



where great stories begin™

# MILESTONES OF EARLY LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

Babies learn best from caring adults. From birth, it's important for parents to notice and *respond* to what interests their child. Reading aloud and talking together *every day* creates secure relationships and a strong foundation for learning. Books should be part of *every* family's naptime, playtime, and bedtime routines.



## 6 TO 12 MONTHS

### MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

*What your child is doing*

holds head steady  
sits in lap without support  
grasps book, puts in mouth  
drops, throws book

### COMMUNICATION AND COGNITION

*What your child is saying and learning*

smiles, babbles, coos  
likes and wants your voice  
likes pictures of baby faces  
begins to say "ma", "ba", "da"  
responds to own name  
pats picture to show interest

### ANTICIPATORY GUIDANCE

*What parents can do*

**Ask questions and wait for your child to answer**

**Read and speak in your first language**

talk back and forth with your baby; make eye contact  
cuddle, sing, talk, play, read  
point at and name things: nose, ball, baby, dog...  
follow baby's cues for "more" or "stop"  
play games such as "peek-a-boo" or "pat-a-cake"

### WHAT TO READ

board and cloth books;  
books with baby faces;  
nursery rhymes

## 12 TO 24 MONTHS

holds and walks with book  
no longer puts book in mouth right away  
turns board book pages

says single words, then 2- to 4-word phrases  
gives book to adult to read  
points at pictures  
turns book right-side up  
names pictures, follows simple stories

smile and answer when your child speaks or points

let your child help turn the pages; keep naming things  
use books in family routines: naptime, playtime, bedtime; on the potty; in the car, bus  
use books to calm or distract your child while waiting

board books; rhyming books;  
picture books; books that name things

## 2 TO 3 YEARS

learns to turn paper pages, 2 to 3 pages at a time  
starts to scribble

adds 2-4 new words per day  
names familiar objects  
likes the same book again and again  
completes sentences and rhymes in familiar stories

ask "Where's the dog?" or "What is that?"

be willing to read the same book again and again  
as you read, talk about the pictures  
keep using books in daily routines

rhyming books; picture books that tell stories;  
search and find books

## 3 TO 4 YEARS

turns pages one at a time, and from left to right  
sits still for longer stories  
scribbles and draws

recites whole phrases from books  
moves toward letter recognition  
begins to detect rhyme  
pretends to read to dolls and stuffed animals

ask "What happens next?" in familiar stories

point out letters, numbers  
point out words and pictures that begin with the same sound  
together, make up stories about the pictures

picture books that tell longer stories; counting and alphabet books

## 4 TO 5 YEARS

starts to copy letters and numbers  
sits still for even longer stories

can listen longer  
recognizes numbers, letters  
can retell familiar stories  
can make rhymes  
learning letter names and sounds

relate the story to your child's own experiences  
let your child see *you* read  
ask your child to tell the story  
encourage writing, drawing  
point out the letters in your child's name

**LET YOUR CHILD CHOOSE WHICH BOOK TO READ. FIND STORIES ABOUT THINGS YOUR CHILD LIKES.**