

Reading Aloud to Your Child

"You may have tangible wealth untold -
caskets of jewels and coffers of gold.
Richer than I you can never be.
I had a mother who read to me."

-- Strickland Gillilan
"The Reading Mother"

Don't ever consider your child too old to be read to. I am always amazed in the classroom at how quiet and attentive the students become - even the "squirrely" ones - when I read them a story. The benefits are many. Here's a list paraphrased from The Fluent Reader by Timothy Risinki.

Students who are read aloud to:

See reading as emotionally powerful. By modeling their own delight in books, teachers and parents can show students what a pleasurable and meaningful experience reading can be.

Are motivated to read more. By reading to children we encourage them to read. More than anything else, being read to is a purely enjoyable experience. It nurtures a desire in students to read on their own.

Witness fluent reading. The child hears how the voice can be used to create meaning. By reading with expression, the reader shows that meaning is embedded in more than just the words and students get the message that when they read, both orally and silently, they need to read in the same expressive, meaningful manner.

Improve comprehension and vocabulary. Reading aloud texts that students may not find on their own or may not be able to read on their own has been shown to improve their vocabulary and comprehension.

If you would like an in-depth look at all aspects of the Read Aloud experience, including a "Treasury of Read Alouds," I would suggest The Read-Aloud Handbook by Jim Trelease, "the classic handbook on reading aloud to children."