

Things To Do While Reading Together

- You and your child can use a “magic pointing finger” or a “reading stick” to point to the words in a book. A tip of a wooden chopstick dipped in glue and glitter is a great “reading stick.” The finger or the stick will draw your child’s eyes to the print. By pointing to the print, your child will learn to match a written word with a word read aloud. This is called “one-to-one correspondence.”
- A “picture walk” is useful for emergent readers. Quickly look through the book and discuss pictures and make predictions about what is to come. This will help your child start to think about vocabulary in the book, as well as what will happen.
- To promote ownership, have your child actually hold the book and turn the pages. Do this even when you are sharing the book.
- Enjoy reading! This should be a fun time. You can share the reading (if possible) by taking turns. If your child isn’t ready, have them hold the book and turn pages. The goal is to encourage independence when possible. Can they chime in with a known word along the way? Can they look at the picture and guess which word might be on that page? All of these things are great!
- While you are reading and after you are finished, ask questions or “think out loud.” I always say, “hmmmm” at crucial parts where I would like them to really think about what is happening. Make sure your child is understanding the story. Ask them to recall details, This will help your child “connect” to the story and deepen their understanding.
- Don’t forget to encourage your child to tie in any personal experiences to the text (either before, during or after). This is another way in which children enhance their comprehension and connections to a story.

Tricky Words

- If your child is reading simple text and gets to a tricky word, wait at least 10-20 seconds before giving some help. Do not jump in and read the word! Instead, encourage your child to use the 3 cueing systems:

1. Look at the picture. Does it give any hints about the word?

2. Sound it out. (Be careful! -- too much emphasis on this one can lead your child to use only this strategy!)

3. Encourage your child to skip the tricky word temporarily, read to the end of the sentence and then decide what word would make sense in that spot.

- If your child still doesn't get the word, it's okay to tell them. Have them point and slide their finger or reading stick under the word and repeat it three times. You can also remark about how the word looks, "I notice that there's a 'b' in that word, just like the one in your name!"

- Self correcting is when a child reads the word incorrectly and then fixes it on their own because it didn't sound right, look right or make sense. Self correcting is a great predictor of a child's reading ability! If your child self corrects, make sure to praise them and let them know exactly what they did right!

Odds and Ends

- Retelling a book is very important! If a child has "read" a book, but doesn't know what it was about, then it's not really considered "reading." To properly read, the comprehension aspect must be present. It's a great idea to get your child used to retelling some stories after they are read. At first, you might have to ask them

questions, but eventually they will get good at telling you what happened first, next and last.

- Feedback - Be sure to give lots of specific praise and feedback after they have read the story.
- Levels - Books read at home should be in the easy to instructional range. No one likes to read a “too hard” book for pleasure - it’s too much work! For maximum enjoyment and daily habits, your child should have books that are easy enough to read. This will lead to fast, fluent reading and a love of reading.
- The most important thing is to HAVE FUN! Do not do all of these things with EVERY book you and your child read together. Pick one or two a day on which to focus these tips.

16 Ways to Get Your Child to Read or Acquire Pre-Reading Skills

1. Read to your child every day because children not only learn new words, they also learn about new and interesting places and things.
2. Take trips to the local library or bookstore. Take time out to browse through a store or library and allow children to pick out their favorite books. Point out books that might be interesting to them.
3. To help with learning the alphabet, call out a letter and have your child lie on the floor in the position of the letter’s shape.
4. Give your child a set of plastic alphabet letters to play a guessing game where you close your eyes and identify the letters by shape.

5. When reading, turn the pages slowly and ask your child to tell about the pictures in the story.

6. Label furniture and other household items to help children learn to recognize new words.

7. Play “I Spy” and ask your child to point to letters when you are driving, walking, shopping or reading.

8. Take your child to story time at the local library. This will help your child to see that reading is fun.

9. Read a book over and over again. Children love repetition and learn from it

10. Encourage your child to make their own books as gifts. They can write and draw a story on pieces of paper and staple together.

11. Keep books in the car or tucked into backpacks. Children can read while traveling.

12. Encourage the reading of a series. When children fall in love with a series the next book is easy to find. By the time they are through with a series, they are reading better and have begun to form a lifelong habit.

13. Connect reading with favorite activities. Find books that match your child’s interests -- riding bikes, skateboarding, etc. He or she will connect reading to these favorite activities.

14. Location, location, location. Encourage children to read where they are comfortable. A good book knows no bounds, whether it’s on the porch, up in a treehouse or under the bed. Think about making a “reading corner” in your house, complete with beanbag chair, book shelves and reading light.

15. Relax a little. Try not to over-commit your child to too many activities. Let them know that lying on the bed reading is not a waste of time.

16. Let your child see you reading. Parents should spend time reading each day. Take out the newspaper, a book or a magazine when your child is present. It's important to be a good role model!