

Tip Sheet #5

BOYS AND BOOKS

Some boys take to reading right away. Other boys are reluctant readers. Jon Scieszka, a former teacher and author of many children's books that appeal to boys, started a web site (<http://www.guysread.com>) to help adults who want to raise boys to be readers.

Why are boys slower to dive into reading?

- Boys are slower to develop than girls. They may struggle with writing and reading skills in the early grades.
- Boys like action and movement. Reading makes them sit still and focus.
- Boys do not see many male role models around them reading for pleasure.

What can you do to encourage a boy who is a reluctant reader?

- Select books that appeal to boys. Some that have been voted as favourites include:
Flat Stanley by Jeff Brown
The Stinky Cheese Man by Jon Scieszka
Jumanji by Chris Van Allsburg



Ask your librarian to suggest books boys will like. Librarians are happy to help you. Many libraries also have computerized lists of books on all sorts of topics.

Laughter makes reading fun. Find joke and riddle books. Keep one in the kitchen or car.

Some boys find facts more interesting than fiction. Encourage boys to pick books and magazines on non-fiction topics that they care about. If they love cars, your librarian can help you locate material on hot rods, sports cars, classic cars, all kinds of cars. If they are interested in rocks, stars, or animals, there are many books that can help them explore those interests. Don't forget books on sports and the sports pages of the newspaper. A strong interest in a topic can pull a reluctant reader into books.

Encourage men to read to boys. Fathers, uncles, grandfathers, and older brothers can all read with boys. Some schools invite male school administrators, police officers, fire fighters and others throughout the community to come into the classroom and read their favourite children's books to students – increasing the number and type of adults that children can see as role models for reading for pleasure.

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