Reading with Children
Activities for families with children ages 3 to 5
Suggested Books

The library has many different kinds of books that you can borrow—free. Your librarian can help you choose books that your child will love. Here are some titles to get you started. For other tips about choosing books, see the last page of this booklet.

**Abuela**, by Arthur Dorros. A little girl and her grandmother enjoy a fantastic adventure flying over New York City.

**Baby Rattlesnake**, by Te Ata. Baby Rattlesnake learns a lesson about growing up when he tries to scare the chief’s daughter with his new rattle.

**The Empty Pot**, by Demi. The delicately detailed artwork and simple wording show how one child’s failure becomes a success because of his honesty.

**Flossie and the Fox**, by Patricia McKissack. Feisty Flossie outwits a clever fox.

**Julius: The Baby of the World**, by Kevin Henkes. At first, Lily doesn’t like her new baby brother.

**Stellaluna**, by Janell Cannon. A little bat learns that families can come in all shapes, sizes—and species.

**Where the Wild Things Are**, by Maurice Sendak. When Max is naughty, he is sent straight to bed, but ends up “where the wild things are.”

On BETWEEN THE LIONS, the daily PBS series, Theo and Cleo read to their cubs every day. It’s fun and relaxing and helps their cubs develop a lifelong love of reading. Theo and Cleo know that reading aloud is the single most important thing parents can do to help their children succeed in school.

Watch BETWEEN THE LIONS weekdays on your PBS station. Ask your librarian to help you find the BETWEEN THE LIONS Web site (pbskids.org/lions) on the library’s computers. You’ll find read-aloud stories and lots of games to play with your child.
Reading aloud to kids—even just a few minutes a day—is proven to build literacy and learning skills. Reading can help kids do better in school, and for the rest of their lives. Every child deserves that kind of advantage. Here are some ideas to help you make reading together fun for you and your kids.

1. Read with your child every day, even just a few minutes. Encourage older siblings to read to their younger brothers and sisters.

2. Bring a book along to read when you ride the bus together, wait in line at the store, or go to the doctor’s office. Reading is a great way to keep children occupied and happy when you’re waiting.

3. Try to find a regular time and a quiet, comfortable place for reading together.

4. Turn off other distractions, such as the radio or television.

5. Read slowly enough so that your child has time to take in the story and look at the pictures. Point to the words as you go.

6. Children may enjoy holding the book or turning the pages. Invite your child to point to words on the page or help you read the words.

7. Read with expression. Try creating different voices for different characters.

8. Talk about the story with your child. Did he or she like it? Why?

9. Older children enjoy reading aloud, too. They can read their favorite parts, or you can take turns reading chapter books.
One day a Mouse ran over the paws of a sleeping Lion. Angrily the mighty beast woke up and grabbed the Mouse by the tail. He was about to gobble up the little animal, when the Mouse cried out, “Please, don’t eat me! I would be only a tiny mouthful. Besides, if you let me go, I’ll return the favor and help you one day.”

The idea that this tiny creature could ever help him made the Lion roar with laughter, but finally he let his little prisoner go.

Later, the Lion was caught in a hunter’s net. The more he struggled, the more he became entangled. His roar of rage echoed through the forest. Hearing the sound, the Mouse ran to the trap and chewed the ropes that
bound the Lion. It was not long before he had cut the last cord with his little teeth and set the huge beast free.

The Mouse said, “See? I told you I would help you someday!”

“You are welcome,” said the Mouse. “And now I hope that you can see how small friends can be a big help.”

“Thank you!” said the Lion. “I’m sure glad I didn’t eat you!”

And from that day forward, the little Mouse and the big Lion were best friends.
“The Lion and the Mouse” Activity

A good book doesn’t have to end with the last page. You can add to the adventure with all kinds of activities. Acting out the story is one thing you and your child can do to make the story come alive. It also helps to develop your child’s language skills.

What to do:

1. After you finish the story, ask your child some simple questions, such as:
   - What did the lion want to do with the mouse in the beginning of the story?
   - How do you think the little mouse felt?
   - What happened to the lion when he was walking through the jungle?
   - How did the little mouse help the big lion?
   - Why do you think the little mouse and the big lion became friends?

2. Color the puppets on the next page. Use any colors you want.

3. Cut out the two puppets, then carefully cut out the holes. Put two fingers through the holes. You can either be the lion or the mouse.

4. Take turns acting out the role of the very big lion and the little mouse.

5. You and your child can tell and retell the story. Have fun changing the story if you want!

6. Save the finger puppets. Use them with other stories or to tell stories of your own.
Finger Puppets

Lion

Mouse
Because there are few words in some picture books, children can “read” them in their own way. Help your child develop language, creativity, and imagination by making your own wordless picture book!

**What to do:**

1. Cut out the pictures on the following pages on the dotted lines.
2. Punch out the holes on the side of each picture.
3. The picture with the title “One Special Day” is the cover of your book. Place it on top.
4. Ask your child to color the pages and to write his name on the line any way he can.
5. Each page is numbered. Place each page in order.
6. Loosely tie a piece of string or yarn through the holes to hold the book together.

Take turns “reading” the story.
Tell me, tell me. What do you see?

I see a 🐇 in the library!

She’s reading a 📚 about climbing a 🌳.

It’s a 🍁, you see.

Tell me, tell me. What do you see?

I see a 🐻 in the library!

He’s reading a 📚 about planting 🌱.

And plenty of 🌸 and bright red 🍊.

Tell me, tell me. What do you see?

I see some 🐱 in the library.

They’re reading a 📚 about chasing a 🦊.

The 🦊 is hiding under a 🧡!
Tell me, tell me. What do you see?

I see a 🐒 in the library!

He’s reading a book about catching a 🐱.

A 🐴 who rides in a big blue 🐎.

Tell me, tell me. What did you see?

I see four 🐤 in the library!

They’re the librarians! Yes, that is true.

And they love to read 📚—just as we do!
Choosing Books

Here are some suggestions for choosing books your children will really like.

1. Younger children enjoy books that use word repetition, rhymes, and predictable text. Look for books with colorful pictures and simple words.

2. For beginning readers, select books that match their skill level.

3. At the library, let your child choose some of the books.

4. If your child has a favorite book, he or she may enjoy other books written by the same author.

5. Choose stories that provide new experiences, such as folktales or books about different countries and cultures.

6. Choose books that match your child’s interests, from dinosaurs to dancing. Most children like books that are funny.

7. Encourage your child to try different kinds of books, such as mysteries, biographies, and other non-fiction.

8. Ask the children’s librarian for book suggestions or booklists.

9. Books about events in your child’s life (new siblings, moving) can help her or him cope with fears and other feelings.

10. Visit the BETWEEN THE LIONS Web site (pbskids.org/lions) for more on children and reading.
BETWEEN THE LIONS is produced by WGBH Boston, Sirius Thinking, Ltd., and Mississippi Public Broadcasting.

BETWEEN THE LIONS is funded in part by The Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a cooperative agreement from the U.S. Department of Education’s Ready To Learn grant, and by the Barksdale Reading Institute.

National corporate funding is provided by Chick-fil-A, Inc.

The contents of this document were developed in part under a cooperative agreement between the U.S. Department of Education, The Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and the Public Broadcasting Service for the Ready To Learn Initiative, PR#s U29SA050003 and U295B050003. However, these contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. Development of the contents herein were funded in part by the Park Foundation and the Institute for Civil Society.

The WGBH Educational Foundation and Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY USA; www.hippyusa.org) collaborated on the original creation of the contents and methodology for this booklet.

©2002, 2009 WGBH Educational Foundation and Sirius Thinking, Ltd. All rights reserved. BETWEEN THE LIONS, Get Wild about Reading, and the BTL characters and related indicia are trademarks or registered trademarks of WGBH Educational Foundation. All third party trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Used with permission. www.pbskids.org/lions.

Designers
Scott Thorpe
Jenny Barrett
WGBH Design

Print Production
Mark Hoffman
WGBH Design

Illustrator
Steven Mach

©2002, 2009 WGBH Educational Foundation and Sirius Thinking, Ltd. All rights reserved. BETWEEN THE LIONS, Get Wild about Reading, and the BTL characters and related indicia are trademarks or registered trademarks of WGBH Educational Foundation. All third party trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Used with permission. www.pbskids.org/lions.
Pounce on...

pbskids.org/lions

Watch BETWEEN THE LIONS on PBS Kids™