

How to Motivate Your Tween to Read: Tips for Parents

If you have a tween that doesn't enjoy "reading," don't worry, you're not alone. Many parents struggle with this, and often times it is because we place too much emphasis on reading the things they don't enjoy. The tips below have been collected to assist you in motivating your tween to read and how to find other reading choices.

Set an example. The more a parent chooses to read for enjoyment, the more likely your tween will, too. If you demonstrate that reading is as fun to you as being on the computer or watching a movie, your tween will incorporate that belief and quite possibly try it themselves.

Focus on what they love! The most important motivator to get tweens to read is to find something they are interested in. Some tweens love nonfiction, for example, boys may enjoy sports or "how to" books. Others love fiction, but want stories that focus around certain topics. They typically don't read to just read.

Make reading aloud a natural part of family life. Share an article you clipped from the paper, a poem, a letter, or a random page from an encyclopedia — without turning it into a lesson.



View pleasure reading as a value in itself. Almost anything your youngsters read — including the Sunday comics — helps build reading skills.

Check out a cool library together. Libraries are so important because you can offer your child lots of choices for free. If your tween doesn't seem all that keen on heading to the local public library with you, consider its "coolness" factor. Is it small and/or "boring-looking?" Consider taking your tween to a different branch or the main library.

Read some books written for tweens. Young adult novels can give you valuable insights into the concerns and pressures felt by tweens. You may find that these books provide a neutral ground on which to talk about sensitive subjects.

Play audio books. Ok, I know an audio book is not reading. However, it may get your tween involved in a story, which would encourage them to get involved in other stories! Get the first book that is part of a series of novels and play it. If they like it, go check out the second book from the library and offer it to them to read

Talk to your tween. What is he/she enjoying about the book? What is puzzling about it? What does it make him/her think about? Think about what gives you pleasure as a reader. When you have a book you love, talk about it with your tween. What do you love about it? What does it make you think about? Read, think and talk together about books, magazines or other reading material that you both enjoy.

Don't limit the subject matter. Don't limit your child in their choice of reading. If your tween chooses something that you would typically object to, keep an open mind. This is a way for a tween to experience life without doing it themselves. It will also cause them to think critically about the world around them. Also remember, that the more your child reads, the more they will be interested in reading.



Use technology to your advantage. Tweens are very drawn to screens, so use it to their benefit. Many tweens have smart phones and can be able to download eBooks, audio books, and magazines.

Instilling a love of reading in your tween will open their eyes to so many possibilities – it is well worth the effort.

Meet at the bookstore. Despite the way your tweens roll their eyes at you, they actually do want to spend time with you. Visit the bookstore together. Walk around and see what catches your child's attention. Pick a few possible books and sit down to have a conversation about the things that interest your tween. If you find a book they like, add to your home library or request it from your public library.

Keep the big picture in mind. For all sorts of reasons, some tweens go through periods without showing much interest in reading. Don't panic! Time, and these tips, may help rekindle their interest.