

# School Stuff

## Books for Babies



Babies need books much the way they need food. Reading to even the youngest babies helps their brains grow. Connections in the brain are stimulated and strengthened by pictures and words. Research shows that an infant's brain becomes very active when listening to a book read aloud. Here are some tips to help you introduce books to your baby.

- Ease with language is the first step in becoming a reader. Talk, talk, talk and give your child opportunities to respond to what's happening, too.
- Reading aloud is a social event and a shared activity. The importance of the closeness between parent

and child combined with the parent's voice cannot be overemphasized. Hold your baby in your lap and tap the pages of the book to get the baby's attention.

- Choose books that babies can explore. Infants often do this by putting books in their mouths. Allow this exploration and describe what the baby is doing. You do not have to actually read the book at this stage. Enjoying the book together is what's most important.
- Babies like plastic, cloth, and board books with bright, simple pictures or photos. Images of faces and babies are especially appealing.
- Bedtime is not the only time to read to your infant. Find other times to make reading a part of the routine. Plastic books work best when you are changing, bathing, or feeding your baby.

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