

The ABCs of Reading To and With Your Child

Ask questions while reading together. "What do you think will happen next?"

Buy books as gifts for birthdays or other holidays.

Chat about what is happening in the book and how it relates to everyday life.

Drop everything and read. Set aside 20 minutes a day during which the whole family reads.

Examine book illustrations in detail. Select some books that have large, bright pictures.

Find books that interest your child. Make suggestions, but don't turn reading into work.

Give hints when your child gets stuck on a word.

Have fun. Smile and enjoy the story. Read with a slow, relaxed voice and be expressive.

Invite your child to the bookstore. Take time to lounge in the chairs and browse the books.

Join in your child's reading successes. Celebrate every small step with sincere praise.

Kids love to receive mail. Send your child a magazine subscription in an area that interests him or her.

Learn to read with, and not just to, your child daily. Read aloud, share ideas, and answer questions.

Model reading. Share with your child, whether you're reading for information or for entertainment.

Never force your child to read. If you're both too tired or discouraged to read, take a break.

Offer your child a variety of reading materials such as books, magazines, cereal boxes, comics, and newspapers.

Predict story elements, draw conclusions, and retell the story with your child.

Quiz your child at the end of a story. Informally, of course!

Reread books to familiarize your child with words and to build self-confidence.

Sing songs, recite poetry, and do fingerplays to help develop language and listening skills.

Try to help your child understand that it's okay to make mistakes.

Understand that reading is developmental and that it takes time and practice to become fluent.

Visit your local library on a regular basis. Sign your child up for his or her own library card.

Welcome wordless picture books into your collections. They generate conversation and allow the nonreader to create his or her own stories.

"Xhibit" patience when your child is selecting books. Your support is empowering.

You are the most important person in helping your child develop a lifelong love of reading.

Zealous readers are the result of supportive and nurturing role models.