



"Reading together twenty minutes a day is the most important gift you can give your child. Read to your bunny often, and your bunny will read back to you."

Rosemary Wells



### A Parent's Guide to Reading with Your Child

Reading together is magical. As you discover adventures between the covers of a book, you also discover things about each other. And with every page you turn, your child expands vocabulary, comprehension, reasoning, grammar and other skills.

Here are 10 tips to help you bring up a book lover.

1. **Create Reading Rituals.** Read together every day, starting when your child is a baby. Set aside a special time and place to read together. Let your child know that reading is important to you, and that your child can expect to enjoy this time and place with you on a regular basis.
2. **Get Close.** When you cuddle with your child while reading a story, your child begins to associate reading with a sense of security. Children learn better when they feel safe.
3. **Provide Sound Effects.** Use silly voices and sounds to keep your child interested in the story. Hearing different sounds in language also helps your child develop critical listening skills. Try singing, too!
4. **Make Connections (1).** Help your child connect the words you are reading and the words she is hearing. Follow along with your finger as you read to show how print moves from left to right. Point out the pictures in the book and talk about what you see.
5. **Make Connections (2).** We're surrounded by letters and words. Children need experience with all kinds of print — from shopping lists to the Internet to street signs. Point out letters and words around you. Connect the letter symbol to the name of the letter.
6. **Talk About It.** When reading or telling a story, pause to talk to your child about it. Ask him open-ended questions, like "What do you think will happen next?" or "What would you do?" Put things in your own words to help make the story clearer for your child.
7. **Read It Again.** Children need to hear favorite stories over and over. This helps them recognize and remember words. It also helps them learn how to predict what's coming next. Most importantly, as kids become familiar with a story, it gives them confidence about reading and improves their comprehension and background knowledge.
8. **Keep It Active.** Let your child touch and hold the book. Ask her to help you turn the pages. And you don't always have to sit when you read or listen to a story. Try clapping out a fun rhyme or dancing to a silly poem.
9. **Be Creative.** Too tired to hold a book? Tell a story that you know, or make one up together. Making up a story with your child stimulates creativity. It's also a nice change.
10. **Follow Your Child's Pace.** Don't push your child to read beyond his ability. Choose books suited to his age and development, and let him choose books that are interesting to him. Encourage your child's reading, and congratulate him when he learns a new word or masters a new skill.