

WILL THEY EVER LEARN TO READ?

by Lehla Eldridge





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The answer is yes

The shift that happened when my daughter said 'Please can you stop worrying about me reading'

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The answer is yes, they do!

The answer is from my experience, a big yes, they just do and it is amazing to witness. We live in a world where words are everywhere and children are amazing they soak it all up. With this process there is no one clock watching so your child can unfold around reading exactly as they should. It is perhaps you (as it was me) that needs to take a breath and step back and let the magic unfold..

On the following pages I share a story of how it played out with us and a letter to my younger self, from a wiser me that now has experience and isn't so uptight about the whole learning to read process.

I stopped worrying about reading once I listened to my daughter's words.

'Please can you stop worrying about me reading and actually, just leave me alone' were the words she said to me. I was aghast, mainly as I had thought I had done such a good job of subtly trying to help her to read. I had to admit to myself that I had been 'lightly' chasing her around in a 'I am not making you read' kind of way. There was nothing subtle about it.

So my husband and I stopped, it was not easy, it flew in the face of everything I had been taught. IE reading is something that is taught to you. She did not want me to teach her. She was asking us to have faith in her.

We had to change our thinking. I LOVE that she questioned me and told me her needs. She is now, at the age of fifteen an avid reader, she reads non stop, she has novels lined up for the next few months, she reads them back to back. What is more, she loves it. The most we did (after we stopped chasing her around) was to say what the words were, once she spelt them out and that was that. It is the same for her twin sister, who seemed to find reading easier, they both read non stop.

Our son says he doesn't like reading, he may well not be a book worm and that is OK. He is twelve, when he was younger he said to me 'I will read when I can read' that to me is it. It is up me to have an inner leap of faith and to not listen to the scripted voice that holds a clock up to my child's learning.

He is now a great reader, he really did it himself, as I had learned from the girls to leave him alone. He became a very fluent reader through gaming. You have to read and write through gaming otherwise you fall behind!

There is the issue of dyslexia. I can't speak for other families who have dyslexic children and of course if you feel that more support is needed then that is important to follow your instincts.

The point I am trying to make is about worrying, I have historically been a worrier and I have found it of no use when it comes to supporting my child's learning. Actually we all know that worrying is useless and often a gremlin taking over. So if that is happening with you calmly thank that gremlin for it's concern but let them know you've got this.

A letter to my younger self

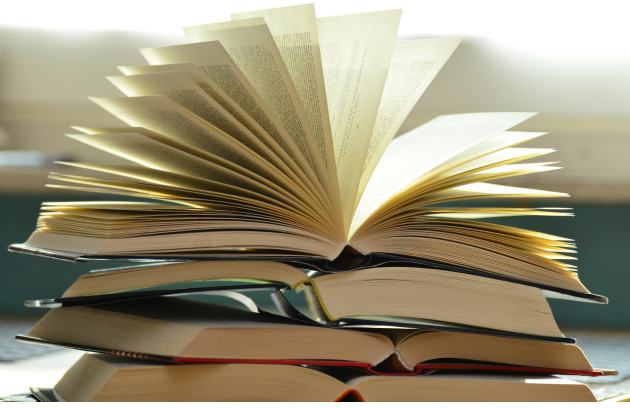
Dear Younger Parent Lehla,

Please stop worrying about the children's ability to read. Have more faith in them. You have been conditioned to think that they should learn at a certain age. In this process of learning there is no thing as a certain age. You know this, so stop worrying.

Here is what will help them read. Start having more faith in them. Stop worrying about them falling behind. Know that falling behind doesn't exist.

There is no behind, advanced, or on target, there is just the present moment. Read books yourself.

Leave books around. Don't try to trick them in to reading, trickery doesn't work.



Let them play video games, where in order to do well at the game they have to read and write.

Read to them, if they want you to. Put your fingers under the words if they ask you to.

When they ask you what a word is and you have to spell it out in the air, be there for them, even if this means doing this for years. Relax, they are learning.

With love from,

An older, possibly bit more wiser version of
Lehla



A quick take away; How to inspire new readers

If they see you loving reading that will inspire them to love it to. Leave things scattered around, books, magazines, interesting blogs on the internet. Go to the library, if they like the library keep going back.

Put your fingers under the words when you read to them, if they want you to read to them.

Remember they are never too old to be read to. There will be a day when reading to them whilst they snuggle in your arm pit will be a memory.

Try this quick game.

Stick words around the room but do it wrong, so stick the word 'fridge' on a chair or 'oven' on the table, then get them to sort the words and stick them to the correct things.

If they like playing games, play Word Bingo.

Write out 8 words on a grid. 4 at the top, 4 below. Get 8 corresponding words, cut out on paper and put them in a small bag. Get them to take the words out and put the right words on the right place on the grid.

Know that they will get there, there is no rush.



4 Simple Things to Remember...

1. There is no race, they will learn, let them go at their own pace and trust the process. The kids are alright.
2. Each time they see you read, that can inspire them to read.
3. Cultivate their environment with books, or magazines that look appealing, notice what they like reading.
4. You can try and inspire them but take the lead from them. They ultimately know how they want to learn. And remember there is no clock ticking..

We love to keep in touch...

For more insights and connection keep in touch as we love to connect up with you! You can follow us at Unschooling the Kids on Facebook.

Or on Instagram at [unschooling_the_kids](#) You can also read our blog [here](#).

Or we would love you to buy our book [Jump, Fall, Fly from schooling to homeschooling to unschooling](#).

Thanks for reading till the end!

With good wishes from,

Lehla and Anthony

