

All About Books: Choosing Books for Babies and Young Children



Many educational studies show that when parents read to their children from the time they are babies, children learn to read earlier and are better readers later in school. These studies also found that students with higher test scores were more likely to have magazines, newspapers and at least 25 books in their home. Having books and magazines is important. Here are some tips for getting good books for babies and young children.

A **Where to get books.** Borrowing from the public library is a good place to start. Many libraries offer board books as well as picture books. Yard sales are good sources of inexpensive books. Discount stores, bookstores, and Internet book sellers all have bargain sections or run specials.

B **Where to keep books.** Children need to have books where they can reach them. Have several places at home and in the car where books are readily available. A box, a basket, or a low shelf offers easy access to books.

C **What to look for in a book.** Books for young children need to be well made and durable. Little ones like to really explore their favorite books, carrying them around, tugging on pages, and even “mouthing” them. Large, colorful pictures attract children to books and hold their interest.

D **When to get and give books.** Anytime is a great time for a new book! Give books for special occasions or everyday treats. No matter when you give your child a book, you are helping build a love of reading.

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Books for babies to 1 year old:

- Thick cardboard pages
- Flexible cloth or vinyl pages
- Small, chunky format
- Simple, bright pictures or photos
- Few or no words on a page
- Themes that encourage sounds (farm animals, vehicles, etc.)

Books for toddlers and twos:

- Cardboard or thick paper pages
- Repetition of words or phrases
- Pictures that tell a story without words
- A story told in a few, simple words
- Nursery rhymes or rhyming words
- Stories about familiar, everyday things
- Simple concepts like colors or shapes

Books for preschoolers:

- Nursery rhymes
- Folk tales
- Stories about issues children face (fears, separation, and new baby)
- Color, number, or letter themes
- Rhyming text or poetry
- Humorous plots or characters
- Stories about different cultures and places

Visit PATNC.org and check “quick links: suggested books.”

