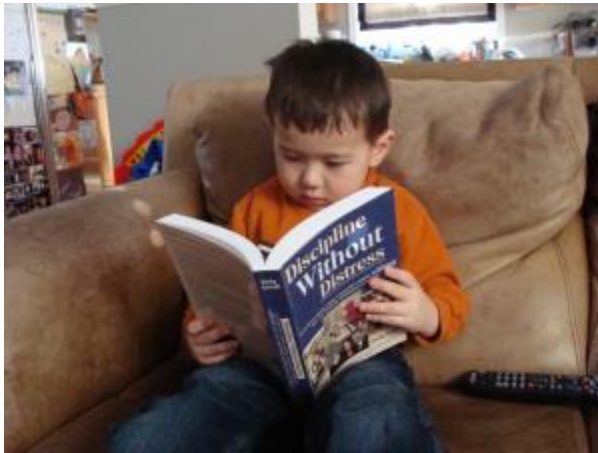


# All Children Learn to Read Without Direct Instruction

Posted on September 28, 2020 by Judy Arnall, BA, DTM, CCFE

From our website at [www.unschoolingcanada.ca](http://www.unschoolingcanada.ca)

Worried that your child is not reading yet? Tried phonics? Tried Whole language? Tried APPs? It is not your child's fault or your fault. It is because your child's brain needs time to mature.



There are no studies (zero in fact) out there that show children learn to read naturally on their own, because most studies on child development began in the 1950's when all children were in school.

Learning to “crack the code” in reading, is a developmental task that all children accomplish on their own, much like toilet training, learning to walk, and learning to talk, without direct instruction, when their brain is ready and coordinated to work in conjunction with other parts of the brain to accomplish the task. The parts of the brain involved in language processing are the Occipital Lobe (seeing), the Parietal Lobe, and the Temporal Lobe, which begin working together to decipher sight words and sounds at the beginning of what is traditionally called Kindergarten in school. Because this happens from ages 4-12, which is a normal range, when most children are in school, most people think children learn to read in school because their developmental mastery happens to take place during the same time as the school grades of 1-6. Most people assume it is a skill that is taught, by teachers, rather than a developmental leap of brain connections that occurs naturally in a stimulating environment.

Our world today is so full of words, whether from street signs, screen advertising, to radio and media and printed material. One can't escape the printed word!

The bottom line is that reading will happen when it happens. We know now that no baby walker is going to help a child walk before they are developmentally ready, (and thus,

they are now banned in Canada due to their danger), and we also know that no amount of direct instruction is going to help a child's occipital lobe, temporal lobe, parietal lobe, and frontal cortex work together to read words before it's time.

Your job is to cultivate a love of reading and enjoyment of the written word and all children will learn to read eventually! Have an environment rich in the printed word such as a variety of board, picture books, novels, graphic novels, non-fiction, reference books, story books and cartoons for your child. These can be digital or paper-based or even auditory (great for vocabulary). Curl up on the sofa with your child cuddled near and read to them or have them sound out words if they want. Let the child lead! It will come!

Why are some adults illiterate? It could be an undiagnosed learning challenge or sight problem. It could be a lack of books in the home for the child to enjoy. For evidence of a child's brain ability to crack the code, look at the hundreds of thousands of kids that self-direct their learning and all have learned to read by age 12. Without a teacher. Perhaps someday...someone will do a research project on this!