

The Value of Reading

We believe this is a critical moment for positive change in education ... a moment that could be a turning point for the role of reading in children's lives.

Right now, reading occupies limited space for children, often competing with gaming and technology. Even in school, there is less time set aside for independent reading, while more time goes to testing.

Recognizing how critical reading is to children's success, there is a new drive among teachers and parents to help children find books to get them excited about stories and information, to link their reading to fun, discovery, and curiosity, and to promote the sheer joy that reading can bring.

Scholastic has talked about reading with thousands of children, parents, teachers, and literacy thought leaders. We have heard concerns about distraction and lack of time or interest. But we have also heard hope and optimism about the power of reading to transform lives. Against the backdrop of rigor asked for by the Common Core State Standards, teachers and families also want school to become more motivational, engaging and personal. They believe that school can be a place where children's eyes are opened to the power of imagination and discovery. Teachers, in particular, see independent reading as a driving force in children's happiness and growth in school and at home.

We know that children want to read. So, how do we get them there?

The research tells us:

- › When children choose their own books to read, versus having books assigned, they are five times more likely to read the whole book.
- › When a young child gets excited about a topic or a story, he can read four or five books in a single day. An older reader can read several books in a week when she finds a character or a plot or a fact that connects to her life and expands her world.
- › When children want to read, they drive their own learning, which can be many times more powerful than simply following along in a class assignment.
- › When children have books at home, they do better in school. Having books in the home is more important than parents' education levels as a marker for success in school.
- › When children read widely and often, they develop higher-order thinking skills called for by the new standards, and also develop a love for reading and learning. Reading helps them to feel more optimistic, and to see a world in which they can reach higher and achieve their dreams.

That optimism, based on almost a century of experience in helping children reach their potential, drives all that we do at Scholastic. And this is why we are introducing Open a World of Possible ... a new statement of mission and belief that reaches out to teachers, parents and children across all

of Scholastic's books, magazines, websites, instructional materials, consulting, customer service and delivery systems serving most of the schools and families in the United States and many more throughout the world.

Open a World of Possible points to independent reading as a doorway to imagination and discovery – a way to motivate children to read and learn and realize themselves. It also drives social engagement in classrooms, at home and online, so teachers, parents and children can connect and share the pleasure of reading with each other.

Scholastic is privileged to help teachers and parents discover the books and information, in print or electronic forms, which can build strong lifetime foundations for reading and learning. We believe in the dreams and potential of all children, and invite you to help young people Open a World of Possible.

Richard Robinson
Chairman, President & CEO, Scholastic Inc.

Our Reading Message

Scholastic's mission is built on helping children learn to read and love to read. We believe that independent reading is a critical part of children's learning and growth.

With support from teachers, parents, and schools, children choose from Scholastic the books they want to read, and discover the pleasure and power of reading.

Finding the right book at the right time can light an emotional spark within children that motivates them to read more, understand more, and read joyfully.

When that happens, the world opens. Everything becomes possible.

What You Can Do

Open a World of Possible drives social engagement in classrooms, at home and online, so teachers, parents and children can connect and share the pleasure of reading with each other. We're connecting and enabling you to help each other by sharing your best ideas and advice – like favorite books and authors, ideas for read alouds, creative reading experiences – all the wonderful and inventive ways you are encouraging independent reading in your classroom and at home. Share your best ideas and advice at **#sharepossible**.