



Early Childhood Development Center, Inc.

Parent Pages

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Tips For Reading Aloud To Children

The joy of sharing books starts when children are infants. Even though they can't understand everything you say, they begin to associate the good feelings of nurturing and closeness with reading. When preschool rolls around, children have learned to sit longer, understand more words, and predict endings. Reading activity builds until children are ready for the big adventure of reading on their own! When children have graduated to this level, they still need to be read to because they're capable of comprehending plots and understanding words beyond their reading level.

Tips that Help

Be dramatic: Reading in a monotone doesn't cut it with kids. They like drama, and you may surprise yourself with the number of interesting voices and sounds you can come up with. You can bark like a dog and growl like a lion. You can speak in a deep daddy voice or a teeny tiny baby voice. Expand your repertoire—it makes reading to children much more fun!

Repetition is key: When reading a familiar book, invite children to repeat phrases and tell in their own words the ending of the story. Repetition is important for the wiring of the brain—that's why children want to read the same story countless times. The three bears say over and over, "Someone's been eating my porridge" or sitting in my chair or

sleeping in my bed, but that repetition builds up to a great climax that children learn to anticipate!

Interruptions are okay: You may interrupt a story to answer questions and explain new words or phrases ("Gigantic means really big"). It's important to point out details in the illustrations and to sometimes follow along with your finger under the words as you read. This practice connects words to the actual reading experience.

Relate to your child: Relate the story to your own child's life when you can. If you're reading about a dog getting in trouble repeatedly, talk about your family's experience with your special pet. You may also want to insert your child's name for the main character in the story.

Follow your child's interests: Some children like stories about dogs or dinosaurs; others like to read about children having wild adventures. Some like humorous books; others prefer a little more suspense.

Ask thought provoking questions: "What do you think might happen next? Where did Louis go? Why did Darcy do that?"

Plan follow-up activities: Invite your child to draw or paint a picture of the story just read or act out a couple of the scenes, "I'll be the first little pig, you be the big bad wolf."

Reading aloud to children is not just for parents—get everyone from grandparents to babysitters involved. It's a great way to raise a reader!



Check out these book categories:

Board Books: These books for infants and toddlers make turning pages easier. They have a few words per page and lots of colorful illustrations. **Picture Books:** The text is simple for shorter attention spans, and the illustrations are a key feature. Example: "Where the Wild things Are." **Predictable Books:** They usually repeat a phrase over and over. Children can memorize and "read" them. Example: "The Three Bears." **Concept Books:** These books teach a concept such as vocabulary, ideas, and skills such as the alphabet or counting. **Fairy Tales:** These stories have been passed on from one generation to another. **Nursery Rhymes:** It is through these important rhymes that poetry, rhythm, and word play are introduced to young children. **Easy Readers and Chapter Books:** These books are created especially for the emerging reader.

PERSONAL PARENTING

Giving Medicine to Children

Parents always want to get it right when giving medicine to children. According to the Food and Drug Administration, there are specific things to look for and specific questions to ask doctors or pharmacists, whether you're filling a prescription or using an over-the-counter drug. This is not the time to be shy—ask any question that comes to mind.

Parents need to know the answers to these questions:

- * What is the drug?
- * How soon will it start working?
- * How is it used?
- * Will there be a problem with other drugs my child is taking?
- * How often and for how long does my child need to take it?
- * What if my child misses a dose?
- * What side effects does it have?

Cranberry Surprise Muffins

Muffins for breakfast are always a treat, and these are simple to make *and* nutritious.

- Vegetable oil spray
- 1 8 1/2-oz. box corn muffin mix
- 1 egg
- 1/3 cup 2% milk
- 1/3 cup dried cranberries, chopped
- 1/2 cup jellied cranberry sauce



Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Coat two muffin tins with vegetable spray and set aside. In a large bowl, combine the muffin mix, egg, and milk. Stir in the dried cranberries. Fill the muffin tins about 1/3 full with batter. Make a small depression in the center of the batter, and fill with a teaspoon of cranberry sauce. Spoon additional batter over the sauce until the muffin cups are about 2/3 full. Bake for 12 to 15 minutes until slightly golden. Cool for about 10 minutes before removing from the pan. Delicious alone or spread with cream cheese.

Follow That String!

This is a great indoor game to play with kids. Tie a piece of string around a treasure such as a book, a miniature car, a small stuffed animal, or a box of crayons.

Wind the string down hallways, under tables, over chairs and toy boxes, and behind doors. Give the free end of the string to your child and follow along until he finds the treasure. Then let him hide the treasure for you to find.



THREE BEDTIME HINTS



Bedtime can be a difficult time of the day for all ages of children. It's not easy to wind down after a busy day filled with activities. Try these ideas to make the transition a little easier especially for preschool age children.

1. "Can you tell me a bedtime story tonight?"
2. "Show me how you say good night to your teddy bear."
3. Play a simple game of Simon Says. Simon says: Put on your pj's. Pull up your covers. Say good night. Close your eyes. Sleep tight!



Block Play for Brain-Building Fun



One of the first things a toddler delights in is knocking over a block tower. She may not be able to stack them yet, but she'll learn. In the meantime, she's enjoying this exciting cause-and-effect activity she's mastered! Block play continues as school-age children play alone or together building elaborate structures they never want to dismantle. Could your child be an emerging architect?

Blocks are one of the most versatile toys. They're for stacking and counting, hauling and building. This

versatility probably accounts for much of their popularity across generations. Blocks come in all shapes and sizes—there are large plastic or cardboard blocks that build big things fast, and there are very small ones that require a lot of mastery and patience to fit together.

Some of the skills children are developing through block play include:

- **Motor skills:** Children use large and small muscles when they grasp, reach, carry, and balance blocks.
- **Cognitive skills:** Problem solving is apparent in most block activity. Will the big block balance on the little one?

Can a truck go under the bridge of blocks without breaking it? How many blocks must fit together to create a road that extends across the room? Not only are children learning to problem solve, they're being creative, exploring, and inventing.

- **Emotional skills:** Toddlers feel very proud of themselves when they learn to balance one block on top of another. Older children feel in control and confident when they've built a gas station, a skyscraper, or an entire town.

- **Social skills:** Children learn to work cooperatively and share with others when building with blocks. They talk, laugh, argue, and look to each other for new ideas and guidance.



What Can Parents Do to Enhance Block Play?

Provide a variety of block shapes—squares, rectangles, arches, cubes, cones—and a lot of them. Wooden blocks can be very expensive, so creating your own from well-sanded hardwood pieces may be a solution. Empty boxes or cartons in different sizes are great for stacking and building. Interlocking blocks whether large or small are great fun for kids and improve eye-hand coordination.

A well-equipped block area should have a flat surface away from traffic for building. There should also be a good place to store the blocks—open shelves work much better than big storage bins. When children see the blocks that are available to them they're much more likely to play with them.

Some blocks come with diagrams that stimulate the child's budding creativity. You can also provide some books with pictures of schools, houses, airports, and bridges. Another way to enhance block play is to provide toy cars and people, wooden dowels, pieces of cardboard, and bits of fabric.

Show you are impressed with your child's creations, and get involved when you have time. It will bring back memories, and you'll have a really good time!



CLIPBOARD

Conversations about Everyday Life with Children -

Mealtime Struggles and Healthy Eating Habits

Tues. Nov. 17, 2009; 12:00pm-12:45pm at ECDC-ND; Gross Motor Room
Fri. Nov. 20, 2009; 12:00pm-12:45pm at ECDC-SMC; Havican Hall, Rm 18

Handling Chronic Sibling Conflict: Reparative and Preventative Measures to Decrease Conflict and Aggression

Tues. Dec. 8, 2009; 12:00pm-12:45 at ECDC-SMC; Havican Hall, Rm 18
Fri. Dec. 11, 2009; 12:00pm-12:45 at ECDC-ND; Gross Motor Room

Hearing & Speech Screening: ECDC-SMC – 10/27 & 29 and ECDC-ND – 11/17 & 18.

Parent permission is required. Please stop by the front desk if you need a form.

Parent Teacher Conferences – November and December at ECDC-SMC and ECDC-ND,

parent sign-up sheets are posted in classrooms. If the times posted do not work for your schedule, please speak with the classroom teacher to arrange an alternate day and time.

Book Fair at both ECDC-SMC and ECDC-ND: Nov. 16-23, 2009. All proceeds

will support the purchase of Educational Materials.

Thanksgiving Break at ECDC-ND and ECDC-SMC -

Both ECDC programs will be closed on Wed., Thurs., & Fri. – Nov. 25-27, 2009

Winter Break - Two Weeks – Dec. 21, 2009 - Jan. 1, 2010 at ECDC-SMC and ECDC-ND

Friendly Reminders~

- Please check your child's locker to make sure that there is at least one complete set of "extra clothes" for the cooler fall weather. Please label all extra clothing.
- If your child or your family is experiencing changes at home, please let the teachers know so that we can be sensitive and more fully meet the needs of your child and family.
- It is our goal to have on file current information for each child, including current contact, general, emergency and medical information. If necessary, please update your child's contact, general, emergency and/or medical information with the ECDC office staff.