



# SHARING BOOKS WITH YOUR PRESCHOOLER

BOOKS BUILD CONNECTIONS TOOLKIT



TALK



READ



SING



Use the following tips, for children in the preschool ages:

- 3 years old
- 4 years old

Preschoolers are chatty, curious, and full of themselves. Preschoolers are full of questions like: *Why does the sun shine? What makes the car go? Why can a bird fly, but I can't fly?* They are full of imagination and use play to work out challenges. Preschoolers are getting ready to read.

Preschoolers are very attached to their parents and caregivers. Reading and talking about books with preschoolers help strengthen all of these abilities.

For each age, there are examples of what your child can do and tips you can do to help you share and enjoy books with your preschooler.

## Sharing Books With Your 3-Year-Old

- Preschoolers enjoy books and learn from sharing books with you, the most important person in their world.
- They love the special one-on-one attention they get when you read, talk, sing, and play with them.
- This special time helps strengthen your bond with your preschooler.
- It teaches her how important she is to you. It builds her self-confidence and her interest in learning.
- Looking at, reading, and talking about books with preschoolers build their vocabulary.
- Reading books with preschoolers helps them get ready to listen and learn in school.
- Set aside a few quiet minutes every day for sharing books together, perhaps as part of your regular bedtime routine.



## FAMILY RESOURCE: Sharing Books With Your Preschooler



- This time should be free of TV, texting, and other distractions.
- Regular bedtime routines started with young children help prevent struggles around bedtime.
- At the end of your routine, teach your preschooler how to fall asleep alone by putting her in bed sleepy but awake without a sippy cup. This helps prevent night waking and dental problems.
- This may become the best time of your day!

### 3-year-olds can:

- Name the books they want to read with you.
- Pretend to read a favorite book out loud to you.
- Tell you how a story is like things they have seen or done.
- Ask you questions about books you are enjoying together.
- "Correct" you if you skip a page or even a word in a favorite book.
- Tell you what they like about a book.
- Tell you the story in a favorite book in their own "words."

### You can:

- Find a quiet, cozy place to cuddle up with a few good picture books.
- Ask your child to tell you about the pictures and the story.
- Respond with enthusiasm to your child's questions and comments.
- Read with joy and enjoyment! Use different voices for different characters.
- Ask your child to show you all the things in a picture that are alike in some way. You can say: *Can you find all the blue things?* or *Show me all the things that can fly.*
- Talk about emotions in pictures and stories. You can say, *Look at that bear! He looks sad. Why do you think he is sad? What makes you sad?*
- Point out colors, shapes, and numbers in their books.
- Take your child to your local public library to borrow books or to enjoy story time.

## Sharing Books With Your 4-Year-Old

- Preschoolers enjoy books and learn from reading books with you, the most important person in their world.
- They love the special one-on-one attention they get when you read, talk, sing, and play with them.
- This special time helps strengthen your relationship with your child and builds his self-confidence, interest in learning, and ability to handle small stresses.
- Looking at, reading, and talking about books with preschoolers help build their vocabulary.



## FAMILY RESOURCE: Sharing Books With Your Preschooler



- Reading books with preschoolers helps them get ready to listen and learn in school.
- Set aside 10 to 20 minutes for reading together, perhaps as part of your regular bedtime routine.
- This time should be free of TV, texting, and other distractions.
- Regular bedtime routines help prevent struggles around bedtime.
- At the end of your routine, teach your preschooler how to fall asleep alone by putting him into bed relaxed, but awake without a sippy cup. This helps prevent night waking and dental caries.
- This may become the best time of your day!

### 4-year-olds can:

- Tell you which books they want to read with you.
- Pretend to read a favorite book out loud to you.
- Tell you how a story is like things they have seen or done.
- Ask you questions about books you are reading together.
- “Correct” you if you skip a word or page in a favorite book.
- Tell you the story in a favorite book in their own words.
- Begin to name the first letters in some of the words you are reading together.

### You can:

- Find a quiet, cozy place to cuddle up together with a few good books.
- Ask your child to tell you about the pictures and the story.
- Respond with interest to your child’s questions and comments.
- Read with joy and enjoyment! Use different voices for different characters.
- Ask your child to show you all the things in a picture that are alike in some way. You can say: *Can you find all the things that live in the ocean?* or *Show me all the things that can jump.*
- Point out colors, shapes, numbers, and letters and ask him to find them in the books you are reading together.
- Point out written words in the world around you, like on traffic signs and on food labels in the grocery store . Ask your child to find a new word each time you go out together.
- Take your child to your local public library to borrow books or to enjoy story time.

Adapted from AAP Literacy Promotion Toolkit Web site (2008), Pamela C High, MD, FAAP, Natalie Golova, MD, FAAP, Marita Hopmann, PhD, and the AAP Council on Early Childhood, 2014





**Other family resources related to early literacy and early learning include the following:**

- Helping Your Child Learn to Read
- Sharing Books With Your Baby up to Age 11 Months
- Sharing Books With Your 1-Year-Old
- Sharing Books With Your 2-Year-Old
- Sharing Books With Your School-Age Child
- The Secret to a Smarter Baby
- Why It Is Never Too Early to Start Reading With Your Baby

**Pediatric Professional ePubs in this AAP series include the following:**

- Evidence Supporting Early Literacy and Early Learning
- Finding the Right Book for Every Child
- Selecting Books for Your Program
- What Every Pediatric Professional Can Do to Promote Early Literacy and Early Learning

Please visit [aap.org/literacy](http://aap.org/literacy) for further information about resources mentioned within this publication and additional resources on early literacy.

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