

Reading with Children of All Ages at Home

Good reading habits and a positive view of school begin early. Here are some questions to ask yourself to keep you and your child on track for fun times and good learning. You are key in this endeavor!

For Babies (6 weeks to 1 year)

- Do I provide a comfortable place for our story time? Is my child happy to be here?
- Am I showing her the pictures in the book?
- Do I change my voice tone as I read to show emotion and excitement?
- Do I pay attention to how my child responds and am I aware of his likes? Is the child tired and ready to stop?

For toddlers (1-3 years)

Ask yourself all of the questions above and the following:

- Does my child enjoy the book we are reading?
- Do I encourage him to “pretend read” joining in where he has memorized a word or phrase?
- Do I relate ideas in the story to things with which my child is familiar?
- Do I let my child know how much I like her ideas and encourage her to tell me more?
- Do I point out letters, such as the first letter of his name?

For Preschoolers (ages 3-4)

All of the first questions and...

- Do I find ways to help my child begin to identify letters and letter sounds?
- Do I ask the child to tell me what they see in pictures and encourage her to make up their own stories?

For kindergartners (5 years)

All of the questions thus far, plus...

- Do I find ways to help my child begin to identify printed words?
- Do I let my child retell favorite stories to show he knows how the story goes?
- Do I accept her version of a story and encourage creativity?

For 1st graders (6 years)

All of the other questions and...

- Do I give my child the chance to read a story to me using the text, picture clues, her memory, etc.?

For 2nd -5th grades

- Do I still read to my child?
- Do I show delight in their reading to me?
- Do we read the same book and talk about it?
- Does my child see me reading for my self-enjoyment/learning?

For 6th -12th grades

- Do we talk about books we've read?
- Do we share things we've read with each other?
- Do I show sincere interest in my child's thoughts and the things they have learned?

Children learn step by step in a process that takes time and patience. They vary in their rate of progress and in what holds their interest.

