

# BUILDING READERS®

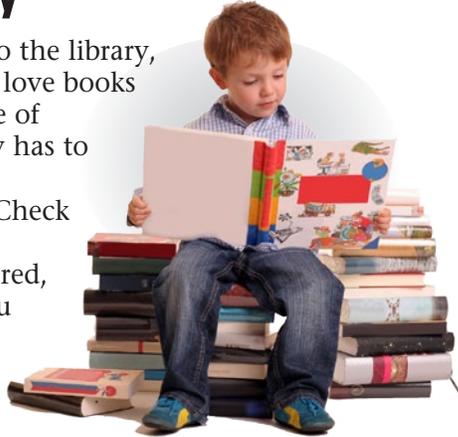
How Families Can Help Children Get Ready to Read

Readiness Program  
Intermediate Unit 1

## Make the most of the opportunities at your local library

When you take your child to the library, you're helping him learn to love books and reading. Take advantage of everything your local library has to offer, including:

- **Special events for children.** Check with your librarian about when story hours are offered, and attend as often as you can! See if your library also has puppet shows, movie screenings or other kid-friendly events. Not only will your child love attending, he'll also be interacting with other children.
- **Resources.** Learn about all of the materials you can check out from your library, including DVDs, audio books and, of course, all types of books!



**Source:** "Library Services for Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers," Colorín Colorado, <http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/24052/>.

*"Reading has given me more satisfaction than really anything else."*

—Bill Blass

## Mail can build excitement about reading

What could be more exciting for your child than receiving her very own mail!

Ask relatives and family friends to send her notes and cards. Read each one with her and then ask her to dictate a response. She can also draw a special picture on her note before it goes into the envelope. (Have her watch you address the envelope. This shows her that writing is an important skill as well.)

You can also give your child any junk mail that you receive. Catalogs can be especially fun to look at together. Ask your child about what she sees in the pictures before reading the printed description aloud to her.

## Demonstrate the connection between the text and what you read

When you read to your child, show him that you're reading the words on the page. You're demonstrating to him that there's a connection between the text he sees on the page and what you're saying—and that you're not making up a story from the pictures. Follow the words with your finger as you read. Occasionally stop and point out words he may recognize.



**Source:** "Reading," Between the Lions Parents & Teachers, <http://tinyurl.com/pwezfb1>.

## Reading and writing matter!

When your child sees you reading and writing in your everyday life, she learns that they're important skills to have.

Try to:

- **Write grocery lists.**
- **Read recipes** out loud as you make dinner.
- **Read words** out loud as you write notes or letters.
- **Read together** every day!



## Use music to nurture reading skills

Music is a great tool for preparing your child to read. Songs are an important—and fun—way to familiarize children with elements of reading, such as rhythms and rhymes.

To use music to boost your child's reading readiness:

- **Sing** nursery rhymes together.
- **Clap** along with syllables in words.
- **Encourage** her to invent silly songs.
- **Use** her name in songs you make up together.



## Talking with your child during reading helps build important language skills

Next time you read your child a story, notice how much time is spent reading and how much time is spent talking. Don't worry if there's more talking than reading—that's okay!

When you read with your child, talk about the book and ask each other questions. This shows you're interested and thinking about the story. You can talk about:

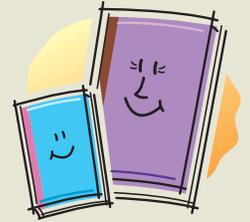
- **What your child thinks.** It's okay if your child interrupts the story. Listen to his questions and comments and discuss them.
- **Your thoughts and questions.** Point out neat things about the story ("Oh! Look at that big brown bear!") or ask thought-provoking questions ("What do you think will happen next?").



**Source:** M.R. Jalongo, "12 answers to parents' questions about their young child's reading," PTA TODAY.

### Let your child 'read' to you

Help your child build his language skills by having him "read" a story to you. Even if he can't read the text, he can still be a great storyteller!



Have your child flip through the pages of his favorite book. He likely knows the plot of the story, but he can use the pictures as a guide. And if he goes a little off topic, that's okay! He's building creativity skills at the same time.

### Books to delight your early reader

- **Peck, Peck, Peck** by Lucy Cousins (Candlewick). A little woodpecker learns to peck—and she loves it! Join her as she flies all around, looking for new things to peck.
- **Once Upon a Banana** by Jennifer Armstrong (Simon & Schuster). Follow along and see what happens when a banana is tossed on a city block. This exciting story is told completely by the illustrations!
- **Digger, Dozer, Dumper** by Hope Vestergaard (Candlewick). There are all kinds of trucks, and they all have important jobs to do! Enjoy reading these fun poems about a dozen different kinds of trucks, from bulldozers to ambulances.



### Develop your child's cognitive skills

Learning to read involves more than just learning letters and sounds. Your child develops important *cognitive* (thinking) skills when she:

- **Works with patterns.** Make a pattern by placing a red block, then a green one, then red, etc., on the table. Ask your child to copy it. Add more colors as she improves.
- **Uses her memory.** Put eight items on a tray. Let your child look at the items for one minute. Take the tray away. See how many items she can remember.
- **Recognizes similarities and differences.** Draw three people. Make them all the same—but put a hat on one.



See if your child can pick out what is different. If this is too easy, try a more subtle difference, like adding an extra button on one person's shirt.

**Source:** C. Jones, *Parents Are Teachers*, Williamson Publishing.



**Q:** Why does my child want to hear the same story again and again? How does that help her reading development?

**A:** Because she loves it! Familiar stories help your child feel secure, but they also teach her about words, sounds and structure. If she's happily absorbed in one book, don't rush her onto a different one. There's a world of new stories waiting when she's ready!

Do you have a question about reading? Email [readingadvisor@parent-institute.com](mailto:readingadvisor@parent-institute.com).

### Building Readers®

How Families Can Help Children Become Better Readers

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