

# BUILDING READERS®

How Families Can Help Children Get Ready to Read

Parent Information & Resource Center  
416 Black Avenue, Lexington, S.C. 29072

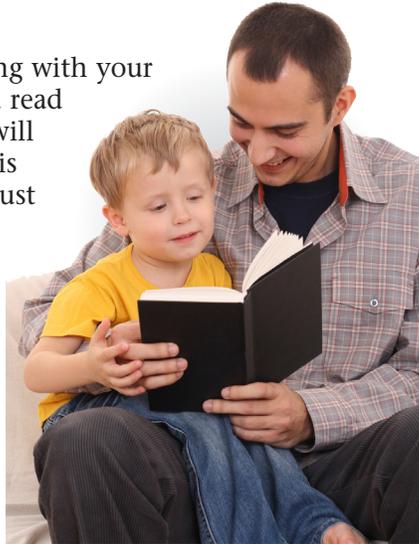
## Get your child involved when you read actively

To make the most out of reading with your child, try to engage him as you read and talk about the stories. He will get more out of the story if he is actively involved, rather than just listening and looking.

Here are some ways to encourage your child's participation:

- **Ask about what he sees** or notices on the page. "What animal is this? What is it doing in this picture?"
- **Expand his response** by rephrasing it and asking for more information. "The duck is peeking out of the pond. Why do you think it's doing that?"
- **Rephrase the question** to see what he has learned. "What was the duck looking for when he was in the pond?"

**Source:** G.J. Whitehurst, "Dialogic Reading: An Effective Way to Read to Preschoolers," Reading Rockets, [niswc.com/reading\\_aloud\\_actively](http://niswc.com/reading_aloud_actively).



*"The world is full of magical places, and the library has always been one of them for me."*

—Julie Andrews

## Provide activities to make your child think

The more critically your child is able to think, the better the reader she is likely to become. Try these activities to boost her thinking skills:

- **Give her puzzles to solve.** Break out the jigsaw puzzles and get busy! Once she masters puzzles and just a few pieces, try some that are more complicated.
- **Tell riddles.** What has two hands but no feet? A clock! What gets wetter as it dries? A towel. See if your child can figure out these and other brain teasers.
- **Play with patterns.** Use coins or other small objects to make a pattern (like nickel, quarter, dime, nickel, quarter, dime). See if your child can continue it correctly.

## Enrich your child's library visits

The public library is a great source of reading opportunities. To make sure your child is reaping the benefits of the library:



- **Sign him up for a library card** and check out books regularly.
- **Ask the librarian** to suggest books.
- **Explore the library's other offerings**, such as DVDs and audiobooks.
- **Attend story time** and other events held at the library.

**Source:** L. Newton, "Benefits of Trips to the Library," [families.com](http://families.com), [niswc.com/library\\_trip\\_benefits](http://niswc.com/library_trip_benefits).

## Create a cozy spot for your child to read

Help your child designate a special reading spot. Whether it's her own special chair or a blanket on the floor, set aside a place for her to look at books. If she likes it, it may even encourage her to read more!



## There's always time for language fun

It doesn't take a long time to help your child build language skills. From having conversations and reading stories to singing songs and playing rhyming games, language-rich activities will put him on the road to reading.



These activities help your child:

- **Broaden his vocabulary** and knowledge of words.
- **Sharpen his memory** and listening skills.
- **Expose him to different sounds** in words.

**Source:** D. Davis, "Easy Ways for Families to Help Children Learn," Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, [niswc.com/learning\\_literacy\\_activities](http://niswc.com/learning_literacy_activities).

## Spend time playing rhyming games with your child

Rhymes are a terrific tool for boosting your child's language learning. Carve out some "rhyme time" each day and play:

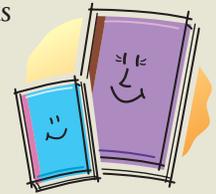
- **Change the Name.** Rattle off the names of everyone in your family, and then challenge your child to invent rhymes for each one. See who can come up with the silliest one!
- **What Do I See?** Think of an object in the room and give your child rhyming clues about it. If you want him to guess the word *table*, you might say "I see a *nable* ... a *wable* ... ." If you can, use some real words as well as nonsense words.
- **Roses Are Red.** Use the classic verse as a jumping-off point for creating new rhymes. "Roses are red, violets are blue ... ." Now what?



Source: L.K. Rath, Ed.D. and L. Kennedy, *The Between the Lions Book for Parents*, HarperCollins.

## Choose advanced books for read alouds with your child

When selecting books to read to your child, don't be afraid to look beyond her reading level. When you read aloud from books that are above her reading level, you:



- **Expose her to new** vocabulary words.
- **Introduce her to complex** and different concepts.
- **Encourage her to explore** other higher-level books.

## Books to delight your early reader

- **Big Friends** by Linda Sarah and Benji Davies (Henry Holt and Company). Birt and Etho take two big cardboard boxes out each day and pretend they are pirates, astronauts and more. One day, a boy named Shu comes up the hill with his own giant cardboard box.
- **A Place to Read** by Leigh Hodgkinson (Bloomsbury USA Childrens). A young reader is in search of the ideal reading spot. He looks all over to find the perfect location.
- **How to Dress a Dragon** by Thelma Lynne Godin (Scholastic Press). Take note of these helpful hints in case you need to dress a dragon—for example, dragons prefer shorts to pants and capes to shirts.



## Make reading fun to inspire a love of reading

When story time is exciting, your child will look forward to sharing this special time with you. To make reading together enticing:

- **Make it entertaining.** Story time shouldn't be a chore—it should be a delight! Be playful when reading with your child.
- **Put your child in charge.** Let her choose which books to read—even if she always picks the same ones. You may cringe at the thought of reading a particular tale over and over, but it is beneficial for your child to hear repeated stories.
- **Mix up your location.** Who says story time has to happen inside? Grab a blanket and share books in the backyard or park!



**Q:** My child doesn't always feel like reading stories. What other reading-related activities can we do?

**A:** There's no limit to the reading-related fun you can have. Listen to audiobooks. Act out favorite stories with finger puppets. Make bookmarks. Host a "book character" tea party using your child's

stuffed toys. And when your child is in the mood to read, settle in together with a story!

Do you have a question about reading? Email [readingadvisor@parent-institute.com](mailto:readingadvisor@parent-institute.com).

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