

Why Reading Aloud is Beneficial

1. Emotion

- Reading Aloud is an incomparable way for parents and children to spend - and share - time together; to develop and grow an emotional bond. Studies have even shown that information and knowledge are retained better when accompanied by an emotional attachment. What a bounty: Reading Aloud brings you stories and love and educational merit.

2. Morality

- Reading Aloud is an age-old, time-tested way to impart moral lessons and ethical examples to our children. For centuries, the Bible (and other religious literature) have been specially crafted and used for moral instruction. From today's storybooks, the lessons are less didactic - but no less valuable. Children can learn resourcefulness, fortitude, and perseverance from Robinson Crusoe stories like Scott O'Dell's Island of the Blue Dolphins or Gary Paulsen's Hatchet. But they also naturally identify w/ the protagonists - and the full range of ethical decisions they face, from the petty to the grand - in stories as old as C.S. Lewis' Chronicles of Narnia to those as fresh and new as J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter.

3. Literature

- Reading Aloud is a way to bring literature to our children. And if literature does anything - it expands our minds. It exposes children to new and different perspectives, cultures, points, of view, contexts, situations, phenomena... It teaches children -w/out their knowing it - to be less provincial, more open-minded; less parochial, more versatile; less hide-bound, more curious. If literature can do all that, shouldn't we be offering them all they can handle?

4. Education

- Reading Aloud to children creates better readers, enabling students to better - and more easily - succeed at all the tasks in school that require verbal acuity. It does this by increasing students' attention spans, vocabulary, facility w/ grammar and syntax, sentence structure and paragraph composition, and familiarizes them w/ more complex character and plot composition. Best of all, none of these skills require worksheets or drill. Reading aloud yields better readers and better students, making school easier for those blessed w/ its educational benefits. If practiced universally, it will surely raise SOL scores.