

FLASHLIGHT READING

"I think I've hit upon the perfect plan for encouraging the kids to read. At least for a parent. I forbid them to read in bed after their bedtime and then I carefully looked the other way when they naturally did. They LOVED to read ... thought they were REALLY getting away with something." ~ N. Kettmann

Materials: book, flashlight

The image that comes to mind when thinking about a child who truly loves literature, is that of a child reading in bed, using a flashlight. Mom and Dad have said good night and have closed the bedroom door. The child waits motionless for a minute or two. Once the coast is clear, the book and flashlight are pulled out from their hiding places. A quick flip of the sheet over the head (it subdues the light, you know) and on goes the flashlight. The time for sleep has already been declared, but the story is so captivating that it cannot be put down. Whether or not your child is a bookworm of this magnitude, flashlight reading will most definitely ignite the spark of loving literature.

When your child is getting ready for bed, make choosing a book part of the bedtime routine. Tell them that you'll be reading together in a special way ... using a flashlight. Take a little time to explain how to properly use a flashlight to younger children. Simple safety tips such as never shining the light in anyone's eyes and turning the flashlight off when not in use can be discussed. Either dim or turn the room lights off and read the story using the flashlight as the primary light source. Older children might want to do this on their own, but reading together at all ages has definite educational value. When the story is over, assess their comprehension of the characters by making character shadows on the wall. Tell your child to have the character do or say something from the story.