

# Fall in Love with Reading: Ten Simple Things you Can Do at Home

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There are many ways to enjoy reading with your child. Here are a few ways to make reading a fun part of your everyday life.

## 1. Develop family reading routines and rituals

Find a regular time of day when you can dedicate story time into your day. You can read in the morning, after school, or before bedtime! Making story time a cozy routine makes reading an essential and pleasant activity.

## 2. Read what interests your child

The nutrition facts on the milk box, newspapers, recipes, maps, and game instructions all make great reading material if your child is interested.

## 3. Try books that reflect your daily experiences

Making connections to topics you read about is a fun way to keep children engaged. For example, you can read *You Can't Take a Balloon into the Metropolitan Museum* with your child before or after visiting an art museum. This opens up opportunities for conversations like discussing similarities and differences between the book and the museum visit.

Or read Dr. Seuss's *In a People House* and then ask your child if they see any similar items, how they work, or even create a new book based on what's inside your own home.

## 4. Let your child select books

When you visit the library, let your child select books. Try both fiction and informational books, and ask the librarian for recommendations based on your child's interests.

### **5. Reread your child's favorites**

It's common for young children to request the same book again and again. Re-reading familiar stories offers children a chance to absorb information over time and lets them master the whole story.

### **6. Encourage storytelling**

Encourage your child to tell you a story from time to time or to retell a story after you've read it several times. Don't feel the need to correct how she's telling the story. Let her enjoy the experience of storytelling.

### **7. Have fun while reading**

Try whatever style feels comfortable for you and your child. Some ways families have fun with stories include:

- Acting out the story while reading by using facial expressions, gestures, body movements, and voices to make the story come to life.
- Making the story relevant to your child's life by adapting the story to include her name, a friend's name, or your pet's name. For example, surprise your child by saying "Olivia, Olivia, what do you see?" when you read Eric Carle's *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?*
- Finding props to go along with favorite stories and offering them to your child to use in her play.

### **8. Change your setting!**

It can be fun to read books in different places in and around your home. Try reading Eric Carle's *The Very Lonely Firefly* in a dark room with a flashlight. I've read *The Lamb and the Butterfly* (written by Arnold Sundgaard, illustrated by Eric Carle) to a group of four-year-olds on the grass, and when they saw a butterfly fly by, they associated it with the one in the story! You can even ask your child where she wants to read a particular story.

## 9. Try one of these books that trigger children's interest in reading

Adam Lehrhaupt's Warning: *Do Not Open This Book!* Is a great example of a book that draws children into the act of reading. Children wonder: "Why can't I open this book?" and read on. Here are some others:

- *Don't Push The Button* by Bill Cotter
- *Go Away, Big Green Monster!* by Ed Emberley
- *How To Hide a Lion* by Helen Stephens I
- *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* by Laura Joffe Numeroff
- *Maisy's Fairground* by Lucy Cousins
- *My Granny's Purse And My Mummy's Bag* by P. H. Hanson
- *Press Here* by Herve Tullet
- *Tap to Play* by Salina Yoon
- *The Foggy Foggy forest* by Nick Sharratt
- *Where's Wally?* by Martin Handford

## 10. Get to know your child and your own reading style

- Knowing your child and your own reading style is important for three main reasons:
- It offers you an opportunity to observe what interests your child. Be it science, art, interactive books or wordless books, you will figure out her current interest and support her in appropriate ways.
- You won't impose your preferences on your child; instead, you will share what you like with each other and get a chance to explore those beyond your favorites.
- It allows your child to understand and respect that every individual reads differently and it is okay.

There are lots of ways to encourage and enjoy reading. Try these ideas and do more of what your child enjoys.

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**Audience:** *Family*

**Age:** *Early Primary, Infant/Toddler, Kindergarten, Preschool*

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