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Read to your children before they can read, then begin reading

with your children as soon as they can.

- **Read aloud** to your child; talk about the words and pictures and share ideas about the book.
- **Read yourself.** Children who see adults reading, and enjoying reading, are much more likely to read themselves.
- **Surround them with books.** You don't need hundreds of books at home, but make regular trips to the library or bookshop, not just to borrow books, but to spend time together browsing and learning to make choices. Make books part of your family life - always have books around so that you and your children are ready to read whenever there's a chance.
- **Talk to your child.** Spend time with them, doing simple activities (cooking, making something, building a model). As you talk about what you're doing, you are helping them to learn new words. Later, when they see words written down, they have already heard them and know what they mean.
- **Match their interests.** Help them find the right book - it doesn't matter if it's fiction, poetry, comic books or non-fiction. All reading is good - don't discount non-fiction, comics, graphic novels, magazines and leaflets. Reading is reading and it is all good.
- **Get comfortable!** Snuggle up somewhere warm and cosy with your child, either in bed, on a beanbag or on the sofa. Turn off the television and concentrate on enjoying the book.
- **Ask questions.** To keep them interested in the story, ask your child questions as you read such as, 'What do you think will happen next?' or 'Where did we get to last night? Can you remember what had happened already?'
- **Read whenever you get the chance.** Bring along a book or magazine for any time your child has to wait, such as at a doctor's surgery.
- **Read again and again.** Encourage your child to re-read favourite books and poems. Re-reading helps to build up fluency and confidence.
- **Bedtime stories.** Regularly read with your child or children at bedtime. It's a great way to end the day and to spend valuable time with your child.
- **Rhyme and repetition.** Books and poems which include rhyme and repetition are great for encouraging your child to join in and remember the words. In this way, your child starts to learn the language used in stories.
- **Bring the characters to life.** Talk about the characters, the drawings and the events so that the story starts to come alive. Remember that your face says it all - exaggerate your normal expression like a children's TV presenter: children will love it.
- **Try audio books** - this is a great way to build a child's understanding of stories and improve their listening.

