

Why Should I Learn to Read?

An Honors Thesis (ID 499)

by

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Date: May 1989

Graduation date: May 1989

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A Nation at Risk was published in 1983 to inform the American people of a problem this nation is facing. The United States has begun to fall behind other industrialized nations. Students in the United States scored among the lowest of all industrialized nations in simple tests of reading, writing, and mathematics. Our nation has had a strong influence in world affairs for many years, but that may change. If we have a poor showing, other nations will not want to listen to us. Something needs to be done if we wish to continue to have such a strong nation.

In 1985 Becoming a Nation of Readers was published to give some suggestions on improving the teaching of reading. This publication was used as background for materials that have been published since then. Although many of these publications are very good, they are not written to be read by one important group. Parents have a lot of influence on their children. The child begins learning at home, and his parents are very important to learning how to talk, read, and write.

The focus of this presentation is reading. A person in our society needs to be literate to be able to function. You need to be able to read to get a good job, get a driver's license, to read labels on food, and do many other simple necessary things. The important everyday uses of reading need to be shown to parents and their children. This will help them

get focused on the need for a child to learn how to read. At this point the parent will start to search for help, if they are unsure about how to help their child.

Once the importance of reading is understood the parent may begin to ask for help. The other reason for making this presentation is to let the parents know some things that they can do to interest the child in reading, and how to help their child learn to read. Many suggestions are made to help the parent aid the child at all levels of learning to read. There are some suggestions for reading to your child; more ideas for teaching spelling and the alphabet. A few suggestions are made for parents who have older children.

This presentation talks about learning to talk and write as well as reading because the three skills are interrelated. It is much easier to read a word you have heard before, especially a word you may have used before. After you can read a word, the next step is to learn to write the word. Learning one of these skills will help a child learn the other two. The section on talking relates to children of any age. It involves simply teaching your child to communicate. A child who will talk and make up stories is ready to begin learning to read. The child who is ready to talk will want to talk about what they read. The next step is to get the child to write their own story. This presentation works with how to help children spend more time writing after they know how to make their letters. It suggests lists and stories that the child can write.

This presentation is made up of over one hundred slides and a sound recording. It is made primarily to show to parents of elementary school children. It has been made to help parents understand how important reading is to their children. It also makes suggestions for the parents on what they can do to help their child read, write, and talk better.

Teachers work with children on reading and writing, but they often do not even see the child until he is five years old. The parents are in charge of teaching before the child is old enough for school. It is necessary for the parents to teach the importance of reading early in life. When the child starts school, their job is not over. The parents need to emphasize the things learned at school and how to use it at home.

The child who learns to read is ahead of the students who do not. When an adult tries to learn how to read, it is much more difficult. A child who reads in his spare time will have an advantage over a student who only reads at school or when he has no choice. A good reader will do better in school. Do not force a child to read who does not want to read, but if you work at it you may be able to find something he will want to read. Magazines or books on subjects he is interested in will be a good start. This program is designed to try to aid the parents in understanding this.

In the process of making this presentation, a lot of the time was spent in researching the topic to be discussed. Books

journals, and pamphlets were obtained and read as possible sources. Three sources are cited in the presentation; these were listed because they were used a little more directly than the other publications. Most of the presentation came from my ideas, and ideas that were repeated in many of the works that I read. Attached to the end of this paper is a bibliography of the sources that I was able to really use in some way.

A script was written with the information recieved to help in making the presentation. The script contains three parts: the picture description, the words to be spoken, and the background music to be used. The words to be spoken were written using the information obtained from the research done.

This presentation contains 127 pictures that were then made into slides. The pictures were made of family, frinds, and a group of third and fourth graders at Surrton Elementery. Some pictures were also taken of places and various items that can be found around the house.

The background music used in the presentation came from some children's songs. Three records and two tapes were put on a cassette and played behind the tape made of someone giving the information. The music was chosen from some old materials that I was able to obtain.

The slides and the two tapes were put together to make the final presentation. In putting this together there have been some problems. A few of these problems might be fixed when time and money allow, but a few of them are simply changes

that I might want to make the next time I do a presentation of this type.

If I had to do this again, I would make some changes. The pictures would be taken of a larger variety of people and places. More time would be spent finding background music. More than one person would make the voice recording. All of these changes will not be made even if more time is spent to correct the problems.

Some of the slides in the program would be retaken. I had trouble getting them in focus. These pictures were taken twice and the best of the two pictures used. There are still a few that should be taken again. The pictures were taken using a 35 millimeter automatic focus camera. The problem with automatic focus is that the item you are photographing needs to be a certain distance away to focus properly. To get the items far enough away you sometimes had to move them too far to read or identify what they are. Another camera without the automatic focus might work better, but I don't know how to use one.

The sound tape has more background noise than it should. The sound recording was made using old records, and in a room that was not sound proof. The tape might be improved upon by changing these materials and conditions.

There are a few problems with the presentation, but I think it will fulfill my purpose. This presentation is designed to show to parents in order to help them. I hope that when

I show this to them they will walk away understanding the importance of reading. I hope they will also remember some of the suggestions that will show them how to help their children.

SCRIPT

PICTURES	WORDS	MUSIC
1. Why should I learn to read?	Why should I learn to read?	No music
2. by Cheryl Mann with help from Dr. Nancy Clements		ABC-DEF-GHI (big bird)
3. Sources: <u>A Nation at Risk</u> and <u>Becoming a Nation of Readers</u>		ABC-DEF-GHI
4. Also Scott Foresman <u>Developing Independent Readers</u>		ABC-DEF-GHI
5. Pictures: Judy, Karen, and David Mann, and 3rd and 4th grade at Sutton		ABC-DEF-GHI
6. bibliography available upon request		ABC-DEF-GHI
7. class reading	Reading is an important skill taught in school that you use for the rest of your life.	ABC-DEF-GHI
8. child and parent reading	The parents spend as much time with a child as a teacher does and reading can be a good part of that time.	ABC-DEF-GHI

PICTURES

WORDS

MUSIC

9. <u>Are You My Mother?</u>	1)Are you ready for your bedtime story? This is a new book about a mother and her baby bird. 2)Hey what's this for? 1)That's the title. It tells you the name of the book; it says <u>Are You My Mother?</u> See, it's right here inside too; <u>Are You My Mother?</u> 2) <u>Are You My Mother?</u> 1) Right, you can read; you know how to read.	ABC-DEF-GHI
10. <u>Are You My Mother?</u> open	2) <u>Are You My Mother?</u> 1) You read it again. I'll read the story now and stop for you to read that part every time we come to it.	ABC-DEF-GHI
11. child reading	Reading will help your child all through life and is necessary to doing many simple everyday things	ABC-DEF-GHI
12. outside of a school	Education is an important step to getting a good job.	In a Little Red School House
13. high school diploma	For someone with a high school or college diploma a good job is possible.	In a Little Red School House
14. student reading	You need to know how to read to finish school. When a child reads it helps with schoolwork.	In a Little Red School House
15. Report card	Good grades can help the student when it is time to get a job.	In a Little Red School House

PICTURES

WORDS

MUSIC

16. book of instructions and hand written instructions	To get a job you need to be able to read and fill out an application. You need to be able to read written instructions, or rules to keep a job.	In a Little Red School House
17. phone	Notes and messages like you might leave in your child's lunch can be practice for memos and phone messages.	In a Little Red School House
18. computer terminal	To get a job and keep a job you have to be able to read at least these things. Some jobs take even more reading.	In a Little Red School House
19. sign	There are many everyday actions that involve reading. Look and point out to your child the words around him.	In a Little Red School House
20. telephone book (open)	-in the telephone book	In a Little Red School House
21. Christmas cards	-on greeting cards	In a Little Red School House
22. drive-in menu	-on menus	In a Little Red School House
23. advertisement from a magazine	-in ads	In a Little Red School House
24. can labels	-on labels	In a Little Red School House

PICTURES	WORDS	MUSIC
25. street signs	-on signs	In a Little Red School House
26. marquee about tickets	-on tickets	In a Little Red School House
27. medicine bottles	-on medicine bottles	In a Little Red School House
28. cookbook open	-and written recipes	In a Little Red School House
29. group playing game	Playing games together makes people talk, think, and even read	In a Little Red School House
30. adult reading	-and reading can even be used for entertainment.	In a Little Red School House
31. map of the United States	Reading is important and America has been falling behind other industrialized countries.	Stars and Stripes Forever
32. students in the classroom	A <u>Nation at Risk</u> , a study done about students, listed some ways that American students are having more trouble than ever before.	Stars and Stripes Forever
33. students in the classroom	Our students test lower than other industrial countries in comparison on academic tests. In some cases our test scores were the lowest.	Stars and Stripes Forever

PICTURES

WORDS

MUSIC

34. tests (essay)	1/5 of the 17 year olds in the United States cannot write a persuasive essay and 2/3 can not solve a math problem requiring several steps.	Stars and Stripes Forever
35. reading test	Even worse 23 million Americans are functionally illiterate by simple reading, writing, and understanding tests.	Stars and Stripes Forever
36. parent and child reading	Reading is important and there are ways that a parent can help. There are three things you should do to let your child know how important reading is.	alphabet song
37. adult reading	First, let your child see you reading books, magazines, or newspapers.	alphabet song
38. adult reading	Your example will encourage the students to try it.	alphabet song
39. parent and child reading	Second, you should encourage your child to read to you.	alphabet song
40. words of praise	Praise your child for success in reading.	alphabet song
41. parent and child reading	-but don't get upset when a mistake is made--be patient.	alphabet song
42. parent and child reading	If the child has trouble reading, help him, but try not to tell the child the word.	alphabet song

PICTURES

WORDS

MUSIC

43. one page in a book	Have them sound it out and give sound or meaning clues to help the child guess it.	alphabet song
44. child and adult reading	Also in addition to reading children need to hear someone read. If you don't have time find someone who does--a grandmother or a neighbor.	alphabet song
45. record and read along book	Another solution to not hearing someone read might be a cassette or record and read along book for a small child who needs listening experiences.	alphabet song
46. children playing	Small children need to hear and say words to learn words for reading.	Perpetuum Mobile
47. stereo	Listening to radios and records will help as they learn words to songs. This will help the child to learn new words for reading.	Perpetuum Mobile
48. book with finger under words.	When you read to a child it helps to run your finger along the words you read.	Perpetuum Mobile
49. book with finger under the words	This shows the child which direction the writing goes and that the print makes words he or she knows.	Perpetuum Mobile
50. focus on page	The words in one story will be in the same order and on the same page everytime they read this book.	Perpetuum Mobile

PICTURES	WORDS	MUSIC
51. books	Don't just read the book, ask questions and encourage your child to talk about the story.	Perpetuum Mobile
52. child playing	Compare the book to things they know.	Perpetuum Mobile
53. library shelves	There are many books around you could read to your child.	Perpetuum Mobile
54. books	Keep books available to make reading easier.	Perpetuum Mobile
55. outside of library	The library is a good place to get books that will not cost you anything.	Perpetuum Mobile
56. book surrounded by wrapping paper	Books also make good presents.	Perpetuum Mobile
57. books of authors	If you are concerned with getting a book that your child will enjoy. There are lists in books of good authors.	Perpetuum Mobile
58. librarian in library	Another easy way to get help choosing a good book is to ask the librarian for suggestions.	Perpetuum Mobile
59. Mad magazine	No matter where or what the reading material is the child should enjoy things he reads.	Perpetuum Mobile

PICTURES

WORDS

MUSIC

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|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| 60. comic books | If the child reads comic books, at least he is getting a chance to look at print and reading. | Perpetuum
Mobile |
| 61. books (movie) | First get the child to want to read then try to get him to read other books. | Perpetuum
Mobile |
| 62. books (classics) | Don't force a child to finish a book they don't like. This will make reading unpleasant and stop your child from trying another book. | Perpetuum
Mobile |
| 63. parent and child reading | Even as a child gets older don't stop reading the child still needs to hear someone read. | Perpetuum
Mobile |
| 64. <u>Are You My Mother?</u> (open) | Children enjoy helping you to read. For young children it is fun to read a book with repeated phrases. This makes it possible for students to participate by helping with the repeated part. | Perpetuum
Mobile |
| 65. table, chairs, and books | Make a special time and a place to read each day so that it becomes an everyday experience that they will get used to. | Perpetuum
Mobile |
| 66. <u>Little Women</u> (closed) | If your child can read, let the child choose the book he reads using the 5 finger method for choosing a book. | Perpetuum
Mobile |
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PICTURES	WORDS	MUSIC
67. <u>Little Women</u> (open)	The 5 finger method of selecting books is very simple. A child chooses a book and opens to a page.	Perpetuum Mobile
68. <u>Little Women</u> one finger down	He reads the page and puts down one finger for every word he doesn't know.	Perpetuum Mobile
69. <u>Little Women</u> 5 fingers down	If he puts down five fingers, the book is too hard for him to read.	Perpetuum Mobile
70. child reading	Before a child learns to read there are some activities you can try that will help him.	Perpetuum Mobile
71. alphabet	To encourage the child to learn the alphabet or how to spell words.	Perpetuum Mobile
72. letters made from dough	Make letters from cookie dough.	Perpetuum Mobile
73. page of home- made picture dictionary	Make a homemade picture dictionary by cutting pictures from magazine.	Perpetuum Mobile
74. page of home- made picture dictionary	Paste the pictures on pages with letters at the top that start the word shown in the picture.	Perpetuum Mobile
75. magnetic letters on refrigerator	-or use magnetic letters to spell words on a refrigerator.	Perpetuum Mobile
76. dictionary (open)	The more words your child knows the better he will be able to read.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel

PICTURES	WORDS	MUSIC
77. parent and child talking	You need to let your child talk to help him build a larger vocabulary.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
78. question mark	When you talk use questions that make the child say more than just yes or no to answer.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
79. handful of cards	Make your child compare 2 things or contrast them.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
80. 2 playing cards	An example of comparing: Both cards are hearts.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
81. 2 other cards	An example of contrasting: The numbers are different.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
82. buttons divided by number of holes	Have your child classify things, for example: 2 hole and 4 hole buttons.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
83. bed set up for use	Talk about the things you do. Discuss your day and question what your child did. Do this at the end of each day--right before bed.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
84. vacation picture	Give your child a variety of experiences to talk about.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
85. country	Take them to the country	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
86. animals at the zoo	-the zoo	Overture to Hansel and Gretel

PICTURES

WORDS

MUSIC

87. front of the museum	-the museum	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
88. inside the library	-and the library	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
89. picture of dragon	Another good idea to get your child talking is to have the child use their imagination to come up with stories or parts of stories.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
90. what if	Ask what if questions	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
91. written story starter	Start stories and have the student finish them.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
92. person watching television	Most children watch some TV this can be a good experience when you use it properly.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
93. TV guide	Limit TV watching to only a few hours and good programs.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
94. person watching television	Watch TV with your child and discuss what you are seeing.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
95. Parent writing child watching	Another good talking activity is to have a child dictate a story that you write down.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
96. child at zoo	These stories can be something they have done or made up.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel

PICTURES

WORDS

MUSIC

97. homemade book	These stories can be put together to make a book or journal.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
98. book without words	A shorter activity would be to make-up stories that go with books without words and discuss possible stories from the same pictures.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
99. student writing	Being able to write helps your child to read. Practice in writing will help him read better.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
100. paper, pencil, markers, and crayons	A simple way to encourage your child to write is to provide paper, pencil, markers, and crayons for writing and drawing.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
101. box with pencils and markers	This can be done by keeping a writing box where the child can get it that contains all of these items.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
102. child writing	This will keep the child familiar with writing and help him understand its importance.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
103. child writing	There are many other simple everyday activities the child can do to practice writing.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
104. calendar	Let your child keep track of important dates on the calendar.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel

PICTURES	WORDS	MUSIC
105. grocery list	Let your child make lists for shopping trips and clip coupons to use during the trip.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
106. child writing	Older children can write the list and younger children can draw pictures of the things to be bought.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
107. list of chores	Give students a written list of chores or instructions to follow.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
108. person making	It is even better to choose a task where the student must read or write to finish it.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
109. department store magazine	Have the students make a list of items they would like from a magazine.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
110. page from department store magazine	The list can be a gift list or something like furniture to put in a dream house.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
111. Indiana map	When you go on a trip, let your child help you plan what to do and how to get there.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
112. travel picture scrapbook	Let the child write a journal of what you did or make a picture scrapbook.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
113. thank you card	Let your child write birthday cards or thank you cards.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel

PICTURES

WORDS

MUSIC

114. letter and envelope	An older child might enjoy a pen pal.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
115. child reading	Your child will do well in school if he can read and write well.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
116. textbooks	Practice in reading will help, but you should also talk to the teacher to find out how your child is doing.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
117. textbooks	You should talk to your child to find out what he or she is doing in class. You might be able to find something to read on the same subjects.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
118. class reading	Reading is important in school and you need to know how and what your child is doing.	Overture to Hansel and Gretel
119. adult reading	Reading will improve through practice for the rest of your life.	ABC-DEF-GHI
120. child reading	In some ways reading is kind of like brushing your teeth.	ABC-DEF-GHI
121. materials for toothbrushing	Small babies do not brush their teeth you do it for them. We also show them the right way to do it.	ABC-DEF-GHI
122. materials set up for use	When the child gets older, we teach them to do it themselves. We show them what to do, let them try, and talk to them about how they did.	ABC-DEF-GHI

PICTURES

WORDS

MUSIC

123. person brushing their teeth	As the child gets older we expect the child to do it more and more on their own.	ABC-DEF-GHI
124. bathroom sink area	Eventually the child will be able to do it when they are told.	ABC-DEF-GHI
125. person brushing their teeth	We hope that the child will do it without being told. At that point we can say that we are finished with teaching toothbrushing.	ABC-DEF-GHI
126. book	Reading works in the same way. We hope when he is out of school your child will read on his own.	No music
127. child reading	Reading is important to your child's future. Are you doing what you can to help your child be a good reader?	No music
128. No slide	Thank you	ABC-DEF-GHI

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