



SHARING BOOKS

When you spend time sharing books with your child, it helps build spoken language and sets the foundation for learning to read. We know that children who are read to frequently from a very young age become better readers. It is never too early to start!

It is important to look at books together frequently, but how you share books is also important. Here are a few ways to make book sharing a fun learning experience:

- ★ Read the same book over and over again. Children love repetition! It also gives your child the chance to think more deeply about the story and learn new words.
- ★ Pause during reading to talk about what interests your child. This gives your child the chance to think about and expand on the parts they enjoy most.
- ★ Explain and ask questions during the story to expand your child's learning...but be mindful of asking too many questions!
 - Talk about important parts of the story (e.g. characters, setting, problem) to make sure your child understands what is happening.
 - Ask questions that encourage your child to think about the story. Questions like 'why?' or 'what would you do if' encourage thinking.
 - Make connections between the story and your own lives.
 - Encourage your child to guess what might happen next.
- ★ Explain unfamiliar words to your child.
 - Provide simple definitions of a word (e.g. 'Complicated means it's really hard').
 - Relate new words to your child's experiences (e.g. 'Remember that puzzle you did yesterday, it was really complicated').
 - Use these new words again in other situations to help learn child to use them at different times (e.g. 'I'm making dinner, but this recipe is very complicated').
- ★ As children get closer to Kindergarten, book reading also helps them with specific pre-literacy skills.
 - Track the words with your finger so that children learn that we read from left to right and top to bottom.
 - Point out capital and lower-case letters. Point out punctuation marks like ? and !

- Draw attention to letters and the sound they make. ‘That’s the letter ‘s’. It makes the sound ssss’. Help your child find words that start with the same sound.
 - Point out words that rhyme to build your child’s awareness of sounds.
- ★ But most important, have fun!
- Let your child pick books and topics that interest them.
 - Think beyond books — magazines, photo albums and grocery store flyers can be fun too.
 - Children will also be more interested in books when they see their parents reading for fun, so pick up your own book if you have a spare moment.
 - Make trips to the library to add new and interesting books.

Adapted from the Hanen © Guidebook- I’m Ready! How to Prepare your Child for Reading Success (Greenberg, & Weitzman 2014)