

# Benefits of Strong Reading Skills

**Reading is arguably the most important skill your child can learn in the early years of their education. But why?**

Reading lays the groundwork for your student's ability to excel in all other subjects. From early education through 3rd grade, students are taught various skills and concepts required for reading. After 3rd grade, students are expected to use their reading skills to comprehend all their other subjects, like science, history, math, and more.

Not only are strong reading skills important for the classroom and furthering your child's education, but they also have plenty of other valuable benefits for their development and well-being.

## Benefits of Reading:

### Lower Stress Levels<sup>1</sup>

According to a 2009 study at the University of Sussex, reading for just 6 minutes can reduce stress levels by 68%. This study also showed reading was more effective at reducing stress than taking a walk (42%) or listening to music (61%).

### Improved Concentration and Memory<sup>2</sup>

Think of your brain like a muscle—you need to exercise it regularly to keep it strong! Reading requires students to extend their attention span to stay engaged in the story and constantly remember multiple characters, settings, plots, and more.

### Increased Creativity and Enhanced Imagination<sup>4</sup>

Each book a child reads transports them to another world. Their reading skills allow them to imagine and create mental images of infinite landscapes and characters. Books allow their ideas to come to life and often spark creative new ideas.

### Support for Cognitive Development<sup>3</sup>

Reading requires more focus than passive activities like watching television, and studies have shown this increased brain activation persists beyond a student's time spent reading. [One study](#) found an increased resting rate of brain activity for five days after a reading session!

### Strengthened Self-Image and Empathy<sup>2</sup>

Not only do strong reading skills increase confidence, but they also provide access to reading materials with diverse perspectives and life experiences that help children better understand others.

### Help in Developing Critical-Thinking Skills<sup>6</sup>

As students read more and more, they are presented with unique arguments and challenges that require them to ponder their own personal values and beliefs. Reading also teaches students to pay attention to and evaluate details important to making smart decisions.

### Improved Sleep<sup>5</sup>

Reading before bedtime is an excellent way to relax the physical body and allow your mind to de-stress. It's also a better alternative to electronic screens right before you snooze; the blue light emitted from phone and tablet screens confuses your body's internal clock, making it more difficult to fall asleep.<sup>5</sup>

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## References:

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.takingcharge.csh.umn.edu/reading-stress-relief>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nu.edu/blog/reading-improves-memory-concentration-and-stress/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3868356/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://worldliteracyfoundation.org/reading-enhances-imagination/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/sleep/art-20048379>

<sup>6</sup> <https://uwaterloo.ca/writing-and-communication-centre/blog/five-reasons-reading-fun-will-make-you-better-student-any>