

Born to Read: How to Raise a Reader

Source: American Library Association

The joy of sharing books is a gift you can give children from the time they are born. Chanting nursery rhymes, singing songs, and reading stories can comfort and entertain even the youngest child. Parents, child care providers, teachers, and other adults interested in the development of young children have a wealth of good books from which to choose. Here is a list of some of the best with easy-to-do tips developed by members of the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association. This information is also available in Spanish.

Sharing books...

- Helps create a special bond between parents and children.
- Introduces children to art through the illustrations.
- Enhances children's listening skills.
- Introduces children to a wide variety of experiences.
- Helps prepare children for learning to read.
- Improves and enriches the quality of children's lives.
- Provides fun and enjoyment for children and adults.

When to share books

- Begin when your child is born.
- Set aside a special time each day, such as naptime, bedtime, or after meals.
- Share books when you and your child are in a relaxed mood.
- Limit sharing time if your child becomes fussy or restless.
- Take advantage of "waiting" times to share books--on trips, at the doctor's office, in line at the grocery store.
- Soothe a child who is sick or cranky.

How to share books

- Find a comfortable place to sit (a rocking chair is wonderful).
- Recite or sing rhymes from your favorite books.
- Turn off other distractions--television, radio, or stereo.
- Hold the book so your child can see the pages clearly.
- Involve your child by having him or her point out objects.
- Talk about the pictures, or repeat common words.
- Read with expression.
- Vary the pace of your reading--slow or fast.
- Find other titles by the authors and illustrators included in this list.
- Have your child select books to read.
- Reread your child's favorite books whenever asked.

And remember...

- Be enthusiastic about books.
- Be an example for your child--let her or him see you read books, too.
- Keep a wide selection of reading materials at home.
- Be aware of your child's reading interests.
- Give books as presents.
- Begin to build a child's home library.
- Get to know the children's librarian at your local public library.
- Use your local library regularly and register your child for a library card.

Some good books to share

Baker, Keith. *Big Fat Hen*. Harcourt Brace, 1994.
Bang, Molly. *Ten, Nine, Eight*. Greenwillow, 1983.

Brown, Marc. *Play Rhymes*. Dutton, 1985.

Brown, Margaret Wise. *Goodnight Moon*. Harper, 1947.

Carle, Eric. *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. Putnam, 1981.

Crews, Donald. *Freight Train*. Greenwillow, 1978.

DePaola, Tomie. *Tomie DePaola's Mother Goose*. Putnam, 1985.

Field, Eugene. *Wynken, Blynken, & Nod*. North-South Books, 1995.

Fleming, Denise. *Mama Cat Has Three Kittens*. Henry Holt, 1998.

Fox, Mem. *Time for Bed*. Harcourt, 1993.

Hill, Eric. *Where's Spot?* Putnam, 1987.

Ho, Minfong. *Hush! A Thai Lullaby*. Orchard Books, 1996.

Jonas, Ann. *When You Were a Baby*. Greenwillow, 1982.

Keats, Ezra Jack. *Peter's Chair*. Harper, 1967.

Martin, Bill, Jr. *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* Holt, 1984.

McBratney, Sam. *Guess How Much I Love You*. Candlewick Press, 1995.

McMullen, Kate. *If You Were My Bunny*. Scholastic, 1996.

Opie, Iona. *My Very First Mother Goose*. Candlewick, 1996.

Oxenbury, Helen. *Tom and Pippo Read a Story*. Simon & Schuster, 1998.

Steptoe, John. *Baby Says*. Lothrop, 1989.

Tafuri, Nancy. *Have You Seen My Duckling?* Greenwillow, 1984.

Weiss, Nicki. *Where Does the Brown Bear Go?* Penguin, 1989.

Wellington, Monica. *Night Rabbits*. Dutton, 1995.

Wells, Rosemary. *Max's Bedtime*. Dial, 1998.

Williams, Vera B. *"More, More, More," Said the Baby: Three Love Stories* Greenwillow, 1990.

Revised by the Preschool Services and Parent Education Committee, Association for Library Service to Children, American Library Association.
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