

Ready, Set, Read!

Tips for Reading with Your Child

Reading with children boosts literacy and language skills, and cultivates a lifelong love of reading and learning.

BEFORE READING

Choose a place to read. Find a quiet spot away from distractions. Make it comfortable and inviting. Have books nearby and enough light for reading. **Why?** Having a special place to read signals to children that it's time to focus.

Preview the book. Look at the cover and read the title and back-cover text. Ask children what they notice and wonder. Provide information they may need to make sense of the text. Skim the text and pronounce and define unfamiliar words. **Why?** Previewing a book builds background knowledge and sparks children's curiosity and anticipation.

DURING READING

Decide who will read. Read aloud, ask children to read to you, or take turns reading sections of a book. **Why?** Reading aloud builds engagement and listening skills; letting children read to you builds confidence and skills.

Read with expression. Use different voices for different characters. Change your tone, pace, and volume depending on what is happening in the text. **Why?** Reading with expression engages listeners, adds to enjoyment, and provides a good model for young readers.

AFTER READING

Talk about the book! Invite children to share what they liked, learned, wondered, or what surprised them. Encourage them to retell or summarize the text or story. **Why?** Talking about reading—including retelling and summarizing—is a chance to share ideas, make connections, and clarify understanding.

Let's Have Fun!

Reading Activities for Thinking Beyond the Book

These engaging activities build reading, writing, and speaking skills while helping children think about reading in creative ways.

SAY IT!

Make a family Word Wall in a central area of your home and encourage everyone to add to it. You'll need a large piece or a pad of paper and a pencil or pen. Have family members write down new words and their definitions. Keep score! Award points for each word and bonus points when someone uses the words in conversation.

WRITE IT!

Encourage children to write

- a letter to the author of or favorite character from a story.
- a review of a book they just read.
- a recommendation to classmates about a favorite book.

SHOW IT!

Encourage children to express themselves about the reading by

- creating a new cover for a book they just read.
- drawing a picture of a favorite character, setting, or event from a book.
- acting out or retelling a favorite scene from a story.

“When books are part of the family routine, children's language skills grow.”

—American Pediatric Association

