

SHARING THE JOURNEY

How the Public Library Helps Communities Grow Young Readers



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The Simple View of the Reading Journey (1)

The journey to reading has two major components: **Language Comprehension** (understanding words that are heard) and **Decoding** (recognizing words on the printed page).

Reading comprehension develops from these components when readers are able to decode the words on a page and make meaning from them.

The goal of the journey is to have reading become integral part of the students lives so that they become lifelong readers for enjoyment, personal growth and for gathering information relevant to their lives.

The image below looks at this view of reading through a child developmental lens. See the other side of this handout for suggestions for ways parents can support the journey with the help of the public library.

The Reading Journey Viewed Through Stages of Child Development

Step 1 - The Early Literacy Years

In the early years, beginning at birth, **language comprehension** takes center stage in a child's learning journey. It will remain ON stage for a lifetime. Children ages 0-5 need exposure to lots of language through being read to, sung to, talked to, etc. This lays the foundation for ALL future learning.

In later preschool years, the early stage of decoding begins as the child begins to recognize letters, their name and other familiar words on the printed page.

Step 2 - The Early Elementary Years

In the early years of school, **decoding** takes center stage to join **language comprehension** as the child begins to learn to recognize more and more words they see on the printed page. Teachers and parents will use a variety of strategies to help children learn to decode while continuing to read to them so that comprehension will grow.

Step 3 - The Later Elementary Years

Once children have become expert decoders, the journey continues as they learn to become experts at self-selecting reading materials for use in reading for enjoyment and exploring topics of interest. They will continue to strengthen their **reading comprehension** through continued experience with the printed word.

The journey is a lifetime one and is strengthened by connection to families and communities who read and explore together.

Activities for the Early Literacy Years - Ages 0-5

Major focus: Language comprehension

Emerging focus (ages 3-5): Early decoding skills like letter recognition

The landmark Becoming a Nation of Readers report from 1985 concluded that "the single most important activity for building knowledge for their eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children.(2)

**Here are a few ways you can engage your child with reading and literacy during these early years.
Focus on the ones your child enjoys most.**

- Read aloud to them regularly.
- Make literacy and language part of your everyday routine.
- Allow them to "play" with toddler friendly books.
- Let them read books to you by looking at the pictures and telling you the story of what they see.
- As they start to learn to recognize letters, have them go on "hunts" for the letters both on book covers and in the text. Also look for words and letters you see in your environment. (You can do the same thing with numbers, colors and shapes.)
- Let them choose books they would like to have you read to them or for them to "read" to you.
- When your child starts to ask questions about things they observe in the world, help them learn that they can find answers in books.
- Bring them to the library.

Activities for the Early Elementary Years (Ages 5-8)

Dual focus on Language Comprehension and Decoding

Children typically reach the milestone of sounding out unfamiliar words at ages 6-7. Keep in mind that kids develop at different paces and spend varying amounts of time at each stage. (3)

**Here are some ways you can engage your child with reading and literacy as they begin to decode.
Focus on the ones your child enjoys most.**

- Keep on reading aloud to them while they learn to read and after they are able to read independently.
- Listen to audiobooks in the car or at home.
- Let them practice reading aloud to others. Younger siblings and even pets are great audiences as they practice.
- Many books for this age group are in series. Enjoyable series keep them reading!
- Explore graphic novels that help develop both reading words and using pictures to more deeply understand the story.
- Encourage creative fun connected to their reading including drawing pictures, creating puppet shows or plays, and creating their own books with stapled paper.
- Continue to encourage them to think of books and other resources as places to find factual answers to questions. They can start learning the Dewey Decimal numbers for some of their favorite subjects.
- Bring them to the library.

Activities for Growing a Wild Reader Ages 6 +

Reading comprehension strengthens as students master decoding and continue growing in their comprehension of language.

“Exposing students to lots of books and positive reading experiences, while building a network of other readers who support each other provides students with tools that last beyond the classroom setting.”(4)

Here are some ways you can engage your child with reading and literacy as they grow into a lifelong wild reader. Focus on the ones your child enjoys most.

- Keep on reading aloud to your child even once they are a strong, independent reader.
- Listen to audio books together in the car or at home.
- Read some of the same books that your child is reading independently and talk about it with them.
- Allow your child to self-select their own books and encourage them to have a method for keeping track of books and authors they enjoy for future reference. Let them place holds for books they want to read.
- Look for opportunities in your local area to meet authors and illustrators.
- Get together with families in your community for book clubs.
- Play book-based games with your children. One game that is elementary-age kids like is called “Stump the Parent”. Rather than “quizzing” your child about a book you both read, have them come up with questions to try to stump YOU. This is more fun for them and gets them deeper into the content than having them take a quiz.
- Continue to encourage them to think of books and other resources as places to find factual answers to questions. Introduce them to some of the professionally curated databases available through BadgerLink. Build critical thinking by having them learn differences in facts, opinions, hyperbole, etc.
- Bring them to the library.

Getting Ready to Read: Ages 0-5

A professionally curated book collection that includes sturdy board books for toddlers, picture book fiction/nonfiction for sharing and learning, leveled easy readers for children learning to read, audio books and movies.

Professional guidance for growing young readers through:

- In-person reader's advisory
- Sharing the Journey: Videos and handouts about reading provided online from our youth services librarian.
- Reading resource notebook in the children's department with book lists and other helpful information.

Tunes and Tales for Toddlers
Story Time for Preschoolers
Virtual Bedtime stories read by library staff and community leaders
StoryWalk @ Springbrook Trail

1000 Books Before Kindergarten Reading Challenge
Family Activities and Reading challenges related to our StoryWalk.

Social and play time built into library programs
Learning Game computers at the library
Puzzles, blocks and games at the library

Take and Make Activity bags
Educational special events and author visits
Summer Reading Program

Learning to Read: Ages 5-8

A professionally curated book collection that includes picture book fiction/nonfiction for sharing and learning, leveled easy readers for children learning to read, early chapter books for children beginning the journey into longer fiction, graphic novels, audio books and movies.

Professional guidance for growing young readers through:

- In-person reader's advisory
- Sharing the Journey: Videos and handouts about reading provided online from our youth services librarian.
- Reading resource notebook in the children's department with book lists and other helpful information.

Early Chapter Book Club
Virtual Bedtime stories read by library staff and community leaders
StoryWalk @ Springbrook Trail

Paws to Read: Build reading fluency by reading with a therapy dog.
Read to your Librarian: Practice reading and talk about books.
Family Activities and Reading challenges related to our StoryWalk.

Learning Game computers at the library
Puzzles, blocks and games at the library

Take and Make Activity bags
Educational special events and author visits
Summer Reading Program

Becoming a Wild Reader: Ages 7 +

A professionally curated book collection that includes picture books, nonfiction books, longer fiction, graphic novels, audio books and movies. Wild Readers will sometimes go back and re-read favorite books from younger years or want to try more challenging books. These are great ways to reinforce the reading habit and help them learn their reading preferences.

Professional guidance for growing young readers through:

- In-person reader's advisory
- Sharing the Journey: Videos and handouts about reading provided online from our youth services librarian.
- Reading resource notebook in the children's department with book lists and other helpful information.

Best Reading List Ever Challenge
Book-themed escape games
StoryWalk @ Springbrook Trail
Family Activities and Reading challenges related to our StoryWalk.

Electronic resources to assist with projects and homework.
Downloadable audio and ebooks available through Libby.
Learning Game computers at the library.
Puzzles, blocks and games at the library.

Take and Make Activity bags
Educational special events and author visits
Summer Reading Program



Growing Young Readers at the Antigo Public Library

Works Cited

1. <https://www.readingrockets.org/article/simple-view-reading>
2. <https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/why-reading-aloud-to-kids-helps-them-thrive>
3. <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/milestones.html>
4. Miller, Donalyn. Reading in the Wild. Jossey-Bass, 2013.

Links to Library Resources

<http://www.antigopl.org>

Children's Page for Program Information

<https://www.antigopl.org/childrens/>

How to get a library card

<https://www.antigopl.org/library-services/>

Wisconsin Valley Library Services Catalog of Library Materials

<https://catalog.wvls.org/search/>

Children's Book Lists

<https://www.antigopl.org/book-lists-for-children/>

Beanstack Information

<https://antigopl.beanstack.org/reader365>

Online Resources

<https://www.antigopl.org/online-resources/>

Antigo Public Library Virtual Storytime

<https://www.antigopl.org/virtual-programs/>

https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLHUcMO68-pM_Vip4m-ENGcV7vZO4YZx-y



<https://www.facebook.com/antigopl>

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