

Understanding Literacy and Your Child

Literacy. It's a term that we are all familiar with, but what does it really mean? We all know that literacy is the ability to read and write. But literacy is also so much more than that...

Literacy is:

- Understanding
- Knowledge
- Fluency
- Capability
- Growth
- Success in life

Literacy skills help us understand context and meaning in the written word. It helps us achieve higher-level thinking and helps us to make sense of the world around us. It helps us to solve problems and reach for goals and to improve our lives. Literacy breaks down barriers and opens doors. Literacy is opportunity.

Simply put, literacy gives us quality of life.

In terms of your child and his or her education, literacy is his or her ability to read and write fluently and with understanding and meaning. In the classroom, your child's literacy skills might be discussed using the term "reading comprehension"

Reading comprehension is the ability to read or write a sentence and understand its meaning. It is the ability to look at the written word and quickly process the meaning, instruction, or direction...and that's important because reading comprehension is at the core of almost everything that children do in school.

Without solid reading comprehension skills a student can miss the basic meaning behind a reading passage and make **silly mistakes**. These silly mistakes can easily translate into **poor grades** and poor grades can easily translate into **frustration** and an unwillingness to participate in class.

By working on basic literacy skills, your child will improve in areas such as sounding out words and vocabulary development and improve in turn, his or her reading comprehension.

When you improve a child's literacy skills, you improve that child's self esteem. It's win-win.

You can read more about the importance of literacy and how you can help your child develop strong literacy skills at ABC Canada.org