

Learning to read *begins* before children start school. Help your children develop early literacy skills now; this makes it easier for children to learn to read once they begin school.

Five of the best ways to help your child get ready to read are:

Talking  
Singing  
Reading  
Writing  
Playing



Learn how to help your child get ready to read with simple activities such as the ones suggested here.

Find more ideas at your library.

## Fun with Words: Telling Stories

Telling stories is a wonderful way to increase children's vocabulary. As you tell a story, use new words and explain what they mean, or talk about something your child hasn't experienced and explain what happens.

Here are some storytelling tips. Remember that almost any story you tell your child will be of interest—just because you are the one telling it!

### Storytelling Starters

For infants and toddlers, start with silly sounds. Children delight in mimicking the sounds you make. This is just the beginning of having conversations with your child.

Tell your child how you felt the day he or she was born.

Tell a story about your childhood. Children have a great interest in hearing about experiences their parents had at a similar age.

Use simple props such as a puppet or a stuffed animal to tell a story. Use silly voices for different characters and ask your child to join in.

Use family photos to tell different stories.

Make a book by clipping photos from magazines. Use them to tell an imaginary tale.

Encourage your child to tell a story about a favorite event, or act it out.