



EARLY CHILDHOOD RECOMMENDED READING LIST 2018-2019 | 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.

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!

Gray Smith, Monique. *My Heart Fills with Happiness*. What makes you and your little one happy? Sunshine, holding hands, and more are beautifully illustrated by a tribally enrolled Cree-Métis illustrator who brings her culture to the images.

Harrison, Kenny. *Hide and Seek Harry Around the House* (series). Toddlers will delight in being able to spot Harry the Hippo as he tries to hide.

Marston, William Moulton. *My First Wonder Woman Book* (series). Babies will love the touch-and-feel interactions, while you'll love introducing beloved superheroes to the new generation.

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.

2-YEAR-OLDS

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.

Doyle, Elizabeth. *A B See*. There's plenty to identify and talk about in this fantastic alphabet book, where each letter is made up of dozens of items that begin with it. This book will grow with your baby for years.

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.

Franceschelli, Christopher. *Countablock*. This lovely book introduces kids to numbers up to 100 by showing how they grow.

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.

Lemke, Donald. *Book-o-Beards* (series). Kids love to play with their books, so why not turn the book into masks they can wear as they read?

Matheson, Christie. *Touch the Brightest Star*. This gorgeous book lets kids push the story forward with fun, interactive scenes.

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.

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.

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.

continued on back



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3- & 4-YEAR-OLDS CONT.

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!

Otoshi, Kathryn. *Beautiful Hands*. This colorful concept book rouses children to use their hands for good and to reach for their dreams.

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.

Portis, Antoinette. *Wait*. A picture book about the joys of waiting and taking in what is around you.

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?

Wan, Joyce. *Whale in My Swimming Pool*. Kids can add their own ideas to this story about a kid trying to get the whale out of the pool.

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!

