

## Richard Peck's Do's

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1. *Give your preschool children literacy training. Don't worry that being able to read will leave them bored when they get to school. They may be bored either way.*
  2. *Read aloud to children as much as you can, and don't stop even after they can read for themselves. Books are bonds between you and them.*
  3. *Encourage and reward the memorizing of short passages. Spoken poetry emphasizes the rhythms of our language and strengthens both speech and writing.*
  4. *Play vocabulary games with your children of all ages to increase their vocabularies and yours. If your children aren't communicating well with you, maybe they don't have any words.*
  5. *Make sure there are maps in your house. Geography is no longer taught in schools, and young people don't read newspapers. Maps, as well as being eloquent employers of the written word in one of its most romantic modes, remind the young that they aren't the center of the world. They need a lot of reminding of that.*
  6. *Make sure your children have library cards from their earliest years and feel at home in the part of the library for them. Give books as holiday gifts instead of toys. Toys are a poorer value and harder to share. Let your young equate gift-giving with reading. They probably already have all the toys they'll ever need.*
  7. *Let your child observe you reading: books and magazines and newspapers that reflect your own tastes and interests. Independent reading is the badge of adulthood, of manhood and womanhood. The young are hungry for the advantages of maturity. Reading is one of them, and they can have it now, with your help.*
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## Richard Peck's Don'ts

1. *Never say to yourself or to others: "My child just isn't into reading, but has so many other interests." Your child won't get far with those other interests as a functional illiterate. There's a literature for every field: scientific, artistic, athletic, vocational, professional, parental. Successful people in those fields must have access to it.*
2. *Never imply by word or attitude that reading and writing (including letter writing) are women's work.*
3. *Never tell your child or anyone else that your child is gifted. Outsiders will smile away your biased opinion, and you have reason to hope your child doesn't believe it either. An A on a report card today may mean either that your child is not being challenged, or that everybody is getting A's just for turning up. A's without homework are danger signals.*
4. *Never complain about a teacher or a school program if you don't personally know the school administration and faculty. If you've been sending your children off in the care of strangers throughout their school lives, you have no leverage when you appear at school – a stranger yourself – with a complaint.*
5. *Never worry about a book corrupting your child. Don't blame a book for giving the sex education you haven't gotten around to. Worry if your children aren't getting ideas from books. If your children aren't reading, they're at the mercy of the standards and whims of their peer group, standards to which you have less access than to what appears in print.*
6. *Never use a book as a scapegoat for your inability to control your children's television addiction, and never worry over the words in a book your children already knew before they could read or see regularly written on walls.*
7. *Never try to ban a book unless you want to help the author publicize it.*