

# Get School-Wise with Carol Josel

## *How can I get my child to read more?*

While there are no simple, one-size-fits-all answers, below you'll discover a list of suggestions to choose from. At the same time, remember that we parents are our children's first and foremost teachers and that our children's love of learning begins at home. If we make reading a priority, our children will most likely pick up the "habit," too, so try out some of these tips and be sure to contact me for more individualized advice.

1. Create a cozy reading corner in your home—quiet, well-lit, comfortable.
2. Keep reading materials—books, magazines, newspapers—readily available, even in the car! Same with puzzles, mind bender activity books, etc. If carsickness is an issue, turn to books on tape, which are available at the library and local bookstores, or order from Recorded Books, LLC at 1-800-638-1304 or [www.recorded-books.com](http://www.recorded-books.com).
3. Eat dinner together as a family as often as possible. Conversation bolsters vocabulary, one of the best predictors of reading ability. Be sure to talk about current events, your day, new discoveries, etc. Be sure to reminisce and tell stories, too, while also chatting about the books you read.
4. Share great leads, well-written passages, compelling plots, strong characters and/or dialogue from the books, newspapers, magazines you happen to read.
5. Visit your local library together at least twice a month.
6. Within reason, let your child select his/her own free reading books. These should actually be written below your child's grade level in school, so there's no stumbling over words, no needing help understanding the story line. So . . . a) Check the back cover or copyright page for the reading level (R.L.) and/or b) Give the book the five-finger test by asking your child to silently read a randomly chosen page, raising a finger each time s/he encounters an unfamiliar word. Five fingers up means the book is probably a bit too challenging right now, so save it for a later time.
7. If, after twenty pages or so, your child still dislikes a book, it's probably time to choose another one.

Tip excerpted from *Other-Wise and School-Wise: A Parent Guidebook*.

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