

# Early Literacy: Helping Your Child Become A Reader

There are many ways that you can encourage your child to become a reader. Here are some questions that you can ask yourself to make sure that you are keeping on track:

For Babies  
(6 weeks to 1 year)

- Do I provide a comfortable place for our story time? Is my child happy to be in this place?
- Am I showing my child the pictures in the book? Am I changing the tone of my voice as I read to show emotion and excitement?
- Am I paying attention to how my child responds? What does she especially like? Is she tired and ready to stop?

For Toddlers  
(1 to 3 years)

All of the questions above, plus:

- Does my child enjoy the book we are reading?
- Do I encourage my child to “pretend read,” joining in where he has memorized a word or phrase?
- When I ask questions, am I giving my child enough time to think and answer?
- Do I tie ideas in the book to things that are familiar to my child? Do I notice if he does this on his own?
- Do I let my child know how much I like his ideas and encourage him to tell me more?
- Do I point out letters, such as the first letter of his name?

For Preschoolers  
(3 and 4 years)

All of the questions above, plus:

- Do I find ways to help my child begin to identify sounds and letters and to make letter-sound matches?

For Kindergartners  
(5 years)

All of the questions above, plus:

- Do I find ways to help my child begin to identify some printed words?
- Do I let my child retell favorite stories to show that she knows how the story develops and what’s in it?

For Beginning First  
Graders (6 years)

All of the questions above, plus:

- Do I give my child the chance to read a story to me using the print, picture clues, his memory - or any combination of these ways that help him make sense of the story?

Brought to you by *Early On* Michigan.

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