

Toddlers



Here are some ways you can help your child "get ready to read" during the ages of 2 and 3.

- I read with my child every day, even if it's only for a few minutes.
- I encourage my child to bring his favorite books to me so that we can read together.
- I point to pictures and name them out loud, and encourage my child to point to pictures while we read.
- I watch to see if my child sometimes makes eye contact with me when I read aloud. That tells me she is paying attention to me and the story.
- I talk with my child throughout the day about things we are doing and things that are happening around us.
- I try to be patient when my child wants to read the same book over and over again.
- I encourage my child to "play" with books—pick them up, flip them from front to back, and turn the pages.
- Sometimes I listen when my child "pretends" to read a book—he holds the book, goes from page to page, and says words, even though they're not the words on the page.
- I give my child paper and crayons so she can scribble, make pictures, and pretend to write.



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Preschoolers



Here are some ways you can help your child "get ready to read" during the ages of 4 and 5.

- I help my child hear and say the first sound in words (like "b" in boat), and notice when different words start with the same sound (like "boat" and "book").
- I help my child hear words that rhyme (like moose, goose, and caboose).
- I introduce new words to my child, like "bow" and "stern," which mean the front of a boat and the back of a boat.
- I talk with my child about the letters of the alphabet and notice them in books, like "c" for canoe.
- I point out signs and labels that have letters, like street signs and foods in the grocery store.
- I encourage my child to find the joy and fun in reading. Usually, I let my child choose the books we read.
- I let my child pretend to read parts of the book when we read together.
- I talk with my child about stories and make connections to things that happen in our own lives.
- I ask "what," "where," and "how" questions when I read with my child to help her follow along and understand the stories.
- I help my child write notes or make books (like an alphabet book), even if his writing only looks like scribbles or marks.



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Kindergarteners



These skills usually develop when a child is in kindergarten. Talk with your child’s teacher if you have questions.

- My child listens carefully to books read aloud.
- My child knows the shapes and names for the letters of the alphabet and writes many uppercase and lowercase letters on his own.
- My child knows that spoken words are made of separate sounds.
- My child recognizes and makes rhymes, can tell when words begin with the same sound, and can put together, or blend, spoken sounds.
- My child can sound out some letters.
- My child knows that the order of letters in a written word stands for the order of sounds in a spoken word.
- My child knows some common words such as a, the, I, and you, on sight.
- My child knows how to hold a book, and follows print from left to right and from top to bottom of a page when she is read to.
- My child asks and answers questions about stories and uses what she already knows to understand a story.
- My child knows the parts of a book and understands that authors write words and text and illustrators create pictures.
- My child knows that in most books the main message is in the print, not the pictures.
- My child predicts what will happen in a story and retells or acts out stories.
- My child knows the difference between “made up” fiction and “real” nonfiction books and the difference between stories and poems.
- My child uses what he knows about letters and sounds to write words.
- My child writes some letters and words as they are said to her and begins to spell some words correctly.
- My child writes his own first and last name and the first names of some friends and family.
- My child plays with words and uses new words in her own speech.
- My child knows and uses words that are important to school work, such as the names for colors, shapes, and numbers.
- My child knows and uses words from daily life, such as street names and the names for community workers—teacher, mail carrier, etc.



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