

## 5 Tips on Reading Aloud

Reading aloud to children of all ages is one of the best ways to help them develop a love of books. It can also be a special way to spend time with your child.

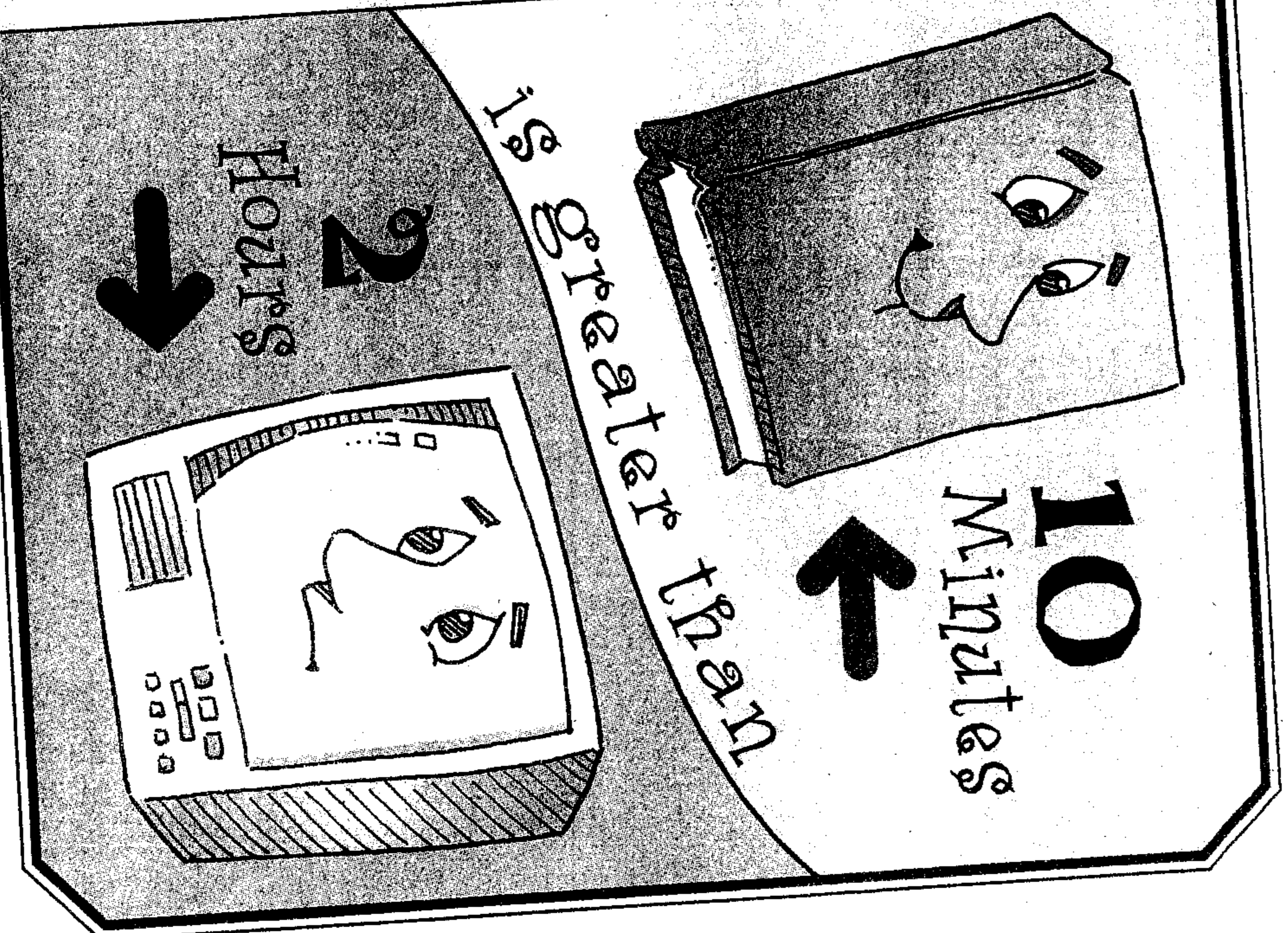
According to Jim Trelease, author of *The Read-Aloud Handbook*, there are five things you shouldn't do:

1. Don't read stories that you don't enjoy yourself. Your dislike will show in the reading.
2. Don't get too comfortable. If you lie down, you're likely to get drowsy. If you slouch, your voice will lose its energy.
3. Don't be surprised if your child interrupts with a lot of questions. Answer those questions right away. "There is no time limit for reading a book," Trelease points out. But there is a time limit on a child's curiosity. Answer the questions and move on.
4. Don't confuse quantity with quality. Your child will remember 10 minutes of reading far longer than he will remember two hours of television.
5. Don't try to compete with TV. Tell your child the TV will be turned off at a certain time every evening—whether you have read-aloud time or not. Ask if he wants to hear you read. If he doesn't, that's fine—but the television doesn't come back on.

## Keep Track!

Do you know how much time you and your child read each week? Keep track of your activities for a week, then talk about what you've charted. Are you watching more television than you'd like? Does reading seem to be a lower priority than other activities?

Many families have reading time every day. Sometimes, everyone can read silently. Other times, you can read aloud with your child. Or she can read aloud to you.



## You Set the Example

Children who see their parents reading usually grow up to be readers themselves. This is one of those times when actions really do speak louder than words. Talk with your child about *why* you're reading—for information, to check out something you think you know—or just for fun.

## Make Reading Easy, Fun

If the TV is easy to reach, but books are on a high shelf, you can guess how your kids will spend their time. Make sure books, magazines and newspapers are easy to get.

Reading in unusual places also adds to the fun. Look for unusual places children can read. You might consider:

- Outside, under a shady tree. In a sandbox or hammock. At a nearby park.
- Under a tent made by tossing a sheet over a clothesline or table.
- In the car during road trips or traffic delays. Keep books in your car's glove box.
- Sitting on a blanket spread on the floor for an indoor reading picnic.

