



EARLY CHILDHOOD RECOMMENDED READING LIST 2019-2020 | OPPL.ORG/KIDS

BABIES & 1-YEAR-OLDS

Baylis, Aless. *ABCs Spanish*. A is for ardilla! This playful book is a wonderful introduction to the Spanish alphabet, complete with pronunciation for grown-ups learning along.

Beer, Sophie. *Love Makes a Family*. What is love? It can be expressed in lots of different ways with so many different people. This makes for a lovely bedtime story and opportunities to share stories about love experienced in your own day.

Blackstone, Stella. *Baby's First Words*. Your baby will love following this busy baby and her dads as they learn the words for all the things they see, and then doing the same around your house and neighborhood.

Burton, Jeffrey. *The World Shines for You*. There's so much to look at and point to over and over in this simple story that connects the world, the seasons, change, and all that shimmers in life.

Gravett, Emily. *Bear and Hare: Where's Bear?* (series). This is a sweet and fun way to introduce numbers and counting to 10 as Bear and Hare play hide-and-seek. Read in English or Spanish!

Hughes, Susan. *Up! How Families Around the World Carry Their Little Ones*. An Upsy-Daisy refrain connects families throughout the world, and beautiful collage art styles will make this one for kids and caregivers to pore over.

Presley, Elvis. *Elvis Presley's Love Me Tender*. Listen to Elvis croon as you snuggle with your little one and watch babies grow up in this ode to families of all shapes and sizes.

Van Camp, Richard. *Kiss By Kiss/Ocê Tôwina*. Introduce your children to counting in English and the Plains Cree language, while sharing lots of opportunities for smooching. Beautiful photographs showcase a variety of loving families and appeal to the youngest of babies, too.

2-YEAR-OLDS

Atinuke. *Baby Goes to Market*. Kids will cheer for cheeky Baby, who counts his way through free gifts given to him by kind merchants in their Nigerian market.

Balouch, Kristen. *The Little, Little Girl With the Big, Big Voice*. This is an excellent book to read with expression and volume, as a little girl meets animals and finds a new friend.

Barrow, David. *Have You Seen Elephant?* Kids will love being in on the joke of the elephant who claims to be truly talented at hide-and-seek.

FitzSimmons, David. *Curious Critters: Illinois*. Introduce young children to the animals they can find in their neighborhoods! Go on nature hunts to look for evidence of these animals, or visit them at zoos.

Gates, Mariam. *Goodnight Yoga*. This beautifully illustrated book doubles as bedtime story and gentle wind down bedtime stretches.

Ho, Minfong. *Hush: A Thai Lullaby*. Animal books are a great way to share sounds and interact with books, and this one is filled with animals uncommon in American titles.

Jackson, Richard. *All Ears, All Eyes*. This book is filled with animal sounds as they start settling in for the night, but can you find where they are resting?

Kuhlman, Evan. *Hank's Big Day*. A bug's view will give kids a new perspective on familiar things, along with some beautiful new vocabulary.

Rosen, Michael. *Tiny Little Fly*. This delightful adventure is great fun to interact with—trace Fly's progress, wink your eye, act out the animal responses and more!

Smith, Lane. *A Perfect Day*. What does a perfect day mean to your child? See what these animals think, and then talk about your answers.

Wenzel, Brendan. *Hello, Hello!* Sometimes it's easy to see how animals are different, but can you find all the similarities, too? This is a great conversation starter with wildly engaging art.

Williamson, Sarah. *Where Are You?* Can you spot the pink snake hiding on each page? This book encourages interaction with the text and images in a fun way.

3- & 4-YEAR-OLDS

Barnett, Mac. *Triangle*. Kids will appreciate the sly humor of the art and words as Triangle tries to play a trick on Square—but who really comes out on top?

Burach, Ross. *There's a Giraffe in My Soup*. All this boy wants is tomato soup, but animals keep arriving in the bowl instead! Continue the story by coming up with your own silly soups.

Cornwall, Gaia. *Jabari Jumps*. Who's the real star—Jabari, who is working himself up to try the high diving board, or his dad, who validates his fear and supports his efforts? Both make this book a delight.

Deedy, Carmen Agra. *The Rooster Who Would Not Be Quiet*. Kee-kee-ree-KEE! This folktale brings humor to the lesson that it's important to speak up against injustices and inspire others to your cause.

Doerrfeld, Cori. *The Rabbit Listened*. Well-meaning friends try to cheer Taylor up, but all they need is someone to be there with them. An important lesson for kids and caregivers to learn!

Gonzales, Mark. *Yo Soy Muslim*. This poem to the author's daughter is a gorgeously illustrated ode to pride in yourself and your heritage, and a window to a different culture for some children.

Hoffman, Eric. *A Dark, Dark Cave*. This ode to imagination has both rhymes and repeating refrains, making it an excellent choice to get kids interacting and helping read.

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3- & 4-YEAR-OLDS CONT.

Maiser, Brenda. *Little Red Fort*. Little Red Hen gets an update with enterprising Ruby, who asks her friends to help build a fort with her, but is turned down every step of the way. Will she share her cool new space when it's finished?

Martin, Emily Winfield. *The Wonderful Things You Will Be*. Kids and caregivers can dream about the future and what it'll be like to be grown up, clever, and kind. Read it in English or Spanish!

Murray, Lily. *Hello Hot Dog*. This zany story about a hot dog who realizes their fate is to be lunch will keep everyone in tears of laughter.

Portis, Antoinette. *Best Frints in the Whole Universe*. This book encourages kids to play with language, pick up context cues to learn what new (made-up) words mean, and navigate the bumps of frintship, with some super cute aliens.

Richards, Dan. *Can One Balloon Make an Elephant Fly?* This book explores the magic of imagination and science questions as a boy and his mother visit the zoo. Can you make any animals fly?

Roderick, Stacey. *Bugs From Head to Tail* (595.7 ROD). Gorgeous collage art matched with introductory facts about eight fascinating bugs. Kids can learn scientific vocabulary in an age-appropriate way.

Sattler, Jennifer. *Sylvie*. Kids love big words, and this one is positively filled with them! Stretch their vocabulary with this delightful flamingo who turns a multitude of colors—even paisley.

Schaefer, Lola. *Because of an Acorn* (577.3 SCH). This simple science book introduces kids to the life cycle of an acorn to a tree, and can spark discussions of other growing things.

Smith, Alex T. *Little Red and the Very Hungry Lion*. This retelling of Little Red Riding Hood will delight the whole family. Can you create your own version too?

Thompkins-Bigelow, Jamilah. *Mommy's Khimar*. This delightful ode to imagination and love is filled with gloriously bright and cheerful illustrations that will delight kids and caregivers alike.

7 DAYS / 7 WAYS WITH THE VERY READY READING PROGRAM

Sharing these seven ideas with kids will help them grow into readers. Focusing on one a day will keep it fun. Here are some of our favorite tips.

SHARE BOOKS: Always keep reading fun, not a chore or punishment. Flashcards can take away from the fun and make kids less likely to enjoy learning to read or reading independently later. Avoid asking questions on every page—it breaks the flow of the story and makes it less enjoyable. Try 1 or 2 per book, or ask questions after you finish. And don't force it—better to read one or two pages without a struggle than a full book that is miserable for everyone.

SHARE SONGS: Sharing songs is more than fun—music's rhythms and rhymes help children develop the vital knack of hearing differences between different sounds. When we sing "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star," kids love doing the finger actions, but they're also hearing the subtle distinctions between "star" and "are," and "high" and "sky." So find a book to sing out loud, or sing your directions to a task. Each syllable has a note, making it easier to hear how words break down to sound them out, an essential skill.

SHARE RHYMES: Rhymes don't need to make sense! They still help kids hear patterns of words and speech. So make up silly rhymes and act them out, dance with your child while reciting them, and play rhyming games: "I spy something that rhymes with the word hook!"

SHARE SOUNDS: Share books and tunes that encourage sound effects, silly noises, or animal sounds—they are fun and help you and your child interact with the books together. Encourage your children to help with any noises that may occur. Is a lion roaring? Is the wind howling? Is someone snoring?

SHARE WORDS: Kids love big, fancy words. Use them all the time and kids will too! Talk about the indigo sky, the gigantic stack of books, and so on. New experiences mean new words: at the zoo, read words on animal exhibit signs. At the store, read words on packages. The more words kids hear, the more they understand and will be able to figure out when they learn to read. Narrate your days!

SHARE STORIES: Practice telling stories and connecting them to your lives at the same time. Tell your kids stories about how you used to celebrate the Fourth of July as a child, and let them tell you memories of their own past celebrations. Family pictures are a great way to share stories about when you or their grandparents were younger. Make your own books! Use photos to tell the story of a favorite day or vacation, or make a touch-and-feel book with fabrics and other items.

SHARE PLAY: Play with your kids as often you can. It's the basis of all learning for kids! It fosters creativity and imagination, bonds you, and gives your child confidence when they are in charge of the game. Pretend play is the best for reinforcing new words and vocabulary and allowing kids to practice telling stories. Act out stories, have a tea party, visit a pretend zoo—anything is possible!

Bonus tip:
Sign up for
**1,000 Books
Before
Kindergarten
at any library
location!**

