

There are so many benefits to reading to and with your children – no matter their age. Reading together is fun and offers an opportunity for connection. The Becoming a Nation of Readers report concluded that the “single most important activity for building knowledge for their eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children.” Reading teaches children about their world, develops their vocabulary, and develops their compassion and empathy for others. Some fun ideas to encourage reading include:

- *Picture walk* – Before starting to read, take the child on a picture walk through the book. Look for books with bright, colorful pictures/illustrations. Based on the child’s age, you can describe the pictures on each page in rich detail or for other children, you might ask questions about the pictures, too. Questions that start with who, what, when, where, and how are great ways to get the conversation started.
- *Reflect on the Page and the Story* – After sharing the story, reflect on what you learned and read about. Share what the characters did and why, discuss the colors or the animals, wonder if it might really happen.
- *Act Out a Story* – As you share your favorite stories and books, find ways to act them out. Be enthusiastic with voice and movement. Ask your child to act out a character from the story. Be their cheerleader, clap and say “bravo.”
- *Write or Create Your Own Book* – Write about your day or a favorite activity with your child. Depending on your child’s age, maybe they can illustrate it or tell you things to include in your story.



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