

Reading Lasts Forever: Ways to Develop a Literate Home

Babies and Toddlers

Now is the time to talk to your child about everything. Your child hears your voice and the patterns of language. Best of all, you have your child's attention!

- Give books as gifts.
- Sing and play music.
- Describe feelings.
- Say nursery rhymes.
- Snuggle and read.
- Read aloud from any book.
- Describe things around the room.
- Listen to your baby make sounds.
- Repeat the sounds, create patterns, and add new sounds.
- Go to different places (store, park, zoo, library, beach, etc.).
- Talk about what you see.
- Mess around with drawing pictures (in applesauce, with cereal).
- Make symbols (smiley face, heart, etc.) to communicate.
- Respect your child's efforts to communicate.
- Value your child's learning.
- Read board books, point to the pictures, and name the parts of the book.
- Have vision and hearing checked during regular medical visits.
- Play "pat-a-cake" and "peek-a-boo."
- Set up a book nook (reading area) of durable books.

Look for books like these at a bookstore or your public library:

- *Animal Crackers: A Delectable Collection of Pictures, Poems, and Lullabies for the Very Young* by Jane Dyer
- *My Very First Mother Goose* edited by Iona Opie
- *Goodnight Moon* by Margaret Wise Brown

Preschoolers

Your preschooler loves to hear stories and often imitates your reading. Children this age are aware of print around them and are beginning to draw and write what they see and hear.

- Have conversations...talk, listen, discuss.
- Use pencils, markers, paints, or crayons to make pictures or symbols.
- Visit bookstores.
- Let your child turn the pages and point to the words and pictures when you read.
- Take your child to the library.
- Go to story hours at your local library or bookstore.
- Play with puzzles, blocks and games.
- Keep a bag filled with books and story tapes in the car.
- Listen to your child's ideas.
- Let your child see you read for pleasure.
- Reread "old favorite" stories.
- Use letter and number magnets on the refrigerator.
- Have vision and hearing checked during regular medical visits.
- Listen to your child retell a story, activity, or adventure.
- Give books and magazine subscriptions as gifts.
- Say, sing, clap, or dance to rhythms and nursery rhymes.
- Read a recipe to make a special treat.
- Label belongings (chair, hat, desk, etc.).
- Keep reading materials in every room.

Look for books like these at a bookstore or your public library:

- *Brown Bear, Brown Bear* by Bill Martin, Jr.
- *The Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle
- *The Napping House* by Audrey Wood

Beginning Readers

Your child knows many letters of the alphabet and some letter sounds, can recognize some words in print, loves to hear a story, and often retells a story.

- Have conversations ...talk, listen, and discuss.
- Listen to your child read and celebrate the effort. Remember that not all words can be sounded out.
- Stay in contact with your child's school and teacher.
- Make sure each family member has a library card.
- Teach respect for books.
- Play board games.
- Take turns reading parts of a story.
- Display and celebrate reading and writing activities.
- Continue to check vision and hearing.
- Keep reading materials in every room.
- Match and write letters and sounds to make words.
- Set aside a special time and place to read.
- Read aloud - old favorites, new stories and chapter books.
- Celebrate print in the environment (road signs, cereal boxes, etc.).
- Encourage retelling stories using drama, music, dance, and art.
- Give books and magazine subscriptions as gifts. (It's a great time for a picture dictionary!)
- Play word games (alphabetical order, word searches, rhyming, crosswords, etc.).
- Show concepts of print such as front, back, top to bottom, left to right.
- Assist your child in writing activities such as diaries, journals, thank you notes, etc.

Look for books like these at a bookstore or your public library:

- *The Mitten* by Jan Brett
- *Henry and Mudge* by Cynthia Rylant
- *On Market Street* by Anita Lobel

Developing Readers

At this stage your child is developing word fluency and a sight vocabulary. Your child is also able to read some books independently by using phonics and comprehension strategies such as: sounding out words, using picture clues, reading on, rereading, predicting words, and seeing if the words make sense.

- Have conversations ...talk, listen, and discuss.
- Help your child recognize and use standard spelling.
- Help your child use the reading strategies listed above when you read together.
- Keep reading materials in each room.
- Write in a diary or journal each day.
- Play reading/writing word games.
- Take turns reading aloud.
- Set aside a time and place to read.
- Make reading a family tradition.
- Continue to check vision and hearing.
- Give books and magazine subscriptions as gifts.
- Take your child to the library for books and special programs.
- Set aside a time and place for homework.
- Display and celebrate reading and writing activities.
- Stay in contact with your child's school and teacher.
- Use reading and writing for different purposes (writing letters, reading for pleasure or information, following directions, etc.).
- Keep resources available (dictionary, encyclopedia, etc.).

Look for books like these at a bookstore or your public library:

- *Where the Sidewalk Ends* by Shel Silverstein
- *Owl Moon* by Jane Yolen
- *Crinkleroot* by Jim Arnosky

Fluent and Independent Readers

Your child has learned the basic skills of reading. These skills are used to read and understand new materials. Readers at this level are able to read more critically and to self-monitor their reading to make sure it makes sense. They also enjoy reading different genres (types of writing) and often have a favorite genre. They are able to communicate thoughts, ideas, and information through speaking and writing.

- Discuss what you are reading.
- Join or form a parent/child book club.
- Keep resources available (dictionary, encyclopedia, atlas, newspaper, etc.).
- Keep reading materials in every room.
- Keep reading as a family tradition.
- Continue to monitor vision and hearing.

- Give books and magazine subscriptions as gifts.
- Share and compare different genres (fiction, non-fiction, poetry, biography, etc.).
- Stay in contact with your child's school and teacher.
- Write in different forms (lists, letters, journals, diaries, etc.).
- View and discuss movies and plays based on books.
- Make choices of television shows to watch together.

Look for books like these at a bookstore or your public library:

- *Stone Fox* by John Reynolds Gardiner
- *Ella Enchanted* by Gail Carson Levine
- *Shiloh* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor

Grandparents

You have raised your family. Now you are supporting, perhaps even raising, your grandchild. Reading helps to keep you young, informed and entertained.

- Read a variety of genres.
- Write to your grandchildren and encourage them to write back to you.
- Keep reading as a family tradition.
- Read aloud to your grandchild.
- Keep a journal or diary.
- Visit museums and other local sites with your grandchild.
- Volunteer at your local school.
- Explore hobbies, crafts, or sports.
- Give books and magazine subscriptions as gifts.
- Tell, retell, and tape family stories.
- Take time to ask and answer questions.
- Keep a variety of reading materials in your home.
- Discuss current events with your grandchild.
- Contact centers for adult learning.

Look for books like these at a bookstore or your public library:

- *Grandmother Bryant's Pocket* by Jacqueline Briggs Martin
- *The Friends* by Kazumi Yumoto
- *Grandfather's Journey* by Allen Say

Multilingual Homes

You are fluent and literate in one or more languages and are learning to read and write in English. By sharing your culture and traditions, you add a richness to your community.

- Read to your child every day.
- Keep reading materials in your native language and English in your home.
- Use books on tape.
- Continue to check vision and hearing.
- Keep a journal.
- Stay in contact with your child's school and teacher. Take an interpreter if needed.
- Read and discuss stories from your native language and English. Talk about their similarities and differences.
- Write to your child and encourage responses.
- Visit the library for books and other resources.
- Share your culture and life experiences with others.

Look for books like these at a bookstore or your public library:

- *So Far From the Bamboo Grove* by Yoko Kawashima Watkins
- *Nursery Tales Around the World* by Judy Sierra
- *The Rooster's Gift* by Pam Conrad

Lifelong Readers

Congratulations! Reading daily is an important part of your lifestyle as you read for pleasure and for information. You communicate orally and in writing when sharing thoughts, ideas, and information.

- Keep reading and writing a tradition.
- Keep reading materials in every room of your home.
- Give books and magazine subscriptions as gifts.
- Listen to different kinds of music.
- Subscribe to magazines.
- Visit museums and other local sites.

- Keep a journal.
- Read a daily newspaper.
- Write for different purposes.
- Have a library card and use your local library.
- Contact centers for adult learning.