

Some Tips to Help with Beginning Reading and Writing

The greatest benefits of reading are obtained when the child is an active participant engaging in discussion about stories, talking about meanings of words and the story, predicting outcomes, and relating the story matter to other texts and his/her own life.

1. Read to your child daily.
2. Talk about the book as you read with your child and after you have finished reading it.
3. Look at the book cover before reading. Point out the title, author, and illustrator.
4. Point out words or phrases that are repeated several times throughout the story.
5. Encourage your child to finish predictable phrases or rhymes.
6. Remember to focus on the meaning of the story. If a child reads something that doesn't make sense, often he or she will go back and try again. If this doesn't happen, stop and ask, "Does that make sense?"
7. If your child comes to a word he or she does not know and asks for help, consider asking these questions:
 - Does the picture give you a clue?
 - What word would make sense here?
 - With what letter does the word begin (or end)?If these strategies fail and your child wants you to say the word, go ahead and do so rather than having your child labor over it.
8. Don't worry if your child memorizes a particular phrase or story. That is an early stage in the reading process.
9. Encourage your child to point to the word with his or her finger as he/she reads.
10. Some helpful questions:
 - What happened at the beginning, middle, or the end of the story?
 - What do you think will happen next?
 - Why do you think the character did that?
 - What would you have done if you were that character?
 - What was the best thing about the story?
11. Make sure your child sees you as a reader, (reading a newspaper, enjoying a good book, reading a catalog, etc...)
12. When reading with a child, always sit beside the child with the book between you so that you can both see the text and enjoy the pictures.
13. Consider giving books as presents so they become associated with a pleasurable experience and have special meaning.
14. Make sure your child sees you also as a writer, (writing things such as grocery lists, thank you notes, notes to other family members, etc....)
15. Have a wide variety of writing supplies available for your child to write and draw on including various sizes and types of paper, pencils, crayons markers, chalk and practice using scissors.
16. When your child draws a picture, encourage him/her to tell you about it. Then write down what the child says as he/she says it. Let your child see you write down what is said. Read it back. Point to the words as you read.