

Using Books to Talk, Sing, Read, Write and Play with Your Baby

Board Books: Infant - Birth to Crawling

Create a special place (a cozy corner) where your child can look at books.

- **Tip:** *Sitting in a cozy space for reading makes reading more fun. Children can pay attention to books longer if they know they are in a special book-reading place.*

READ

Share a book with your baby.

- **Tip:** *Reading books together is the most important thing you can do to help your child be ready to read.*

READ

During awake time, snuggle together with your baby, look at a board book together, turn some of the pages, and talk about the pictures.

- **Tip:** *Learning to read begins at birth. It is never too early to read to your child.*

READ

Cuddle with your child while looking at a book together.

- **Tip:** *Children connect their feelings about books with the feelings they had when someone was reading to them. Reading together in a cozy place builds fond memories; children who had fun reading with their parents often will grow to love books and reading.*

READ

Share books with your baby every day.

- **Tip:** *Children who are read to regularly will most likely to want to learn to read themselves.*

READ

Lie on your tummy next to your baby with your face up close. Hold a book just a bit in front so our baby has to reach out to touch the pictures. Point to the pictures and encourage your baby to reach out and touch them.

- **Tip:** *Your baby will develop neck, back, and arm muscles while enjoying a shared book with you.*

READ

Read books to your baby that YOU enjoy.

- **Tip:** *Your child can pick up on your feelings and understands the enjoyment of books and reading even when he or she is too young to understand your words*

READ

Using Books to Talk, Sing, Read, Write and Play with Your Baby

Snuggle with your child and read together when you are feeling happy.

- **Tip:** *It's important to share books and talk with your child, but if you do it when you are feeling very angry, your child might connect your angry feelings with the book and with reading. It is better to share books in a positive way. Also, if your child is not in the mood for book reading, that's fine. Put the book away and read together at another time.*

READ

Hand a board book to your baby and see what happens. Encourage your baby to enjoy books, even when chewing on them.

- **Tip:** *Don't worry if your baby chews on the pages of a board book. Babies use their mouths to explore the world. Babies can control their lips and tongues before they can explore and understand the word with their fingers. They learn about "the same" and "different" through taste as well as through touch, sight, and hearing.*

READ

Babies like to hear their parent's voices. Talk and read to your baby with a smile on your face -- it puts a smile in your voice.

- **Tip:** *To baby, your voice is the most beautiful sound in the world.*

READ, TALK

Go outdoors and bring a board book with you. Sit on a bench or stoop and hold your baby on your lap. Read a few pages to your baby. Then look around and describe what you see.

- **Tip:** *Babies learn about the world around them when people talk. Knowing things will help them understand the meaning of what they read when they are older.*

READ, TALK

Put your infant on your lap and look at a board book together. Choose short books with bright pictures and not many words, and say what you see. Babies do not have long attention spans, so looking at just one or two pages is fine.

- **Tip:** *Babies may not understand what you are reading or saying, but they understand that reading together is a fun and loving thing to do. Reading to infants in a loving way helps them to grow up loving books.*

READ, TALK

Sit with your infant and look at a book together. Point to some of the pictures in the book and say what you see.

- **Tip:** *Your baby loves hearing your voice. By listening to you, your baby learns the names of new things.*

READ, TALK

Using Books to Talk, Sing, Read, Write and Play with Your Baby

If you baby makes noises or babbles while sharing a book together, smile and babble right back. Mimic baby's sounds AND use real words

- **Try this:** When your baby says, "AHHH," say "That's right, AHHH!"
 - **Tip:** Babies understand that you are listening to them when you repeat the sounds they make.
- SING, TALK**

Choose an area in your home to be a "cozy corner." Go there, put your baby in your lap, and look at book together. Cuddle together while you read.

- **Try this:** Sit with your baby in your lap, and hold the book so your baby can see the pictures. Point to the pictures that match the words you are reading. If baby touches the page, talk about the picture s/he touched – "There's a kitty. Do you see its soft fur?"
 - **Tip:** How you read with your baby is as important as what you read. If you read together in a loving way, your baby will have good feelings about books and reading.
- READ, TALK**

Look at pictures of animals in books, and make animal sounds with your baby.

- **Try this:** Find a book with big animal pictures. Don't read the book to your child! Instead, sing a song about the sounds the animals in the pictures make.
 - **Tip:** Hearing and making animal sounds is a fun game that helps your child listen carefully to sounds. Did you know that animals make different sounds in different languages?
- SING, TALK, PLAY**



Using Books to Talk, Sing, Read, Write and Play with Your Baby

Board Books: Baby - Crawling to 18 months

Take a break and read the board book to your child.

- **Tip:** *Reading together increases the number of words your child will know. It also helps with brain development and memory!*

READ

Hand your baby a board book. Help him/her turn the pages and point to the pictures (it doesn't matter if you read what is on the pages or not). Say the names of what you see; objects, colors, sizes, shapes.

- **Tip:** *The earlier start that babies have with experiencing books, the better prepared they will be to start reading from books.*

READ, TALK

Put your child on your lap and look at a book together. Read the title and say the name of the author and illustrator. Say, "The author is the person who wrote the book, and the illustrator is the person who drew the pictures."

- **Tip:** *Reading books together is the most important thing you can do to help your child be ready to read.*

READ, TALK

Look at some pages of a book with your baby and talk about what you see. After looking at some pages, say, "All done," and put the book away.

- **Tip:** *Babies can't pay attention to one thing for a long time. It is best when they are not expected to stay interested for very long.*

READ, TALK

Read with your baby every day.

- **Tip:** *Children who are read to become better readers. Reading with your child helps him or her develop the skills needed to become a successful reader.*

READ

Read a book with your child every day. Pick a "special time" for reading together when you can give your baby your full attention. Reading together before your baby goes to bed can become an important ritual.

- **Tip:** *Reading books together is the most important thing you can do to help your child be ready to read.*

READ

Keep board books in a special place where your child can read them and look at them at any time of day.

- **Tip:** *Children like to choose their own books.*

READ

Using Books to Talk, Sing, Read, Write and Play with Your Baby

Read with enthusiasm and expression.

- **Tip:** *Reading together is the single most important way to help your child get ready to read. Showing that you enjoy reading by being enthusiastic and reading with expression, teaches your child that reading is fun. Your child will want to learn how to read, too.*

READ, PLAY

Talk or sing about the pictures in a book.

- **Tip:** *You don't have to read a book to tell a story. Talking about the pictures, or singing songs is a great way to share books with your child.*

READ, SING

Read a book aloud to your child every night before bedtime.

- **Tip:** *Toddlers like hearing a story at bedtime. They may ask to hear the same book read aloud over and over again. This is how they learn.*

READ

Use a gentle, pleasant voice when you read and talk with your baby. Pretend what you are talking about is the most important thing in the world (it is to your baby!).

- **Tip:** *Babies can hear and feel the emotion in your voice.*

READ, TALK

Point out shapes as you are reading books with your baby.

- **Tip:** *Learning about shapes is one of the first steps to learning letters.*

READ, TALK

Read to your baby in ANY language.

- **Tip:** *Reading and speaking to your child in the language you know best makes it will be easier for you to explain things. Then your child will learn more.*

READ, TALK

When sharing a book with your baby, if she makes noises or babbles, smile and babble right back. Mimic her sounds AND use real words.

- **Try this:** When your baby says, "AHHH," say, "That's right, AHHHH!" Add to the conversation. "What do you see over there?" Give baby time to respond. If baby doesn't say anything, point and say, "I see a tree."

- **Tip:** *Babies understand that you are listening to them when you repeat the sounds they make.*

READ, TALK, PLAY

Ask your baby to choose a book for you to share together.

- **Tip:** *Encouraging your baby to choose a book to share will increase her enjoyment of the book. This positive connection creates a love of books and reading.*

READ

Using Books to Talk, Sing, Read, Write and Play with Your Baby

Recite nursery rhymes with your baby and clap along to the beat.

- **Try this:** Hold your baby's hands in your while you tap and clap hands to "Pat-a-cake" together. Pretend to mix, roll, and pat. Use your baby's name and first initial instead of "B" for Baby.
 - **Tip:** *Rhymes, music and rhythm help your baby to learn language.*
SING, TALK, READ, PLAY

Share a book with your baby. Talk about the pictures and say the names of the objects. Mention the colors, sizes, and shapes. Do the same thing in your home or at the grocery store.

- **Try this:** Wherever you are with your baby, look around and describe the colors, shapes, and sizes of objects that you see. For instance, if you are in the grocery store, talk about red apples and round, white eggs. In your kitchen, talk about big boxes of cereal and little jars of baby food
 - **Tip:** *Describing objects builds your child's vocabulary.*
READ, TALK

Turn off the TV and play with your baby. Share books, sing, dance together, and clap.

- **Tip:** *When a child feels loved and safe, it is easier for the child to learn.*
- **READ, PLAY, SING**

Hand a cardboard book to your baby. Give your baby time to explore it. Don't be surprised if your baby starts to chew on it! Just take the book gently out of your baby's mouth and start looking at the pictures together.

- **Tip:** *Touching and tasting are ways that babies learn about the world. Chewing on books is often part of early reading!*
READ, PLAY

Read your child a story with a car in it, talk about cars, and show your child a picture of a car. Go outside and look at cars – you can talk about the different colors of cars that you see. Then make car sounds together.

- **Tip:** *Connecting words, pictures, and sounds builds your child's language skills..*
TALK, READ, PLAY, SING



Using Books to Talk, Sing, Read, Write and Play with Your Baby

Board Books: Toddler - 18 months to 3 years

Cuddle with your child while reading a board book.

- **Tip:** *Children connect their feelings about books with the feelings they had when someone was reading to them. Reading together in a cozy place builds fond memories; children who had fun reading with their parents often will grow to love books and reading.*

READ, TALK

Ask your child to choose a book for you to share with him.

- **Tip:** *Encouraging your baby to choose the book she wants you to read will increase her enjoyment of the book. This positive connection creates a love of books and reading.*

READ, TALK, PLAY

Read aloud to your child as often as possible

- **Tip:** *Sharing books with your child introduces him to new words that are not typically used in everyday conversation. The more often you read, the more prepared your child will be to learn to read.*

READ

Sometimes, run your fingers under the printed words in a book as you read aloud with your baby.

- **Tip:** *Seeing a connection between the written letters and spoken words is the one of the first steps to learning how to read.*

READ

Look at some pages of a book with your toddler and talk about what you see. After looking at a few pages, say, “All done,” and put the book away.

- **Tip:** *Toddlers can’t pay attention to one thing for a long time. It is best when they are not expected to stay interested for very long.*

READ, TALK, PLAY

Create a special place (a cozy corner) where you can share books with your child. Sit side by side and cuddle with your child as you look at books together. Make comments like, “I like the way the farmer helped his animals. What part did you like?”

- **Tip:** *Talking about a book during loving moments builds your child’s desire to read.*

READ, TALK

Find a book with big animal pictures in it. Sing a song about the sounds the animals in the pictures make.

- **Tip:** *Playing games with books turns them into friends. If books are your child’s friends, your child will want to learn to read.*

READ, SING, PLAY

Using Books to Talk, Sing, Read, Write and Play with Your Baby

Encourage your child to pretend to read a book to a doll or a favorite stuffed animal. Let your child hold the book and turn the pages.

- **Tip:** *Having fun with books even before a child can read encourages children to want to learn to read later on. It's fine for the book to be a toy that your child likes to play with!*
- **Tip:** *Finding out that books are fun encourages a child to want to read. Playing with books helps children learn how print looks and how books work.*

READ, TALK, PLAY

Get a FREE library card for your child at the local library. Visit the children's area. Choose books your child likes. Borrow them. Put them in a special place at home where they won't get lost. Read them each day to your child. After two weeks, go back to the library, return these books, and borrow new books!

- **Tip:** *Getting a library card for your child is free. It does not cost any money and it lets you borrow books to read to your children. When you return those books, you can borrow more books. What a great way to introduce your children to different books!*

READ

Read and talk to your toddler in ANY language. If you know other languages, use them.

- **Tip:** *Toddler's brains are like sponges. They can learn words in many languages if they hear the words when they are very young.*

READ, TALK

When looking at book with animal pictures, ask "What sound does the cow make?" and let your toddler answer. Expand the fun by making animal sounds with puppets and stuffed animals.

- **Tip:** *Practicing animal noises gives your toddler practice using sounds and language.*

READ, TALK, PLAY

Look at book with animal pictures, and ask "What sound does the duck make?" Pause to give your toddler time answer.

- **Tip:** *Children often need more time to respond to questions than adults. Give your child plenty of time to think before giving an answer.*

READ, TALK, PLAY

Look at a book and ask your child to tell you what or she sees. Repeat what your child says and add a new word to it. For example, if your child sees a truck, say "Yes, that's a truck. It's a pick-up truck."

- **Tip:** *Talking with children helps them understand what they will later read. Repeating what your child says and adding a new word to describe it increases the number of words she knows.*

READ, TALK, PLAY

Using Books to Talk, Sing, Read, Write and Play with Your Baby

Read a book aloud with your toddler while you are snuggling together. Read the same book the next day. Read it again. And again. And again.

- **Tip:** *Children like to hear the same book over and over again. When a story is repeated, your child learns what parts are the beginning, the middle, and the end of the story. Your child may even be able to tell you the story in his or her own words!*

READ

Take a board book with you when you go somewhere with your toddler. When on the bus, waiting on line or sitting in an office, put your toddler on your lap, open up the book, and read it out loud.

- **Tip:** *Sharing a book together gives your toddler something fun to do and makes waiting much easier. It also helps your toddler learn about books.*

READ

Go to the public library. Ask your child to choose a picture book. Look at the book together. Point to big pictures of objects and name them slowly and clearly. If your child knows the name of the object, ask her to point to it and name it for you. Then say, "You're right, it's a truck!"

- **Tip:** *The public library has lots of books for children. Going there and looking at new books teaches your child that the public library is a great place for children to visit and get books.*

READ

Look at a book with your toddler. Ask questions that connect the book to your child, such as "Where is her shirt?" and then, "Where is your shirt?" Ask, "What color is her shirt?" and then, "What color is your shirt?" Be sure to wait and give your toddler plenty of time to answer. Answers can be given by pointing to a picture or by using words.

- **Tip:** *In school, your child will have to answer lots of questions. Getting practice at answering questions will help your child be successful in school*
- **Try this:** *Take a "picture walk" through a book without reading it. For example, if there is a strawberry in the book, ask your toddler if she likes eating strawberries. Then ask what other fruit she likes to eat, and what colors those fruits are.*

READ, TALK, PLAY

Act out a book or a story with your child. Dress up with old clothes and use props like boxes, plastic food containers and shopping bags.

- **Tip:** *Children learn how to express themselves and how the world works by playing.*

READ, TALK, PLAY

Using Books to Talk, Sing, Read, Write and Play with Your Baby

Board Books: Preschooler - 3 - 5 years

Let your child pretend to read a board book or retell the story back to you.

- **Tip:** *A good story has a beginning, middle, and an end. This is the beginning of narrative skills.*

READ, TALK

Take a break and read with your child.

- **Tip:** *Reading together increases the number of words your child will know. It also helps with brain development and memory!*

READ, TALK

Read a story aloud to your child and then act it out with puppets or stuffed animals.

- **Tip:** *Acting out a story with puppets or stuffed animals is a fun way to show your child that stories have a beginning (Once upon a time), a middle (what happened), and an end (and they all lived happily ever after). Knowing that stories have a beginning, middle, and end helps your child understand about reading.*

READ, PLAY

Ask your child to “read” a book you’ve read together many times and tell you the story.

- **Tip:** *Even if the child can’t read, by pretending to read a book to you, your child is using words, telling stories, holding a book, and turning pages. All of these will help your child learn to read!*

READ, TALK, PLAY

Show your child how important reading is by letting him or her see *you* enjoy reading.

- **Tip:** *Because you are your child’s first and best teacher, your child will want to imitate the things that you do. If your child sees you enjoy reading a good book, your child will want to read a good book, too.*

READ

Read aloud to your child at least once a day. Choose one specific time during the day to read together – maybe after lunch or just before bedtime. Keep this time special for reading and don’t let other things interfere with reading time.

- **Tip:** *Children love routines. Knowing what to expect and when to expect it makes them feel safe. Adding book sharing into your routine helps your child feel safe and loved when being read to.*

READ

Choose a book to keep in the bathroom that your child can “read” during toilet training. Having something to do will keep your child on the potty longer.

- **Tip:** *“Reading” while on the potty shows your child that reading can take place anywhere, any time.*

READ

Using Books to Talk, Sing, Read, Write and Play with Your Baby

Visit the public library and look for books related to your child's interests. Tell the children's librarian what your child likes (for example: trucks, animals, shapes, etc.) and ask if there is a book your child will enjoy.

- **Tip:** *Looking at books that show pictures of things your child enjoys (animals, for example) helps your child want to learn to read. Reading a book together about things your child enjoys may give him or her new information. It helps your child learn the value of books and reading. It also shows your child that the library is a great, free place to go for books!*

READ, TALK, PLAY

When you finish reading aloud, ask your child to retell the story in any way. Even if the story is different from the one you read aloud, listen carefully, ask questions, and ENJOY!

- **Tip:** *Having a good attitude towards reading and books makes learning to read easier. When sharing books with a parent is fun, children develop positive feelings about reading.*

READ, TALK, PLAY

Talk to your preschooler. Ask your child to tell you about the story by saying, "What happened? How did you feel?"

- **Tip:** *After reading a story together, ask your preschooler to tell you the best thing and the worst thing that happened that day. This helps your child learn that words can express feelings and tells you what your child likes and does not like.*

READ, TALK, PLAY

Keep a board book in your pocket book or diaper bag so you can read to your child every day, any time. Talk about books or read a few pages aloud when waiting for a bus, sitting in a doctor's office, and getting ready for bed. Any time is the right time for reading, talking and listening to your child.

- **Tip:** *Reading, talking, and listening to your child (having conversations) teaches social skills and builds reading skills. The more words your child uses, the more words she will recognize when it is time to learn to read.*

READ, TALK

Ask your preschooler to choose a book to read with you. Sit in your cozy corner and read the first page or two. Then ask, "What do you think is going to happen?" Wait for an answer and give plenty of time for child to think before speaking.

- **Tip:** *In order to tell you what will happen next, your child will have remember what the story is about and look at the pictures for clues. Paying attention to these details will help your child learn to read.*

READ, TALK, PLAY

Using Books to Talk, Sing, Read, Write and Play with Your Baby

Share a book with your child in your "Cozy Corner." Read the title aloud and mention the name of the author and illustrator. Say, "The author is the person who wrote the book and the illustrator is the person who drew the pictures." Take turns reading pages or looking at the pages and talking about what is happening on them.

- **Tip:** *Reading books together is the most important thing you can do to help your child be ready to read.*

READ

Let your child pretend to read a book to you or retell a story back to you.

Try this: Open a board book backwards and try reading it from back to front. Encourage your child to tell you if anything seems different in the way you are reading the book, and to describe what you are doing.

- **Tip:** Knowing how a story works and that it has a beginning, middle, and end helps children remember stories better. It also makes it easier for them to answer questions about the story.

READ, PLAY, TALK

