

parentingthecore

A PARENT'S THOUGHTS ON EDUCATION IN THE ERA OF REFORM

Sep
20

Reading Log Revolt

75

Parents and teachers of elementary school aged students, I have a confession to make:

I loathe the reading logs my daughter brings home.

So, just to be clear, the reading logs that return from my house, faithfully filled out each week or month — those reading logs are big fat lies.

My older daughter is now in fourth grade. Each year since kindergarten, she's brought home some version of the nightly "reading log." Depending on the year and teacher, it's been as simple as writing down the name, the book, and the number of minutes read (initialed or signed by a parent, of course), or it's been as involved as a reading response journal that requires her to summarize, or pick out key details, or connect the text to her own life, and to record the number of pages read, time spent reading, etc.

But each reading log comes with one universal expectation: every single night, there's some minimum requirement for reading (i.e., number of pages read, or amount of time spent reading). And on a nightly basis, that reading must be tracked.

My older daughter (unlike my little one) started kindergarten as a fluent reader, who had already moved on to reading simple chapter books (Magic Tree House, Beverly Cleary, etc.). More importantly, she started kindergarten as a lover of books. My biggest concern (and oh-how-I-wish-my-mom-was-here-to-laugh-as-I-finally-emphathized-with-her-experience-with-me) was how to pry her away from books. But within weeks, the reading log began to change all of that: "Mom, am I done with my fifteen minutes yet?" "Mom, why do I have to write this?" "Mom, I don't know what to say." And worst of all: "Do I HAVE TO read?" This, from my voracious reader. This, when previously my bi

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been prying books out of her hair with your friends!"

play

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Something had to be done. I was supposed to disappear before my eyes. So I continued to read voluntarily on my own, nagging her, and just sign whatever I wanted as long as it looked vaguely reasonable. Despite my general emphasis as a lawyer, I didn't care in the least if the reading log required her to read. She knew that she was doing far more than the reading log required. It was like my billable hours. As a lawyer, tracking my time at work is a necessary evil. But I'm in my forties. My daughter is nine.

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And for five years now, that's how it's worked in my house.

But there's always a tension. Now teachers require the kids to write down which pages they read each night. Teachers, my kid doesn't want to constantly track, track, track. And my kid doesn't want to constantly be tracked, tracked, tracked. My kid wants to escape into the world of fiction, where time loses its meaning as she inhabits its characters. My kid wants to read last thing in bed at night, and first thing when she wakes up in the morning, and in the bathtub. She wants to bring her "emergency pack" of books to her little sister's family picnic for school, and she doesn't complain when she doesn't see the iPad for weeks on end, because she has her books.

And I fully believe that part of the reason she still wants to do those things in fourth grade is because I long since agreed that her reading log could be a work of fiction. But I hate lying, and I hate undermining your authority, and I'm wondering if maybe, perhaps, this can be the year that I come clean and we can make a deal: stop requiring the reading log, so I can stop lying on the reading log. But if not, be assured: this is the one and only aspect of my life in which my signature on that reading log my daughter faithfully brings back to you each month is not worth the paper it's written on. And my daughter is learning a lesson from that — that sometimes, when the system is stupid and counterproductive, the greater good makes it okay to lie and game the system. I don't like that lesson, but we've talked about it, and in this case, I think it's worth the trade off.

So, for now, the joy my daughter continues to take in the printed page

far outweighs the momentary discomfort it causes me to sign — and certify — as true, a reading log that is generally a patchwork of guesses, at best. Because I love my kid. But wouldn't it be better if we simply refused to make reading a chore?



I'll trade lying on reading logs for photos like this any day.

Edited with BlogPad Pro 

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An advertisement for 'babybug' magazine. On the left, a child in a pink hooded raincoat stands next to a small grey rabbit holding a green umbrella. In the center, three 'babybug' magazine covers are displayed. The text reads: 'babybug will have your child singing, counting, and reading along! The magazine for toddlers and babies 6 months to 3 years'. At the bottom, there is a red 'Shop now' button and the Amazon logo.

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75 THOUGHTS ON "READING LOG REVOLT"



Stefanie Paul

— SEPTEMBER 20, 2014 AT 4:03 PM

I am pleasantly reminded of the deal Atticus makes with Scout when her teachers tells her that she's been taught to read all wrong. Something like, we will continue reading as we always have, if you agree to go back to school. Wonder how many of our logs are a lie dear fellow colleagues?

★ Liked by [3 people](#)

[Reply](#)



Cate n 4

— SEPTEMBER 20, 2014 AT 4:59 PM

My kids endured Accelerated Reader program. They were each reading several grade levels above their enrollment, but had to suffer through the program, while "sneak reading" books of their interest. With one bully teacher, It took 6 months for youngest to resume reading for pleasure. As a senior education major (In English Language Arts), she knows what she will NOT be doing with her students.

★ Liked by [2 people](#)

Reply



Cleargrace

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 1:21 PM

I think we did the same thing with math....

★ Like

Reply



Carrie

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 4:35 PM

This argument interests me. I agree children should enjoy reading. What would the alternative be then? This is easily resolved when you have proficient, avid readers whose parents encourage and support their reading but what about kids whose parents, without a specific recommendation for reading minutes each night, would not have their children read. Daily reading is essential. I would love to hear suggestions to the problem.

★ Liked by [2 people](#)

Reply



Becky

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 8:02 PM

A few suggestions. Get 2 sticky bookmarks per book and have the child leave one where she starts and insert one where she stops. She can give the book and the log to her mom who will fill in the page numbers and sign the log. If the log requires a

written summary, the kid can tell the mom what happened or one thing that interested her and the mom writes it down. This can be worked out with a teacher who recognizes the devastating effect of student motivation of the whole reading log process.

The research that explains the daughter's reaction show that when an activity like painting or reading has intrinsic value for children, they will do it a lot. Once that activity is rewarded by teachers, and then the rewards are removed, they lose interest. The teacher reward has no value to this child so she has transferred the lack of value of the reward to the activity being rewarded. When teachers do things that suck the joy out of learning, they need to be told. The whole individualized instruction movement is meaningless when we give every child the same homework and justify assigning work to one child because another child needs it.

★ Liked by [1 person](#)

Reply



Roni

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 8:42 PM

Ahhh Becky, that is so cute!

★ Liked by [1 person](#)



Lisa

— SEPTEMBER 22, 2014 AT 3:53 AM

I was just thinking the same thing. What about reading logs as an option. Throw this article and other research out to parents, ask them to develop a system, and agree to it? Doesn't hvae to be the same for all kids, right?

★ Liked by [1 person](#)

Reply



Chris Lies

— SEPTEMBER 22, 2014 AT 9:19 PM

Do you really think suggested reading minutes makes a difference for parents whose kids don't read?

★ Liked by [1 person](#)

Reply



Monica Swindle

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 1:53 AM

Do you really think parents who don't encourage/make their kids to read regularly fill out and return the reading logs anyway?

★ Like



Angie Head

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 1:12 AM

Read Readicide by Kelly Gallagher and the Book Whisperer by Donalyn Miller. They both answer this question. Give students time (IN school), access (classroom library), and choice to read, and trust me, they will read and beg for more time. Logging at home and AR ... don't get me started. I'm a high school English teacher and my students read books they choose for the first 10-15 min each class with no strings attached (stupid projects, AR tests, etc.).

Good job, mom! I love this blog post and will share.

★ Liked by [1 person](#)

Reply



Peggy

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 3:56 AM

As an educator I would not mind on a case by case basis of dropping the 15 minute reading requirement if I knew the child was reading. I do however have a problem with a parent signing off when the work has not been done. It sends the wrong message. Talk to the teacher and come to a compromise.

★ Like

Reply



AgainstTheCore

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 12:23 PM

How hard would it be to allow students who are capable of reading their own selections record those instead? Those students are likely the ones who have full parental support and parents who would ensure that their children are reading every night. Additionally, I suspect some of the parents who are not as supportive and conscientious just write things down and sign them without doing ANY reading, so these forced reading logs prove NOTHING.

One of my kindergartners is currently reading at a 3rd grade level. So far, it takes him roughly 90 seconds to read the books he brings home from school each night. Like the author here, I am going through the motions. We write down the book that was sent home and then go read something he likes. I suspect there will come a day when those school books take longer to read and he will come to hate reading for all the same reasons.

Forcing reading will not foster a love of it in students. Encouraging them to read things at their level AND that they are interested in, however, will.

★ Like

Reply



Christina Sormani

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 3:38 PM

If your child is reading above level, then record what she is reading on the log. What is the point of lying? Let the teacher know your child's reading level.

★ Like



Jeff Tranell

— SEPTEMBER 24, 2014 AT 3:36 AM

All of this discussion has empowered me to make a substantial change as a 6th grade teacher. Here's a letter I sent home on Monday. The response has been totally positive...

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/15AT4vn-t5ISfPoz-W0ypzlhCg5ukPhSXuhoH3tWQscs/edit?usp=sharing>

★ Like



Michele

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 3:55 PM

I learned before my children were born that reading cereal boxes, comics and magazines were in fact reading. Instead of insisting on chapter books, why not a comic? Why not a magazine of their interests. Throw in a Readers Digest in the mix. Show them the jokes. Show them the word challenges. Make it a family challenge. Let them read road signs. Stop expecting it to be a

book of your ideals.

★ Like

Reply



Julie

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 4:36 PM

I'm a teacher and I hate reading logs. I don't ever give them out.

★ Liked by [1 person](#)

Reply



Granuaile

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 4:49 PM

This is why I've stopped requiring a reading log in my class and I don't miss it! I do require "reading responses" three days a week, but that is where the students tell me what they are THINKING while reading. What are they wondering about, connecting with, inferring and predicting? As I tell them, good readers think while they read and until I can jump into their brains, they have to tell me their thinking. As an adult reader myself, I love to talk about the books I'm reading. Hopefully I'm creating that in my students.

★ Liked by [1 person](#)

Reply



Rachel T.

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 4:56 PM

I completely agree with your post. I am a mother of a voracious reader

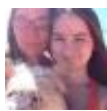
and also a reading teacher. I cannot stand the reading log sheets my daughter brings home. We read EVERY night at our home and having to write it down is just one more thing. My daughter loves to read and takes a book with her everywhere we go, however, sometimes she wants me to read to her and that is something I will not give up over some reading log.

I send books home with the struggling readers I teach, but I do not send home a log. I am often asked by my students if they have to have their parents sign something. I ask, "Are you reading at home?" Most say yes and that is enough for me. As a teacher I know who is reading at home and who is not. I don't need a sheet to tell me that.

Just let them read!

★ Like

Reply



Teresa Van Earden

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 4:58 PM

As a teacher I can tell you for the most part I assign the basic reading log without expectation that it will actually be legitimately done. I do it to appease the administration to show that I am assigning homework and for the parents who demand homework for their children. I think the concept of homework for the sake of homework is barbaric. Does your boss assign work for you after your 8 hour day is complete? Not unless he pays you. I put in 10-14 hours of work everyday for my students. The last thing I want to do is go home and work more...it makes me a bad teacher, a frustrated teacher....boring homework with no reward makes my students bad students, frustrated students....

★ Like

Reply



onathought

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 5:05 PM

Yes. Thanks for writing this. I totally agree. As a teacher, I no longer do reading logs. There are other (better and more authentic) ways to "make sure" my students are reading.

★ Like

Reply



Jamie

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 5:07 PM

Can I just chime in as a teacher? Does anyone think I want to collect and check, then most likely follow up with a reward I no doubt supply myself, those reading logs? Unfortunately until someone comes up with a better way I have to have something to try to encourage students and parents to pick up books at home rather than turning in the TV, picking up a video game, or ignoring books in favor of soccer and gymnastics. I have 20 minutes a day with my reading groups (if I'm lucky) and kids need more time reading in order to grow tegu reading ability.

★ Liked by [3 people](#)

Reply



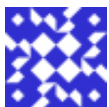
Roni

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 8:47 PM

There ARE better ways. Perhaps you should pick up a book!

★ Like

Reply



Amy

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 5:11 PM

What about kids that DON'T have a love for reading like your daughter!? What about parents that are TOO busy to read with/to their kids? We all know that reading at home creates better readers, more fluent readers with stronger comprehension...

★ Like

Reply



saltybird

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 7:15 PM

Any parent who is too busy to read or listen to their kids read is not bring a positive parent. How hard is it to listen for 10 minutes while you prepare dinner? How hard is it to listen in the car? How hard is it to spend a few minutes of quality time with your child being a positive educational influence (like reading yourself)? If this is too difficult maybe people should not be parents or maybe they should set their priorities on their children, not themselves. Sorry to be so blunt but as a teacher I am rather tired of hearing parents tell me they do not have time for their kids.

★ Liked by [4 people](#)

Reply



JD

— OCTOBER 12, 2014 AT 4:58 PM

Saltybird, You need to realize that there are parents who work two or sometimes three jobs, who are in circumstances where they really do not have those minutes available. They may be caring for an elderly family member, a child with a severe disability, or any number of other possibilities. This does not make them a bad parent. It does, however, mean that they are likely doing the best they can under very stressful conditions. Did you know exactly how your life was going to be lived when your child

was born? I think not. Life happens, often in ways we have not planned or expected. A little empathy and imagination might change your perspective.

★ Liked by [1 person](#)



suburbanprincessteacher

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 8:02 PM

No one should be too busy to spend at least 15 min. a day with their child. Cut something else – 15 min. of TV, 15 min. of internet surfing, whatever. If you're working shift work and aren't home when you're child gets there, then get the caregiver to do it. No excuses. I don't buy it.

★ Liked by [2 people](#)

[Reply](#)



Becky

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 8:10 PM

Those kids may need a reading log. The problem here is that teachers assign the same homework to every student. The kids who begin to hate reading, like the author's daughter, are considered acceptable collateral damage in the war to get kids reading. A parent who works evenings must be forgiven for not reading with their children, but one who is at home and who thinks that housework or TV or reading the newspaper is more important than reading with their children needs to be educated and nudged to fulfill their responsibility to their children.

★ Liked by [3 people](#)

[Reply](#)



Nancy Loera

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 5:14 PM

As a teacher I understand her point about this daughter. If she came to me I would probably make an exception as long as she did her other homework, classwork, and was doing good on her reading comprehension.

However, what about her other children? Do they constantly read also? Or do they need the dreaded reading log to make sure they get the minimum?

★ Like

Reply



Interesting

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 5:27 PM

But life is jammed full of things we don't really want to do...like take out the trash, scrub the toilet, and use our time doing laundry, to name a few...unfortunately there are all kinds of things in being educated that we don't really want to do, but must.

The way I see it, the compromise you made with your child is EXACTLY what you're being asked to do...make sure your kid is reading. Who gives a crap about the rest? So why teach your kid that you're bucking the system? Why not just approach the teacher from the get-go? It's not teachers versus parents. It's supposed to be a TEAM.

★ Liked by [2 people](#)

Reply



Anichols

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 1:12 AM

I agree. I don't understand what the problem is. Your daughter is

reading, voraciously. Isn't that what the teacher wants her to do? It doesn't seem to me like you're lying about her reading log at all.

★ Liked by [1 person](#)

Reply



Angela Perry Fairless

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 5:30 PM

I agree, and I am a teacher. However, we are being told that we have to keep up with the number of books children read. We have to turn in that number to the principal each month. Not only that- WE (teachers) are evaluated based on the reading growth of our students. So naturally we want our children reading as much as possible- our job depends on it. For some children (and their parents) if we don't say "read" as part of homework, they would never do it.

★ Like

Reply



Becky

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 8:17 PM

So this is where individualized instruction comes in. You work as a team with the parents. The parents can do the work that makes the child hate reading, like recording page numbers. Or you can trust some children and their parents and assign different sorts of homework for the children who voracious readers. You can present your problem to the child – that the principal is collecting numbers of pages read and she will think that you are not a good teacher, so can the child please just hand you a sticky note with the title and number of pages of each book that she finishes. There are many creative alternatives once we stop worrying about being "fair" and start teaching individual children.

★ Like

Reply



mrspothier

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 5:41 PM

Sadly, many parents do not require or suggest any reading from their children at home. Hence the reading log. Reading logs can be particularly helpful in the older grades, since it teaches students to look for patterns about themselves as readers. It's too bad teachers and parents aren't more willing to meet each other in the middle. They'd find that each side is well intentioned and together they could help students arrive at the perspective that reading is reading, and that there's no difference between "school reading" and "home reading."

★ Like

Reply



Kelly

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 5:51 PM

I'm a teacher and I hate the reading logs we are required to send home, too. Either the kid loves to read and the logs are a waste of time. or the kid hates to read and doesn't do it. It's a waste of everyone's time and does indeed detract from the joy of reading My question for you is this....do you have a suggestion for how teachers can encourage kids to read at home? There is clear evidence that reading at least 20 minutes independently at home does indeed improve reading ability. And not every student (in fact – few of them) is a voracious reader like your daughter.

★ Like

Reply



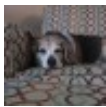
Monica Swindle

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 2:00 AM

What if instead of a log (which really only shows you that the kids who turned in the log got the parents to sign it) students had to show that they are reading every day by doing something that shows that they have read like write something, share details from their reading with the class, read something someone else in the class is reading and do a written discussion, or make a cool project based on a book? I have the exact same experience as the author with both my daughters and have come to much the same solution- the goal is for them to read outside of school about 100 minutes a week, it is abundantly clear my kid is doing that (and more), so the form gets signed...

★ Like

[Reply](#)



suburbanprincessteacher

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 8:05 PM

Awesome post. I totally agree with everything you said. As a parent, I also lied on my children's reading logs. They both read what and when they wanted. I did encourage it and insist upon it when they had gone too long without doing it. I understood that as the parent it was MY job to ensure my child was doing what he was supposed to do when he was in my home. Parents who tell me (as a teacher), "Oh, I can't make him read if you don't list it as homework" make me wonder about their parenting skills. I make sure students read and write when they are in my room but I can't parent them from afar. That's ridiculous.

★ Liked by [1 person](#)

[Reply](#)



Erin

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 8:24 PM

I am a teacher who gives a weekly reading log. It does allow flexibility (kids must aim to read 100 pages a week in a book of their choice, but they can accomplish the goal any way they like in sessions that work for their schedule.) I ask them to write in some way about what they read once each week, usually asking them to apply a skill we've been learning in class and using their thoughts about their reading in doing so. As your child's teacher, I would completely excuse your lying, as long as you're doing so because you know your child is reading, enjoying and thinking about what they read. I would even welcome a conversation about it, so you wouldn't have to lie. No teacher is trying to kill anyone's love of reading, so your instinct to adjust the expectation in your house seems perfectly appropriate, since your child already reads and loves to read. Please understand, though, that not every child is like your child and many of my students will tell me flat out, "I'll read if I have to, but only if I have to." This is why I keep independent reading as an assignment that requires some documentation from home. I hope this helps you understand that there is good reason for these assignments and I hope you continue to support your children's love of reading.

★ Liked by [3 people](#)

Reply



Jen

— SEPTEMBER 21, 2014 AT 9:51 PM

It is funny – today I saw this in my newsfeed, but also this: <http://www.upworthy.com/10-minutes-a-day>. I think the reading log is to encourage reading, not an end in itself. And encouraging reading is especially important for those kids who do not come from a print rich environment and do not have adults modeling reading for them. And why don't they model? They may be illiterate or may not have learned to read beyond a certain level. They may be working a lot to pay the bills and cannot take the time. Who knows. But at least the school is saying, read, and the reading log expectation helps make that clear.

★ Liked by [1 person](#)

Reply



Tamara

— SEPTEMBER 22, 2014 AT 12:15 AM

The years I teach language arts, I give out a reading log. When many of my children are involved with sports and other activities outside of school, they forget they need to read too. It is an accountability system.

As a parent, I have a child who would rather do anything, even the dishes, instead of reading. Does this break my heart? Oh so much. But with her, what her teacher asks of her becomes more important than if I ask her to do the same. For some reason it is okay to let me down, but not her teacher.

Hopefully one day she will find a book or series which will cause her to fall in love with books. Until that day, I will fill out that log.

Now back to the authors point. The main goal is to have her read every night. If she reads, then sign her log. It isn't truly lying unless she doesn't read.

★ Liked by [1 person](#)

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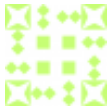
Becky

— SEPTEMBER 22, 2014 AT 3:16 PM

Exactly. Doing the paperwork for the child is keeping the main thing the main thing. Reading is the main thing, not the log. It is not lying. The real goal of this assignment is to get children to love to read. Anything that is an obstacle to reaching that goal can reasonably be altered. Sure kids have to learn gamesmanship. The school game has some silly rules. But rules that stifle learning are best broken or worked around.

★ Like

[Reply](#)



Kim

— SEPTEMBER 22, 2014 AT 1:36 AM

I'm a teacher who hates reading logs. I even shared with my parents at Back to School Night this as one of the reasons I hate them. They reward lying. They also don't prove quality reading. I do require a short paragraph a couple of times a week IN CLASS that connects what they are personally reading with what comprehension strategies or skills we are working on.

★ Liked by [1 person](#)

[Reply](#)



Cassie

— SEPTEMBER 22, 2014 AT 2:39 AM

I'm a teacher in an extreme poverty school. 98%. I send home reading logs knowing they won't get done but it's documentation for when a kid is failing and such. Majority of our parents do not read with their kids and don't even make it to conferences. So as a teacher so I just let go of the reading log? I don't think so. The log I send home has several questions the student can choose from to answer. To those who can't believe parents don't spend time with their child reading or doing other homework open your eyes. Parents who do homework and read with their children are becoming the minority in education. Most of our parents can't even read themselves. This is not a right or wrong issue-go to the teacher and create some other log for your child. Honestly there's lots of issues in schools and this is one I wouldn't choose to battle over. Feel blessed that your child loves to read and that you have time to spend with them.

★ Liked by [1 person](#)

[Reply](#)



Becky

— SEPTEMBER 22, 2014 AT 3:07 PM

This parent does have to battle over it because her child no longer loves to read. Teachers must begin to care about each individual student and stop doing things that stifle children's love of learning even if means that the individualize homework assignments.

★ Like

[Reply](#)



sarah

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 12:39 AM

How about students learn to complete assignments and follow directions when it is appropriate for their skill level? When your child finally gets her dream job that comes with some dreaded *legally-binding* paperwork, she will have no choice but to complete it if she wants to be employed. Will her employer fill it out for her because she doesn't enjoy that aspect of the job?

★ Like



teacherrrrrr

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 1:01 AM

She will learn those things from assignments that are not soul searing. She will learn them from all the jobs she gets as a teen and college student. Full time employment is a long way off. Right now the only important thing is th at she be a voracious reader. If that is lost, then her academic life is lost already. She is not training for adult employment. She is training for life as an 8 year old.

★ Like



sarah

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 11:38 PM

I will let my child learn very early on that some things are non-negotiable and that there will be consequences for lying, especially to teachers. I would never undermine a teacher by telling a child it is okay to lie. Sometimes you just need to do assignments because they are assigned. You may not think these logs serve a purpose, but the teacher may be doing it for a reason that you have no idea. Communicate with the teacher instead of lying.

★ Like



Becky

— SEPTEMBER 24, 2014 AT 1:55 AM

Sarah, I don't think you read my comment very carefully. I never proposed lying. The author never says that she lies. She says that she may be inaccurate because the logs are a "patchwork of guesses." That is very different. You are willing to destroy a child's love for learning in the name of following directions. She is not. It's that simple. Don't tell me that a teacher may have reasons of which I am unaware. I know exactly why the teacher is assigning the log. Either it is required by the principal or she believes that only with written accountability will the children read. She is willing to suck all of the joy out of reading for the voracious readers in order to help the reluctant readers because she doesn't know or doesn't care. She believes that 'fairness' of assignment is a thing. It is not a thing because it isn't possible given the varying abilities of the students. Oh, heck, what am I talking to you for anyway? This mom made a decision to protect her child from the soul sucking assignment. I applaud her.

★ Like



Rosa

— SEPTEMBER 22, 2014 AT 3:48 AM

To the author of this article and all parents: Talk to your child's teacher! I ALWAYS encourage parents to come to me when they are having a problem with homework so that we can adjust accordingly. I get that you (the author) needs to put out a article but come on, how passive aggressive is this? As parents and teachers, we need to have more open communication between home and school.

★ Like

[Reply](#)



Becky

— SEPTEMBER 22, 2014 AT 3:03 PM

You may be approachable, but many teachers are not. One parent called me about a mistake I had made grading her child's test and she said that many other parents had advised he not to call. It was my first week in a new school system and the grading system was unclear so I had made a mistake. I was happy that she had called and fixed the error immediately but her fear and relief were so obvious that I immediately sent a letter home with my home and mobile numbers and made sure that every parent knew that they could call me at any time. The other teachers all advised me not to give out my number. Not all schools operate as teams. You are more unusual than you realize.

★ Like

[Reply](#)



Jeff Tranell

— SEPTEMBER 22, 2014 AT 3:49 AM

You have inspired me to try something new this year...

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/15AT4vn-t5ISfPoz-W0ypzlhCg5ukPhSXuhoH3tWQscs/edit?usp=sharing>. Let me know what you think.

★ Like

Reply



Tiffany

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 2:22 AM

Jeff, how is this working so far? Any preliminary feedback or results?

★ Like

Reply



Jeff Tranell

— SEPTEMBER 24, 2014 AT 4:05 AM

It's hard to tell how it's working so far. I got several really positive emails from parents (like thank you notes) because they know I really want their child to read, and I want them to support their children, but I also realize that life happens. I am so torn because I never want to teach or encourage lies- that's why my pledge is just that- a pledge to try to hold kids and parents accountable. I hope that I can now follow up by motivating my students to read by getting them into books or anything- magazines, etc.- that they don't want to put down! According to the status of the class updates and a shared "What We are Reading" google we did today, it seems like they're enjoying some great books. When I start my conferring soon I should know a lot more.

★ Like



Prissy

— SEPTEMBER 22, 2014 AT 8:46 AM

I would never tell my child or my grandchildren that it is ok to lie to a teacher or anyone else. It is a young age to be encouraged by your parent to lie if you do not want to follow the rules. Wouldn't it have been wiser to have your daughter explain to her teacher why she doesn't like assigned reading and ask if there is some way to adjust how they have to keep track of their daily homework in reading. A lie is a lie is a lie anyway you try to spin it. It is wrong to encourage this behaviour. It will hurt her more than just doing what is expected of her.

★ Like

[Reply](#)



Becky

— SEPTEMBER 22, 2014 AT 5:41 PM

A parents point of view: children are at school for the equivalent of someone working full – time hours. Do you come home from work and then are expected to do 2-3 hours worth of work? Or even 15-30 minutes of reading/replying to work emails (or whatever) *every*single*day* after you've already worked full-time? No & it's ridiculous to expect that from our children. The teacher's time to dictate the students activities is while they are at school but when they are at home it's my time as the parent to decide what we will or will not be doing. Sometimes we sit down and read a book, sometimes we relax in front of the tv, sometimes we go on hikes, sometimes we have church or sports or festivals or some other activity/event to attend; but most of the time we just have free time to *choose* what we want to do. I know that "studies say" a kid becomes a better reader if they read at home but I also know that "studies say" burn – out is the leading cause of hating school/education/reading/anything. I refuse to force my kids to do any form of school work at home and I make sure my kids' teachers are aware of it. They are allowed to do it in their free time, if that's their

choice, but it's never forced on my end. Kids need to learn more than just academics to be successful in this life and that's not going to happen if the only thing they have time for is schoolwork ~ and more work does Not equal more learning. Just my two cents anyways....

★ Liked by [1 person](#)

Reply



Sullivan

— SEPTEMBER 22, 2014 AT 8:13 PM

Hey mom, get over yourself. There are families out there that this is a viable tool to use with their children. I have never taught reading, am a voracious reader and respected the rules set down.

★ Liked by [1 person](#)

Reply



Casey

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 12:06 AM

John Hattie, a researcher, completed a meta-analysis of around 800 (I think) education studies. Student self reported grades (tracking their progress) has the highest influence on student achievement. Most good teachers are open to suggestions and concerns. My students are required to read 100 minutes over 7 day period. I don't care when they read (daily) or if they do 40 here or 10 there.

★ Like

Reply



Michelle

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 12:50 AM

I think (as a teacher and parent) that you are not actually lying. Your daughter is reading and the log, whether entirely truthful or not, is simply verifying that she is reading. It is those that aren't actually reading with their kids or having their kids read that are the problem. I have to make my own read and without the accountability, sometimes I just don't want to fight the fight. (I do, but I don't want to.) Kids need to be reading, whether they like it or not. I do a reading log for that purpose only. If given a choice, I would eliminate homework entirely (with the exception of reading and practicing math facts).

★ Like

Reply



Darlana

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 1:26 AM

My son is now 18 and has graduated. When he was in 2nd grade, his school was so over the top on the accelerated reader program, that his class hated reading. They were all about the points. He hates reading to this day because of so much focus on it. Even the avid readers in his class shut down and quit reading. It's like pulling teeth to get them to read. All the joy and fun is gone from reading for them. How will they instill the joy in the printed word to their children when they can't stand to do it?

★ Liked by [1 person](#)

Reply



Marcy Prager

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 11:14 AM

I do not like reading logs just for the sake of having students write down the title, the author, the number of pages they read...I never had students do that. What I did assign, were reader's responses, as a

PRACTICE for learning to interact with books. Writing goes hand in hand with reading. It is valuable for students to practice the kinds of responses they are learning in school. Homework should be complimentary/enriching for any subject students are learning in school. If there are choices of responses, students are more willing to share their authentic interactions with the book. An avid reader can choose his/her own response and write. Sharing responses in class help motivate others to read that book.

★ Like

Reply



Christina Sormani

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 12:08 PM

I also don't like reading logs but what is with this suggestion of lying?!!!! My son also had difficulty with reading at the rates expected of him. So we recorded what he read and some days he read nothing. I sent a note to the teacher that it was frustrating for him and that someday he wanted to play with legoes, which was an educational activity that would more likely lead to a future science/engineering career for him. I did not teach my son to lie and enter false data. Teaching a child to cheat is not the same thing as rebelling against reading logs. It is simply teaching the child to cheat. Once a child has learned to cheat, then perhaps he will start cheating in other subjects too. Hey, why not start lying to his parents since his parents have displayed no respect for honesty. If you disagree with reading logs: either refuse to submit them or submit them with honest lower rates of reading.

★ Like

Reply



Swain

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 1:38 PM

Our reading logs are complete and total forgeries.

★ Like

Reply



Christal

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 9:20 PM

As a teacher I also loath the reading log. I am pressured to use it each year by administration- but I never make my students use it. Funny, my kids all become kids who love reading and make a year's + worth of growth without it.

★ Liked by [1 person](#)

Reply



emilyjagos

— SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 AT 11:11 PM

I'm a mom of 3 boys and an elementary teacher with a reading background. The reading logs my boys fill out are complete lies. I've told them, make sure they are believable and I will sign them. We all hate them and it kills their love of reading. All three of my boys have grown into voracious readers, but each at their own pace and with their own interests. Some days one will read two hours and maybe 10 minutes the next. It's all good. Finally, this year, one of their teachers had stopped requiring logs because she said 'no one ever fills them out truthfully'. It's about time.

★ Liked by [1 person](#)

Reply



k12helper

— SEPTEMBER 24, 2014 AT 11:31 AM

Hey, check out YOU-LOG Reading before you give `em up! Logging reading can be fun! <https://t.co/l809yd3gRQ>

★ Like

Reply



jana

— SEPTEMBER 24, 2014 AT 5:07 PM

I did not read a complete book until I was in 7th grade. Somehow I was placed in advanced English and reading classes for 6th grade. I love to read now and reading is also my chosen field of work.

I suspect my reading ability came from cereal boxes, magazines, and just the fact that I could not see the written word without reading it- billboards, road signs, bumper stickers. My point is that a child does not have to be forced to read to be reading. No amount of books logged will guarantee or not that they will be successful or good at reading, each child will develop that on his or her own skill level and time.

★ Like

Reply



Ryan

— SEPTEMBER 25, 2014 AT 10:55 PM

I think that if you want to decide how your child's curriculum is organized, then you should home school. This teacher takes time from her day to not only create and print your reading log, but she also takes the time to read it and make sure your darling daughters are reading at level and are able to grow their comprehension skills. Rather than complain, why don't you come up with a better way to ensure children read each night and that you can account for that reading in terms of improvement. Only then will you have contributed positively to this discussion.

★ Like

Reply



Wendy Odell

— SEPTEMBER 26, 2014 AT 10:49 PM

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!! This has been a struggle in our home for years! My third child is in 4th grade and is already fearful of the punishment for not filling out all of the required log sheet elements. I have attempted twice to engage his teacher on this and have been told to "deal with it". So I will continue to lie.

★ Like

Reply



carolsbeyondreason

— SEPTEMBER 29, 2014 AT 3:25 AM

As a teacher who has assigned reading logs for near 20 years, it was relief to read this; this year we decided to eliminate reading logs and stick with Accelerated Reader points- yeah!

★ Like

Reply

Pingback: [Beyond the log: How do I capture reading time with my child?](#)
« [Becoming Comfortable with Uncomfortable](#)



Amy

— OCTOBER 9, 2014 AT 7:12 AM

I came across this article as someone shared it on Facebook and it really

interested me! I am a primary school teacher and set Reading Logs for my students. When it became a mundane task a colleague and I decided to make our own iPad app to make it easier and more fun for kids to use. It is called "Reading Diary" and I would be more than happy to gift you a copy to have a try at home to see if it is less mundane than filling out a paper log! If you email me at amy@littletechies.com.au I would be more than happy to gift you a free copy to try.

Amy

<https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/reading-diary/id582188500?mt=8>

★ Like

Reply



Mary Christensen

— OCTOBER 12, 2014 AT 3:44 PM

When my kids were young, I, too, loathed reading logs because I believe in the joy of reading. In our family, we wanted to read every day as much as we possibly could and reading logs were a huge annoyance. As a teacher, I have eschewed reading logs because they are inauthentic; in real life, most lifetime voracious readers do not keep a log of everything they read every day. However, not every family is like my family, and some parents say the structure and accountability of a log is helpful to them. Now, I offer reading logs as a choice, and roughly half of my families use a reading log.

★ Like

Reply



Marilyn

— OCTOBER 12, 2014 AT 5:26 PM

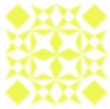
Reading logs are best used at school during independent reading time with reader's response as a means of holding students accountable in school. We also use Accelerated Reader at school with class points

announced, etc. Our students come in wanting to take a test on the book they completed at home the night before. We celebrate as a class and as a school and our scores are improving in class. Encouraging them to read a book from the genre being taught and one of choice has even our most reluctant students reading and we are a Title I school.

★ Like

Reply

Pingback: [Stacey Loscalzo - Goodbye Reading Logs](#)



Gema

— OCTOBER 14, 2014 AT 1:00 AM

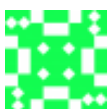
As a 3rd grade teacher (and parent) I want my readers to love, love, LOVE books. I want them to get lost in them just as you do. I may or may not be one of the few teachers who feel this way, but I don't care about teaching to the test my goal is to help students fall in love with reading so they become lifelong readers and learners!

So if you want a change, talk to those who make laws that require we give standardized tests that are created with the students' failure in mind. So we can talk to studens about books, share our own love for books, and create the learning environment where they are all successful.

Talk to the politicians that is where we need the change!

★ Like

Reply



mominmtc

— OCTOBER 15, 2014 AT 4:10 PM

last year my husband, unbeknownst to me, decided to write random lyrics to a song rather than what our student was actually dictating for

the reading log. Later he told me it was an experiment because he was convinced the teacher never looked at these logs. He was right, the teacher just made a nice big C on the sheet and returned it. I think some reading logs are better than others at encouraging advanced reading skills, and of course some teachers are better than others at making assignments meaningful. Thankfully this year our teacher framed the task as a way to celebrate how much the students read, and I can see that this has made a positive impact on our student.

★ Like

Reply

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