



Tips for reading with your child

Most of us need a little help when we start reading with children for the first time. Here are some tips to help make it satisfying for all involved. Try out one tip at a time. See which ones work best for you and your children.

Have fun

The most important thing is for you to relax and enjoy yourselves because that way your children will learn that reading is pleasurable and interesting.

Take turns choosing books

Sometimes let your children choose which books they want you to read. Other times, talk together about books to choose and suggest ones that you think will suit their interests.

Time it right

Find a time when your children find it easy to settle. This might be after bath time or just before they go to sleep at nap time and/or at night.

Don't overdo it

Read together in bite-size chunks. Younger children find it difficult to concentrate for long periods of time. If your children become restless or lose interest, stop reading and try again later or the next day.

Don't skip the cover

Read the title of the book and the name of the author and illustrator each time you read a book to your children. This helps them to realise that real people create stories. Ask them to be detectives with a new book and use the clues on the front cover to guess what the book is about.

Ask questions

As you read the story, ask your children questions about it. 'What do you think will happen next?' is a great question to develop children's prediction skills, which are very important literacy skills.

Read it again...and again!

If your children ask you to read the same story again, do it! They discover new things about the story each time you read it.

Joining in

As your children become more familiar with a story or as older children are learning to read, ask them to help you read the story. Younger children often like to recite parts of a familiar story – especially if the words rhyme or a phrase is repeated. Read along with older children as they attempt to read the words on the page with you, pointing to the words as you go.

Keep doing it

Reading together is for older children too. Once children can read, you do not have to stop reading to them! Choose books that are more difficult and complex than the ones they can read on their own.

