

## What is Literacy?

Literacy is the ability to develop and communicate understanding in a variety of ways, including speaking, listening, reading, writing and viewing.



## Supporting Literacy at Every Age

Even though school is an important place for adolescents to build literacy skills, families and community members have key roles to play. There are a number of simple, but important, ways to support literacy in the middle grades.

[www.maine.gov/doe/literacy-for-me](http://www.maine.gov/doe/literacy-for-me)



## What is *Literacy for ME*?

*Literacy for ME* is a statewide effort led by the Maine Department of Education with involvement by community partners to help all Maine citizens develop strong literacy skills.

## How to Get Involved

**If you would like to be involved with *Literacy for ME*, here are some things you can do.**

- Share this brochure with family and friends. Encourage them to support literacy as well.
- Visit the *Literacy for ME* website for more literacy resources - [www.maine.gov/doe/literacy-for-me](http://www.maine.gov/doe/literacy-for-me)
- Contact the Maine Department of Education for additional information at 207-624-6600.



## Contact Your Local Partner

Insert your local contact information here

## Tips for Building Literacy With Adolescents



Adolescents: Grade 6 to Grade 8



An Initiative of the Maine Department of Education  
[www.maine.gov/doe/literacy-for-me](http://www.maine.gov/doe/literacy-for-me)

# Adolescents

## Grade 6–Grade 8



Keeping adolescents motivated to continue developing strong literacy skills is crucial. Although peer groups become increasingly important, family and community members still play an important role in helping middle school students build literacy skills. The following tips can help increase adolescent literacy engagement and enjoyment.

### **Talk with adolescents and show them how adults talk with one another.**

- Show your interest by asking about their music and hobbies.
- Ask adolescents to recommend titles for you to read, listen to, or watch. Talk to them about their suggestions.
- Let them see you talking with others to solve problems or make requests.
- Encourage adolescents to practice using new words they encounter to build their vocabulary.

### **Help adolescents cement the reading habits they will carry with them the rest of their lives.**

- Continue to be a role model. Let adolescents see you reading and using the library.
- Encourage adolescents to read a variety of different materials. Series books, fan fiction, blogs and graphic novels are great sources of information and entertainment.
- Talk with adolescents about what they read and share what you are reading.
- Help adolescents learn to use the internet safely to explore topics of interest.
- English learners should continue to read things in their most comfortable language.

### **Support and encourage writing for a variety of different purposes.**

- Encourage journaling, writing poetry, blogging and creating comic books.
- Model using writing for real purposes. Send thank you notes and emails, write letters, keep a journal, or write out directions for a task.
- If a student you know is an avid writer, ask to see a finished piece and talk about the things you liked.
- Talk with adolescents about writers they like and encourage them to identify what makes the writing appealing to them.