

# 3 Tips for Sharing Books with Infants and Toddlers

*The foundation for reading begins at birth*

1

## Follow your baby's pace.

- Infants and toddlers may only be able to engage with books for a few minutes at a time. However, the more practice they have sharing books, the longer they will be able to focus.
- You don't have to finish the story in one sitting—or even read the pages in order! Your child may want to look at one picture and then move on to a different book or activity. Follow your baby's lead to keep reading fun and not forced.



2

## Make it a conversation.

- Feel free to ignore the words on the page! Talk about what you see in the pictures or use your imagination to make up your own story.
- Even if your baby isn't yet talking or cooing, ask questions as you read and pause for a response as if you are having a conversation.
- Share books in the language you are most comfortable speaking.



3

## Have fun!

- Use silly voices and sounds, sing songs, or use puppets or stuffed animals to help tell the story.
- Dance, move around, and act things out.
- Hold your child on your lap as you share books. Lap time is one of the best ways to bond with your baby.
- Allow your little ones to play with their books. Babies explore their world by touching, holding, and chewing on objects. Soon, books will become one of their favorite toys!



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# Choosing Books for Infants and Toddlers

## Look for these features

## Develop these skills

## Some examples

**Newborn to  
6 months**

Books with simple geometric shapes

Focusing on simple shapes supports babies to recognize, and later identify, shapes, symbols, and letters.



*Black & White*  
by Tana Hoban

Books with pictures of human faces.

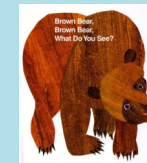
Recognizing emotions and facial expressions

Homemade picture books using photos of family members.

**6 to 12  
months**

Books with rhythmic, patterned language

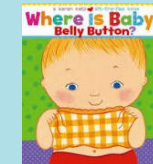
Repetition encourages language development, even when an infant doesn't yet understand words.



*Brown Bear, Brown Bear,  
What Do You See?*  
by Bill Martin and Eric Carle

Interactive lift-the-flap books

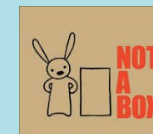
Understanding cause and effect



*Where is Baby's Belly Button?*  
by Karen Katz

Bright images and simple text

Understanding the connection between spoken language and written words.



*Not a Box*  
by Antoinette Portis

**12 to 36  
months**

Repetitive and predictable books

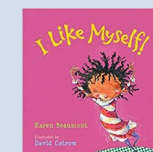
Children will begin to anticipate what comes next, and will eventually begin inserting words or phrases from the story.



*Blue Hat, Green Hat*  
by Sandra Boynton

Nursery rhyme and poetry books

Strengthening phonemic awareness—the ability to notice, think about, and manipulate the individual sounds in words.



*I Like Myself*  
by Karen Beaumont