

Especially for parents of preschoolers! 

Let's Read Together

Reading and Storytelling

Children ages 3-5 are ready to learn about books and take part actively in sharing them. Reading picture books with your preschooler helps spark her imagination and her love of stories.

What is the practice?

Sharing, reading, and looking at the pages of a picture book with your child and asking questions help prepare her to read. The more books you read with your child, the more her love of books will grow. Provide your preschooler with books on topics that interest her and share in reading experiences that capture her imagination. Reading storybooks with young children is a vital activity for later reading success.



What does the practice look like?

Let your preschooler choose a picture book for you to read to her. Find a comfortable place where the two of you can sit together to look at the pictures. Spark her interest in the book by actively involving her in the storytelling process. Let your child ask questions and encourage her to point to the pictures in the story. Ask her questions about the pictures and point out connections between the pictures in the books and her own experiences.

How do you do the practice?

Provide your preschooler with a variety of picture books to choose from. Let her pick out the book she wants to read.

- **Ask “wh-” questions:** Asking your child questions as you read helps her think about and understand the story. Start by identifying what is going on in the pictures. *“What is this dog doing?”* Agree with and expand on her answers. *“That’s right! That dog is chasing a cat! What do you think the cat is trying to do?”* You can also relate the book to your child’s own experiences. *“Our dog likes to chase cats too, doesn’t he? What else does he like to chase?”*
- **Reread and retell:** Rereading the same book helps your child become familiar with the story and learn to connect the words that are being said with the words she sees on the page. Once your child becomes familiar with the story, have her retell it in her own way. She can use the pictures and her memory. Encourage and praise her attempts even if her version is different from the original.

How do you know the practice worked?

- Does your preschooler show greater interest in reading?
- Does your preschooler have a favorite book, one that she wants you to read again and again?
- Does your preschooler retell stories while looking at the books?

Take a look at more reading together

Shared Reading

Four-year-old Tremain loves animals. His mom found a word book at the public library that is filled with pictures of animals. Tremain loves looking at this book and will spend time looking carefully at each page. He likes to have his mom read the book to him. When he asks her to read it to him she always says, "Only if you will help me with the names." Tremain likes to help and he readily agrees. Tremain's mom points to and names the animals and then asks her son to help name the rest.



Picture Reading

After going to the grocery store with her mom, four-year-old Kristen brings her mom a word book to look at. "Mommy, this book has pictures of the grocery store. Read it to me?" It is right before dinner so her mother replies, "Okay. But I need to finish making dinner. I might need your help. Why don't you start, Kristen? Tell me what you see on this page." "Okay," says Kristen, "there are oranges and apples and lettuce, but what's this, mommy?" "That's an artichoke. Next time we are in the grocery store I will show you one," her mom says.

Favorite Words & Signs

Noah has a hearing impairment. When his parents read to him—usually at bed time—they sign and point to the pictures in the book. Noah always picks out a book he would like for his parents to read to him. Noah's favorite book is a book with a label under every picture in the book. Both Noah's mom and dad have read this book to Noah many times. He likes all of the pictures and he likes that each picture has a name. Sometimes when reading, Noah's mom says, "Show me your favorite picture on this page." Noah points to a picture and sign the name. Noah's mom asks, "Why is that picture your favorite?" Noah signs why he likes the picture best. He enjoys spending this special time of closeness with his parents.

