

## Improve Your Child's Reading Skills

It is not difficult to get clues as to how a child is feeling. He reveals this by his facial expression, by twisting and squirming like an animal that wants to get out of a cage, or by subdued docility, as well as by the words he says. Of course, we cannot observe feelings directly; we have to make inferences from the clues we observe. The way a child feels about himself, his reading, and his parents' efforts to help him improve is of great importance; his feelings and attitudes govern his responses to the reading situation in which he is placed. As the child grows older, we can help him to accept his limitations, and focus on the things he can do well and on the level of reading ability he can achieve. We probably do not know how many children worry about making mistakes when they read. Some mention it specifically in their accounts of reading aloud to their parents. Older boys and girls mention their embarrassment in reading aloud before their classmates. Fear underlies many reading problems. The child may not recognize his fear of failure, of losing his parents' love, of being ridiculed by his classmates, of being stupid. Fears may lurk behind many facades. To the parent and teacher the child may appear to be indifferent to or content with his poor reading. He may appear stubborn, hostile, or unreasonable, or merely docile and conformable. He may refuse even to try to learn to read because his previous efforts have all met with failure; he is afraid to try again. Failure can significantly lower the child's feeling of personal worth; self-esteem is built on successful experience. A child's worry about his failure in school may be intensified by a guilty feeling that it is all his fault - he did not work hard enough. To be sure, this may be true in some cases, but in others the fault lies in circumstances that are beyond the child's control. If we recognize the possibility that the child's ostensible attitude is a mask for underlying fears, we shall be in a better position to give him two kinds of help: to help him understand and handle his fears, and to change conditions that are beyond his control. The way children view themselves determines to a great extent the way they approach reading. Behavior stems from attitudes. We should try to understand the child's attitudes: 1. Toward his parents and brothers and sisters. If he considers that his parents have a negative feeling toward him, his resentment may express itself in self-sabotage. Failure to learn to read hurts both the child and his parents. If he has a brother or sister who is a good reader, the child who is having reading difficulties may prefer not to try to learn; if he tries and fails, he will make his rival's superiority still more evident. 2. Toward himself as a person - dependent or independent, competent or incompetent, worthy or unworthy. One boy identified himself as "the black sheep of the family," and added, "Every family has to have a black sheep, I guess." Such an attitude often cancels effort - he's licked before he begins. 3. Toward himself in relation to reading - a child may think of himself as "a boy who can't learn to read." So, why try! 4. Toward reading - "reading isn't important," "reading is sissy," "reading is drudgery." Attitudes in these crucial areas, whether negative or positive, determine, to a great extent, the kind of response a child makes in a reading situation. His attitudes condition the effort he puts forth and the satisfactions he gets from the reading experience. The effect of initial attitudes is cumulative; a satisfying reading experience produces an enthusiastic approach to the next experience, whereas an unpleasant recollection of past attempts to read may result in halfheartedness or out-and-out withdrawal or rebellion in the face of another reading task. Gaining an understanding of how children feel about reading greatly enhances our ability to help them.

## About the Author

Here's How To Improve Your Child's Reading Comprehension Strategy With Little Or No Effort [Click Here For Free Online Ebook](#)  
<http://www.readingcomprehensionstrategy.com/>

Source: <http://americanahost.com>