

ONLINE RESOURCES

www.rif.org/parents
Reading Is Fundamental, Inc.
www.reading.org
International Reading Association
www.parents-choice.org
Parents' Choice Foundation
www.read2kids.org/readaloud.htm
Family Literacy Foundation
www.ala.org/yalsa/booklists
American Library Association

PRINT RESOURCES

How to Get Your Child to Love Reading
Esmé Raji Codell. Algonquin, 2003.
How to Make Your Child a Reader for Life
Paul Kropp. Main Street Books, 2000.
The Read-Aloud Handbook, 5th Edition
Jim Trelease. Penguin, 2001.
*Reading Magic: Why Reading Aloud
to Our Children Will Change Their Lives Forever*
Mem Fox. Harvest Books, 2001.

For a complete list of RIF parent guides,
visit www.rif.org/parents/resources.

READING IS FUNDAMENTAL, INC. works to build a literate nation by helping young people discover the joy of reading. For more information and to access reading resources, visit www.rif.org.



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A Guide for Parents from
Reading Is Fundamental®



Reading Aloud

Reading aloud to children is one of the best ways to help them discover the joy of reading. And it's never too early—or too late—to start. All children, even infants and teens, can benefit from listening to you read aloud.

This Reading Is Fundamental guide is filled with tips and strategies for reading to and with your children as they grow.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOUR CHILD?

Research shows that families play an important role in children's reading success. By reading aloud with your children and encouraging them to read on their own, you are helping them become better readers, better listeners, and better students. You are also helping them build vocabulary and language skills, and helping them gain knowledge about the world around them. When you read aloud together, children learn quickly that reading is important. And most of all they learn that reading is fun!

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

Reading is more than just making sense of words on a page. It's an adventure! It's a chance to explore new places, discover new things, and meet new people. And it's something you and your children can do together. Reading aloud can be a special time for you and your children to bond. You can cuddle together as you share stories, laugh at silly characters, root for heroes, and wag your fingers at villains. You'll get to know each other better as you talk about what you read. And most of all you'll feel satisfied knowing that you're helping your children develop a lifelong habit of reading.



Reading Aloud Together

GETTING STARTED

Reading aloud can be done anywhere, anytime, with almost any book.

A few things you can do to get started:

- * Make a commitment to read aloud at least once a day. It's important to establish a routine.
- * Select a time to read aloud. It can be anytime—morning, after school, bedtime—but try to make it the same time every day.
- * Choose a favorite place to read aloud. It can be a bedroom, a living room, or any place you can read together comfortably.
- * Remember to have fun! The more fun kids have reading aloud, the more they will love books and want to read them.



READING TO YOUNG CHILDREN

Even before they know what words are, children benefit from watching and listening to you read aloud. Within their first year, they're able to learn basic language and reading concepts, such as how to hold a book and that you're reading words, not pictures. The earlier children grasp these concepts, the easier they learn to read when they're ready.

Ways to help your children get the most out of being read to:

- * Read slowly, with expression. Try using different voices for different characters.
- * Follow the words with your finger as you read. Your child will see that words are read from the left to the right of the page.
- * Point to the pictures and say the names of objects and colors.
- * Have your child help turn the pages.
- * Ask your child to describe pictures, repeat phrases used in the story, and predict what will happen next.
- * Take time to answer her questions.
- * Read a variety of books. Continue reading old favorites, but don't be afraid to try new stories.

READING ALOUD WITH EMERGENT READERS

Continue reading aloud to children even after they're reading on their own. Reading aloud should now be an even more enjoyable experience because you can do it together. Encourage your child to read aloud as often as possible. Listen attentively and offer positive feedback as he improves.

How to read aloud with your young reader:

- * Take turns reading paragraphs or entire pages.
- * Help your child with words she has trouble reading. Ask her what word would make sense in the story, or supply the correct word so she can move on and read the rest of the sentence.
- * Be encouraging. Tell your child he is doing a good job.
- * Talk about the book as you read together. Ask questions that allow your child to express ideas and opinions.



Quick Tips!

- * Take books everywhere (the car, bus, doctor's office), and make the most of every minute.
- * Read everyday items aloud: food labels, maps, menus, cereal boxes, road signs, catalogs, and newspapers.
- * Ask your local librarian to help you find books that meet your child's interests and needs.
- * Set up a home library. A few books on a special shelf is a great start. And it doesn't have to be expensive—used-book stores, yard sales, and flea markets sell books that children will treasure for years.



READING ALOUD WITH OLDER CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS

Older children and teens also benefit when you read aloud to them. Reading aloud together gives them an opportunity to read interesting books that might be too difficult for them to tackle on their own. It's a great way to motivate older readers to improve vocabulary and reading skills. They'll want to read more about their favorite topics, and they'll want to learn how to do it on their own.

Hints for reading aloud with older children and teens:

- * Read short sections of books or articles aloud to catch your child's attention. Encourage her to read the rest on her own.
- * Call your child's attention to an illustration or photo on the cover of a book or magazine. Ask what he thinks about it. Encourage your child to read the book or article, and then discuss it with him.
- * Encourage your child to read aloud to younger brothers, sisters, cousins, or family friends. All children will benefit.