

Being a toddler is all about ACTION. Encourage continued language development and interest in books and reading by keeping things lively and engaging. Everyday experiences are full of opportunities to engage in conversation and develop language skills. The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

■ **Don't expect your toddler to sit still for a book**

Toddlers need to MOVE, so don't worry if they act out stories or just skip, romp, or tumble as you read to them. They may be moving, but they are listening.

■ **Recite rhymes, sing songs, and make mistakes!**

Pause to let your toddler finish a phrase or chant a refrain. Once your toddler is familiar with the rhyme or pattern, make mistakes on purpose and get caught.

■ **Choose engaging books**

Books featuring animals or machines invite movement and making sounds. Books with flaps or different textures to touch keep hands busy. Books with detailed illustrations or recurring items hidden in the pictures are great for exploring and discussing.

■ **Keep reading short, simple, and often**

Toddlers frequently have shorter attention spans than babies. Look for text that is short and simple. Read a little bit, several times a day.

■ **Encourage play that involves naming, describing, and communicating**

Set up a zoo with all the stuffed animals. Stage a race with the toy cars. Put your toddler in charge and ask lots of questions.

■ **Every day is an adventure when you're a toddler**

Choose books about everyday experiences and feelings. Your child will identify with the characters as they dress, eat, visit, nap, and play.

■ **Ask questions**

Take time to listen to your toddler's answers. Toddlers have strong opinions and interesting ideas about the world. Encourage your toddler to tell you what he or she thinks. You'll build language skills and learn what makes your toddler tick at the same time.

■ **Play to their favorites**

Read favorite stories again and again. Seek out books about things your toddler especially likes—trains, animals, the moon. These books may extend a toddler's attention span and build enthusiasm for reading.

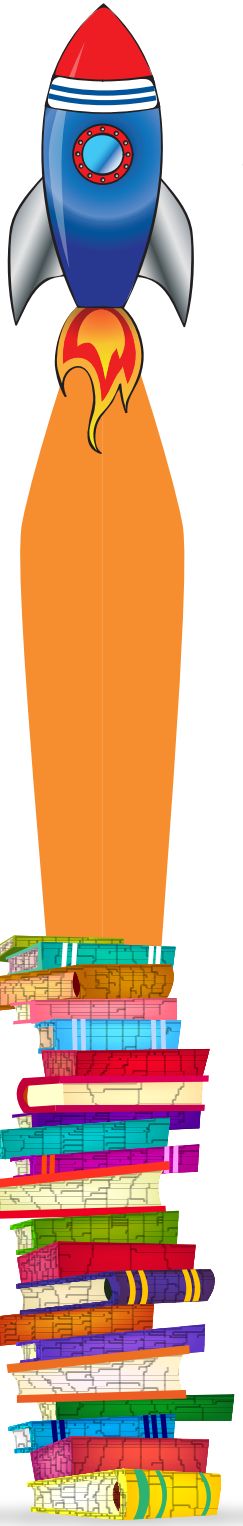
■ **Not having fun?**

Try a different story or a different time during the day. Reading with a very young child is primarily about building positive experiences with books, not finishing every book you start.



Visit [www.ReadingRockets.org](http://www.ReadingRockets.org) for more information on how you can launch a child into a bright future through reading.

*Colorin Colorado is produced by Reading Rockets, a project of public television station WETA. The project is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs; the American Federation of Teachers; and the National Institute for Literacy*



Read early and read often. The early years are critical to developing a lifelong love of reading. It's never too early to begin reading to your child! The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

### ■ **Read together every day**

Read to your child every day. Make this a warm and loving time when the two of you can cuddle close.

### ■ **Give everything a name**

Build your child's vocabulary by talking about interesting words and objects. For example, "Look at that airplane! Those are the wings of the plane. Why do you think they are called wings?"

### ■ **Say how much you enjoy reading**

Tell your child how much you enjoy reading with him or her. Talk about "story time" as the favorite part of your day.

### ■ **Read with fun in your voice**

Read to your child with humor and expression. Use different voices. Ham it up!

### ■ **Know when to stop**

Put the book away for awhile if your child loses interest or is having trouble paying attention.

### ■ **Be interactive**

Discuss what's happening in the book, point out things on the page, and ask questions.

### ■ **Read it again and again**

Go ahead and read your child's favorite book for the 100<sup>th</sup> time! Talk about writing, too. Mention to your child how we read from left to right and how words are separated by spaces.

### ■ **Point out print everywhere**

Talk about the written words you see in the world around you. Ask your child to find a new word on each outing.

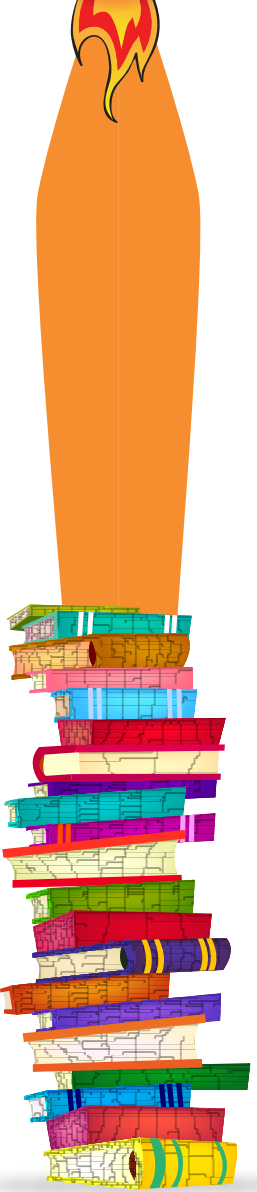
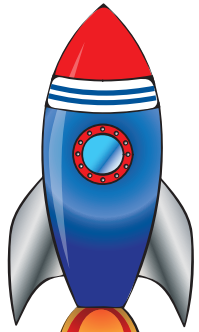
### ■ **Get your child evaluated**

Please be sure to see your child's pediatrician or teacher as soon as possible if you have concerns about your child's language development, hearing, or sight.



Visit [www.ReadingRockets.org](http://www.ReadingRockets.org) for more information on how you can launch a child into a bright future through reading.

*Colorin Colorado is produced by Reading Rockets, a project of public television station WETA. The project is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs; the American Federation of Teachers; and the National Institute for Literacy*



Play with letters, words, and sounds! Having fun with language helps your child learn to crack the code of reading. The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

### ■ **Talk to your child**

Ask your child to talk about his day at school. Encourage him to explain something they did, or a game he played during recess.

### ■ **Say silly tongue twisters**

Sing songs, read rhyming books, and say silly tongue twisters. These help kids become sensitive to the sounds in words.

### ■ **Read it and experience it**

Connect what your child reads with what happens in life. If reading a book about animals, relate it to your last trip to the zoo.

### ■ **Use your child's name**

Point out the link between letters and sounds. Say, "John, the word jump begins with the same sound as your name. John, jump. And they both begin with the same letter, J."

### ■ **Play with puppets**

Play language games with puppets. Have the puppet say, "My name is Mark. I like words that rhyme with my name. Does park rhyme with Mark? Does ball rhyme with Mark?"

### ■ **Trace and say letters**

Have your child use a finger to trace a letter while saying the letter's sound. Do this on paper, in sand, or on a plate of sugar.

### ■ **Write it down**

Have paper and pencils available for your child to use for writing. Working together, write a sentence or two about something special. Encourage her to use the letters and sounds she's learning about in school.

### ■ **Play sound games**

Practice blending sounds into words. Ask "Can you guess what this word is? m - o - p." Hold each sound longer than normal.

### ■ **Read it again and again**

Go ahead and read your child's favorite book for the 100th time! As you read, pause and ask your child about what is going on in the book.

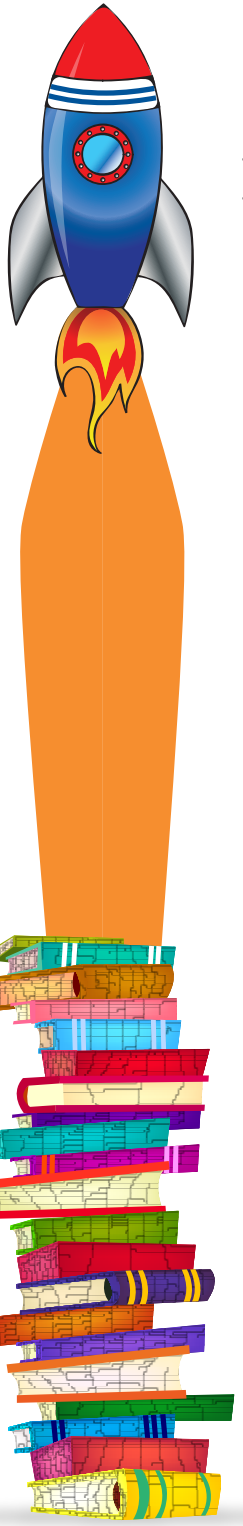
### ■ **Talk about letters and sounds**

Help your child learn the names of the letters and the sounds the letters make. Turn it into a game! "I'm thinking of a letter and it makes the sound mmmmmm."



Visit [www.ReadingRockets.org](http://www.ReadingRockets.org) for more information on how you can launch a child into a bright future through reading.

*Colorin Colorado is produced by Reading Rockets, a project of public television station WETA. The project is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs; the American Federation of Teachers; and the National Institute for Literacy*



Give your child lots of opportunities to read aloud. Inspire your young reader to practice every day! The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

- **Don't leave home without it**  
Bring along a book or magazine any time your child has to wait, such as at a doctor's office. Always try to fit in reading!
- **Once is not enough**  
Encourage your child to re-read favorite books and poems. Re-reading helps kids read more quickly and accurately.
- **Dig deeper into the story**  
Ask your child questions about the story you've just read. Say something like, "Why do you think Clifford did that?"
- **Take control of the television**  
It's difficult for reading to compete with TV and video games. Encourage reading as a free-time activity.
- **Be patient**  
When your child is trying to sound out an unfamiliar word, give him or her time to do so. Remind to child to look closely at the first letter or letters of the word.
- **Pick books that are at the right level**  
Help your child pick books that are not too difficult. The aim is to give your child lots of successful reading experiences.
- **Play word games**  
Have your child sound out the word as you change it from *mat* to *fat* to *sat*; from *sat* to *sag* to *sap*; and from *sap* to *sip*.
- **I read to you, you read to me**  
Take turns reading aloud at bedtime. Kids enjoy this special time with their parents
- **Gently correct your young reader**  
When your child makes a mistake, gently point out the letters he or she overlooked or read incorrectly. Many beginning readers will guess wildly at a word based on its first letter.
- **Talk, talk, talk!**  
Talk with your child every day about school and things going on around the house. Sprinkle some interesting words into the conversation, and build on words you've talked about in the past.
- **Write, write, write!**  
Ask your child to help you write out the grocery list, a thank you note to Grandma, or to keep a journal of special things that happen at home. When writing, encourage your child to use the letter and sound patterns he is learning at school.



Visit [www.ReadingRockets.org](http://www.ReadingRockets.org) for more information on how you can launch a child into a bright future through reading.

*Colorin Colorado is produced by Reading Rockets, a project of public television station WETA. The project is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs; the American Federation of Teachers; and the National Institute for Literacy*