

# Reading and Singing



## Reading

Daily shared reading is the single most important activity you can do for your child's future reading success. Read every day with your baby! If you can't sit down with a book, just tell him/her a story while you are changing his/her diaper, rocking him/her or giving him/her a bath. Read all kinds of books – books with one or two words on a page, stories, poems, nursery rhymes, information books...everything!

### Birth to One Year

- Use a lot of animation in your voice and exaggerated facial expressions.
- Snuggle up with a book – reading together is a great time to bond!
- When you pick up a book, talk about the picture on the front cover and what you think the story will be about based on the title or picture.
- Point out any emotions or expressions on the faces of the characters in the story. "Oooh, he looks sad." "He is mad because he broke his toy!"
- Model the following interaction: Find a picture on a page. Ask your baby where it is. "Do you see the spider? Where is it?" Point to the spider and say "Here is the big, black spider." Eventually your baby will point to it.

### One to Two Years

- Don't insist on finishing the story – if your child crawls away you can read again later!
- Don't read too fast! Make reading a relaxed, enjoyable time.
- Talk about the pictures, what you see, the colors, size, shape, etc. and compare them. "That square is bigger than the circle." "The bear is brown and the dog is white!"
- Ask specific questions about feelings and actions. How does your child think a character in the book is feeling? Why do you think that? Point out the facial expressions and other clues in the pictures that help us know how the character is feeling.
- If your child throws the book or stands on it, just pick it up and say "Books are for reading."

## Reading

### Two to Three Years

- Always read with interest and enthusiasm — inspire a love of reading in your child! Kids love it when you change your tone of voice and use funny voices for the different characters.
- For your first time with a new book:
- Look at the front cover together and ask, “What do you think this story will be about?” Be sure and wait for an answer! Then ask, “Why do you think so?” (For children who are younger than two, point to the pictures on the cover and talk about what you think the story will be about.)
- Read the title of the story, tell the author and the illustrator and say, “The author writes the words and the illustrator draws the pictures!”
- If there is a part in the story that is suspenseful or you are not sure what the character will do or what will happen in the story, then stop for a minute and ask, “What do you think is going to happen?” Wait for an answer. “Let’s see.”
- When it is over, if she wants to read it again, go for it!
- Any time you read a book together, make sure and ask specific questions about feelings and actions. How does your child think a character in the book is feeling? How would your child react in the same situation? What does your child think will happen next?
- Ask your child about his/her favorite part — why was it the favorite?
- Run your fingers along the words so he/she knows you are reading left to right.

### Three to Four Years

- Let your child hold the book and “read” through it.
- Ask your child to tell you what happened in the story or just retell the story to you or someone else.
- See if he/she can find a letter or a word he/she knows.
- Have your child draw their favorite part of the story or a different ending.
- Make up rhymes to go with words in the story.
- Make a letter sound and see if your child can find the letter that makes that sound.
- Go back through the pages and look for certain parts of the story or for certain characters or pictures. Which character was his favorite? Why?
- For dramatic play have your child act out the book you just read. Use materials from your house for props or draw the props together.

### Four to Five Years

- Make some comments about the story, the message, the characters, etc.
- Talk about what happened at the “beginning,” “middle,” and “end” of the story.
- Ask your child to make their own book with blank paper and crayons.
- Practice writing favorite or main words from the story.
- Make comparisons to other stories you have read or to real people and events. What is the same? What is different?
- Talk about the characters’ feelings and behavior (and maybe consequences of bad behavior).
- For dramatic play pretend to have a library, gather all the books in your home and put together your very own library. Take turns with your child being the librarian and being the person checking out books to read.

## Singing

Singing is a great way for your child to learn language. In songs, each syllable has a note, so children can hear the parts of words. This helps them sound out words later on.

### Birth to Two Years

#### Try singing the Little Red Wagon song

- Stretch legs out in front of you--- bounce knees up and down, patting them with your hands.  
Bumpin' up and down in my little red wagon  
Bumpin' up and down in my little red wagon  
Bumpin' up and down in my little red wagon  
Won't you be my darling?
- Change the color of the wagon—let your child choose. Change the pace of the song—slow down or speed up the bouncing to go along with your singing. Tell your child you are pulling up a hill and going slower, or rolling quickly down a hill and speed up the song!

Try singing the Itsy Bitsy Spider using hand motions: <https://youtu.be/xwKX6m2tCR4>

Try singing the Five Little Ducks song and flap your wings: <https://youtu.be/UG58OOkLoLk>

### Three to Five Years

Try singing the Five Green Speckled Frogs song: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WSC-gHBU\\_d0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WSC-gHBU_d0)

Five green and speckled frogs, sat on a speckled log  
(hold up 5 fingers)  
Eating some most delicious bugs YUM, YUM!  
(pat tummy)  
One jumped into the pool, where it was nice and cool,  
Then there was 4 green, speckled frogs GLUB, GLUB.  
(repeat with 4, then 3, then 2, then 1, then...)  
Now there's no more green, speckled frogs GLUB, GLUB.

Try singing the Ten Little Bumblebees song to practice counting: [https://youtu.be/piP\\_wrjHFFM](https://youtu.be/piP_wrjHFFM)

Try singing the Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday song to practice the days of the week: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=loINl3Ln6Ck>

Try singing the Head, Shoulder, Knees, & Toes song to practice learning body parts:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RuqvGiZi0qg>