

Why is it important to read to my child?

Brain and language development:

Reading to your child is the best way to help them build language skills.

School success: The more words your child learns before kindergarten, the better prepared they will be for school.

Listening skills: Reading to your child helps them learn listening skills.

Imagination: Children learn about people, places, and things by listening to stories. Stories help them build their imagination.

Love of reading: When your child sees you excited about reading, they will be excited, too!

Where can I get books for my child?

You can check out books for free from your local library.

Find the public library closest to you by visiting New York Public Library's website:

www.nypl.org/locations



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Reading to Your Child



How do I read to my child?

Birth to 18 months

- ◆ Babies love to hear your voice and look at big pictures. Try books that have pictures of other babies. Or try books with sounds, puppets, or mirrors.
- ◆ Try small books that your baby can grab and hold on to. Let him or her try to turn the pages.
- ◆ It is normal for your baby to try to chew the book. Try books with thick cardboard pages that will last!
- ◆ Make reading fun. Point and name things on the page. Try to use different voices, hand gestures, and faces.



Read for as long as your child will pay attention. Story time should get longer as your child's attention span grows.



Make story time a routine. Read to your child at the same time each day.

18 to 24 months

- ◆ Try books that repeat words and phrases. Rhymes help toddlers learn the sounds that make up words.
- ◆ Children this age may ask to hear the same story many times. They may start filling in words or phrases as they hear them.
- ◆ Try books with 1 to 2 sentences on a page.
- ◆ Ask your toddler questions as you read: "What does the cow say?" "Where's your nose?"

2 to 3 years

- ◆ Try books that have flaps you can lift or textures you can feel.
- ◆ Try books about counting or books about feelings.
- ◆ Talk to your toddler about the pictures in the book. Help them understand how the story relates to them.

3 to 5 years

- ◆ Try books that teach ideas, like opposites. Try books that teach habits, like eating, bathing, or bedtime.
- ◆ Start to read longer picture books and chapter books with your child.
- ◆ Before you read, look at the cover and talk with your child about what the book might be about.
- ◆ Run your finger under the words while you read so your child can follow along.
- ◆ Children this age may ask a lot of questions during the story. This is how they learn!



Do you have older children? Ask your older child to join in and read to their younger brother or sister!