

How Reading and Language Skills Go Together

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Reading is a critical part of language development and academic success. Reading with your child involves reading the story or looking at the pictures.

-When looking at the pictures in a story, you can develop children's language skills by asking them to describe what they see, make a guess on what they think will happen, describe the faces of the characters and retell the story with a beginning, middle and ending. Let them use the pictures to help with their memory.

-You can also ask WH questions, such as, "**Who** was in the story? **What** did they do? **Where** did the story take place? "When, how and why questions are harder questions to answer, so depending on your child's age and abilities, you can ask these questions with you modeling the answer.

-It is easier to remember smaller chunks of information than larger ones. Instead of waiting to finish a whole book or a whole chapter before going over what you have read. Try talking with your child after a page, a paragraph, or even after a couple of sentences. Whatever you feel is best for your child.

-When reading with your child use sound effects, funny voices to represent the characters, as this will maintain your child's interest in the story. Also using gestures paired with new words, has been shown to increase a child's vocabulary understanding (Lawson-Adams & Dickinson, 2019). So if you come across a new word in your story, such as "chop," mimic a chopping motion with your hand and make a "chop, chop, chop" noise. Have your little one join along too!

-Relate information from the book to something your child already knows or experiences. For example, if the book is about a shark, you can ask the child, "Do you remember when we went to the aquarium?! We saw a big shark with lots of teeth, just like this one in the book! What do you remember about that shark?"

-Many children may move to another activity before a book is finished. Try to have the child attend to the book as long as possible. But if the child gets up and moves on to another activity, keep on reading! If the child is in earshot, they are still absorbing story elements, new vocabulary, the predictable patterns of text, etc. The most effective strategy is to read every single day. Even though the life of a parent is very busy (understatement), just a little reading each day is wonderful for language and literacy development.



**Time at home with family
is all what you make of it.
Wash your hands. Stay
safe.**

Have fun!

