

# 5 BENEFITS OF READING WITH TEENS

## Bonding Time

- Reading aloud with teens at the most basic level provides a time to connect and bond unrelated to the usual discussions in the house. When you read with teens (you to them or them to you), you can create positive moments and memories that will bring you closer together.
- Utilize moments when they are captive audiences (like while they are doing the dishes or folding clothing) to foster this bonding.
- Spend whatever time you can afford to make this a repeating event in the home. Reading after dinner or while a child or partner prepares dinner is a good start.

## Conversation Starter

- Using books as a starting point for tough topics is a great way to make awkward conversations less awkward.
- Never know what they are thinking or doing? Have your teen choose a few things to read, then allow them to share their opinions. It can be a magazine article, religious passage, newspaper story, draft of an ELA project, or whatever they choose.

## Common Shared Experiences

- Try to keep your knee-jerk reactions to a minimum when they share to encourage the conversation to flow. It is hard not to give them all of your life's anecdotes, but make sure they are the star here and feel that their opinions are valid (even if they don't quite align with your thinking). We like to sneak in opportunities to discuss family values, morals, and boundary-setting in our homes.

## Creates Fun and Entertainment

- Teens are often very funny and entertaining at this age once they relax. They are used to the home's traditional caregiver and child roles, and this new shared experience and activity can create an entirely new place to test their conversation skills.
- Many teens are busy and not often asked to share their experiences and opinions. When you allow them to have an equal share in an activity, they might surprise you and teach you some new jargon or share something trendy you can impress other adults with. Ask them to share their current favorites with you, and you can reciprocate.

## Time is Not Infinite

- Your babies are growing up (also, never call them that). Have you begun the empty nest math countdown yet? It will go by very fast for us grown folks.
- Start now. Yes, today. Get out there and read to those teens! Blame the library. We have your back.