

Building Blocks of Reading

Begin talking and singing to your child from birth.

Your baby loves hearing your voice. Play peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake. Recite nursery rhymes or other verses that have strong rhythms and repeat sounds. Sing lullabies and other songs.

Let your baby know that you hear their babbles, coos and gurgles.

Repeat the sounds they make. Smile back. When you respond to their sounds, they learn that what they "say" means something and is important to you. Sometimes, you can supply the language for them.

Point to familiar objects and name them.

When a baby hears an object called the same name over and over and over, they learn to connect the spoken word with its meaning.

Make sharing books part of every day.

In the morning, before bed or any other time, give your baby some books to handle and explore.

A few minutes is OK—don't worry if you don't finish the story.

Very young children can only sit for a few minutes. Even if you only read a page, or if your baby plays on the floor while you're reading, it is the melodic rhythm of your reading aloud that will benefit your baby's early literacy development.

Talk or sing about the pictures.

You do not have to read the words exactly as they are on the page. You can simply talk or sing about the pictures in the book.

Let babies turn the pages.

It is okay to skip pages, or to only look at one page your baby enjoys. Let your baby decide.

Show children the words.

Try running your finger along the words as you read them from left to right.

Make the story come alive.

Create funny voices as you tell the story and use facial expressions.

Make it personal.

Talk about your own family, pets, or community when you are reading about others in the story.

Have fun!



Worcester Public Schools Parent Information Center
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Worcester Public Schools

Books for Babies
An Early Literacy Program
For
New Mothers