



The Power of Joyful Reading

by ERIC LITWIN and DR. GINA PEPIN

When young children are immersed in joyful and engaging shared reading experiences throughout the day, they learn to love books, enjoy reading, and see themselves as readers. They also gain reading skills and knowledge, which prepares them for reading instruction.



LITERACY CHAMPION: ERIC LITWIN

A former third-grade teacher and the number-one *New York Times* best-selling original author of the Pete the Cat series, as well as the author of *The Nuts* and *Groovy Joe*. Eric's books have sold over 13 million copies, been translated into 17 languages, and won 26 literacy awards. Learn more at: www.ericlitwin.com



LITERACY CHAMPION: GINA PEPIN

Gina Pepin holds an Ed.D. in Teacher Leadership and an M.A. in Reading, Literacy, and Assessment. She is the 2018–2019 Upper Michigan Teacher of the Year. She is currently a K–3 reading teacher in Escanaba, Michigan, and an online instructor of graduate literacy courses at GCU and NMU. Learn more at: www.ginapepin.com

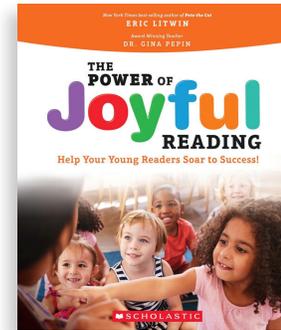
One to Know: Joyful Reading

Young children thrive when they are immersed in joyful and engaging reading experiences, in the classroom, with caring teachers, throughout the day, day after day, all year long. Those experiences are seamlessly woven into daily routines, activities, and lessons, building students' basic reading skills and knowledge, which prepares them for successful reading instruction. Best of all, they lead students to love books, enjoy reading, and see themselves as readers.

What to Do

Immersing students in joyful and engaging reading experiences prepares them for successful reading instruction. It also leads students to love books, enjoy reading, and see themselves as readers. Joyful reading helps young children develop their full language, cognitive, and social emotional potential. Joyful reading gives you what you need to transform your classroom into a “reading playground”—a space in which children read along to, sing to, dance to, and celebrate words and texts.

We provide a step-by-step guide to our Shared Joyful Reading Approach in our book [*The Power of Joyful Reading, Help Young Readers Soar to Success*](#). We make reading experiences more joyful and engaging by getting the students involved. Then we weave these incredible reading experiences into our daily routines, activities, and lessons throughout the day.



Using the Shared Joyful Reading Approach to Promote Fluency

Let’s demonstrate what we mean by our Joyful Shared Reading Approach. Confident readers are often fluent readers—they know how to read accurately with expression at an adequate speed (not too fast or slow)—and read with ease and flow. There are many joyful reading activities that promote fluency, such as:

Literacy Performances

Invite your children to “perform” a book, song, or poem. As they rehearse and read out loud they are practicing fluent reading – and the other children benefit as well hearing and seeing the words come to life. Nursery rhymes, predictable books, and songs work particularly well; and funny texts are always a plus!

Jump Rope Rhymes

Traditional jump rope rhymes and hand-clapping chants are naturals for fluent reading. Pick from the classics such as “Miss Mary Mack,” “Patty Cake,” and “Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear.” Reciting rhymes and chants provide a great brain break—don’t forget to weave them into your lessons throughout the day.

Voice Jars

All kids, young and old alike, enjoy “voice jars.” Students choose a “voice” from the jar—a person, place or thing written on the card—and read aloud a text in that voice! The text they are invited to read in their chosen voice may be individual numbers, letter names, letter sounds, phrases, or passages. Students can read the text individually in their chosen voice or chorally. Either way, they will have a blast—and become better readers.

More to Know and Do

- Our book *[The Power of Joyful Reading. Help Young Readers Soar to Success](#)* can get you started. It has a powerful accompanying resource website with research, support materials, and ready-to-use make and takes. Additionally, you'll find free songs, poems, jump-rope rhymes, hand-clapping chants, and stories at The Learning Groove. Created by Eric Litwin and Michael Levine, it has over 100 pieces you can choose from: <https://www.thelearninggroove.com/>
- Dr. Gina and Eric Litwin are available together and individually to provide keynotes and workshops to help inspire teachers and share. Visit their websites for details!
- Don't miss this [review](#).