

Raising a Successful Reader

part 1 Getting Ready to Read



How can you help your child get ready to read? Talk, read, draw and laugh!

Recent reading research proves there are simple things you can do to prepare your child for reading success. Children need a foundation for reading. You can build that foundation. Your child needs to:

- Understand that letters and words mean something
- Build a listening and speaking vocabulary
- Have many different experiences to relate to new words and ideas
- Connect drawing and writing to reading

Here are several easy and fun activities you can do to help your child get ready to read.

Talk and listen to your child

- Talk with your children. There is no substitute for time spent talking with your child. You are teaching new words and ideas. Talk in complete sentences and encourage them to do the same.
- Encourage your child to describe experiences and ideas. Use photo albums or magazine pictures to start a conversation.
- Take your child to visit interesting places—playgrounds, grocery stores, libraries, museums and historical sites. Discuss these places or read more about them.

Fall in love with language

- Stick labels on objects in your home such as the table or toothbrush. Collect the labels and have your child put them back on the correct items.
- Teach your child nursery rhymes and songs. Recite and sing them together often.



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- Play with words—separate the sounds in a word (i.e. “mud” has three different sounds). Note how some words begin with the same sound (i.e. “dog” and “dark”) or rhyme (i.e. “tea” and “me”).
- Make up silly sounds and funny chants. Dr. Seuss books are great for playing with language and sparking the imagination.
- Look for letters of the alphabet everywhere you go.

Develop vocabulary and concepts

- Point to pictures in books and magazines, and ask your child to describe the picture.
- Play the game, “I see something,” where one person describes an object in view and the other(s) must guess what it is.
- Help your youngster make connections among words or concepts such as “winter = cold, snow, holidays;” or “dinner = food, family, evening.”

Show how print has meaning

- Find answers to your child’s many questions by looking them up in books, newspapers or magazines. Explain that the printed words on the page can provide information.
- Show your child how print helps us everyday. For example, providing directions for putting a bike together, recipes for fixing dinner or directions to a friend’s house.
- Point to and read the words on items like grocery lists, restaurant menus or signs in the street. Help your child notice the difference between words like “chocolate” or “vanilla” ice cream.

Connect drawing, reading and writing

- Encourage your child to draw pictures. Drawing is a preparation for writing and reading. Display your child’s pictures proudly.
- Show your child how to write his/her name. Practice, practice.
- Collaborate with your child to compose a note to a relative or a friend. Have your child dictate as you write. Read the note back, pointing to the words as you read them.

Laugh

- Remember to have fun with your child. From making up silly sounds to talking about a story, appreciate your child’s special joy for learning new things. So laugh, even when your child asks you to read that one favorite book—again!



Oh, the Places You’ll Go!