

Youth Services Department

Suggestions for Reading Aloud

Read to your child as early as possible. Infancy is a good time to start.

Read, sing and practice rhymes and songs. Children need to hear rhythms and patterns.

Read often.

Have a traditional time of day to read such as after supper or bedtime.

Cultivate the art of listening gradually. Young listeners have short attention spans. Take cues from your child. It will lengthen with time.

Move from board books to picture books to story books and then to novels as your child grows.

Vary the subject matter. Don't forget about poetry, fiction, myths and legends, nonfiction, biographies and autobiographies, etc.

Vary the reading forms. Read books, magazines, newspapers, comics, reference materials.

Read above your child's reading level to challenge his listening level.

Allow time for your child to get settled in a comfortable position to be ready to listen.

Make sure your child can see the illustrations of the book.

Allow for time to discuss the book after you read. Process the content with dialogue.

Practice reading the book aloud to yourself before you read it to your child.

Use expression in your voice when you read. Be dramatic.

Adjust the pace of your reading where appropriate. Some parts you may draw out to build suspense; other parts may speed up a bit.

Take time to read slowly and articulate the words. This gives time for your child to mentally visualize and to see the details in the illustrations.

Preview the book in order to decide if and when to shorten, eliminate or elaborate the text.

Learn about the author. The library has excellent author sources. Pass the information on to your child.