

EARLY LITERACY NEWSLETTER

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Reading Books with Toddlers!

Toddlers have figured out what books are all about! They enjoy holding a book, turning the pages, looking at the pictures and talking about what interests them. They often have favourite books, which they read again & again!

When reading with a toddler, the main goals include:

1. Developing their interest in books.
2. Having them interact back & forth with you.
3. Learning some interesting new words.
4. Having fun!

Types of books to read with a toddler:

Books with colourful, realistic photographs or pictures. These books catch the child's attention!

Board Books; books with thick, sturdy pages that are easy for toddlers to hold & turn pages.

Repetitive books; books with predictable, rhythmic language that repeats throughout the book. This type of language will catch your child's interest and make it easier for them to remember key words as they are repeated often.

Photo Albums & Homemade books; toddlers love to look at pictures of themselves and of the important people and events in their lives.

Short, simple story books; books with a simple storyline. If your child isn't interested in listening to the whole story at first, simplify it, or just talk about the pictures.

Tips for sharing books with toddler:

Let your child choose the book! It's okay to make suggestions but allowing your child to choose the books ensures that they are truly interested.

Sit face to face with your child. Traditionally, we would sit beside the child or have them sit on your lap. When you sit face to face you can read your child's cues and find out what interests them about the book.

Allow your child to hold the book, turn the pages & 'read' the book in their way. This will ensure your child is actively involved. Don't worry if they skip pages, the goal is to make the book interactive & fun!

It's okay to change things up or keep things the same! You don't have to read every word on the page. You can simplify the story or just talk about the pictures. Some children love to read the same book over & over again. There's no need to discourage this. The repetition helps your child develop a better understanding of the concepts in the book.

READING
is to the
MIND
what
exercise
is to the **BODY.**

Sir Richard Steele



Book suggestions for toddlers:

- Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you see? By Bill Martin Jr.
- Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown
- Hand, Hand, Fingers, Thumb by Al Perkins
- Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle

Adding Language during Book Reading

Once you've found some books that your child likes and you are taking turns talking about the books, you can add language that will stimulate your child's vocabulary, understanding and thinking skills.

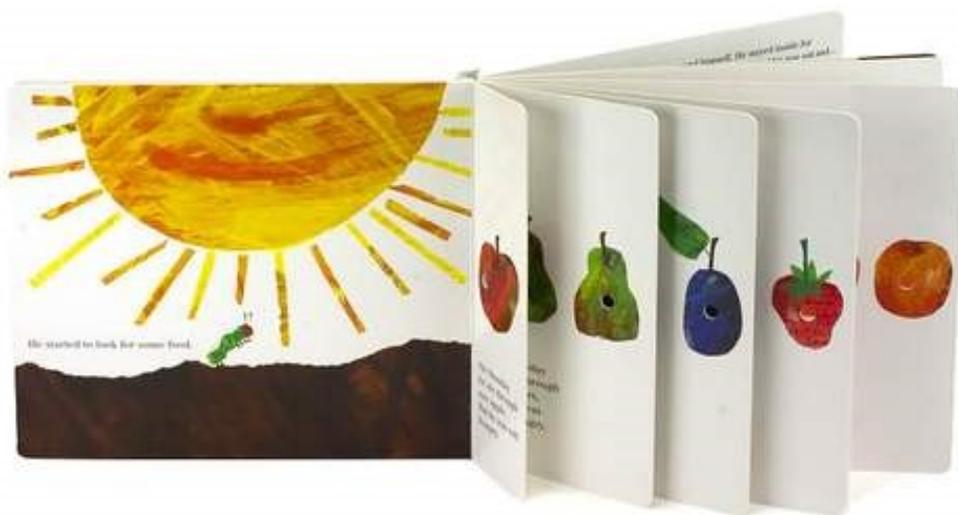
Use a variety of words. Try to avoid just naming the pictures in the book, the nouns. While nouns are important, your child also needs to be exposed to words that describe (e.g. wet, hot, tall), action words (go, run, sleep, eat), words for feelings (happy, sad, tired), location words (up, down, under) and words about time (now, later, after).

Highlight important words. Emphasize the most important words, the ones that are key to your child understanding the information on the page, with your voice. You can do this by slowing down and showing a picture in the book that demonstrates the meaning of the word. You can also use gestures to explain concepts in the book. For example, when looking at a picture of a big elephant, you can outstretch your arms to indicate 'big' while you talk about the very big elephant.

Expand your child's message. When your child says something about the book, you can respond by elaborating on his message. For example, if they say 'dog' while looking at a picture of a dog having a bath, you could say 'The dog is having a bath'. Adding on to your child's idea shows your child how to produce longer sentences.

Build your child's understanding. Your child will gain a better understanding of their experiences and his world when you draw connections between the book and their life. For example, if you look at a book about a trip to the doctor, you can talk about a recent visit your child had to the doctor.

Build your child's imagination. Books offer a great opportunity to add language that introduces imaginary concepts to your child. Talking about topics like castles or pirates that your child cannot experience in 'real life' helps build your child's language, play and thinking skills.



References
The Hanen Centre
It Takes Two to Talk: Pepper & Weitzman