

The Importance of Read-Alouds

Deborah Weuhler

If you're busy like me, you struggle finding time to add in read aloud time. This is where and how I have squeezed in the time with my growing brood:

Over the years, I have read when the kids have been sick and are lying around, or I have just had a newborn and need more rest, but what has worked best for regular reading times has been at night from ½ to 1 hour before the younger children's bedtime. The younger kids are all in bed and I sit in the hallway so all can hear. If that doesn't work in your house, gather in one living area after they are ready for bed and then send them on their separate ways afterwards. Another option I have heard is to read while the kids are eating breakfast or lunch.

If none of these ways work and you find yourself overly busy, listening to books on tape is a great alternative. You can listen in the car, while making dinner, while kids are playing with building blocks or coloring pictures about the book they are listening to, or even drawing their own illustrations as they listen.

Don't wait until you think the younger children are old enough to hear a classic. Choose one geared toward the older children. Once the younger ones start listening to good literature, they will eventually pick up the meanings of words and increase their vocabulary as they go along. I've had three year olds repeat adult-type phrases from books geared towards the older children.

Your auditory learners will especially love hearing good literature, whether read by you (which is the way most kids prefer) or by other means.

Here are only a few of our favorite read-alouds over the years:

[Wisdom and the Millers series](#)

[Hive of Busy Bees](#)

[Lampighter books](#) (Basket of Flowers, Christie's Old Organ, etc.)

[Daughters of Destiny](#) (short stories of courageous women in history)

[Where the Red Fern Grows](#)

[Uncle Tom's Cabin](#)

[C.S. Lewis works](#)

[Pilgrim's Progress](#)

And, don't forget to read the Bible aloud to the kids, and, while you're at it, stop and talk about it. The history and classic stories and poetry and wisdom included far outweigh any other classic. This is the best learning for life.

Biographical Information

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Deborah Wuehler is the senior editor for The Old Schoolhouse® Magazine. She resides in Roseville, California, with her husband Richard. They are the parents of eight children: three teenagers, three elementary, a preschooler, and a baby. They have been homeschooling since the birth of their firstborn, who is now graduated from high school. Many of her articles can be found on www.Crosswalk.com, and many other homeschooling sites. She is a group leader in her local homeschooling support organization and she loves digging for buried treasure in the Word, reading, writing, homeschooling, and dark chocolate! Email her at senioreditor@TheHomeschoolMagazine.com.