

Connect with Your Child through READING!

50 FUN IDEAS

- 1 Try a New Genre**

Encourage children to develop an interest in a variety of genres such as adventure, mystery, fantasy and poetry.
- 2 Word Games for Everyone**

Lead by example — exercise your mind by doing crossword puzzles, word jumbles and word searches. Play board games as a family to develop vocabulary skills.
- 3 Current Events**

Encourage family members to develop a habit of reading and discussing items from the daily newspaper to keep up-to-date on what is happening around the world.
- 4 Transitions Tunes**

Sing with young children every day to help them make transitions. Make up songs about daily activities such as waking up, taking a walk, or going to the store.
- 5 Young Illustrators**

Ask your children to illustrate stories and engage them in dialogue about their artwork. Keep an album of their artwork so the family can continue to talk about it and so children can see their progress.
- 6 Bring Home a Book**

Tie reading into an outing. If you're going to a museum, bring home a book about a favorite exhibit, so children see reading as an experience.
- 7 Author Study**

Help your child learn more about a favorite author. Look up titles of other books by that author, and help your child send a letter or e-mail to the author.
- 8 Reading Journal**

Help your child keep a journal of what books he or she reads. Include the book title, author, what your child liked or didn't, and a simple rating system (make it fun with stars or stickers).
- 9 Stop!**

Point out signs during the day and read them together. Talk about what the symbols on the sign mean.
- 10 Scavenger Hunt**

Hide a special book for your child. Write out simple clues and have a scavenger hunt to find the book.
- 11 Living Room Theatre**

Read a story and then act it out using puppets, dolls or stuffed animals.
- 12 Let the Pictures Tell the Story**

With your child, look at the pictures in a book and guess what happens. Then, read it together to see if you were right!
- 13 Play with Your Food**

N is for Noodle! Help your child spell their name or form the letters of the alphabet using cooked spaghetti noodles.
- 14 Simon Says...**

By playing this listening game, your child will get practice listening carefully and following directions — two things that are important on school days.
- 15 Spell My Name**

Help your child cut out letters from a newspaper or magazine. Try to find the letters in your child's name and your name. Together, string together the letters to spell the names.
- 16 Make Your Own Story**

Look at the pictures in a book or magazine together. Try to make up a story using the pictures.
- 17 At Home with the Gnome**

Make up rhymes about things you see in your home and as you go about your daily routine. "Step over the dog like he's a log." "Would you like to share my stair?"
- 18 Talk About Reading**

Read to your child books that were your favorites when you were a child, and talk about why you loved them.
- 19 The Best Part of Your Day**

Tell your child how much you enjoy reading with him or her. Talk about story time as the favorite part of your day.
- 20 Read Together**

Keep reading to your child even after she learns to read. A child can listen and understand more difficult stories than she can read on her own.
- 21 Improving Reading Comprehension**

Show your child how events in the book are similar to events in your child's life.
- 22 Reading Together**

Invite your child to join in whenever there is a repeated phrase in the text.
- 23 Storytelling**

Encourage him to tell you stories, to put happenings into a logical order.



24 Look for Letters

Point out letters and simple, familiar words in books and signs. Help your child read his name or write it with crayons or magnetic letters.



25 Record Read-Alouds

It's fun for a child to see and hear himself reading a favorite story. Have him read into a recorder or take a video of the activity.



26 Did you Like the Book?

Let your child know it's okay if he or she doesn't like a particular book. Use a not-so-great selection as an opportunity to understand more about reading skills and preferences.



27 Make Time for Questions

If your child asks questions while you read, smile! That means he is very engaged with the story. Stop and answer any questions.



28 Take a Picture Walk

Talk about the book before you read it. Show the cover and ask what the book is about. Talk about the author. Flip through the book, look at the pictures together, and talk about what's on the jacket flaps.



29 Read it Again (and Again!)

Reread books to build self-confidence.



30 Wordless Wonders

Include a wordless picture book in your next stack from the library. Wordless books make for great conversation.



31 Read Together

Have fun. Smile and enjoy the story. Read with a slow, relaxed voice and be expressive.



32 Don't Just Talk

Take time to listen to your child.



33 Listen Up!

Help your child listen to an audio book today!



34 Kitchen Table Printing Press

Encourage your child to make his or her own book and read it to a family member or friend.



35 Share a Favorite Poem

Read a poem from a poetry book for children.



36 Relax with Reading

Make questions about reading conversational and a natural part of the reading process. Be positive and encouraging to your youngster and reward him whenever he tries hard.



37 Sound it Out!

If your child gets stuck on a word while reading, help but don't tell! At least not a first. Encourage your child to look at the first letter or letters, and match a sound to the letters.



38 Nonfiction Options

Include nonfiction in your stack of library books. Try to include different types of nonfiction books including biographies, travel books, or a reference book.



39 Family Book Night

You may have heard of a Family Game Night, why not Family Book Night? Have each family member talk about their favorite book or the book they're reading right now.



40 Animated Reading

The more animated you are when you read, the better your child will follow the story.



41 Re-Read a Favorite Book

Read a book over and over. Children love repetition and learn from it.



42 Literacy to Go

Take children's books and writing materials with you whenever you leave home. This gives your child fun activities to entertain and occupy him while traveling or going to the doctor's office or other appointments.



43 Alliteration

Use your child's name to show a link between letters and sounds. Say, "John, the word jump begins with the same sound as your name. John. Jump. And they both begin with the same letter 'j'."



44 Illustrate a Story

When your child draws, pretends to read or write or invents stories, play allows him to build his literacy skills by experimenting with pictures and symbols he has seen.



45 Take a Journal on the Road

Create a trip journal with your child to create a new family story. Recording the day's events and adding photographs ties the family story to a written record. Include everyday trips, too, like going to the market or the park.



46 Tell Family Stories

Tell your child stories about your parents and grandparents. You might even put these stories in a book and add old family photographs.



47 Look for Award-Winning Books

Each year the American Library Association selects children's books for the Caldecott Medal for illustrations and the Newbery Medal for writing.



48 Share Books with Babies

Encourage infants and toddlers to explore books freely-and in ways that may not necessarily reflect adults' ideas of how books "should" be used. For a six-month old, this may mean mouthing the book while a one-year old may enjoy stacking the books in a tower or spreading them all across the floor.



49 Make a Scrap Book Together

Choose words and phrases that you like and write them down in a word scrap book.



50 Make Books!

Two- and three-year olds can create their own picture books. Books featuring family photos work especially well, as children enjoy looking at them over and over. And, they provide many chances for learning words (mommy, daddy, brother/sister, dog, cat, pet, house).