

Amazon dispatches Alexa to tell stories to kids

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Amazon on Tuesday said that its Alexa digital assistant can now be a reading buddy for children, coaching them when they get stuck on words.

A "Reading Sidekick" feature gives people with Echo smart speakers and subscriptions to Amazon Kids+ service a way to help children ages between 5 and 10 years of age become better readers, according to the Seattle-based internet firm.

Alexa will read stories aloud to children while also encouraging them to participate.

"With the arrival of Reading Sidekick, we are hopeful we can make reading fun for millions of kids to set them up for a lifetime of learning and a love of reading," said Marissa Mierow, head of Alexa Education and Learning.

"Alexa provides a welcoming, no-judgment zone and is always ready to help and to read."

Subscriptions to the Kids+ service offering books, movies, TV shows, educational apps, and games start at \$3 monthly.

With Sidekick, children can tell Alexa it is time to read, mentioning the title of the book in hand and telling the [digital assistant](#) whether they want many or few turns reading aloud.

As children read, Alexa praises progress and offers prompts when they are stuck on words, according to Amazon.

If a child continues struggling, Alexa shifts to a read-after-me mode.

Parents using the service will be able to see how much time their [children](#) spend reading and which books, Amazon said.

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