

How do I choose the right books for my child?

Whether you choose books from your public library or you purchase your own, it is important that books are available and a part of your child's life.

When picking books for the beginning reader, look for books with large print and big spaces between words. Stories should have just a few lines of print on each page. Look for books that are patterned or stories with repeated phrases. Stories that have one or two words on each page that are different are preferred. It is important at this level that the pictures in the book support the text.



Try to pick out books that use language that your child would use in his speech. Children learning to read have varying levels of oral language development. The more a book matches a child's oral vocabulary,

the more successful and less frustrated he will be. At this point you should make reading as easy and enjoyable as you can for your child. Tough reading can come later.

Look for books that might interest your child. It is best if your child can relate in some way to the story and its events. A story about a snowman may be cute, but if your child has never even seen snow, he may not be able to connect to the story and so it will be more difficult for him.

You can create some books of your own. Take simple phrases like, *I like to eat* and make your own pattern book with your child. For example, your child might write

I like to eat apples.

I like to eat bananas.

I like to eat eggs.

I like to eat tacos.

It is important that your child come up with the text and that the text be supported by pictures. Put each line of text on a different page and bind it in book form. Don't forget to give your book a title! Your child will love reading his own stories.

The key is for your child to enjoy and have fun as he begins his reading journey.