

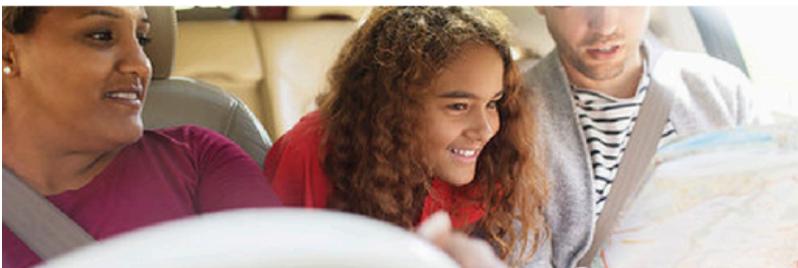


READING/ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS

MSCS OFFICE OF LITERACY

For Parents & Families:

Simple Tips to Help Build K-12 Literacy



KINDERGARTEN TO COLLEGE AND CAREER

Learn tips to support literacy at home.

MEMPHIS
SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOLS

Proficiency in literacy is the foundation of all learning, and we are committed to making that a top priority for students. As we raise expectations of our students, innovative and varied practices are needed in the classroom to provide students with learning experiences that will prepare them for life after graduation.

LITERACY TIPS FOR PARENTS: KINDERGARTEN TO 2ND GRADE

Primary Grades

Read! Read! Read! Encourage your child to re-read favorite books and poems. Re-reading helps kids read more quickly and accurately. Check out the other great tips that encourage your child to have fun with language!

Learning about words is fun!



Talk about letters and sounds. Help your child learn the names of the letters and the sounds the letters make. Turn it into a game! “I’m thinking of a letter and it makes the sound mmmmm. What’s my letter?”

Play sound games. Practice blending sounds into words. Ask, “Can you guess what this word is? m-a-p?” Hold each sound longer than normal.

Trace and say letters. Have your child use a finger to trace a letter while saying the letter’s sound. Do this on paper, in sand, a plate of sugar, shaving cream, etc.

Play word games. Play games like I-Spy with specific letters and words.

Environmental Print Read street signs, restaurant signs, store signs, logos, cereal boxes, and any other print that your child sees often.

Take control of the television. It’s difficult for reading to compete with TV and video games. Encourage reading as a free-time activity.

I read, you read. Take turns reading aloud at bedtime especially. Kids enjoy this special time with their parents.

Be patient. When your child is trying to sound out an unfamiliar word, give him/her time to do so. Remind your child to look closely at the first letter or letters of the word.

Ask questions. Ask your child questions about the books they have read and/or the books you read to them. This would include questions about the main idea, characters, and what happened at the beginning, middle, and end of the story.

Read-Talk-Write Encourage your child to write about what he/she has read by asking questions and talking about the answers before writing their response.

LITERACY

Literacy Toolkit for Families

Introduction

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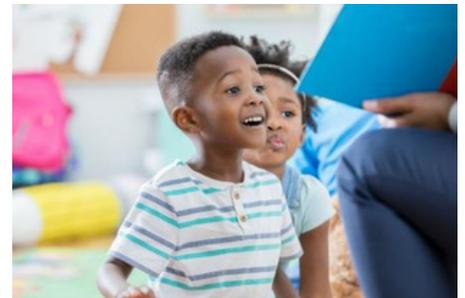
How to Use This Toolkit

1. **Select Your Child's Grade Level:** Below, you'll find resources organized by grade and developmental stage.
2. **Set Literacy Goals:** Use the goal-setting tool [found here](#) to create achievable literacy goals.
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Grades Pre-K – 2: Early Literacy (Ages 3-7)

Key Skills

- Phonemic awareness (understanding sounds in words)
- Letter recognition
- Vocabulary development
- Beginning reading and writing



Resources

- **Interactive Read-Alouds:** Choose from a list of recommended books to read with your child. Use prompts like "What do you think will happen next?" to engage your child in thinking about the story.
 - o Book List Link: Example - "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" Interactive Read-Aloud Guide
- **Phonics Games:** Play interactive games that help children recognize letters and sounds.
 - o [ABC Mouse](#) (Free version available)
 - o [Starfall](#)

- **Sight Words Flashcards:** Download printable flashcards for Dolch sight words.

- [Download Dolch Words List](#)

- [Download Dolch Flashcards](#)

For Multilingual Families

- **Bilingual Storybooks:** Access dual-language books in English and your home language.

- [Dual Language Books Example - "Unite for Literacy" Free Online Books](#)

- **Parent Guides:** Tips on how to support literacy at home in your language.

- [Parent Guides in Multiple Languages Example - Colorín Colorado](#)

For Students with Disabilities

- **Audio Books:** Access to audio versions of books with text-to-speech options.

- [Learning Ally Example](#)

- **Adaptive Phonics Activities:** Games designed for children with learning differences.

- [Adapted Mind Reading Example](#)



Memphis-Shelby County Schools
K-2 Wonders Reading Topics by Unit



Research is Clear

- Students are able to build their vocabulary. faster when they read multiple books, articles, and other texts on the same topic. When students are unfamiliar with a topic, it is harder for them to understand what they are reading and to learn new words.
- Reading several books, articles, and other texts on the same topic allows students to learn more and to learn faster. Children who read 20 minutes a day/5 days a week outside of classrooms are exposed to 1.8 million words in one school year and have an increase in critical thinking. *-NESCA, 2021*

How Parents Can Help

- Below is a list of unit topics that are areas of focus throughout each grade levels' Wonders curriculum. By encouraging students to read about these topics at home, students have an opportunity to deepen their background knowledge. This will further support them in being prepared to learn in class!
- Students can use the same single sign on credentials used at school to access their Wonders online dashboard at home. Click [here](#) for more details regarding the student dashboard.

Kindergarten

Unit 1-New Friends/ Your Senses (*September*)
 Unit 2-Tools/Shapes/ Bugs (*September-October*)
 Unit 3-Rules to Go By / Sounds Around Us (*October*)
 Unit 4-Jobs/ Community (*November-December*)
 Unit 5-How Living Things Grow and Change (*January*)

Unit 6 -Seasons/ Kinds of Weather (*January-February*)
 Unit 7-Animals/ Animal Habitats (*February-March*)
 Unit 8-Transportation/ Space (*March-April*)
 Unit 9 -Good Citizen/ Natural Resources (*April*)
 Unit 10-Protecting the Environment (*April-May*)

First Grade

Unit 1-School/ Pets/ Friends (*September-October*) Unit
 2-Jobs/ Communities/ Maps (*October-December*) Unit
 3-Plants / From Farm to Table (*December-January*)

Unit 4-Animals and Insects (*February-March*)
 Unit 5-Up in the Sky/ Great Inventions (*March-May*)
 Unit 6-Weather/ Sharing Traditions/ Celebrate America (*May*)

Second Grade

Unit 1-Families Around the World (*August-September*)
 Unit 2-Learning From Animals (*September-November*)
 Unit 3 How People Help their Community/What We See in the Sky (*November-January*)

Unit 4-Culture Makes Us Special (*January-February*)
 Unit 5-Heroes/ Good Citizens/ Rules (*February-April*)
 Unit 6-Money Matters/ Myths (*April-May*)

Note: The topics listed above align with texts that students will explore during the unit. The time periods noted in blue are approximations as pacing is based on students' needs.

The Big 3 Reading Questions...Great Questions to Discuss After Reading!

- o What's something you read today and what was the most interesting part about it?
- o Did you learn any new or difficult words? What do they mean?
- o What was the most important part about what you read?

LITERACY TIPS FOR PARENTS: 3RD GRADE TO 5TH GRADE

Intermediate

For this age group, continue to make reading for fun a part of your child's daily routine. Set aside quiet time, with no phones, computers, or other distractions, when your child can read for pleasure, keep books, magazines, and newspapers at home. Make sure your child sees you reading.

Goals at this age include improving fluency, analytical skills, and diversity of reading materials.



Practice reading difficult text out loud. Do this until your child no longer stumbles over words.

Read the same story or novel separately. Then discuss it together.

Monitor independent reading choices. Make sure your child is challenging themselves. Make sure they are transitioning from early reader books with only a few words on the page, to longer books with chapters.

Invite your child to read his or her writing out loud to other family members. Ask questions about your child's word choices and ideas.

Keep a running list of difficult vocabulary words and their meanings. Include words your child is learning in other subjects such as science and social studies. Start a family vocabulary box or jar. Have everyone write down new words they discover, add them to the box, and use the words in conversation.

Play word games like Scrabble and hangman. Or, find fun word games online.

Go to a play or musical with your child. Discuss the way the actors bring the words to life.

Start to introduce informational materials. Read items such as instructions, mail or maps together.

Read non-fiction articles in newspapers or online. Discuss the difference between facts and opinions. Talk about the news together. Pick one story in the news, read it together, and discuss with your child what it means.

Encourage research. When your child asks questions, ask them to think about where they might find the answer. Urge your child to use logical arguments to defend his or her opinion. If your child wants a raise in allowance, ask him or her to research commonsense allowance systems and, based on that research, explain reasons why, supported by facts and details.

Develop recall skills. After your child reads, have them verbally summarize the main ideas and details to you.

LITERACY

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Grades 3 – 5: Building Fluency (Ages 8-10)

Key Skills

- Reading fluency (reading smoothly with expression)
- Vocabulary building
- Comprehension strategies
- Writing simple narratives



Resources

- **Fluency Practice:** Engage in daily fluency drills using familiar texts. Record your child reading aloud and listen together to improve pacing and expression.
 - [Fluency Practice Passages](#)
- **Comprehension Questions:** Use question prompts after reading to improve comprehension.
 - [39 Read for Meaning Comprehension Prompts](#)
- **Writing Prompts:** Encourage your child to write stories using fun prompts to develop their writing skills.

[o Download Writing Prompts Example - Journal Writing Prompts](#)

For Multilingual Families

- **Fluency Practice in Multiple Languages:** Access passages in both English and your home language for fluency building.

[o Bilingual Fluency Passages Example - CommonLit Bilingual Resources](#)

- **Vocabulary Building Games:** Interactive vocabulary games to help multilingual students strengthen both English and home language skills.

[o Vocabulary Builder Example - PBS Kids Vocabulary Games](#)

For Students with Disabilities

- **Speech-to-Text Writing Tools:** Help students write using dictation software.

[o Speech-to-Text Tools Example - Google Voice Typing](#)

- **Comprehension Support:** Visual aids and simplified texts to support comprehension for students with learning disabilities.

[o Comprehension Visuals Example - Boardmaker](#)



Memphis-Shelby County Schools 3-5 Wonders Reading Topics by Unit



Research is Clear

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- When students are unfamiliar with a topic, it is harder for them to understand what they are reading and to learn new words.
- Reading several books, articles, and other texts on the same topic allows students to learn more and to learn faster.
- Children who read 20 minutes a day/5 days a week outside of classrooms are exposed to 1.8 million words in one school year and have an increase in critical thinking. -NESCA, 2021

How Parents Can Help

- Below is a list of unit topics that are areas of focus throughout each grade levels' Wonders curriculum.
- By encouraging students to read about these topics at home, students have an opportunity to deepen their background knowledge. This will further support them in being prepared to learn in class!
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Third Grade	
Unit 1-Cultures and Traditions <i>(August-September)</i> Unit 2-How Government Works <i>(September-November)</i> Unit 3-What We Know About Earth <i>(November-January)</i> Unit 4-How Animals Adapt <i>(January-February)</i>	Unit 5-What Good Citizens Do <i>(February-April)</i> Unit 6-Importance of Goals <i>(April-May)</i>
Fourth Grade	
Unit 1-Natural Disasters <i>(August-September)</i> Unit 2-What Helps an Animal Survive <i>(September-November)</i> Unit 3-Ways to Help the Community <i>(November-January)</i>	Unit 4-Importance of Government <i>(January-February)</i> Unit 5-How the Past Helps Us Understand the Present <i>(February-April)</i> Unit 6-Energy Resources <i>(April-May)</i>
Fifth Grade	
Unit 1-Effects of Technology <i>(August-September)</i> Unit 2- Making a Plan <i>(September-November)</i> Unit 3-Learning About Different Cultures <i>(November-January)</i>	Unit 4-What Can People Do to Bring About a Positive Change <i>(January-February)</i> Unit 5- Our Changing Earth <i>(February-April)</i> Unit 6-Adaptations <i>(April-May)</i>

Note: The topics listed above align with texts that students will explore during the unit. The time periods noted in blue are approximations as pacing is based on students' needs.

The Big 3 Reading Questions...Great Questions to Discuss After Reading!

- o What's something you read today and what was the most interesting part about it?
- o Did you learn any new or difficult words? What do they mean?
- o What was the most important part about what you read?

LITERACY TIPS FOR PARENTS: 6TH GRADE TO 8TH GRADE

Middle School

Set the mood for reading and writing with your middle schooler. Help your child to create a good study area with everything you need (for example, highlighters, pens, paper, etc.). If you don't have a quiet place at home, try your school or local library. Try these other great tips for supporting your child's reading habits.

Remain involved with what is happening in your child's school.



Know Where to Begin Make a list of everything your child will need to do, and note all deadlines. (For example, if your child's English teacher is assigning an essay, inquire about specific deadlines and checkpoints leading up to the final due date).

Study at the Same Time Every Day Even if your child doesn't have homework every night, use the time to review notes, catch up on missed reading assignments, and re-read text that were difficult to comprehend. If sitting down to work is part of your normal routine, you'll approach it with less dread. Also, you'll become a pro at using time productively.

Keep Things in Perspective Know how much weight your child's assignment or test carries, and use your time accordingly.

Get More Involved with Your Child's Study Habits Keep your child's mind from wandering by guiding them in taking notes, underlining sections, annotating documents with them and discussing topics related to their homework.

Organize the Information Your child may process information in different ways. Some people like to draw pictures or charts to digest information, others prefer to read out loud or make detailed outlines. Try to find the methods that work best for your child. Ask your child's teacher for recommendations if you're having trouble.

Take Advantage of Any Free Time If your child has a study period or a long bus or car ride, use the time to help your child review notes, prepare for an upcoming class or start their homework.

Communicate If your child has concerns about the amount or type of homework they have, you may want to talk to their teachers or counselor. They can help you understand how much time your child needs to allot for homework and how to manage their tasks.

Celebrate Your Child's Achievements Reward your child for hitting milestones or doing something well. Positive affirmations encourage your child to continue to strive for academic excellence.

LITERACY

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Grades 6 – 8: Expanding Literacy Skills (Ages 11-13)

Key Skills

- Critical thinking and analysis of texts
- Expanding vocabulary
- Summarizing and paraphrasing
- Writing structured essays

Resources

- **Close Reading Strategies:** Learn how to analyze a text in-depth, focusing on the author's intent, word choices, and theme.
 - [Close Reading Guide Example - Scholastic Close Reading Steps](#)
- **Vocabulary Builders:** Use vocabulary cards and online quizzes to master academic vocabulary.
 - [Quizlet Vocabulary Sets Example](#)
- **Essay Writing Templates:** Help your child structure essays with step-by-step guides and templates.
 - [Essay Writing Template Example - Writing Graphic Organizers](#)



For Multilingual Families

- **Multilingual Essay Support:** Use graphic organizers to help students structure their thoughts in both languages.
 - [Graphic Organizers for Multilingual Learners](#)
- **Critical Thinking in Multiple Languages:** Tips for promoting critical thinking in both English and home languages.
 - [Visual Thinking for Improved Comprehension](#)

For Students with Disabilities

- **Simplified Texts for Complex Topics:** Provide access to simpler versions of difficult texts for students with reading disabilities.
 - [Simplified Texts Example - Tar Heel Reader](#)
- **Text-to-Speech Tools:** Enable text-to-speech options for students who benefit from hearing texts read aloud.
 - [Text-to-Speech Apps Example - NaturalReader](#)



Memphis-Shelby County Schools 6-8 myPerspectives Reading Topics by Unit



Research is Clear

- Students are able to build their vocabulary faster when they read multiple books, articles, and other texts on the same topic.
- When students are unfamiliar with a topic, it is harder for them to understand what they are reading and to learn new words.
- Reading several books, articles, and other texts on the same topic allows students to learn more and to learn faster.
- Students who read 20 minutes a day/5 days a week outside of classrooms are exposed to 1.8 million words in one school year and have an increase in critical thinking.

-NESCA, 2021

How Parents Can Help

- Below is a list of unit topics that are areas of focus throughout each grade levels' myPerspectives curriculum.
- By encouraging students to read about these topics at home, students have an opportunity to deepen their background knowledge. This will further support them in being prepared to learn in class!
- Students can use the same single sign on credentials used at school to access their myPerspectives online dashboard at home. Click [here](#) for more details regarding the student dashboard.

Sixth Grade

- Unit 1- Childhood:** What are some of the challenges and triumphs of growing up?
- Unit 2- Animal Allies:** How can people and animals relate to each other?
- Unit 3- Modern Technology:** How is modern technology helpful and harmful to society?
- Unit 4- Imagination:** Where can imagination lead?
- Unit 5- Exploration:** What drives people to explore?

Seventh Grade

- Unit 1- Generations:** What can one generation learn from another?
- Unit 2- A Starry Home:** Should we make a home in space?
- Unit 3- Turning Points:** What can cause a sudden change in someone's life?
- Unit 4- People and the Planet:** What effects do people have on the environment?
- Unit 5- Facing Adversity:** How do we overcome obstacles?

Eighth Grade

- Unit 1- Rites of Passage:** What are some milestones on the path to growing up?
- Unit 2- The Holocaust:** How do we remember the past?
- Unit 3- What Matters:** When is it right to take a stand?
- Unit 4- Human Intelligence:** In what different ways can people be intelligent?
- Unit 5- Invention:** Are inventions realized through inspiration or perspiration?

Note: The topics listed above align with texts that students will explore during the specified unit. In most cases, each grade level will engage with 1 unit per quarter (i.e., Quarter1=Unit 1).

The Big 3 Reading Questions...Great Questions to Discuss After Reading!

- o What's something you read today and what was the most interesting part about it?
- o Did you learn any new or difficult words? What do they mean?
- o What was the most important part about what you read?

LITERACY TIPS FOR PARENTS: 9TH GRADE TO 12TH GRADE

High School

Remain involved with what is happening in your high schooler's learning. High school students tend not to share as much information with their parents as students in the lower grades. Parents should make it a habit to attend meetings, request conferences, and even volunteer. Active parents are better able to support student needs before they become more serious issues and hinder post-secondary goals.

Having great organizational skills is instrumental in students' success in high school and beyond.



Help your child with their soft skills.

Soft skills, the ability to collaborate, create, think outside the box, and communicate, are important skills that students will need whether they choose to enter college or opt to join the workforce instead.

Practice and implement effective organizational strategies.

While this skill is not explicitly taught in high school, having great organizational skills is instrumental in students' success in high school and beyond. Parents can help teens by providing tools and resources like binders or folders to help keep tasks and assignments organized. Also online calendars and organizational applications that can be accessed on tablets or smart phones can also be helpful and allow parents the opportunity to stay connected to upcoming deadlines.

Provide support with studying.

Many students struggle with studying when they enter college. It is important that parents begin to cultivate and support effective study habits. Provide students with a place and atmosphere for studying. Offer help or tutors when needed.

Make reading fun and accessible. Make sure that your student has an active library card and even access to the electronic library that can be accessed on smart devices. Co-read with your students so that they have someone to discuss their reading with.

Consult with your child's school counselor to develop a post-secondary plan for your child.

Much of what students plan for after high school depends on what they are able to accomplish while still in high school. It is important that parents take the time to discuss post-secondary goals with their child and consult the school counselor to make sure that the student is taking the right courses, participating in the right clubs and organizations, and preparing for the appropriate assessments.

Complete all necessary student aid documents.

Many parents get anxious at the mention of student loans. It is important that parents help students prepare for college by completing all necessary student aid documents. Applications like FAFSA are required if students want to apply for federally funded grants and loans. Completing the application does not commit a parent or student to the funds, but rather it makes receiving the funds possible.

LITERACY

Grades 9 – 12: Advanced Literacy Toolkit for Families Introduction

Reading is foundational for success in all areas of life, and we want to partner with you to help your child build strong literacy skills. This toolkit is designed to provide you with the resources, tips, and activities needed to support your child's literacy journey, no matter their grade level or learning needs.

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Grades 9 – 12: Advanced Literacy (Ages 14-18)

Key Skills

- Analyzing complex texts (literature, nonfiction)
- Developing arguments in writing
- Research skills and citation
- Preparing for college-level reading and writing



Resources

- **Literary Analysis Guides:** Break down how to analyze literature and nonfiction texts, with examples.
 - [Organize Your Analysis Guide](#)
- **College Prep Reading List:** A list of books and articles that will prepare your child for college-level reading.
 - [College Prep Reading List Example - The College Board](#)
- **Research and Citation Tools:** Help your student research effectively and cite their sources properly.
 - [Research Tools Example - EasyBib](#)

For Multilingual Families

- **Bilingual Research Resources:** Access materials and guides in both English and the home language to support research projects.
 - [Bilingual Research Resources Example - RefSeek Multilingual Search](#)
- **Multilingual Advanced Writing Support:** Writing guides and sentence starters for essays in English and home languages.
 - [Writing Support Example - Sentence Starters for Academic Essays](#)

For Students with Disabilities

- **Advanced Literacy Supports:** Audiobooks and digital tools to help students with reading disabilities access complex texts.
 - [Advanced Supports Example - Bookshare](#)
- **Essay and Research Scaffolding:** Step-by-step guides and visual organizers for complex writing tasks.
 - [Example for Students with Autism](#)
 - [Graphic Organizers Examples](#)



Memphis-Shelby County Schools
9-12 myPerspectives Reading Topics by Unit



Research is Clear

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How Parents Can Help

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Ninth Grade

- Unit 1-** American Voices: What does it mean to be "American"?
- Unit 2-** Survival: What does it take to survive?
- Unit 3-** The Literature of Civil Rights: How can words inspire change?
- Unit 4-** Star-Crossed Romances: Do we determine our own destinies?
- Unit 5-** Journeys of Transformation: What can we learn from a journey?
- Unit 6-** World's End: Why do we try to imagine the future?

Eleventh Grade

- Unit 1-** Writing Freedom: What is the meaning of freedom?
- Unit 2-** The Individual and Society: What role does individualism play in American society?
- Unit 3-** Power, Protest, and Change: In what ways does the struggle for freedom change with history?
- Unit 4-** Grit and Grandeur: What is the relationship between literature and place?
- Unit 5-** Facing our Fears: How do we respond when challenged by fear?
- Unit 6-** Ordinary Lives, Extraordinary Tales: What do stories reveal about the human condition?

Tenth Grade

- Unit 1-** Inside the Nightmare: What is the allure of fear?
- Unit 2-** Outsiders and Outcasts: Do people need to belong?
- Unit 3-** Extending Freedom's Reach: What is the relationship between power and freedom?
- Unit 4-** All that Glitters: What do our possessions reveal about us?
- Unit 5-** Virtue and Vengeance: What motivates us to forgive?
- Unit 6-** Blindness and Sight: What does it mean to see?

Twelfth Grade

- Unit 1-** Forging A Hero: What makes a hero?
- Unit 2-** Reflecting on Society: How do people come to have different views of society?
- Unit 3-** Facing the Future Confronting the Past: How do our attitudes toward the past and future shape our actions?
- Unit 4-** Seeing Things New: Why are both vision and disillusion necessary?
- Unit 5-** Discovering the Self: How do we define ourselves?
- Unit 6-** Finding A Home: What does it mean to call a place home?

Note: The topics listed above align with texts that students will explore during the specified unit. In most cases, each grade level will engage with approximately 1 and a half units per quarter (i.e., Quarter1=Complete Unit 1 and begin Unit 2).

The Big 3 Reading Questions...Great Questions to Discuss After Reading!

- o What's something you read today and what was the most interesting part about it?
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- o What was the most important part about what you read?

**LITERACY TIPS FOR
PARENTS & FAMILIES
PROVIDED BY**

MSCS Office of Literacy



Questions? Email officeofliteracy@scsk12.org

