

Expanding Reading Fun for you and your child

"The more you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." - Dr. Seuss, "I Can Read With My Eyes Shut!"

Here are some ideas for expanding your child's enjoyment of books and reading. By interacting with books in different ways-- retelling the story, imagining different outcomes, using art and song-- your child uses multiple intelligences to expand their learning experience. Some suggested activities are best for younger, some for older children-- and some can be used many times, expanding the ideas as your child grows. Have fun, try our suggestions or your own ideas and enjoy the time with your child!

Second Grade

As your second grader reads these 50 new books this year, help them practice reading aloud by reading to you. Encourage and demonstrate reading expressively. Support their improving decoding skills to sound out words by listening without criticism. Enjoy your time reading together by helping them develop this important skill. Here are some suggestions to build on these new skills and have fun together!

Other Books Are Like This Book Because: Ask them if a story reminds them of any other stories. Ask about the characters ("Can you think of any other dinosaur books we have read?"), situations ("Say-- this story is about magic! Where else have we read about magic?"), or themes ("These friends have a problem-- where else have we read about friends facing problems?"). See if your child can recall similar information from other books. Encourage their efforts.

We Tell a Story: Choose a favorite story you and your child have enjoyed and know well. Say the name of the story--"The Little Engine That Could". Tell the story by memory, out loud, taking turns. Can you remember the whole story? Did you retell it the way the story goes-- or did the story change?

Reading a New Book by Turns: Read a book for the very first time out loud, together with your child. Take turns reading, either page-by-page or sentence-by-sentence. Talk about how you are deciding how to read your parts ("Oh, the rabbit looks sad-- I think I'll use a sad voice here.") Read with expression and try using character voices. Encourage your child to do this also. Ask your child questions about the story as you go. Support their efforts at decoding new words.

Build a Poem: Ask your child to choose a favorite story. Look through the book for individual words that could be used to tell the story in a poem form and write them down on 3x5 cards. Try to arrange and rearrange the words to build a short poem to tell part of the story. When you have a version you both like, write it on a piece of paper. Take turns reading their poem out loud.

Storytelling without words--Pantomime: Have your child choose a favorite story. Ask them to "act-out" a scene from the story, using only actions and expressions-- no words. Encourage expressiveness to help understand the story. Can you "read" the story your storyteller is trying to tell? Now, try it yourself and see if they can "read" you!

Draw Me a Story: Ask your child to tell you a story-- by just using pictures they have drawn. They can draw their own illustrations to a favorite story-- or make up a story and illustrate it. Try to read their story out loud-- don't be afraid to make mistakes and ask them for help "reading".

Songwriting 101: Like a poem, a song often uses fewer words to convey meaning. Ask your child to choose a book they enjoyed. Can they tell that same story in a song? Talk with them about what kind of song it might be -- is it a happy song? A sad story that needs a sad song? What words might your child choose? If you have musical skills you can use them to support this. If not, just enjoy what your child comes up with for lyrics.