

# Reading Tips for Parents of 4th Graders

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Much of a 4th grade reading curriculum teaches students how to analyze the books they read. Rather than just understand the plot and information given in a text, students are encouraged to think about the messages in a text and how it relates to their own lives, and compare texts to each other and make connections both within one text and across multiple texts. In short, 4th graders begin to learn how to “think” and talk about a text in order to find their deeper meanings and messages. This is done both with texts students read independently, as well as texts read by the whole class or smaller groups of students. Teachers may often use a class read-aloud to show students strategies for thinking about and analyzing what they read, encouraging them to do this in their own reading. Students also do this as they write in more detail about the texts they read.

## In order to build reading skills, your 4th grader:

- Uses specific examples from the text to explain characters’ motivations, main events, central themes or ideas about a text.
- Uses the context of a text to determine the meaning of a word.
- Understands and can explain the differences between narrative prose, drama and poetry.
- Identifies and refers to the different parts of a poem and plays such as verses, settings, and characters.
- Interprets and connects information from illustrations, graphs, charts or other sources related to the text.
- Identifies, compares and contrasts different perspectives from which texts are written. (For example, 1st and 3rd person).
- Compares and contrasts the way different texts address the same issue, theme or topic.
- Makes connections between people, events or important ideas in a text.
- Uses previous knowledge to read unfamiliar multi-syllable words.
- Reads grade-level texts with accurate comprehension, pacing and expression.

## Reading Activities

- **Read and Research Together:** Read the same book as your child either independently, together or a combination of both. Talk about the books as you read them, reviewing main ideas and plots and expressing your opinions on the book. Then read an additional book or books on the same subject and compare and contrast how the books both dealt with the same issue. For example, read two fiction books about family, or two different topics about the same historical event or non-fiction topic.

- **Compare Perspectives:** Read two texts, one which is first-hand and one which is written in third person about the same event. Talk with your child about the differences and why she thinks these differences exist. Or try this yourself! After sharing an event with your child, each of you can write about it from your own perspectives. Or choose an event which one of you experienced first-hand, that each of you can write about. Talk about the differences between what you wrote to gain a better understanding of perspective.
- **Read magazine and newspaper articles focusing on illustrations, graphs or charts.** Point out to your child what they show, ask her to help you interpret it and discuss how they help explain or elaborate on the text.