

# WHY READING?

*After love, it is one of the most precious gifts you will ever give your child.*

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## IT IS EMPOWERING!

Teacher Rayla Allertsen · I Can Read Series · SUPERSchool.global

I have been in classrooms for most of my life. I have looked into thousands of young eyes, cupped hundreds of little faces in my hands, and said — with everything I had — *you can do this*. Sound it. Blend it. Read it.

And I have watched what happens the moment ... that AHA moment!

Something changes in a child the first time they read a word on their own. Not recite it — *read it*. Decode it. Figure it out. Their face changes. They sit up a little straighter. They look at the page differently — and then they look at you with an expression that says: wait. *I can do this*. That moment is not just an academic milestone. It is a transformation. And I have never, in all my years of teaching, grown tired of witnessing it.

That is why I do what I do. And that is why I wrote this.

## 1. Reading Early Develops Your Child's Brain

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Vital brain connections are made very early in life. When stimulated — through language, through story, through the loving act of reading together — these connections form the basis of all future learning and intellectual ability. **When introduced early and lovingly, reading inspires a lifelong love of learning** — and that love of learning is the quiet engine behind a child's happiness and success later in life.

A 2025 systematic review of 89 neuroimaging studies found that children with stronger reading abilities consistently showed better-organized white matter pathways in the brain — the very structures that support phonological processing and reading fluency. Longitudinal data confirm that early exposure to literacy **enhances brain flexibility and white matter organization** in ways that persist well into adolescence. The brain does not just respond to reading. It is shaped by it.

## 2. Reading Promotes Better Grades

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A child who reads early becomes a better listener, a more fluent reader, and a competent researcher with improved attention and concentration. They gain a more expansive vocabulary and a richer understanding of the world. They learn logic. They learn to decode — not just words, but ideas. And a child who can decode ideas will always have something to say, and know how to say it well.

A landmark 2023 longitudinal study tracking children from birth through Grade 9 found that early expressive vocabulary — built through reading and conversation — **reliably predicted academic achievement fifteen years later**. A separate Yale University study published in 2023 confirmed that reading ability measured as early as first grade predicts adult reading skills at age 42. The investment made in a child's early reading life does not diminish. **It compounds.**

### 3. Reading Equips for the Future

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Reading, instilled early and positively as a habit and a lifestyle, benefits a child as they grow up to navigate whatever age they inherit. The world is changing fast. The children we are teaching today will lead in a world we cannot fully imagine. But in every age, in every economy, in every language — **the person who reads deeply, thinks clearly, and communicates with conviction will lead.**

Research consistently identifies communication, critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration as the indispensable competencies of the 21st century workforce. Every one of these is rooted in the ability to read well. Writing and effective communication are not optional. They begin here — with a child, a book, and someone who believed in them enough to start early.

### 4. Reading Sparks the Imagination

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Books invite children into other worlds, other minds, other hearts. When a child reads a story, they are not just following a plot — *they are living inside another person's experience*. They feel what the character feels. They face what the character faces. They begin to understand, at a very young age, that the world is far larger than their own neighborhood, their own family, their own point of view.

**Reading ignites creativity and stimulates imagination.** A 2025 study published in *PLOS ONE* found that just two weeks of daily bedtime reading measurably improved empathy and creative originality in children aged six to eight. As a result, role-playing deepens — and with it, problem-solving, curiosity, and independence. A child who reads does not wait to be entertained. They have learned to create worlds of their own.

### 5. Reading Gives Confidence

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I want to tell you about a particular kind of parent. The kind who comes to me quietly, almost shyly, and says: *“Teacher Rayla — she read to me last night. She read to me.”* And their eyes are full.

That is the moment. Not the certificate. Not the grade. Not the gold star on the worksheet. **The moment a child reads to their parent.** The roles gently, beautifully reversed. The child, who only months before could not recognize a letter, now holding a book with both hands and sharing a story.

What greater satisfaction can a parent have than to hear your child say, with pride and with joy: **“I CAN READ!”**

And the title of this series — *I Can Read* — was chosen with exactly that moment in mind. My mother and I conceptualized and wrote it together. She illustrated every single page by hand. We knew that a child who learns to read through this series does not only acquire an empowering skill. **They discover something about themselves that no one can ever take away.**

**Confidence, in this moment, is not a feeling. It is a discovery.**

When a child decodes their very first word — when they feel those sounds slide from left to right, blend together, and suddenly mean something — they are not just learning to read. They are learning something far more foundational: **I have power over the world.** Research confirms this: studies show that children taught through systematic phonics develop significantly higher reading self-efficacy — the belief that they can decode, that they can figure it out, that they belong in the world of readers. And that knowing cannot be taken away.

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**After love — reading is one of the most precious skills you can give your child.**

*Give it early. Give it lovingly. Give it well.*

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## SOURCES

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