

Parents and Reading

By Pam Bartusiewicz

Reading, writing and arithmetic signals that the students are back in school and facing the daunting task of homework! Parents often wonder how they can help their children with their homework. Skill and drill is definitely an option, but the children will not like it.

One sure way

to help your budding scholar succeed is by reading to them every day. Yes, I mean everyday!

It can be done! Reading to your child brings many rewards. Reading together is an opportunity to spend time together, enjoy a good story, make new friends and visit far away places. I realize there are household chores to be completed, your job as well as numerous details to address every day. But setting aside time everyday to read with your child will bring great riches to your child's life and to yours as well!

You might ask to what I attribute this notion. As a school librarian, I strongly advocate for reading to children, but I was also drawn to this book entitled: *The Reading Promise* by Alice Orma. It is the journey of a father and a daughter who read together religiously and enjoyed many books. At first Alice and her dad, Jim Brozina made a pact to read for 100 straight days. Once the reading pair completed this goal they celebrated with pancakes. Alice was in fourth grade. Alice and her dad decided then they would read together as long as they could. As reading partners they continued their reading habit until Alice left for college eight years later. That's some commitment!!

This book presents numerous vignettes of how despite various obstacles the father-daughter team read together on a daily basis. The *Reading Promise* lists hundreds of books that Alice and her dad shared. Alice gained a great deal of knowledge from her reading experience with her dad. In eighth grade she was 1 of 3 students out of 300 that ranked advance proficient in the reading section of the state test. As a junior, she had the highest score on the PSAT test. She also won two national writing contests. Alice definitely benefitted from her reading experiences.

At this point you might be asking yourself: "Where am I going to find all those books?" How about making it a weekly ritual to visit the public library and talk to your public librarian. Don't forget to ask your child's school librarian for suggestions. Garage sales, Friends of the Public Library book sales and book exchanges are always ways to obtain books. Books are also great gifts to give and receive.

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