

A Picture, a Word, an Imagination Stirred

A Helpful Guide to Reading with Your Child



brought to you by



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Each day a story unfolds...

Dear Parents,

As innovators in childhood education, LeapFrog and KinderCare are driven by a passion to help children achieve their full potential. That's why we've teamed up to bring you a helpful guide to use as you introduce your child to the joys of reading. We know that spending a few minutes each day sharing a story furthers your child's interest in reading. Not only will regular reading increase your child's language comprehension and vocabulary, but there is a strong correlation between reading at home before they start school and later educational success. The added bonus? The time you spend reading with your child will be some of the most enjoyable and rewarding moments together.

Happy Reading!

From the LeapFrog and KinderCare Learning Teams

Be a reading model

Your own words and actions speak volumes. Children pay attention to everything. When your child sees you reading newspapers, magazines and books, he or she will understand the importance of reading and will want to read, too.

Reading to your child on a regular basis is by far the best way to encourage your budding reader. Here are some tips to make the most of your reading time:



Make reading a **relaxed, fun** activity.

Eliminate distractions such as television, music, and phones.



Establish a **routine time and place** for reading, when possible.

Invite your child to select books to read.



Before you begin a new book, engage your child's **imagination**. Read the book's title and ask your child what the story might be about.

Allow your child to hold the book, see the illustrations, and turn the pages.



Pause periodically to **ask questions** about the text to help your child develop comprehension.

Read with expression. Alter your voice for characters and become animated during exciting parts.



Read the **same books over and over** again. Children love repetition, and they delight in being able to "read" along when a book becomes well known to them.



Infants, 1-12 months

Early literacy begins at infancy. Reading with your newborn helps teach them to talk, learn and listen with confidence. That's why it's important to share books with them as much as possible. A calm environment can help your child stay focused, but don't be afraid to sit in the kitchen and turn pages while dinner's cooking. Allow your baby to hold the book, point out familiar objects, and turn pages. This encourages him or her to adopt the role of "reader" and become comfortable with books.

Did You Know?

Reading with your baby 30 minutes a day adds up to about **900 hours of reading time** by the time they reach age five. But if you limit reading to just 30 minutes a week, your child misses out on 770 hours of stories, tales and bonding over story time.

How to get the most from reading with your infant

What to expect

Tracks with their eyes while exploring with their hands and mouth.

Experiments with sounds and mimics your tone of voice used when reading.

Chooses a favorite book or page.

Shows enjoyment of patterns and rhymes with sounds, facial expressions and movements.

Points to pictures and turns pages—the beginning of interaction.

How you can help

Provide baby-friendly board or cloth books.

Use expressive and engaging tones to bring a character to life or introduce a new object.

Allow your child to select books and turn pages during reading. Invite them to set the pace and focus on certain pages.

Share books with phrases and rhymes that encourage anticipation and recognition of language patterns.

Support language development by repeating and building on your child's words. If your child says "bunny," extend the interaction to something like "That bunny is eating a carrot."





Toddlers, 1-2 years

When reading to your toddler, you're building the preliminary skills your child needs to learn before he will learn to read, like the difference between text and pictures, the direction of print, and beginning or ending stories. Encourage your little listener to name and describe objects in illustrations or photographs. Build curiosity by letting them turn the page to see what happens next.

Did You Know?

Infants who are read to regularly, starting at six months of age, benefit from a **40% increase in receptive vocabulary** by the time they're 18 months. Babies who aren't read to on a regular basis had only a 16% increase in receptive vocabulary.*

*Literacy Promotion in Primary Care Pediatrics: Can We Make a Difference? High, et al. Pediatrics. 2000.

How to get the most from reading with your toddler (ages 1-2)

What to expect

A restless spirit and ability to briefly focus.

Uses generic labels—calls a cow “doggie” or a train “truck.”

Begins to use labels and names with a rapidly building expressive vocabulary.

Hears and imitates different sounds.

Explores pictures.

How you can help

Find books that prompt participation and promote an active reading experience. These books will have mirrors, textures, pull-tabs, and other surprises.

Include non-fiction in your read-aloud time. Research shows that non-fiction often prompts more discussion between parent and child and can provide opportunities to clarify various word meanings.

Choose books with pictures of familiar objects, ideas, colors, and shapes. Take turns naming different objects to help recognize reading as a way to build vocabulary.

Choose rhyming books that help children delight in word play while building advanced reading skills.

Include wordless picture books that encourage children to focus on illustrations.





Toddlers, 2-3 years

The best way to foster a love of reading is to focus on the portion of a book that strikes a chord with your child. This allows toddlers to set their own agenda and pace. Most toddlers like to revisit particular sections, quickly flip through certain pages, or spend extra time examining the details on a single page.

Did You Know?

Children who experience an abundance of language in the form of conversation and read-aloud books hear

32 million more words

by the time they reach age four than children who haven't had a language-rich environment.*

*Hart, B., and T.R. Risley. 1996. *Meaningful differences in the everyday experience of young American children*. Baltimore: Brooks Publishing.

How to get the most from reading with your toddler (ages 2-3)

What to expect

How you can help

A recognition of certain letters, like the first letter of their name.

Provide ABC books that introduce letters, names, shapes, and objects to help build letter recognition skills.

An understanding that words are made up of letters, and text moves from left to right.

Occasionally point to words as they are read and identify letters in your toddler's name.

A realization that text and illustrations can make a story and help teach lessons.

Point out text and illustrations to help explain how they develop the story.

A personal connection with certain stories and sharing related experiences.

Choose stories that prompt consideration of the world around us. Observing how characters respond to certain situations can create new responses to new experiences.

Follows basic one- and two-step directions.

Find books that include simple calls-to-action like "touch your toes" to create listening and response.





Preschoolers, 3-4 years

To provide your preschoolers with a smooth transition through the reading stages, periodically introduce them to more challenging books during story time. Always give the option to return to easier material if the more advanced material is intimidating. Children who are pressured to advance often get less pleasure out of reading.

Did You Know?

Excessive TV-watching delays preschoolers' reading skills.

Children in "heavy" TV households are less likely to read.*

**Early Media Exposure: Implications for Learning. Rideout, Vandewater, Wartella. Children's Digital Media Center: Georgetown University, 2003.*

How to get the most from reading with your 3- to 4-year-old

What to expect

Communicates with more complex language.

Understands when problems arise and begins to devise solutions.

Experiments with alliteration and engages in language play, finger plays and silly stories.

Recognizes and attempts rhymes in poem and songs.

Begins to develop a sense of independence and budding friendships with other children.

How you can help

Choose books with child-like characters that display child-like feelings, allowing them to discuss their point of view comfortably.

Find stories built around a familiar problem. This provides an opportunity to learn and grow from similar experiences.

Choose books with humor, silliness, and surprises presented in visual ways. Include fables and fairytales with make-believe elements and plots that help foster imagination and creativity.

Introduce books with poetry that help children see how words with rhythm and rhyme can be playful and fun.

Find books with diverse characters experiencing familiar events to help them identify unique and consistent themes across humanity.



Build a Home Library

It's never too early to begin building a home library. Even the youngest family members need books to promote language and literacy development. And creating a home library doesn't have to break the bank. After all, it's not about quantity. A home library is about the quality and variety of books available for beginning readers.

Making time to read together and making reading a part of your child's daily routine will help promote a lifelong love of reading!



Tips for getting started

Choose books with words that are rhythmic to draw your child's interest in the sound of the story.

Include books with interesting photos, graphics and illustrations.

Look for sturdy books that withstand rough handling and mouthing (board books with heavy cardboard pages are ideal).

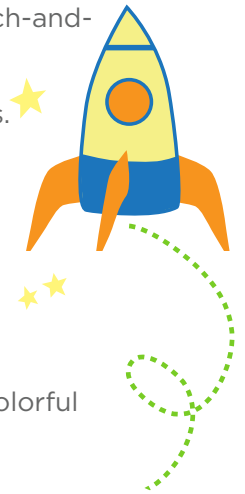
Include books that stimulate the senses, like touch-and-feel books and books with sounds.

Avoid books that mimic popular television shows.

Look for reputable authors and illustrators. Many of their classic stories are available in board book form.

Include at least one children's cookbook with photos and a book of easy science experiments.

Include books with poetry, simple rhymes, and colorful illustrations.



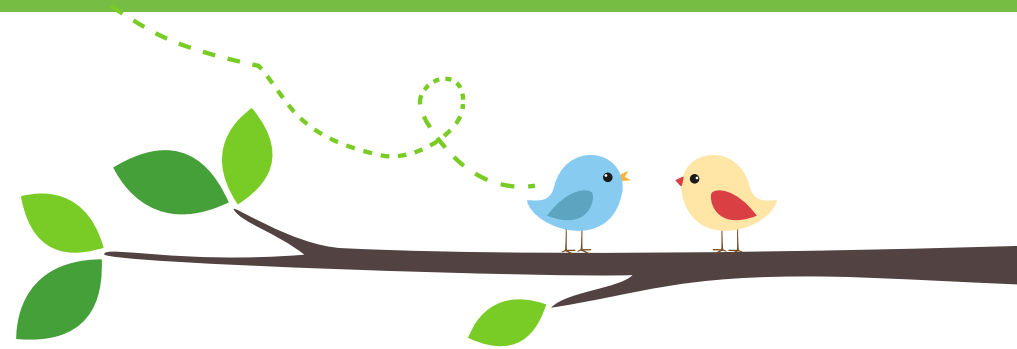
Did You Know?

An extensive international study based on 70,000 case studies in 27 countries showed that "Children growing up in homes with many books get **three years more schooling** than children from bookless homes, independent of their parents' education, occupation and class."*

*Family scholarly culture and educational success: Books and schooling in 27 nations. Mariah Evans, University of Nevada-Reno. Research in Social Stratification and Mobility. 2010.

KinderCare's Suggested Reading Lists

A world of books awaits your child. Below are some age-specific book suggestions to get you started. Choose a variety of genres such as fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and picture books to provide a range of experiences for your child. You can find many great reading lists online and, of course, your local library is a terrific resource for accessing books.



Infants

AUTHOR	TITLE
Byron Barton	<i>Planes</i>
Priddy Bicknell	<i>Happy Baby Friends</i>
DK Publishing	<i>Baby Animals</i>
Kin Eagle	<i>It's Raining, It's Pouring</i>
Lois Ehler	<i>Color Zoo</i>
Sophie Fatus	<i>The Silly Shapes</i>
Mem Fox	<i>Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes</i>
Melanie Gerth	<i>Ten Little Ladybugs</i>
Roberta Grobel Intrater	<i>Smile! (Baby Faces)</i>
Dorothy Kunhardt	<i>Pat the Bunny</i>

Preschoolers & Prekindergartners

AUTHOR	TITLE
Judi Barrett	<i>Animals Should Definitely Not Wear Clothing</i>
Janell Cannon	<i>Stellaluna</i>
Eric Carle	<i>The Very Hungry Caterpillar</i>
Lauren Child	<i>But Excuse Me, That is My Book</i>
Penelope Dyan	<i>There's an Alligator in My Closet!</i>
P.D. Eastman	<i>Are You My Mother?</i>
Don Freeman	<i>Corduroy</i>
Rachel Isadora	<i>Friends</i>
Crockett Johnson	<i>Harold and the Purple Crayon</i>
David Kirk	<i>Miss Spider's Tea Party</i>

Toddlers

AUTHOR	TITLE
Debbie Bailey	<i>My Family</i>
Margaret Wise Brown	<i>Big Red Barn</i>
Sandra Boynton	<i>Barnyard Dance!</i>
Child's Play	<i>The Wheels on the Bus</i>
Mem Fox	<i>Time for Bed</i>
Mirra Ginsburg	<i>Good Morning, Chick</i>
Diane James	<i>Time to Wake Up!</i>
Phyllis Root	<i>One Duck Stuck</i>
The Smithsonian	<i>Tiger Cub See-and-Do</i>
Henrietta and Paul Strickland	<i>Dinosaur Roar!</i>

Kindergartners to second graders

AUTHOR	TITLE
Tedd Arnold	<i>Shoo, Fly Guy!</i>
P.D. Eastman	<i>Go, Dog. Go!</i>
Else Holmelund Minarik	<i>A Kiss for Little Bear</i>
Althea Kontis	<i>Alpha Oops!</i>
Arnold Lobel	<i>Frog and Toad are Friends</i>
Herman Parish	<i>Amelia Bedelia Under Construction</i>
Ron Roy	<i>A to Z Mysteries series</i>
Cynthia Rylant	<i>Henry and Mudge: The First Book</i>
Richard Torrey	<i>Beans Baker's Best Shot</i>
David Wiesner	<i>Flotsam</i>



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LeapReader Junior

Their first steps to reading.
The perfect get-ready-to-read system—stories and songs come to life with every touch on the page.

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1-3
years

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2-5
years

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4-8
years





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