Maintaining self-control, like most skills, is a learned behavior that can be acquired through habitual practice. This is the second segment based on the article *Remain Calm & Respond Right When a Student Challenges!* By Rick Dahlgren

REMAIN CALM: Wait: Model Cognition

The second step in maintaining self-control is simply to wait calmly and silently while assuming a supportive stance. A supportive stance would be sideways to the student who is challenging you. It will appear relaxed and casual and be visually non-threatening. Increase your situational awareness by keeping your R.A.D.A.R. on:

- R = Recognize
- A = Assess
- D = Decide
- A = Act
- R = Review Results

Often the act of simply waiting will defuse the situation without the teacher ever having to say a word. Teachers have reported experiences where the silent period (usually lasting only 5-9 seconds) causes a student to throw up his hands in defeat and say something like, "Fine. I'll do it even though it's dumb!" and storm back to their seat.



This avoids further escalation and in effect says "I am here, I am not afraid, nor should you be. I am an adult and I can take care of this, all without saying a word. A teacher, bus driver, etc. maintains their authority and can address the student's behavior, if needed, on their own terms at a later time, such as recess when it is inconvenient for the student.

Silence is golden and it works on all fronts. You appear to be strong and comforting. You model cognition. You do not take the "bait" laid for you by a student and you appear in control. Silence buys you all of this, and it costs nothing.

Keep in mind, it is often not prudent to insist on having the last word.

This information "and wording" has primarily been taken from the article: *Remain Calm & Respond Right When a Student Challenges!* https://www.bemidjistate.edu/services/public-safety/wp-content/uploads/sites/92/2020/01/Classroom-Security-1.pdf please read the complete article.