



RAR 74 – One Thing You Won't Regret

Sarah: You're listening to the Read-Aloud Revival podcast. This is the podcast that helps you make meaningful and lasting connections with your kids through books.

Hello, hello, Sarah Mackenzie here with episode 74 of the Read-Aloud Revival podcast. So happy you're joining me today. Today I've got, maybe, one of the shortest episodes—this might be the shortest episode we've ever done. It's a little heart to heart. It's my heart to yours. I want to talk with you about something you won't regret. Parenting is rot, right? We set ourselves up every single day to make big mistakes and we wonder if 20 years from now we're going to look back and go, 'Man, I wish I had done things differently.' Today I want to give you a little piece of my heart about that. Before we launch into that, I have a super exciting announcement for you today. And, I hope, hope, hope you get this in time that you don't miss out on the fun. So, on October 9 [2017], we have a big day happening at the Read-Aloud Revival. It's a giveaway blitz. We are giving books every single hour all day long at the Read-Aloud Revival. Here's the deal: in Read-Aloud Revival premium membership we do something called Author Access. Now, these are live video streams where kids and parents get to meet their favorite authors and illustrators and ask their questions, get them answered in real time, and we have some of the best and most impactful authors and illustrators of today coming to the Read-Aloud Revival in 2018. I am so excited to tell you about who we have coming. It's an awesome lineup. The most fun way we could think of to announce all of our upcoming guests is with a giveaway. So, every hour on Monday,

October 9, we're going to be giving away two books on Instagram, two books on Facebook, for the upcoming authors. So, for example, we'll name the author—who it is going to be, or the illustrator—who it's going to be, and there will be a chance for you to win two of those books on Instagram and two of those books on Facebook. Come back an hour later and we're going to announce another one. We're doing it all day long. We are giving away over 50 books. I cannot wait for this day! So, here's what you need to do so you don't miss out on the fun—make sure you're following Read-Aloud Revival on Instagram and Facebook. You can actually enter both giveaways, you don't have to pick one or the other, so you really have the chance to win a lot more than just once. So, go to [Instagram.com/readaloudrevival](https://www.instagram.com/readaloudrevival) to follow on Instagram, go to [Facebook.com/readaloudrevival](https://www.facebook.com/readaloudrevival) to follow on Facebook. Make sure you're following the pages so you don't miss them there. You also want to make sure you get on the email list because you know how Instagram and Facebook are? They don't reliably send you every single message that you're signed up to get. So, you want to be on the email list and I will remind you the morning of the 9th to go check out Instagram and Facebook and get in on those giveaways. So, go to [ReadAloudRevival.com](https://www.ReadAloudRevival.com), pop your email into the page there where it says "to join subscribers and get the free book list," put your email in there, and you will get a reminder on Monday, October 9, about the giveaways. I am so excited to share with you our lineup for 2018. At the Read-Aloud Revival we just keep getting better every year and I can't wait to hear your reaction when you see who we have landed for 2018. So, don't forget, [Facebook.com/readaloudrevival](https://www.facebook.com/readaloudrevival), [Instagram.com/readaloudrevival](https://www.instagram.com/readaloudrevival), and then get on that email list at [ReadAloudRevival.com](https://www.ReadAloudRevival.com) so you don't miss out on



the fun. OK, You ready? Let's have a little heart to heart about something you will not regret.

4:41 Giving Your Best to What Matters Most

If you're listening to this podcast I bet that you, like me, want to form meaningful and lasting relationships with your kids. I bet that you, just like I do, hope that when your kids are all grown up they'll still want to come home for Christmas. I feel endlessly distracted by all of the many parts of raising kids and, you know, sometimes I wonder if 20 years from now I'll look back and wish I could whisper something to my today self. I wonder if I'm going to want to shake myself awake and say, "Pay attention, you're missing this really important thing and it's right in front of you." This parenting gig is the most important work of our lives—you and I both know that. And if making meaningful and lasting connections with our kids requires that we be fully present and focus on what matters most, and I believe it does, then there's one thing that we need to know, that's what matters most? Because those myriad distractions, they're not going anywhere, so we've got to get crystal clear on where our time is best spent with our kids and where our energy is most impactful. If we can figure out what matters most and then go all in there, even while we do all the other gazillion things, like drive the carpool, cook dinner, order new filters for the furnace, pay the water bill, clean out the garage, jot down that grocery list on the back of our gas station receipt, right? Then we will look back on these years with fondness and satisfaction. I've learned a few things since becoming a parent. And one of the most important is this: success in parenting my kids means showing up and giving my best to what

matters most right now, which means, of course, that I have to know what matters most right now.

6:26 Extra?

Most days I'm overwhelmed by the demands of raising a family, we're doing all the important parts of mothering and fathering; disciplining, cleaning, organizing, planning, listening, doling out advice and instruction, or those endless, constantly repeated reminders. But when the days are long and my energy, not to mention my patience, is running low I don't have a lot of extra but isn't that what we need? Extra? Extra, so that we can make those meaningful and lasting connections with our kids that will stand the test of time? It's on days when I'm feeling low and like I don't have any extra, when the power of reading aloud really shines because reading aloud requires so very little of me, other than just sitting down and reading words from a page. The book itself does the work, really, so whether we're visiting Aerwiar in *The Wingfeather Saga* or a snowy hovel in *Narnia* or maybe the seller with Ramona Quimby on Klickitat Street, taking a bite of every apple because the first bite is the best one. A little spark is lit and we all know that it only takes a little spark to start a roaring wildfire, right? When my heart longs to connect with my kids but my energy reserves are depleted a spark is exactly what I need. The stories we read-aloud with our kids give us, I don't know, it's like an inside vocabulary, an inside secret to share with one another. It gives us a set of experiences that we all understand because we're experiencing them together. Of all the things I want most for my kids my desire for them to have a true friendship with each other is one of the greatest. Sibling arguments and those long dreary days where we're just endlessly fighting against the



day, those can be painful and tiring for everyone. My hope is that despite inevitable sibling squabbles in my house, despite our hardest days, my kids will share so many good childhood memories that they'll look back on 20 years from now and they'll see that their childhood was filled with these warm memories of shared stories, full of adventures into Narnia, full of apples with one bite taken out, just like Ramona Quimby. I hope that some of the best memories will be the times that we shared a book and we were astonished at what we saw, astonished at what we read, who we met, and the magic we experienced, astonished at the big beautiful world, and the amazing people we share it with. In the book, *The Reading Promise* by Alice Ozma, it's called *The Reading Promise: My Father and the Books We Shared* and Alice Ozma was on the Read-Aloud Revival podcast on an earlier episode [ReadAloudRevival.com/12], we'll make sure we link to that in the Show Notes so you can hear it if you haven't heard it yet, but in the forward her father wrote this, he said: "The greatest gift you can bestow upon your children is your time and undivided attention. As the years advance you may reflect upon your life and see that in some areas you have regrets about what you took to be a priority. No one will ever say, no matter how good a parent he or she was, "I think I spent too much time with my children when they were young." Here's one thing I absolutely know that you and I will not regret 20 years from now: we will not regret the time that we took, even if it was just 10 or 15 minutes a day, even if it was a whole bunch of time every day, we will not regret the time we spend reading aloud with our kids. So, as you go forward into the next week I hope you remember this, this is one thing we know we won't regret: making meaningful and lasting connections with our kids through books.

10:12 Let the Kids Speak

Now, it's time for Let the Kids Speak. This is my favorite part of the podcast where kids tell us about their favorite stories that have been read aloud to them.

Child1: Hello, my name is Stella, I'm 4 years old. I live in British Columbia. My favorite book is *The Magic Faraway Tree* by Enid Blyton because when they climb up they always are ..in a different world every time.

Child2: Hello, my name is Cormack. I'm 7 years old. I live in British Columbia, and my favorite book is Book 17, *Magic Tree House* because they're on the Titanic and they're on it and it almost sinks but they get away in time.

Child3: [Mom: Hello, my name is Nile.] Hello, my name is Nile. [Mom: I'm 2 years old.] I'm 2 years old. [Mom: I live in British Columbia.] I live in Columbia. [Mom: My favorite book is *Murmel Murmel*] My favorite book is ... [Mom: By Robert Munch.] By Robert Munch. [Mom: I like it because the baby gets saved.] The baby gets saved. [Mom: Goodbye.] Goodbye.

Child4: My name is Josie. I'm 10 years old and I live in Arizona. The series that I like is *Magic Tree House* because you get lost in a whole different world and it's all about adventures and history.

Child5: My name is Madelyn. My age is 8. I live in Arizona. And one of my favorite books to read-aloud is *Anne of Green Gables*. One of my favorite parts is when Matthew Cuthbert gets 20 pounds of brown sugar because he was too embarrassed to ask for a half-sleeve dress for Anne.

Child6: Hello, my name is Muriel, I'm 13 and I live in Arizona. My favorite read-aloud is *The Horse*



and Its Boy by C. S. Lewis. My favorite part is when Bree basically says that the Tisroc is ridiculous and you shouldn't say "Tisroc, may you live forever" because he doesn't want him to live forever and he can't anyway.

Child7: Hi, my name is Corina. I am 15 years old, I turn 16 tomorrow. I am from Arizona. I am going to recommend *The Mysterious Benedict Society* by Trenton Lee Stewart and I like pretty much everything about it, specifically, the characters are pretty awesome, and it's really inspiring.

Child8: Hi, my name is Vivian. I'm 13 years old and I live in Arizona. My favorite book that I've been reading is *Caddie Woodlawn* and I really like that she lives near the woods, Caddie likes nature so much and I really like Tom's story, I think it's hilarious.

Child9: Hi, my name is Daria. I'm 17 years old and I live in Arizona, and the book that I really liked was *The Eight Cousins* by Louise May Alcott, and I really liked learning about Rose and her relationship with her cousins and how awesome they were and what fun adventures they had together, and I really liked Uncle Alec and how Uncle Alec helped Rose throughout the entire story.

Child10: Hi, my name is Lila. I live in Virginia, I'm 5 years old, and my favorite book is *The Green Ember* because [**] attack.

Sarah: Awesome, thank you so much for your book recommendations, kids. I love those. I always find myself putting books on hold at the library while I'm listening to those, so those are fantastic. Hey, don't forget about Monday, October 9, which is going to be our giveaway blitz. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram, you can just look for us there, ReadAloudRevival, get on the email list at ReadAloudRevival.com so that

you don't miss out on all the fun, it is going to be so much fun to announce each of the upcoming authors we're featuring at the Read-Aloud Revival in 2018. Well, that's all I've got for you today. I'll be back next week with another episode. In the meantime, go make meaningful and lasting connections with your kids through books.