

# Babies

It's never too early to read and learn with your child!

- **Talk.** Talk to your baby all day long about what you are doing and feeling.
- **Sing and rhyme.** Find a book of nursery rhymes at your library. Or just make up songs as you go through your day!
- **Cuddle up!** Hold your baby on your lap while you read. Point out the pictures and talk about them.

What to look for in a book:

- **Bold shapes and simple words.** Babies see simple, large pictures and designs with bright colors best.
- **Sturdy board books.** Babies learn by touching and moving--and by putting things in their mouths! Look for books that have different textures to feel and pages that will not be hurt by a little biting.



# Toddlers

Toddlers are explorers! Between one and two, children are all about action.

- **Get moving.** Let toddlers move around during the story--a toddler is learning even on the go.
- **Draw.** Keep crayons and paper out at home. Toddlers begin to learn to write by scribbling and drawing.



- **Look for letters.** Show your child the letters in her name and point out letters and words all around you.

What to look for in a book:

- **Repetition.** Your child may have a favorite book he wants to hear over and over again. This is how toddlers learn!
- **Action.** Books with animal sounds to imitate or flaps to lift get children involved in reading.

# Preschoolers

Between three and four, children are busy playing and learning.

- **Ask and listen.** When you read, ask questions about what is going on in the story.
- **Point it out.** Point to the words as you read aloud to help kids connect how words look with how they sound.
- **Play.** Pretend play helps children learn language and problem-solving skills. Make a blanket fort or have a tea party with your child.



What to look for in a book:

- **Stories.** Try some longer books with exciting adventures and interesting characters.
- **Alphabet and counting books.** Look for fun books to introduce ideas like shapes, opposites, numbers, and letters.

# Kindergarteners

By ages five or six, children have learned a lot of what they need to know to start reading and writing. They are beginning to put it all together.

- **Name everything.** Use lots of different words with your child and talk about what words mean.
- **Ask lots of questions.** Let your child tell the story with you by looking at the pictures, and predicting what will happen next.
- **Play with words and letters.** Help your child begin to build words with letters on blocks or magnets.



What to look for in a book:

- **Variety.** Try out lots of different kinds of books including non-fiction, poetry, and graphic novels.
- **Choice.** Let your child choose books and ask your librarian to recommend books that are not too easy and not too hard.

# You are your child's first teacher.

Get started at your local public library! A library card is free and lets you borrow books, music, movies, and more for everyone in the family.

Public libraries offer free, fun programs called storytimes for babies, toddlers, and preschoolers that help young children enjoy books and the library. There are many more programs for older kids too, and adults! Contact your public library to find out all that they offer.



For rhymes and songs to share with your child, visit the Storyblocks website at [www.storyblocks.org](http://www.storyblocks.org).

For more ideas about early learning, visit the Earlier Is Easier website at [www.earlieriseasier.org](http://www.earlieriseasier.org).

## Things to try:

- Talk with your child often from the day she is born.
- Speak with your child in the language you feel most comfortable speaking. Children can learn the skills they need for school and life in any language.
- Read with your child every day and talk with your child about what you read.
- Laugh and have fun with your child every day! Children learn best when they feel safe and loved.



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Research shows that many simple activities help kids be ready to learn to read and write when they start kindergarten. You help your child learn every day by **talking, singing, reading, writing, and playing** together from the very beginning.

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# Getting Ready to Read



Ideas for reading, playing and learning in your child's first six years.