

Dear Parents,

Becoming a successful reader requires hours of **engaged** reading. It means coming to know authors and illustrators in a variety of genres, both fiction and nonfiction and identifying personal tastes in books. It also means gaining a wide range of skills that can be applied with **independence** to the text that they read, while refining literature knowledge and confidence as a reader, a learner, a thinker! There are many things you can do at home to help your child become a better reader.

- ❖ Schedule reading time! Scratch off something from your routine to-do list and pencil in a chunk of book time.
- ❖ Be flexible! If your child is too tired to read at night, let him/her read at the breakfast table, before bath time, or after dinner instead.
- ❖ Get to know your child's hobbies and interests! Look for books magazines, poems, and articles that support those interests. Find a book that touches on your child's passions, and he/she is likely to buckle down and start reading. For example, if your child is a sports fan, read an article of interest from the Sports section of the newspaper together, and discuss what you've read. (i.e., Do you think the Yankees deserved to win the game? or did they get a lucky call by the ref?) If your child likes to help in the kitchen, cook together. Invite your child to follow a recipe with you. Recipes require children to read and follow multi-step directions while they employ math skills as well.
- ❖ Take advantage of downtime! Carry books in the car or in a bag so your child can read while you're stuck in traffic or on line at the supermarket.
- ❖ Ditch the distractions! For thirty minutes every night, turn off the TV, computer, the phones and video games.
- ❖ Surround your child with words! Provide plenty of access to a variety of literacy materials, such as books, magazines, newspapers, etc. Take advantage of the resources available at your local library.
- ❖ Get your child involved in selecting books! They have had a great deal of practice in selecting "just right" books. While monitoring their choices, be flexible in accepting what they choose to read. If you put your child in charge of his/her own reading, it will make him/her feel more independent.
- ❖ Model a literate life! Let your child see you and older family members reading and writing for a variety of purposes, both pleasurable and functional. Share what you're reading and writing and explain why.
- ❖ Engage in conversation! When reading together, stop to ask your child about the story. Help your child to make personal connections and judgments about what he/she has read.
- ❖ If you are bilingual, read to your child in your native language. Time spent reading is valuable in any language.

Together we can create literate, life-long learners!

Rushmore Literacy Specialists