

Reading for Success

Choosing the right books

One of the best ways to “raise a reader” is to surround your child with reading material. You want to fill your home with the magic of reading, but you may wonder what types of books to select for your prereader. Here’s a simple guide:

Pick great books for read-alouds

- **Select books you’ll enjoy** and read with enthusiasm. Your child isn’t likely to be excited about reading if you’re not!
- **Read books that capture** your child’s interest. Preschoolers tend to like books about kids their own age, playful animals, mischievous characters, dinosaurs, feelings, families, friendship and first experiences.
- **Select books** that include repetition and rhythmic language—especially rhymes and chants.
- **Match the length** of a story with your child’s attention span. Consider two or three very short stories instead on one long one.
- **Don’t worry** about how old the book is. A story is new if your child hasn’t heard it before.



Appeal to new readers

Once your child begins learning how to read, follow these guidelines when selecting books:

- **Build on interests.** A child who likes horses will love a book about these animals. You won’t go wrong choosing a book about something that already interests your child.

- **Stick with a good thing.** If one book by an author was enjoyable, odds are your child will like another. This is why series books are great choices for kids.

Choose a variety of types

Be sure to introduce your child to different types of books and reading materials, such as:

- **Poetry.** Poetry is excellent for prereaders. Rhyming poems help children learn that words are made of sounds. Poetry can improve children’s memories and encourage creative thinking.
- **Interactive books,** like the *I Spy* “hunt-and-find” books. Children also enjoy books with tabs that can be lifted or have pop-up illustrations.
- **Magazines.** There are many magazines written just for children. Be sure to ask your librarian for a list.
- **Books about numbers,** letters, shapes or colors. Seeing the written words next to familiar objects often helps children make the connection between the two.
- **Wordless books.** Encourage your child to make up his own story based on the illustrations.

