BookTrust
Inspire a love of reading

Reading with your Child

4-6 year olds



booktrust.org.uk

Reading with your Child

Reading with your child can mean sharing books, stories, rhymes, or any other writing.

You can:

- Read books together.
- Tell each other stories.
- Chat about the things that you have read.
- Talk about pictures in books.
- Share stories even when you don't have a book in front of you. Why not re-tell your favourite stories?



Why read?

Sharing books and stories with your child is fun!

It is a great way to build special memories and moments with your child, and can easily become a favourite part of the day.

It also helps children:

- Understand the world around them.
- Develop social and emotional skills.
- Improve at school in English, science, maths and other subjects.
- Build confidence with communication.
- Strengthen their bond with you and other family members.



What should we read?

You can read anything.

Try out a range of picture books, comics, poems, and rhymes.

You can read the same book over and over again. Familiar books are comforting and build confidence.

You can choose new books. Pick something together that you can both enjoy.

Books don't have to be full of words. Picture books are perfect for sharing and talking about with your child. You can use pictures to explore stories and help your child understand books that are more difficult.

- Find your local library and see what your child likes.
- Ask teachers, librarians or other parents to recommend books.
- Visit the bookfinder on the Book Trust website for some ideas: **booktrust.org.uk/bookfinder**
- You can find storytelling apps and stories on tablets and computers too. Just be sure to stay with your child and enjoy sharing the story with them.





When should we read?

Share stories whenever you can find the time.

Reading for just ten minutes a day with your child makes a huge difference.

- Take books with you so you always have a story to share. You can read on the train or bus, or even if you are waiting in a queue together.
- When you are outside, take time to notice what is going on around you. Make up stories about what you see with your child.
- Bedtime is the perfect time to read together. It helps create a routine and can make going to bed something your child looks forward to. It is a special time for a parent and child to share.



How?

Find a quiet place with no distractions.

Turn off televisions, radios, computers and tablets. Take time to look at each page.

You don't need to make sure your child gets every word right. It is ok for both of you to make mistakes! Let them talk to you about the pictures. This helps them look for meaning and to think about what they see happening on the page.

Don't forget to smile. If you feel comfortable try pulling funny faces, making animal noises and putting on character voices – these always make children giggle!

Ask questions when you are reading together. For example:

- What do you see on this page?
- How do you think the characters feel?
- What do you think is going to happen next?

When you have finished, talk about how your child feels about the book:

- What did they like?
- What didn't they like?
- What can they remember about what happened?
- Who was their favourite character? Why?
- Link the story to their own experiences. Can they remember when they did something similar?

Most importantly, have fun!



What if English isn't my first language?

You don't have to only read books in English.

Carry on sharing books, stories and rhymes in your first language!

- Your child may use English words – you can still reply or repeat what they have said in your own language. Children love the sound of your voice and can cope with two languages.
- Sharing stories is about more than just learning to read – it's about snuggling up and spending time together.





What if I'm using a tablet or computer?

Digital books and story apps are great fun!

When you are reading using a tablet or a computer, stay with your child. Talk to them about what they are doing, and help them use the device.

- It is a good idea to put the device into 'Airplane Mode' before giving it to a child to avoid any unexpected costs or internet access.
- Ask the same questions about the story that you would with a printed book.



Who?

Be a reading role model!

If your child sees you reading, they will want to read too.

- Involve your family in what you are reading - talk about what you have read and what you liked about the story.
- Encourage friends and family to share books with your child. The more people your child sees reading, the more they will want to read too.



What next?

Visit **booktrust.org.uk** to discover more about the magic of sharing stories, books and rhymes with your child.

You will find:

- More hints and tips.
- Book suggestions and reviews.
- Interactive games.
- Stories you can listen or read along to.
- Information about our programmes.

Happy reading!

