

# Kansas PARENTS Read to Preschoolers

We all know how important reading to our babies, toddlers and preschoolers is to their continued development. As parents we want to give that leg up to our children, but when we get down to reading to our babies, we get stuck on what the best method might be, or we realize that we read the same books the same way day after day and we begin to wonder- am I doing this right? Second guessing ourselves is what we parents do best right?

**Why should your preschooler want to read?** No person, be they young or old, will do anything unless they truly want to. It's up to us as parents to provide the motivation to encourage our children to become literature bugs. Here are some reasons why your child wants to learn to read:

1. He's motivated- whether it's the cuddling, the one-on-one attention from you, or because it's a comforting part of his routine- reading is a pleasure and you can help convey that to him.
2. It's a necessity- she wants to read to make sure you put her favorite crackers on the grocery list, she wants to know what that sign says next to her classroom door, she sees words all around her and wants to know what they say.
3. Preschoolers are people-pleasers (some of the time) and they want to see the look on your face when they identify a letter or word.

**The Pre-requisites to reading: early language!** In order for your child to become a proficient reader, he/she must become a lover of language. Playing with sound with people your child trusts and loves is the best way a child learns. Examples:

- Tongue Twisters
- Silly rhymes
- Made up words- think and talk like Dr. Seuss!
- Word/sound substitutions
- Songs and finger plays- Twinkle Twinkle, Itsy-bitsy or other childhood favorites

\*If you have a bilingual home, be sure to read to your child in your primary language as well as in English. The reason behind this is that you will be more comfortable reading in your first language, and you can convey your love of reading with more ease. You will be giving your child a wonderful gift by helping him or her learn to read and speak more than one language.

## What are the best books for Preschoolers?

- ABC books
- Board books
- Picture books
- Rhyming books
- Touch/feel books
- 1 sentence/page books
- Favorite books (read for the hundredth time)
- Books with repeated phrases/sentences
- Real-life photo books
- Home-made books
- Wordless books
- Photo albums

\*\*If you get stumped as to which books your child would like or may be best be sure to talk with your local public or school librarian. They can provide a wealth of great ideas!

## Where should I keep my child's books?

Keep the books or other reading material at child's level at all times. Store them in tubs, boxes, and basket or on low, accessible shelves. Keep reading material in every room of the house- cookbooks in the kitchen, in the bathroom, in the bedroom and living room. Have reading material at the ready in the car, in the diaper bag or your purse. Make sure that your child can and does handle books at anytime of their choosing.

## But reading isn't all about books:

Magazines, cereal boxes, catalogs, email, newspapers, signs, advertisements; point it all out. We all know that our preschoolers can “read” the sign that indicates their favorite restaurant or store. Listen to an audio book together. Have child look for the letter “D” on the way to the babysitter.

**When is the best time to read books?** A parent’s life is hectic at best- so how to squeeze in time for reading in our busy lives? Take a book everywhere- doctor’s office, in the car, on the bus, check-out line at the grocery, on the potty, while you are cleaning up a meal- let your child look at books and pick their favorite to read when you are finished w/ the dishes. The easiest time to read is the oldest in the book- make it a part of child’s bedtime routine. Just like exercise, reading doesn’t have to be done all in one sitting, but a total of 20 minutes a day is ideal.

### **How should I read so my child will listen?**

- Sing-song
- Funny noises
- Insert wrong words
- Follow with your fingers
- Ask them to turn pages
- Insert their names into the book
- Ask them to identify pictures- where’s the...?

### **How do I know they’re listening?**

- Make predictions from title/cover art- “Look at the picture on the front. What do you think this book is going to be about? Let’s see if you’re right!”
- Make it relate to their life- “Ooo, look there’s a rabbit in this book, do you remember when your aunt let you pet her rabbit?”
- Ask them who they think might like the book
- Have them summarize the book half-way through- “Poor Bear! What has Bear’s friends done so far to help him feel better? Do you think it will help?”
- Have them relate it to another book- “This book is about a sick bear. Have we read any other books about bears? How is this book the same/different?”

**Does all this early reading really help? In one word, YES!**

**More parent reading tips are available from:**

**Reading Is Fundamental, Inc.** - prepares and motivates children to read by delivering free books and literacy resources to those children and families who need them most.

[www.rif.org/parents/tips/default.aspx](http://www.rif.org/parents/tips/default.aspx)

**Reading Rockets** - delivered to you from PBS

[www.pbs.org/launchingreaders/parenttips\\_1.html](http://www.pbs.org/launchingreaders/parenttips_1.html)

**American Library Association** -

[www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/alsc/initiatives/borntoread/index.cfm](http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/alsc/initiatives/borntoread/index.cfm)

**Parents as Teachers** - [www.parentsasteachers.org/site/pp.asp?c=ek1RLcMZJxE&b=307148](http://www.parentsasteachers.org/site/pp.asp?c=ek1RLcMZJxE&b=307148)

**Kansas National Education Association** - [www.knea.org/parents/readingtips.html](http://www.knea.org/parents/readingtips.html)

[www.knea.org/parents/spanishreadingtips.html](http://www.knea.org/parents/spanishreadingtips.html) (for Spanish-speaking parents)

**Kansas Reading Association** -

[www.kansasread.org/parents.htm#Simple\\_Strategies\\_for\\_Creating\\_Strong\\_Readers](http://www.kansasread.org/parents.htm#Simple_Strategies_for_Creating_Strong_Readers)

**Kansas Parent Information Resource Center - [www.kpirc.org/resources/for/early-childhood](http://www.kpirc.org/resources/for/early-childhood)**