

BUILDING READERS®

How Families Can Help Children Get Ready to Read

PHELPS COUNTY R-III

THEME: DON'T BUG ME, I'M READING!

Keep your child in mind when choosing books

Helping your child choose books to take home from the library can be overwhelming. With so many great titles to choose from, how do you know which ones are right for your child?

The good news is that there's no "right" answer. As long as the books are age-appropriate, they're likely to be a good fit for your child. Keep these tips in mind when searching the shelves:

- **Think about your child's interests.** Does he love trucks, dinosaurs or space? Look for books that are related to his topic of interest.
- **Take a quick glance.** If the cover of a book grabs your attention, skim through it. Is it fun and exciting?
- **Look at the pictures.** Are the illustrations creative? Will they inspire interesting conversations with your child?



Remember, not every book will become your child's favorite. The important thing is that you keep reading together!

Source: B. Hearne and D. Stevenson, "A Commonsense Guide to Finding Books," Reading Rockets, niswc.com/rightbook.

"There is no substitute for books in the life of a child."

—Mary Ellen Chase

Introduce your child to letter sounds

Words are a mixture of sounds—the word *dog* is made up of the sounds *duh*, *aw* and *guh*. Understanding this will prepare your child to sound out words once she's reading.

Even if she's not aware of the sounds that letters make yet, there are still things that you can do together to help her make the connection. To help your child strengthen her language skills:

- **Play with words.** Singing songs is a great way to have fun with language while listening to the sounds letters make.
- **Make time for rhymes.** Classics like Dr. Seuss and Mother Goose books are terrific because they're full of rhymes, which emphasize similarities in letter sounds.
- **Talk with your child.** Hearing the sounds in spoken words leads to reading words.

Encourage your child to explain drawings to you

When your child scribbles as part of his drawing, encourage him to explain what he has "written."



This promotes reading and writing as your child learns that he can express himself with written words.

Encourage scribbling by asking your child to draw a picture and "write" about what he's created under the picture.

Source: "Helping Your Child Become a Reader," U.S. Department of Education, niswc.com/explainedrawings.

Read and write on the go

Reading and writing are portable activities. Take books and writing supplies whenever you leave home. Whether he's on an errand with you or visiting a friend, your child can read or write wherever you go.



Source: "Reading Tips for Parents," Colorado State Library, niswc.com/ontheho.

Find creative ways to review the alphabet

Learning the names of letters and the sounds they make is essential for your child's reading readiness. To make learning the ABCs fun:



- **Have a letter of the day.** On "B" day, you can eat bananas, bounce balls and sing songs like "Baby Beluga."
- **Go on letter scavenger hunts.** Look for items that begin with each letter of the alphabet!
- **Play games** using alphabet blocks.

Source: "Learn the Alphabet," essortment.com, niswc.com/creativealphabet.

Review numbers to strengthen both reading and math readiness skills

Building a strong foundation for reading involves more than teaching your child words and letters. It's important to help your child read numbers, too. Not only will this prepare her for reading, it will also boost her math readiness skills.



To review numbers with your child:

- **Find page numbers** while you are reading together. She can also look for numbers in what you're reading, such as in the newspaper.
- **Look for numbers everywhere you go.** See if your child can point out numbers on street signs or at the grocery store.
- **Count objects.** This helps develop one-to-one correspondence, which links the abstract idea of numbers to specific, visible items. You might count the legs on the table or the number of flowers she sees while you're on a walk together.

Source: "Helping Children Learn the Things They Need to Know," Parent Education Resources, niswc.com/readingnumbers.

Good listeners can become good readers

Learning to listen actively—to absorb information and process it as it is heard—is an important part of learning to be a good reader. The way you read with your child can make a difference.

To help your child become an active listener:

- **Stop every so often** and talk about what you're reading. How do the characters feel? What are they going to do next?
- **Ask your child to tell you** what happened in the story using her own words. Go back through the story and look at the pictures. Have her describe what is happening in each picture.



Source: "Every Child Reading: An Action Plan of the Learning First Alliance," American Educator, niswc.com/everychildreading.



Q: My preschooler always fusses during story time. How can I make him enjoy it?

A: You can't "make" your child enjoy reading, but you can make reading enjoyable! Start by sharing stories when he's in a good mood. Find books he likes and read them as often as he wants. If he gets antsy or distracted, take a break until he's ready to focus again. Then try reading a new book.

Do you have a question about reading? Email readingadvisor@parent-institute.com.

To promote reading, read!

Children learn by example, so set a good one for your child! To set a good reading example and encourage your child to read:

- **Keep books,** newspapers and magazines around the house.
- **Let your child see you** read for pleasure.
- **When it's appropriate,** share what you're reading with your child.
- **Check out books for yourself** when you go to the library with your child.



Books to delight your early reader

- **100 Animals on Parade** by Masayuki Sebe (Kids Can). A band of 100 bears is leading a parade through town. Can you find all 100? What about the 100 pigs that are up next, or the 100 carpenter beetles? There are plenty of fun things to spy in this book!
- **The Yellow Tutu** by Kirsten Bramsen (Random House). When Margo receives a bright yellow tutu for her birthday, she puts it on her head and transforms into a dancing ray of sunshine!
- **When Lions Roar** by Robie H. Harris (Orchard Books). What do you do when a big dog barks, monkeys screech and things get scary? One little boy has a routine that is just the right thing to calm him down.



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