

Important tips for parents

- › The earlier and the more often you read aloud the better.
- › Use reading and storytelling as a chance to reinforce your family language.
- › Reinforce your child's German skills by reading aloud. If necessary, use activities offered by the kindergarten, school or library.
- › Turn reading into a dialogue: talk about the contents and pictures, bring stories to life creatively.
- › Reading aloud not only encourages language development, but also the imagination, empathy and the relationship between parent and child.
- › Make use of advice and support services where needed!



No. 4 – Achieving bilingualism Reading aloud encourages language development

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The flyers are available in several languages.



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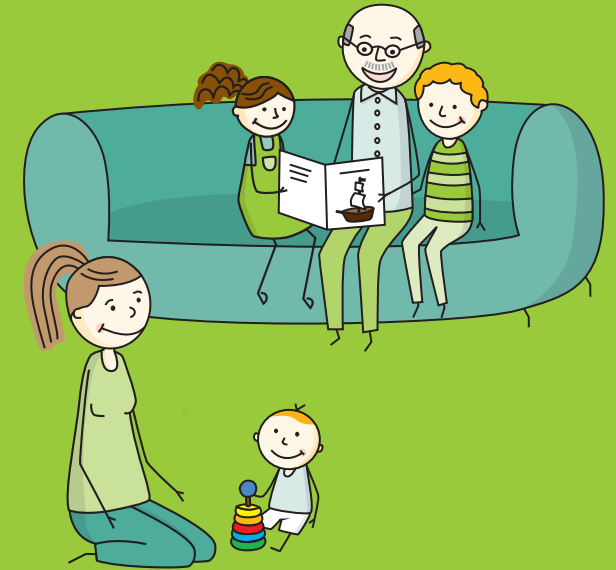
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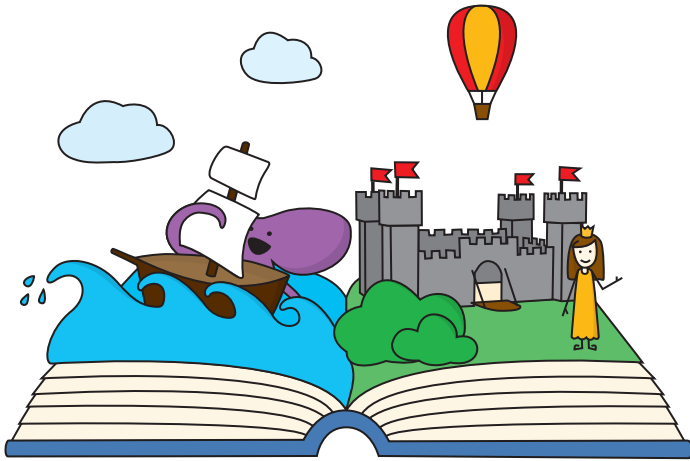
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SCIENCE FOR LIFE
Facts – Research – Information
for Parents and Teachers

Translation: Amy Hunter

Why is reading aloud important?

- › Reading aloud helps to develop interest and pleasure in reading and to secure these skills long-term.
- › Reading aloud expands horizons and sparks the imagination, as children can get to know unknown worlds (e.g. other countries or fantasy creatures like elves or dragons).
- › Reading aloud trains empathy, as children learn how to put themselves in someone else's shoes and understand others' feelings.



Reading aloud and education

- › Reading aloud is part of a holistic education: children who are read to regularly spend more free time on activities e.g. sports and music.
- › Reading aloud is correlated with better achievement at school, not only in German but in almost all subjects.
- › Reading aloud prepares children for learning to read and write. They gain experience of the written language, e.g. learning that language can be represented by signs.

Reading aloud to multilingual children ...

Reading aloud expands language skills, as the written language makes use of different words and sentence structures than in spoken language.

- › It increases vocabulary in each of the respective languages, as well as the ability to deal with texts.
- › Children's ability to tell stories is also encouraged.

... in the home language

- › Reading aloud is a good opportunity to improve the home language(s).
- › It also improves the emotional and personal attitude towards the language.
- › Children can be read to in many languages, regardless of the writing system (e.g. Arabic or Cyrillic).

... in German

It is important that children learn good command of German, in particular for succeeding at school. Reading aloud is good practice for this.

If children are not read to in German at home, there are alternatives on offer:

- › Reading groups in the kindergarten or at school
- › Events in libraries
- › Reading mentors

What does reading aloud mean?

Reading aloud can mean a lot more than adults reading to children and children just listening. Turning reading into a dialogue places language interaction in the foreground, supported by books or other media.

- › Include your child in what you are reading, in order to give them optimum support. Language is learnt best as a dialogue, instead of passive listening or watching.
- › Children are more interested when there is a lively exchange about what is being read, when their questions are answered and the stories are brought to life creatively.
- › Unlike activities where the children are alone (e.g. TV), reading aloud reinforces the relationship with the contact person. Reading aloud together is associated with closeness, comfort and the feeling of being loved.

