

# Keep reading with kids after they start school

(SPM Wire) – Just because your child already has started school doesn't mean you shouldn't continue to read to him or her at home.

While most of us are familiar with the benefits of reading to small children and toddlers, many are not as aware that continuing to read with young, school-age children will help them perform better in school.

Indeed, the National Education Association has issued some helpful tips for reading at home to and with young children who currently attend kindergarten through third grade.

- Keep reading to your children even after they can read alone. Read books together that are too difficult or long for them to read alone.

- Begin to help them sample books with chapters and talk about what is happening in these stories. Encourage your children to make predictions about what will happen next, and connect characters or events to those in other books and stories.

- Talk with your kids about reading preferences that are beginning to develop. Does your child prefer

adventure stories, mysteries, science fiction, animal stories, or stories about other children? Offer encouragement and ask them to explain their reasons for preferences.

- Engage your children about favorite authors and help find additional books by those authors.

- Take turns reading a story with your child. Don't interrupt to correct mistakes that do not change the meaning.

- Talk about the meaning of new words and ideas introduced in books. Help your child think of examples of new concepts.

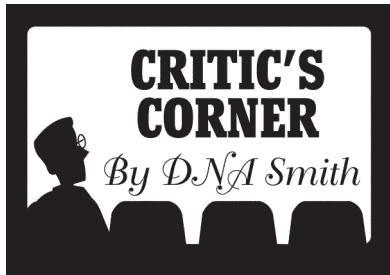
- Talk with your child about stories using the notions of the beginning, middle, and end of the story to organize thinking and discussion.

- Ask why a character might have taken a specific action. Ask for information from the story to support these answers.

- Enjoy yourself and have fun. The most important thing you can do to help your child become a successful reader is communicate that reading is valuable and enjoyable

The research is clear: children who are read to, and who read for pleasure, are significantly more successful in school than children who do not.

For tips on encouraging reading habits among both young and older children, visit [www.nea.org/parents](http://www.nea.org/parents), where you can also find information about math, science and other subjects, as well.



## 'Clerks II'

Running time: 95 minutes  
MPAA rating: R

In 1994, "Clerks," a black-and-white, vulgar, slacker comedy made on a budget of about a buck-oh-five, took the indie movie scene by storm and put director Kevin Smith on the map. Now, 12 years and seven films later, Smith returns to Leonardo, N.J., familiar stomping grounds of convenience-store clerk Dante Hicks (Brian O'Halloran) and video-store clerk Randal Graves (Jeff Anderson).

A decade hasn't changed them too much. They're both at the same jobs

-- briefly; but a fire that destroys the Quick Stop and video store forces the duo to move on with their lives. Unfortunately, the move is a horizontal one, as they both take jobs at Mooby's, a fast-food joint.

Flash-forward a year, and Dante is now engaged to a controlling rich girl named Emma (Jennifer Schwalbach), whose father is going to give Dante a job at his company in Florida. Dante is torn. His future with Emma will be a more affluent and comfortable one, but he is really in love with Becky (Rosario Dawson), the manager at Mooby's. Tomorrow he is leaving for Florida, and Dante must make a Life Choice. Golly. I wonder which one he'll choose? Hmmm ...

Fleshing out the cast are Jason Mewes and Kevin Smith as the ubiquitous Jay & Silent Bob, and a loveably naive fundamentalist Christian named Elias (Trevor Fehrman) who is also a rabid "Lord of the Rings" fan. Also, just about every actor



who's ever appeared in Smith's films makes a cameo (Ben Affleck and Jason Lee most notably).

Like all of Smith's films, the humor is sophomoric, vulgar and often based in comic/sci-fi fandom. But what makes "Clerks II" different is that Smith is willing to ratchet-down the number of jokes in order to give the love story time to develop. "Clerks II" is in many ways better than the original, and a lovely farewell to his View Askew New Jersey world.

GRADE: B+

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