

# BUILDING READERS®

How Families Can Help Children Get Ready to Read

PHELPS COUNTY R-III

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

## A love for books is the first step on the path to reading success

Research shows that the strongest readers are those who *want* to read, not those who are forced to read. Focus on books and reading as something to be loved, not necessarily something to be learned.

To promote a love of books and reading:

- **Read to your child** every day.
- **Make reading entertaining.** Use a different voice for each character.
- **Follow your child's lead.** Every child has her own attention span for listening to a story. Your child may only be able to manage five minutes now, but she will likely want more as she gets older.
- **Encourage your child to look at the pictures** and tell you what she thinks is happening.
- **Let your child take control** of the book. Let her hold it and turn the pages while you read.



**Source:** "Reading tips," Reach Out and Read National Center, [niswc.com/lovereadingtips](http://niswc.com/lovereadingtips).

*"Everything in the world exists in order to end up in a book."*

—Stéphane Mallarmé

## Put some excitement into read alouds

There's more to reading aloud than just reading. It's important to show your child that reading is enjoyable.

To do this:

- **Choose books your child will like.** Find books that match her interests.
- **Take your time with each book.** Let your child skim through pictures and ask questions. Read with emotion.
- **Attend reading events.** Sometimes it's fun to read in groups. Check your local library's schedule of events for story times or other special events.
- **Talk about what you read.** Ask your child questions, such as, "Why do you think she did that?" "What was your favorite part? Why?" Answer your child's questions, too. Show how much you like reading!

**Source:** "Help Your Preschooler Get Ready To Read," Oakland Public Library, [niswc.com/readingexciting](http://niswc.com/readingexciting).

## Create a musical picture book

Make a book of songs with your child by writing the songs in *rebus* form. In this type of rebus, you place small pictures next to many of the words.

That way, your child can use the pictures to figure out the words.

In a rebus of "Mary Had a Little Lamb," draw a picture of a girl next to the word "Mary." Write the words "had a little lamb," and draw a lamb.

**Source:** D.M. Nielsen, *Teaching Young Children, Preschool-K*, Corwin Press.



## A friendly atmosphere will entice your child to read

Add to your child's pleasure at reading time by creating an inviting atmosphere in which to read! Set up a reading nook in your home. Gather comfortable pillows and blankets, your child's books—and get cozy at story time!



## Talking assists your child's reading

When you talk with your child, you are helping him practice his oral (spoken) language skills. And strong readers need to have strong oral language skills.

Your child needs to hear lots of words at home in order to develop his language skills. Hearing lots of new words will help him learn to figure out what those words mean by the way you use them in conversation.

**Source:** L. Lynn, "Language-Rich Home and School Environments Are Key to Reading Success," Harvard Education Letter, [niswc.com/language-rich-home](http://niswc.com/language-rich-home).



## Ask questions to develop your child's higher order thinking skills

Advanced thinking skills will help your child in school and in life. When your child builds her critical thinking skills, she will be able to analyze, critique and evaluate information that she reads or hears. Give your child some practice by asking her questions in different situations.

For example, when reading together, ask:

- **What do you think** will happen next?
- **Why do you think** the story ended the way it did?
- **Why do you think** the author chose to include a particular event or element in the story?



When going somewhere new, ask:

- **How is this place** different from somewhere you've been before?
- **Does this place remind you** of somewhere we've been?

**Source:** C.A. Simon, "How To Encourage Higher Order Thinking," ReadWriteThink, niswc.com/higherorderthinking.

## Bring books alive during read alouds

Reading aloud effectively involves capturing your child's imagination. The more involved he is in the story, the more he'll enjoy it!

When you read aloud, try to:

- **Set a regular,** daily reading time with your child. It will become a special time of day that your child looks forward to!
- **Start by looking** at the cover. Read the title and the name of the author. Ask your child to predict what might happen in the story based on the cover image.
- **Allow plenty of time** to look at the illustrations. Talk about the things in the pictures and what's going on.



- **Talk about the story.** Have conversations before you read, while you read and after you finish the book.

**Source:** "RIF's Guide to Reading Aloud to Your Children," Reading is Fundamental, niswc.com/rifreadaloud.



**Q:** My child's teacher asks parents to send the children to class "ready to learn." But what does that mean?

**A:** Preparing your child to be "ready to learn" means giving her the things she needs to do her best. For preschoolers, that includes enough sleep, a healthful breakfast and the proper supplies. It also includes being enthusiastic about school so she will be, too!

Do you have a question about reading? Email [readingadvisor@parent-institute.com](mailto:readingadvisor@parent-institute.com).

## Use mail to excite your child about reading and writing

Receiving his own mail is exciting for your child! Ask relatives and family friends to send him notes through the mail. Read the letters with him and then ask him to dictate a response. Your child can also draw a picture before it goes into an envelope.



Not only will your child learn about some practical uses for reading and writing, he will also connect with people important to him.

**Source:** K.L. Keith, "Encouraging the Young Reader," niswc.com/readingmail.

## Books to delight your early reader

- **Mustache Baby** by Bridget Heos (Clarion). When Billy is born, he has a mustache—but is it a good-guy mustache or a bad-guy mustache? As time goes on, his family finds out!
- **What Shall We Play?** by Sue Heap (Candlewick). Lily May wants to play fairies, but Matt wants to play trees and Martha wants to play cars. The friends learn to compromise so everyone gets to play.
- **Giraffes Can't Dance** by Giles Andreae (Cartwheel). Gerald the Giraffe just wants to dance, but all of his friends say that giraffes can't dance and laugh at him when he tries. But when he hears a different song, Gerald finds his sense of rhythm.



### Building Readers®

How Families Can Help Get Children Ready to Read

Publisher: Phillip Wherry.  
Editor: Stacey Marin.

Copyright © 2015, The Parent Institute® (a division of NIS, Inc.)  
P.O. Box 7474, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7474  
1-800-756-5525, ISSN: 1533-3299  
[www.parent-institute.com](http://www.parent-institute.com)