



the early years

Reading to baby

The two most valuable gifts you can give a child is love and the ability to read well. Reading to your baby/toddler gives your child an excellent head start on his or her reading and writing journey. Reading together also offers a chance to sit with your child, get close and enjoy each other's company – even for just a short while. Reading should always be fun. Don't make it a chore. If either yourself, or your child, is having an 'off' day, put reading aside and do something else. Here's a couple of tips to make reading fun:

Take your time and enjoy it.

Establish a routine in reading to your child (eg read at bedtime or after bath time).

Choose books with clear pictures and talk about the pictures.

Talk about the book afterwards.

Re-read and re-read favourite books.

Read and tell nursery rhymes and fairytales (old fashioned stories provide some lovely language for your child to hear and enjoy).

Children love having their Dads and Uncles read to them. (This is really important role modelling for boys.)

Let your baby/toddler "read" books for themselves (offer a sturdy "board" book that will survive the experience!)

Borrow books from friends and the library. The librarian can give you advice on books for your child.

Once your child gets to school, ask his or her teacher for more advice on how to help with reading and writing at home.

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