

While Reading with your Child

Model reading and writing.

At times let children choose their own books at stores and libraries.

Read the story as is.

Find hidden objects in pictures (ex. "I Spy" books). Talk about what is in the pictures. Have your child point to and label objects in the pictures.

Have your child match colors within the pictures. Match colors from the book to the immediate environment.

Count items within the pictures.

Let toddlers really explore books. Set some aside that you don't mind getting destroyed. Toddlers need to feel books, which may mean tearing pages. Old catalogues and magazines are excellent.

Before you turn the pages, ask your child what they think will happen next.

Encourage your child to turn the pages.

Read interactively. Ask open-ended questions (ex. How do you think the three bears felt?). Relate the story to your own lives.

Create a different ending for the story with your child (ex. "What do you think would happen if _____?").

Read rhymes. Leave off the endings on rhymes (have child provide a rhyming word). Create silly rhymes. Play with language.

Talk about words (ex. definitions). Talk about opposites (antonyms).

Retell the story using synonyms (words with the same meaning) and/or antonyms (words with the opposite meaning) when appropriate or see if your child can name synonyms or antonyms for particular words you name.

As children get older, point to words in books. Show them words in the environment, such as "STOP" on the stop sign.

See if your child can begin to recognize letters within the words or even short frequently seen words, such as 'the' or 'and'.

Reference: Baron, Naomi S. Growing Up With Language. Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1992.

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