



RAR 104 - Put Those Books OUT!

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.

Well, hello there. I'm Sarah Mackenzie, your host, and you've got episode 104 of the Read-Aloud Revival podcast. Today, I've got a simple tip for you. It's actually, probably, going to sound so simple you're going to think this is not going to make that big of a difference. But, that is why I love it so much. It came to mind again recently for me because in our Premium Membership forum, one of our members, Kristi Bee posted this. She said, *"A recent tip I fell in love with on the podcast is to put the children's books on display with the covers OUT. We've always had books EVERYWHERE-especially when there are toddlers underfoot, because EVERYTHING is EVERYWHERE then. But I guess I forgot what it was like to be a kid at the library. SEEING the covers. Not the spine. Well, I decided I would try this-no building required~ I just set some on our wall heater and another wall space in our school room. Our 7yo daughter was the first one up. They were the first thing she saw and this is what she said; "What are those?! Why are they out?!" I told her we had those books all along, to which she replied, "Yes, but we could never get them, we could only see them." So mama, you don't have to buy a shelf or stalk Pinterest or even mount a rain gutter on your wall.....just set the picture books OUT where they can see them. This is free, but it's a good lesson on how to create the "book culture" in our homes."*

So, Kristi posted that in our member forum and then Kristen posted her very simple and inexpensive Ikea spice racks that she uses to display books face out in her kids rooms and she posted pictures, and then Kortney, our Read-

Aloud Revival Community Director, moved a basket of easy readers that had been sitting in a bookshelf onto the floor with a couple of pillows in the corner for an instant reading nook and she saw that her kids immediately paid more attention to them. Instant, simple, and effective, right?

2:28 Think like your child

Face out – that's my tip for today on the podcast. For just a moment think like your child. Whether that child is 3 or 9 or 13, it doesn't really matter, right? When you go to the library – think about when YOU go to the library now, or when you went to the library as a kid – is your eye caught at the library more by the books that are shelved, spines out, crammed in together or with just their spines facing out? Or are they caught by the front facing displays? The books they put on top of the shelves with their covers face out. Covers are meant to capture our attention, right? Publishers actually create covers with the intention of making them almost impossible to resist. So, if you want to capture your children's attention toward books (without telling them, "Go sit with a book") or if you just want to invite your kids to spend more time perusing books, when you're wondering, 'Gosh, we have a lot of books in our house, why are my kids never just finding a book and sitting down and paging through it?' My challenge to you right now is to go to a bookshelf, pull a few off the shelf, and find a place that you can display them face out, and see what happens. Don't say anything to your kids, just watch what happens.



3:49 How to make books more accessible

Here's a few ideas of how you can do that without buying a thing. Because, like Kristi said, this worked really well for her and she didn't go to Pinterest to see face out bookshelves or I don't know if you've seen those rain gutter bookshelves – they are really cool, where you actually mount a rain gutter on your wall and then just put your books in face out – but without having to do anything like that Kristi saw the results of this just by doing it instantly without buying a thing. You can do like she did and display them on the wall heaters. Now, of course, you can only do this if you have wall heaters (I don't, so I can't do that), and also you can only do that if you're not using the wall heaters, presently, because you don't want to put books on a wall heater that's on. But, we'll post Kristi's picture in the Show Notes so you can see what this looked like, but basically, if you have wall heaters and you're not using them because it's warm out, then just stick the picture books on top, use it as a little wall shelf. And, if you want to see pictures in the Show Notes of how Kristi did this, you want to go to ReadAloudRevival.com/104, and then you'll be able to see it. So, another place you can display them without buying a thing is on the windowsills. This could be a really good morning habit, actually; every morning as you raise your blinds, just grab a few books from a nearby bookshelf and put them on display in the window. You could do this once a week, you could change them out every morning, however often you want to, but I have a hunch if you make it a habit of regularly rotating books that are displayed in a windowsill you might be surprised at how excited your kids are to see what's on display each day. And, if you change them out

every week or so, your kids are going to be so excited when there's a new book out (if you did it everyday it would be that way, too I bet) your kids will kind of go, "Ooh, what's on display today?" and they'll go over and look at it. And, if there are books on your shelves that your kids aren't paging through that are really beautiful this is a great way to invite them to look through the books without telling them to go look through the books.

5:20 The beauty of baskets

Another way you could do this is just to find a basket in your house, put it on the floor, and put a few books into it. I use baskets all over my house full of books—it's kind of my standard way of displaying books because it's tidy-ish, you don't have to put books back in order, but they are face out, or at least the front ones are face out. So, a basket on the floor with an easy reach is a lot more inviting than the spines out bookshelf, even if that's on your kids' level. So, we have, for example, a picture book shelf in our house, a couple of them, where they are at the kids level, even my little kids like my 4 year olds could pull books off of them, they just don't usually. But they do pull them out of the baskets and they would definitely pull them off of a windowsill or if you have a fireplace hearth that you're not using at the moment because it's the wrong season you can display them there. You could also just line up front facing books against the wall. I mean, really you can get really creative and try, if you're one of those people that likes everything tidy and in its place just think to yourself what you would rather have – would you rather have a tidy, perfectly tidy space, or would you rather have your kids become engaged with reading?



Because as far as I'm concerned books are just a part of the home décor.

6:46 Rain gutters, spice racks and more

Now, if you really want to get going with this you could do things like add those rain gutter bookshelves. You know what I mean, right? We will post pictures of rain gutter bookshelves in the Show Notes, too. So, that's at ReadAloudRevival.com/104. You can find them on Pinterest but they're literally rain gutters that you mount on the wall to hold your front facing books, or you can do like our Premium Member Kristen did, and use inexpensive spice racks – those work as well, or you can get baskets and make sure there are baskets in most of the rooms of your house. I try and do that where I look around the house and try to make sure there's a basket of books in just about every room.

7:31 Face out, right now!

So those are just some simple ways you can take it another step, but my biggest challenge to you today, while you're listening to this podcast even, or maybe just immediately after you turn it off, is to go pull some books off the bookshelf and put them face out – on the windowsill, on the wall heater, on the fireplace hearth, simply lining them against a wall or on a table, or anywhere you can do it right now, as soon as you turn this podcast off, go take some picture books or some middle grade novels, depending on how hold your kids are, off the shelf and put them face out and see what happens. I would love it if you wanted to share your displays and show us what it looks like, either your displays, your kids enjoying the books that you set out (because I bet that will

happen pretty quick after you set them out), and if so, if you post the pictures to Facebook or Instagram, tag me. I'm at Read-Aloud Revival on both and I'll be able to see it. And, you can also use #readaloudrevival because there's lots of followers on that hashtag and we can all see your display which will be really fun. And, by the way, tips like these come up all the time in our Read-Aloud Revival Premium Member forum. It's just basically awesome like that. In fact, one of our members, Kelly, recently said, *"I would like to let this community on the forum know that you have made me a ten times better mom than I was before I found you."* And Michelle also said, *"I can't even begin to describe the difference Read-Aloud Revival Premium has made in our homeschool, our family, and in my life."* So, I'm not kidding when I say that the Read-Aloud Revival Premium Membership community is my very favorite place to hang out online. It's where I spend most of my time and energy online because it makes such a huge difference in my home, my kids' reading lives, and in my own life, and of course, in our member's homes and children's reading lives. In Read-Aloud Revival Premium Membership we know you're short on time and we are focused on helping you spend your time where it matters most so that you can connect with your kids through books, so that you can teach from a state of rest, so you can fall back in love with mothering and engaging with your kids every day. We only open doors to new members a few times a year and we're opening doors again for the final time in 2018; we're opening doors in August. That will be the last time we open in 2018, so you don't want to miss it. Head to RARMembership.com and request an invitation. That way you don't miss it when we do open the doors for a short time. I hope you join us there.



10:00 Let us know how it works

OK, so when you turn off this podcast, go to a shelf, pull some books off, put them face out, and tell us what happens. I want to know. Make sure you post on social media, Instagram or Facebook, tag me. Use #readaloudrevival so we can find you and I can't wait to hear what this does in your family. I think you're going to be surprised. I hope so. I want to hear about it. OK, let's hear a little from the kids who listen to the podcast.

10:37 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: My name is David, I'm 10 years old, and I'm from Grand Forks, North Dakota. My favorite book is *The Wouldbegoods* by E. Nesbit. I like it because the Wouldbegoods always get into trouble and they play the Jungle Book one time and then they stuff a tiger hide over a table to make it look real. And I also like when books talk about other books.

Child2: [Mom: what is your name?] Jonah. [Mom: and how old are you?] 7. [Mom: where are you from?] North Dakota. [Mom: and what is your favorite book?] *Moth Flower*. [Mom: what do you like about *Moth Flower*.] ****inaudible****

Child3: My name is Katherine Grace and I am 10 years old. I live in China and my favorite book that was read-aloud to me is *The Hobbit* by J. R. R. Tolkien, and my favorite book I read myself is *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London.

Child4: My name is Caleb and I am 8 years old. And one of my favorite books read-aloud is *The*

Vanderbeekers of 141st Street. And I had a dream that me and my sisters and brother were with the Vanderbeeker kids. Also, one of my favorite books I read by myself is *Detectives in Togas*.

Child5: [Mom: what's your name?] My name is Jace. [Mom: how old are you, Jace?] 3. [Mom: and where do you live?] California. [Mom: and what's your favorite book?] *The Moffats*. [Mom: and why is *The Moffats* your favorite book?] ****inaudible****

Child6: Hello, my name is Jen. I am 8 years old. And I live in Corona. My favorite book is *The Knight at Dawn* by Mary Pope Osborne. And I like it because Jack and Annie get stuck in a little cavern in where suits of armor are and then they find a way out and then a knight saves them at the end.

Child7: [Mom: what's your name?] Dixie. [Mom: and how old are you?] 4. [Mom: where are you from?] Texas. [Mom: and Dixie, what is your favorite book?] *The Turnip* [Mom: and who's the author?] Jan Brett. [Mom: Jan Brett. What's your favorite part about that book?] Where the chick is on top of the turnip and then the people think the chicken but it's really the bears.

Child8: Hi, I'm Nina. I'm 9 years old. I live in Altadena, California. My favorite book is *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. I like Lucy because she's kind.

Child9: Hi, my name is Lucas. I'm 7 years old. My favorite book is *The Lord of the Rings*. What I like about it is that it's mostly action and battles.

Sarah: Thank you kids. I love hearing your recommendations as always. Don't forget you can check out the Show Notes for this episode of the podcast at ReadAloudRevival.com/104, and if you want to request an invitation for the next time



we open Premium Membership, which is happening in August, go to RARMembership.com to ask for an invitation there. Until next time, go make meaningful and lasting connections with your kids through books.