

# Motivation, Independent Reading and Writing, and Home Connections

A key to teaching all children to read and write is engagement in an exciting literate atmosphere that promotes and supports reading and writing. This includes providing a print-rich classroom environment, promoting independent reading and writing in school and at home, and encouraging home caregivers to support the school's literacy program. Research-based instructional materials must provide guidelines and suggestions to support teachers in these areas. The following quotes from the research reports used to develop this framework provide support for these conclusions:

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A key to teaching all children to read and write is engagement in an exciting literate atmosphere that promotes and supports reading and writing.

- **1985 - Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson**

“Research shows that the amount of independent, silent reading children do in school is significantly related to gains in reading achievement.” (p. 76)

“Research also shows that the amount of reading students do out of school is consistently related to gains in reading achievement.” (p. 77)

**“Teachers should maintain classrooms that are both stimulating and disciplined.** Effective teachers of reading create a literate classroom environment. They allocate an adequate amount of time to reading and writing, sustain children's attention, maintain a brisk pace, and keep rates of success high.” (p. 118)

**“Children should spend more time in independent reading.** Independent reading, whether in school or out of school, is associated with gains in reading achievement. By the time they are in third or fourth grade, children should read independently a minimum of two hours per week...” (p. 119)

**“Children should spend more time writing.** Opportunities to write more than a sentence or two are infrequent in most American elementary school classrooms. As well as being valuable in its own right, writing promotes reading ability.” (p. 119)

**“Schools should cultivate an ethos that supports reading.** Schools that are effective in teaching reading are characterized by vigorous leadership, high expectations, an emphasis on academic learning, order and discipline, uninterrupted time for learning, and staffs that work together.” (p. 119)

- **1998 - Snow, Burns, & Griffin**

**“Recommendations on reading practices and motivation:**

Throughout the early grades, time, materials, and resources should be provided (a) to support daily independent reading of texts selected to be of particular interest for the individual students, and also beneath the individual student’s frustration level, in order to consolidate the student’s capacity for independent reading, and (b) to support daily assisted or supported reading and rereading of texts that are slightly more difficult in wording or in linguistic, rhetorical, or conceptual structure in order to promote advances in the student’s capacities.

Throughout the early grades, schools should promote independent reading outside of school by such means as daily at-home reading assignments and expectations, summer reading lists, encouraging parental involvement, and by working with community groups, including public librarians, who share this same goal.” (p. 324)

- **1998 - Learning First Alliance**

**“Home reading.** Children should be spending more time on reading than is available at school. They should read at home on a regular basis, usually 20 to 30 minutes each evening. Parents should be asked to send in signed forms indicating that children have done their home reading...” (p. 15)

- **1998 - Hiebert, Pearson, Taylor, Richardson, & Paris**

“Classrooms that connect Reading at Home and School [do so by] bringing literacy events and materials of the home into the classroom... , extending school reading and writing events into homes... , sharing literacy resources in communities with families...” (Topic 7, pp. 2-3)