

**Birmingham City Schools
Department of Reading/Language Arts, K-5**

**Every Child Reading:
Reading Tips for Parents**



“Reading is the New Civil Right!”

Three Most Important Things to Know

All parents want the best school experience for their children. All parents want their children to learn to read. This booklet will give you some ideas about what to expect at different ages and stages of reading development, suggestions for what you can do at home, and a list of favorite books you can find in most libraries for you and your child to read.

First

Learning to read is like learning anything else: It happens over time, with practice, and with the help of others. Just like learning to talk, to dance, or to cook, children develop reading (and writing) behaviors in a developmental sequence- they do certain things at certain times as they become more and more knowledgeable.

Second

Many experiences and activities help children learn to read. Please review the following contributions:

- Talking and interacting with others- kids and adults
- Recognizing and connecting sounds and letters
- Experiencing going places and seeing things
- Instruction on specific reading strategies
- Exposure to all types of reading materials from a child's earliest days throughout the school years.

Third

Children learn to read best when they have books and other reading materials at home and plenty of chances to read. This means not only having lots of books around, but many chances to read and talk about what they are reading.



Reading Ages and Stages

“What can parents do to help make their children good readers?”

The following descriptions give general guidelines about characteristics of reading behaviors through grade five.

Emerging Readers: Infants and Toddlers

Reading begins at birth. These are the kinds of things that lay the foundation for becoming a reader.

Infants:

- Enjoy action nursery rhymes and Mother Goose verses
- Fall asleep to nursery songs and lullabies
- Listen to stories as they are rocked
- Imitate actions of children in books
- Participate in making the sounds of animals in books
- Appear interested in babies in books
- React to rhythm, repetition, and rhyme
- Can point to objects in large, colorful pictures

Toddlers:

- Like to read the same books over and over
- Pick favorite books from the shelf
- Can begin to repeat Mother Goose verses by memory
- Can supplement some of the words in short stories
- Are able to name objects in books and magazines
- Enjoy bathtub and shape books

Things to do:

1. Expect that infants and toddlers will want to chew on books! They don't need to seem interested- reading to children when they are very young gives them valuable time hearing words and looking at pictures.

2. Provide books with heavy pages.
3. Read books over and over again. Make sure that child-care providers read and talk to your child.
4. Talk about the pictures and ask questions like “Do you see the dog?” “Where’s the dog?” to help them find objects on the page.
5. Repeat nursery rhymes even if you aren’t reading from a book.
6. Listen to children’s music and encourage movement to rhythm and singing along.
7. Have children help you use sound effects like “mooooo” or “arf-arf.”
8. Make talking to your infant or toddler part of your everyday life. Talk about what you are doing and say back what you think she’s saying to you.
9. Link reading to real life- for example, toddlers quickly learn concepts of hot and cold. If there’s a sun on the page ask, “What is hot in the picture?”
10. Take advantage of your public library. Libraries are great ways to get lots of books into your home at little or no cost- and they often have story time for small children.

Kid’s Pick

- *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* By Bill Martin, Jr. Holt, 1996
- *Bunny Cakes* by Rosemary Wells. Dial, 1997
- *Count and See* by Tana Hoban. Collier, 1974
- *Each Peach Pear Plum* by Janet & Allan Ahlberg. Scholastic, 1989
- *Freight Train* by Donald Crews. Tupelo, 1996
- *Good Night Moon* by Margaret Wise Brown, Harper Collins, 1991
- *Have You Seen My Duckling?* By Nancy Tafuri Putnam & Grosset, 1996.
- *Jesse Bear, What Will You Wear?* By Nancy White Carlstrom. Aladdin, 1986
- *Millions of Cats* by Wanda Gag. Putnam & Grosset, 1996
- *In My Room* by Margaret Miller. Crowell, 1989
- *Play Rhymes* by Marc Brown. Dutton 1987 Read Aloud
- *Rosie’s Walk* by Pat Hutchins. Aladdin, 1986
- *Runaway Bunny* by Margaret Wise Brown. Harper Collins, 1991
- *Ten, Nine Eight* by Molly Bang. Tupelo, 1996
- *We’re Going on a Bear Hunt* by Michael Rosen. Aladdin, 1992

Things to do:

1. Read daily to your child- even if all you have is 10 minutes.
2. Reread stories and as your child gets to know the story pause and let him/her finish the sentence.
3. Put magnetic letters on the refrigerator and spell out words your child can copy like her name, “cat”, “dog”, “mom”, and “dad”.
4. Read alphabet books and then help your child make his own by cutting out and gluing magazine pictures to separate pages.
5. Have plenty of markers, crayons, pens paper, and other materials on hand to encourage kids to make books, write and draw.
6. Ask your child to tell you a story about what she has drawn. Write her words on the paper and read it back. Also, ask your child to retell a story.
7. Encourage children to invent word spellings. They may look like nothing more than strings of letters, but this is how children connect sounds to letters, and is important for learning letter sounds.
8. Label furniture in your child’s room. Ask your child to read words on billboards, cereal boxes and signs.
9. Visit the library with your child weekly- children love having their own cards. Purchase used children’s books from yard sales.
10. As your child begins reading aloud, let mistakes go as long as they don’t change the meaning of the story. For example, if the sentence is “She is running up the hill.” don’t correct it. If she reads, “She rain up the hill.” ask if it makes sense. When correcting, do so gently.

Developing Readers: Pre-K Through First- Graders

Young children develop as readers as they begin to pay more attention to the print around them. They start to be able to recognize words and to read easy books with the support of adults and other children.

Preschoolers:

- Hold books correctly and turn the pages
- Are able to write some letters in their name
- Pretend to read their own “writing” and books
- May be able to show where to start reading a book

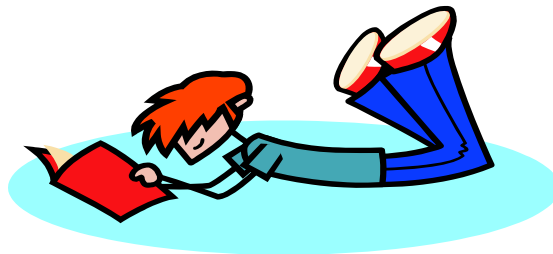
- Can tell the difference between pictures and print
- May know some letter names and can find them in a story
- Begin to read stop signs and business signs (McDonald's)
- Play with language through songs, chants, and invented words
- Can tell what a story is about and what they liked or disliked

Kindergarteners:

- Usually like books with talking animals, folktales, and some fairy tales
- May start to tell the difference between individual letters and words
- Recognize some letters of the alphabet; know sounds of some letters
- May be able to read and write their name and some familiar words
- Use illustrations to tell stories and can retell a story
- Participate in reading of familiar books by supplying some words
- Usually can say words that rhyme and that start with a sound such as “t”, “m”, and “d”

First-graders:

- Recognize the letters of the alphabet and know most letter sounds
- Can write some familiar words from memory
- Are able to read “easy to read” books
- Enjoy fairy tales, the alphabet, counting, and informational books
- Write with invented spellings
- Use a variety of strategies when reading: letters sounds, context clue, illustrations and sight words
- Will make predications of what will happen next in a story
- Know the sequence of a story: beginning, middle, and the end
- Are able to retell a story and can tell the main idea



Things to do:

1. Read daily to your child- even if all you have is 10 minutes.
2. Reread stories as your child gets to know the story, pause and let her finish the sentence.
3. Put magnetic letters on the refrigerator and spell out words your child can copy like her name, “cat”, “dog”, “mom”, “dad.”
4. Read alphabet books and then help your child makes his own cutting out and gluing magazine pictures to separate pages.
5. Have plenty of markers, crayons, pens, paper and other materials on hand and encourage kids to make books, write and draw.
6. Ask your child to tell you a story about what she has drawn. Write her words on the paper and read it back. Also ask you child to retell a story.
7. Encourage children to invent word spellings. They may look like nothing more than strings of letters but, this is how children
8. Connect sounds to letters and it is important for learning letter sounds.
9. Label furniture in your child’s rooms. Ask your child to read words on billboards, cereal boxes, and signs.
10. Visit the library with your child weekly- children love having their own cards. Purchase used children’s books from yard sales.
11. As your child begins reading aloud, let mistakes go as long as they don’t change the meaning of the story. For example if the sentence is, “She ran up the hill.” and the child reads, “She is running up the hill” don’t correct. If she reads, “She ran up the hill.” ask if it makes sense. When correcting, do so gently.

Kids’s Pick

- *A My Name is Alice* by Jane Bayer, Dial, 1984
- *Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman. Dial, 1990
- *Anno’s Counting Book* by Mitsumasa Anno. Crowell, 1977
- *Bread and Jam for Frances* by Russell Hoban. Haper Collins, 1993
- *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* By Bill Martin, Jr. Holt, 1996
- *Caps for Sale* by Esphyr Slobodkina. Harper Collins, 1947, 1985.
- *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* by Bill martin, Jr. Simon & Schuster, 1989
- *Feelings* by Alik Greenwillow, 1984
- *Frog and Toad are Friends* by Arnold Lobel. Harper Collins, 1970
- *Good Night Owl!* By Pat Hutchins. Aladdin, 1991

- *Ira Sleeps Over* by Bernard Waber. Houghton Mifflin, 1973
- *Owen* by Kevin Henkes. Greenwillow, 1993
- *Song and Dance Man* by Karen Ackerman. Scholastic, 1989



Transitional Readers: Second and Third Graders

Transitional readers are making the transition from needing a lot of adult support as they read to being independent as readers. They start to read easier texts on their own, and become increasingly more confident with more difficult books and chapter books.

Second- graders:

- Take pride in showing off their reading skills to grandparents, neighbors, and care providers
- Understand more difficult stories than they can read
- Are able to read early readers and “transitional” books, and may start reading chapter books
- Rely on print and more illustrations to make sense of a text
- Use more and more ways to read, including sounding out using letter patterns, sight words, context clues, and illustrations
- Retell the beginning, middle, and end of the story
- Recognize most frequently read words and words by sight
- Are able to read silently
- Understand basic punctuations- capital letters, periods, and commas
- Can work out unknown words, reread, and self correct
- Are able to talk about the main idea of a story and relate personal experiences to it
- Begin to be interested in series books

Third- graders:

- May choose to read independently and silently most of the time
- Use reading strategies appropriately with ease
- Retell the plot, characters, and events from stories
- Recognize and choose different types of books: fiction, non-fiction, mystery, adventure, historical, fiction poetry, folktale, and so Use encyclopedia, atlas and computer resources to locate information
- Can read assignment and follow directions
- Are able to make predications of what will happen in a story
- Make inference or “read between the line” in a story
- Write stories with a beginning, middle, and end

Things to do:

1. Follow your child’s interest- if she loves sports, find fiction and nonfiction books that tie into the interest.
2. Have your child help you with recipes from cookbooks or mixes. Ask them to read ingredients, measure, mix and clean up!
3. Help your child to become a more fluent reader by having him read to younger brothers and sisters. This gives them practice and helps them share the fun of reading books.
4. Get blank books-or make them. Kids should be encouraged to write down what they think and feel about the book they are reading.
5. Limit television viewing to shows the child selects from the listing.
6. Play games that involve reading. Good choices are Monopoly, Concentration, Life Careers, Risk Clue and many others.
7. At the grocery store let your children find items that are in the list and cross them off. Have them find coupons item, ingredients, and compare items.
8. Play with words by rhyming, find opposites, and naming synonyms or words that have similar meanings like hot or scorching. These type activities give practice and thinking and vocabulary development.
9. Continue to read increasingly harder books aloud to your child.
10. Make thank you notes, birthday cards and invitations together.

Kid's Pick

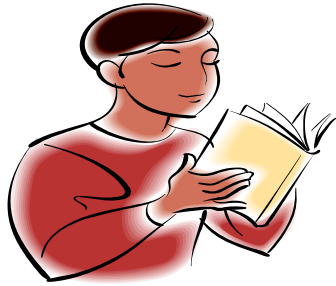
- *Annie and Old One* by Miska Miles. Atlantic Monthly, 1971.
- *Bunnica: A Rabbit Tale of Mystery* by Deborah & James Howe. Atheneum, 1979.
- *Charlotte's Web* by E.B. White. Haper Collins, 1952
- *Dr. De Sota* by Williams Steig, Farrar, Straus& Giroux, 1982
- *Little House in the Big Woods* by Laura Ingalls Wilder. Harper Collins 1971.
- *Miss Rumphius* by Barbara Cooney. Viking, 1982
- *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters: An African Tale* by Steptoe. Lothrop, 1987
- *Officer Buckle and Gloria* by Peggy Rathman. Putnam's 1995.
- *Owl Moon* by Jane Yolen. Philomel, 1987
- *Wanted Dead or Alive: True Story of Harriet Tubman* by Ann McGovern. Scholastic, 1977

Fluent Readers: Fourth and Fifth Graders

Fluent readers have learned how to read for a variety of purposes in their lives and can read independently most of the time. They tend to read and talk about things that relate to their personal lives and experiences.

Fourth– graders

- Read familiar text with ease
- Can read and understand schedules, recipes, and instructions
- Read silently for extended periods of time
- See reading as part of their everyday lives
- Can tell fact from opinion in what they read
- Use word structure clues like prefixes and suffixes to figure word meanings
- Can write stories with a beginning, middle and ending
- Build their reading vocabulary by using dictionaries, glossaries, and other sources



Fifth-graders

- Read to learn new information
- Begin to read young adult literature
- Use Table of Contents, Indexes, Glossaries, and Captions
- Can talk about and share favorite books and authors
- Select and finish reading a wide variety of material
- Use reference material independently
- Like adventures with real heroes and biographies about real people
- See reading as part of their everyday lives
- Can connect previous experiences to new reading
- Choose to read a leisure activity
- Respond and give insight to what is read; to find deeper meaning in books they read

Things to do:

1. Keep reading aloud to your child (even if he can read alone) books that are longer and more difficult than he can read independently. Children still learn vocabulary and information about the world when books are read aloud.
2. If your child seems “turned off” to reading, seek out reading materials that are tuned to his interest. Don’t forget books on tape and reading aloud are other ways to increase vocabulary and language skills.
3. Link movies and television shows to books. Limit TV viewing and video games to between 10-12 hours a week.
4. Encourage children to read more letting them stay up 10-20 minutes later if they are reading.
5. Give magazines subscriptions for a gift.

6. Have your child prepare simple meals and dishes from recipes. This promotes reading skills and gives practice with measuring.
7. Help your child set a time and place for doing homework. A homework first play later policy is a good way to ensure that learning is important.
8. Play games that involved reading and thinking about words. Get children interested in crossword puzzles.
9. Have kids read schedules for television, buses, trains ferries, etc.
10. When you need to find a phone number, have your child use the phone book to look it up. Show how to locate a business number by its category or by its name.

Kid's Pick

- *Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson. Crowell, 1977.
- *Harriett the Spy* by Louise Fitzhugh. Cornstone, 1964, 1987
- *Island of the Blue Dolphins* by Svott O'Dell. Houghton Mifflin, 1990
- *James and the Giant Peach* by Roald Dahl. Knopf, 1990
- *Missing May* by Cynthia Rylant. Orchard, 1992
- *My Side of the Mountain* by Jean Craighead George. Dutton, 1988
- *Number of Stars* by Lois Lowry. Houghton Mifflin, 1989
- *Owls in the Family* by Farley Mowat, McCleand & Stewart, 1989
- *Sarah Plain and Tall* by Patricia Maclachlan. Harper & Row, 1985
- *Shiloh* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, Atheneum, 1991
- *Stone Fox* by John Gardiner. Crowell, 1980
- *Whipping Boy* by Sid Fleischman. Cornerstone, 1989

