Reading Recommendations for Ages 0-6
What should my child be reading?

Every child is unique. This is just one resource and your child’s reading level, interest in the content, and reading stamina will impact which area of the children’s library they will be comfortable in. Your child may also read across several of these areas. If you want more help, please check with library staff.

**Board Books**
- Ages 0-3
- 24-32 Pages
- Sturdy books that can withstand a little extra wear and tear. These are the perfect introduction to books for a baby toddler.

**Picture Books**
- Ages 3-8
- 32-48 Pages
- Picture books are perfect for read alouds as a family. These range from humorous to teaching a concept.

**Early Readers**
- Ages 5-7
- 32-60 Pages
- This section is for children that are beginning to read independently. Early Readers are also leveled A-D based on reading level.

**J Fiction**
- Ages 6-9
- 80-120 Pages
- Early chapter books ease the transition into longer chapter books. They have more words on the page but also have pictures throughout.
What is storytime?

We start with a welcome song that gets everyone ready to listen. Then we read 2-3 books and sing songs or play games in between books. At the end, we do a craft or send a craft home with you.

How old does my child need to be for storytime?

Your child can be any age, but most of our storytimes are geared to ages 3-7.

My child doesn’t sit still!

Neither do we! We pick books that encourage movement, laughter, and fun. We don’t sit quietly because reading is more fun when it’s interactive.

How long is storytime?

Our storytimes are usually 30-40 minutes long. The door is always open so you can go in and out as your family needs.

My older child loves storytime, but my younger child would rather play. Can I leave my oldest and go into the main library?

We ask that you stay with your child because you are part of storytime too. We keep puzzles and quiet blocks in the back of the storytime area so your little one can play while your older child is engaged with the story.

What am I supposed to do at storytime?

Adults are part of storytime too! The more YOU talk about the story and sing songs, the more your child will enjoy it. We promise no one is looking at you. They’ll be looking at the silly staff member at the front.

I still have questions!

Call our children’s librarian at 573-686-8639.
Children up to age 6: Vote for your favorite 2023 Building Block Award Nominee

Voting closes December 31, 2023

The Book of Rules
by Brian Gehriein

Cows Go Boo!
by Steve Webb

Don’t Eat Bees: Life Lessons from Chip the Dog
by Dev Petty

I’m a Unicorn
by Helen Yoon

I’m Terrified of Bath Time
by Simon Rich

Lou
by Breanna Carzoo

Mel Fell
by Corey R. Tabor

One Sheep, Two Sheep
by Tammi Sauer

People Are Wild
by Margaux Meganck

Shhh! The Baby Sleeping
by JaNay Brown-Wood

First name: ______________________
Age: ____________________________
What You Need:
- Valid Government-Issued ID
- Proof of Residency

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Arthur

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. . . AND YOUR KIDS!

PROMOTING LIBRARIES TO MAKE OUR COMMUNITIES STRONGER
STEM TO GO!
AT HOME LEARNING KITS

EXPLORE CIRCUITS, ENGINEERING, ENERGY, SPACE AND MORE.

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) kits are geared toward children (4 to 12 years old) along with their caregivers and teachers. Each kit contains a nonfiction book and two corresponding hands-on learning activities.
SING!

Music wakes up your baby’s brain! Babies enjoy the rhyme and rhythm of the words and melody in a song, and love watching your face as you sing.

Just Sing! Sing to your baby, even if you don’t think you sound great. Your baby is a great audience and will love hearing how your voice changes when you add music.

Sing Songs From Your Childhood. Babies have been soothed by lullabies for centuries. Do you remember any songs that your mother or grandmother sang to you? Pass them along to your little one!

Add Some Variety. Babies enjoy all kinds of music. Try classical music, jazz, or your own favorite popular music.

Chant. For a change, just say the lyrics with a strong beat, instead of singing. You can make any song into a rap or chant!

Hum! If you can’t remember the words just hum a tune. Or replace all the words with one syllable, especially if it is a sound your baby is practicing, like “ba” or “da.”

Move While You Sing. Music and movement just naturally go together. Your baby will love swaying to music with you.

Change It Up. Sing or hum, faster, slower, softer, and slightly louder. All of these simple changes make the song a new and interesting experience for your baby.

Make It Personal. Use familiar tunes and change the words. Insert your baby’s name or just sing about whatever you are doing!

READ!

Listening to you read gives your baby the words he will say one day. Reading together now will start a loving tradition of sharing books everyday for years to come!

Snuggle Up and Read. Holding your baby close while reading helps him connect the things he loves most—your voice, and being with you—to books!

Read Throughout the Day. Read for even a few minutes at a time. Soon your baby will settle into the routine and be ready for the whole book... and then a whole stack of books!

Read the Pictures. If your baby wants to flip the pages, just talk about the pictures. Point to things and name them.

Keep Books Handy. Keep books in your stroller, diaper bag, car, near the highchair, at the changing table. Have baskets of books throughout the house so there will always be a book ready for your baby to enjoy.

A “Taste” for Reading. For older babies, books, become toys to grasp, open, close and even chew on! Learning to love books starts with actively exploring them.

Read Anywhere! When your baby gets older and wants to keep moving, read while he is sitting in his high chair or while he’s practicing standing.

Again... and Again! Babies love, and learn from, repetition. Don’t be afraid to read the same books over and over.

Visit the Library. Many libraries have story time for babies. Pick up a book for yourself, too. When you’re reading for pleasure you are your baby’s reading role model!
PLAY!

Your baby is curious about everything! When you play together you are teaching your little one about the great big world, how things work, but more importantly that you love spending time together!

Your Face is a Toy! Your face will be your baby’s favorite and most important toy for many months. Show your baby all the things your face can do! Try slowly sticking out your tongue. Your baby may try to copy you!

Hands and Feet are Toys Too! Count those toes, pretend to eat them up, kiss all those little fingers!

Surprise! Take a floaty scarf and fling it into the air, letting it settle by your baby’s feet or on your head, then let it land on your baby’s head. Act surprised every time!

I’m Gonna Get You! When your baby is sitting in her infant seat, move slowly toward her saying “I see you, and I’m coming to get you!” I’m gonna kiss you! ... Gotcha!” Then cover your baby in kisses.

Tummy Time Together. Tummy time helps babies learn to push up, roll over, sit up, and crawl. Join your baby on the floor. Lay with your face close to his. Talk with him, shake a rattle, and make funny faces.

Your Closet is a Play Space. Your closet is a great place for you and your baby to explore. Let your baby look at all the colors, feel the silky or wooly fabrics. Play a version of peek-a-boo by ducking behind hanging clothes.

Learn to Respond to Your Baby’s Cues. Just like adults, babies don’t always like being social. When your baby has had enough, she will turn away or fuss a bit to let you know she needs a break. She’ll be ready to play again soon!

TALK!

Talking to your baby from birth is a priceless gift that enriches brain development, and it’s the best way to help your baby understand and learn to use language!

Use the Language of Love. Babies begin learning to talk by taking turns. They coo, look at you, and wait. You coo and they gurgles back. These early conversations teach your baby about language, and about being loved!

Have Changing Table Chats. Diapering is a wonderful talking time. Your baby loves to gaze at you and will focus on watching your face and listening to your words as you tell her what you’re doing.

Respond Gently. In the first year, crying is your baby’s basic communication system. Respond with a gentle tone and loving words so that he learns you are listening to him.

Be a Generous Word Giver. Name everything your baby can see! Flowers and animals, toys and clothes. The more words you baby hears the better!

Talk About What You Baby is Doing. When your baby reaches for you nose, say in a cooing voice “That’s my nose. Are you going to grab it?”

Talk About What You Are Doing all Through the Day. Before you pick your baby up, reach your hands towards her and say “I’m going to pick you up.” This helps her learn language and to expect what will come next.

Tell Stories. Stories can be made up or you can tell a familiar tale like “The Three Bears.” Or just tell a story about what you are doing with your baby as it is happening!
WRITE

Reading and writing go hand in hand. Both represent spoken language and communicate information. Children can learn pre-reading skills by participating in writing activities like scribbling, drawing, and forming letters. Keep paper and crayons or markers on a table that children can access easily.

1. Writing begins with scribbles and other marks. Encourage this by providing many opportunities to draw and write.
2. Encourage children to “sign” their artwork; this practice will help them understand that print represents words. As they practice eye-hand coordination and develop their hand muscles, children can begin to write the letters in their names.
3. Talk to your children about what they draw, and write captions or stories together. This helps connect spoken and printed language.

SING

Songs are a wonderful way for children to learn about language. Singing also slows down language so children can hear the different sounds that make up words. This helps children when they begin to read printed language. Sing songs and play music for your child.

1. Sing the alphabet. This will help your child to learn about letters.
2. Sing nursery rhymes and other rhyming poems. This allows your child to hear the different sounds in words. Encourage your child to sing along with you.
3. Clap along to the rhythms in songs to help your child hear the syllables in words.

READY TO READ

Simple Activities that Promote Early Literacy

PLAY

Children learn a lot about language through play. Children think symbolically when they play, which helps them to understand that spoken and written words can stand for real objects and experiences. Play also helps children to express themselves and put thoughts into words.

1. Give your child plenty of playtime. Allow children to have unstructured time to use their imaginations to create stories about what they’re doing.
2. Encourage children to engage in dramatic play. When children use puppets, dolls, or stuffed animals to make up stories, they develop important narrative skills which help them to understand that stories have a beginning, middle, and end.

READ

Reading together is the single most important way you can help prepare your child to read. Starting from birth, shared reading increases vocabulary and general knowledge while helping children develop an interest in reading. Children who enjoy being read to are much more likely to want to learn to read themselves.

1. Read every day. Make time to enjoy at least one story with your child. Set aside a designated storytime.
2. Make shared reading interactive. Before you begin a book, ask your child to look at the cover and predict what it will be about. Allow your child to turn the book’s pages. Ask questions as you read. When you finish the book, ask your child to retell the story.
3. Use books to help teach new words. Define unfamiliar words for your child as you read.

TALK

Children learn language and other early literacy skills by listening to adults talk. As children listen to spoken language, they learn new words and what they mean while gaining important general knowledge about the world around them. This knowledge will help children understand the meaning of what they read.

1. Make sure your child has lots of opportunities to talk with you, not just listen while you talk.
2. Respond to what your child says and extend the conversation. “Yes, we did see a truck like that last week. It’s called a bulldozer.” Stretch your child’s vocabulary by repeating and adding onto what they say. “You want a banana? That’s a very healthy choice.”
3. If English isn’t your first language, speak to your child in the language you know best. This allows you to explain things more fluently so your child will learn more.
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