



Reading Fever

Ready To Read

**Reading for Babies, Toddlers,
and Preschoolers**

A great place to begin!



DEANNE SPENCER, M.ED.

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and Preschoolers

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Reading Fever®

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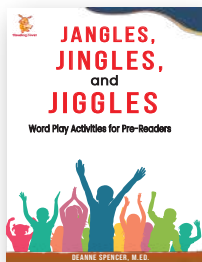
READING PROGRAM COMPONENTS:



Ready to Read:

Reading with Babies, Toddlers, and Pre-schoolers

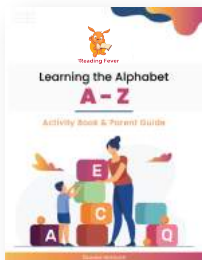
What are the most important things a parent can do to ensure that their children become successful readers? We'll outline some of those strategies for each age group from babies to preschoolers. We'll recommend a few products you can take a look at and have some ideas that cost nothing at all!



Jangles, Jingles, and Jiggles

Pre-Reading Preparation for understanding the code

This is a parent guide to teaching the word play that leads to understanding the English language code. This goes along with the **Learning to Read Program** and is absolutely necessary to ensure the best reading and writing success.



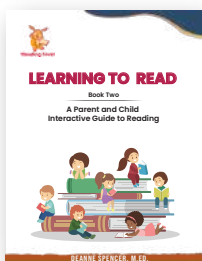
Learning the Alphabet A-Z Book:

This book goes with the **Learning to Read Program** and **Jangles, Jingles, and Jiggles**. It is to teach children to identify and write the letters of the alphabet. These lessons can be taught in any order. Children only need three letters to be able to start reading!



Learning To Read – Book 1:

Provides phonics instruction using all of the letters as if reading is very consistent – one letter, one sound. Vowels are short. Children learn that words are blended left to right, words make sentences, a sentence begins with a capital letter, and ends with a punctuation mark.



Learning To Read – Book 2:

Provides reading instruction using additional sounds for vowels and consonants, including letter blends. It also has many high-frequency words that are a little tricky. It works by providing word reading and practice stories based on a sequential, step-by-step approach.

Reading for Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers

The old phrase, “First children, learn to read, and then they read to learn,” may be accurate, but it is an oversimplification of a complex process. Raising a reader begins before teaching a child to read. In fact, “reading” is only a part of the process of language development, which also includes language skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking. The continuum of “language learning” is synergistic in that all of the domains work together and help build on each other. These skills can all be explicitly taught (there are planned, sequential lessons); however, pre-reading experiences are “fun and games.” These engaging experiences for children help them develop in all language domains and set up the child for success in reading, writing, listening and speaking so that the lessons will make sense when they are taught those skills.

The Foundations of Reading and Language Development:

The foundations of reading, writing, listening, and speaking are put in place long before the skill of reading arrives. The attitude about reading is also in place before the skills are taught. In fact, the vocabulary of a kindergartner is the best predictor of success in school. It all begins with a focus on language development.

PROVIDING A FOUNDATION #1

(Birth - 3 months)

Read and talk to your baby!

Where to begin? With **BABIES**, of course! When a baby first picks up on sounds that those around are making and then begins to produce those sounds, that is a precursor to reading. Why? Because eventually, those sounds will be associated with writing letters or characters that we organize into words, sentences and paragraphs.

That all said, parents and caregivers become the child's first teachers. The easiest of all beginnings is talking to the baby. Not only does talking to the baby foster language, but it also fosters connection. All of the language domains (reading, writing, listening and speaking) are a means of connection. Just because a baby can't focus on pictures in a book doesn't mean there is no benefit in reading to a baby. What the baby hears is the flow of language, the patterns in words, the tone of the speaker. It stimulates the language center of the brain. Within a few weeks, Baby will be searching for the sound of a voice, will start to make cooing, babbling sounds, and have an emotional response to a speaker.

CAUTION: Note loud noise and yelling: Be aware of sudden loud noise and yelling/screaming voices. Intense voices and noises can have a negative emotional impact on babies. Loud, emotional noise can cause tension and may seem threatening or signal danger. We'll talk more about emotional learning later on, but this is also a skill that develops early in a child's life.



READY TO READ

Reading for Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers

Pre-reading activities:

Dancing Toys: Newborns cannot yet see colors, but they can see shapes. Lie the baby face-up and dance different objects across the “screen” of the baby’s view. Slowly dance and turn the toys - side to side, up and down. At first, the baby will not follow and will lose track of the dancing object. But soon, the object will consume more and more attention. This tracking skill helps Baby to observe details, notice movement, and exercise the eyes. Try to choose toys to dance that are light-weight and have some movement and maybe something with a tinkling sound.

Note of Caution: If the toy drops out of your hands, it may hit the baby in the face! Dance the toys carefully with a good grasp - nothing too heavy.

Recommended for Dancing Toys Activity:

Lamaze Baby Toys



Playgro Dangly Toys



Dangly Toys by Rolimate



Light and Shadow: Place the baby near a window occasionally where light and shadow can play across the scenery such as clouds moving, trees with branches moving, or place a mobile over the child’s crib or baby seat so that the movement can catch the baby’s gaze from time to time. Let the baby be in your sphere of activity to observe your movement and the movement of others. At first, the baby can’t make sense of what he/she sees, but eventually, these scenes become more apparent, and the baby will gain some stimulation from watching and observing. Having a child develop a capacity to observe is a precursor to many other skills that will be important to learning later on.

Black and White Mobiles

Recommended for Mobiles:

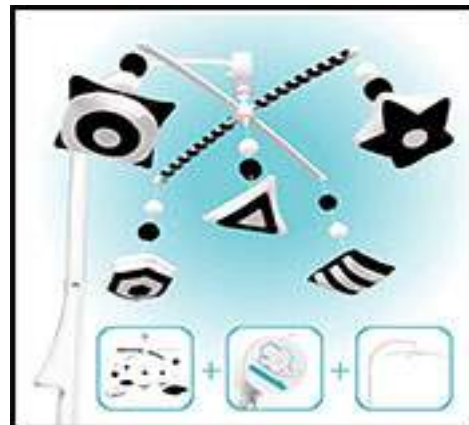
The best mobiles for newborn eyes are in black and white contrasts. Newborns cannot yet see color, so mobiles in black and white are more easily detected and watched. Music is soothing and develops auditory awareness, so that's a bonus.

Here are a couple of examples:

Tiny Love Mobile Magical Tales



Montessori Mobile Baby Crib



PROVIDING A FOUNDATION #2

Reading to your child

Reading to your child from various books is probably the most important thing you can do to prepare your child for learning to read (and write and listen and speak!). Children who have been read to for the first five years of life start school at a significant advantage over children who have not had those experiences.

Children learn through their senses, so providing interactive books will make “learning to read” more fun. Developmentally, interactive books with opportunities to see, feel, touch, taste, and even sometimes smell will provide exciting experiences for the child if provided at the right time.

Let's start with some basics:

- ◆ 0-6 months - Books or anything with pictures and words! You are reading to your children to give them a taste of language. Babies want to hear your voice. Books with black on white contrasts are easier for a baby to see. Being able to see colors takes a few months.

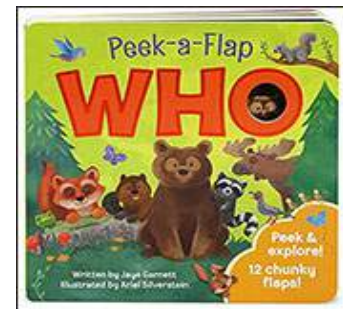
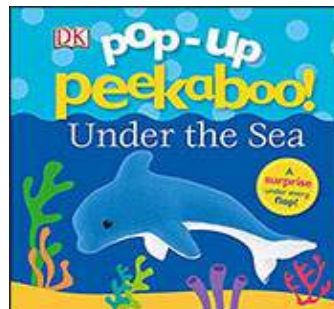
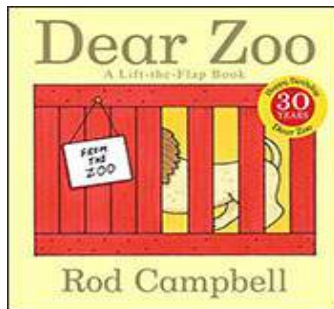


BOOKS

Reading to your child

- ◆ 6 - 12 months - Bath Books (plastic), Cloth Books, Foam Books, Board Books, Texture Books - Once Baby can hold and touch the books, they will go directly in the mouth. They will get crunched, spit on, chewed, smacked and thrown. Thanks to publishers who develop these sturdy books for baby hands! Look for books that have some skin color diversity so that babies can see people who look like them! Some books may have mirrors in them, which makes it fun for babies to see themselves.

Example:



- ◆ Press-the-button books - These are favorites for babies and toddlers as they can have a choice, which they quite enjoy!

Example:



READY TO READ

Reading for Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers

◆ 24 - 36 Months

- ◆ Pop up books and books about colors, numbers and counting, vocabulary building books (books that name things), alphabet books.



Example:

- ◆ Books that you can sing or read, such as the myriad “Wheels on the Bus” or “Baby Shark” options, are all language-building books.
- ◆ Nursery Rhymes for this age group will give children a good foundation in word meter and rhyme. Rhyming is an essential auditory skill that helps with phonemic awareness (sounds in words) and eventually with phonics in reading. Mother Goose is great but also add in some Dr. Seuss and Shel Silverstein. Fingerplays are also fun at this age - “Itsy Bitsy Spider.”
- ◆ Rhyming Songs such as “Down by the Bay” or “Hokey Pokey” are all sing-along hits that will engage any 2–3-year-old.



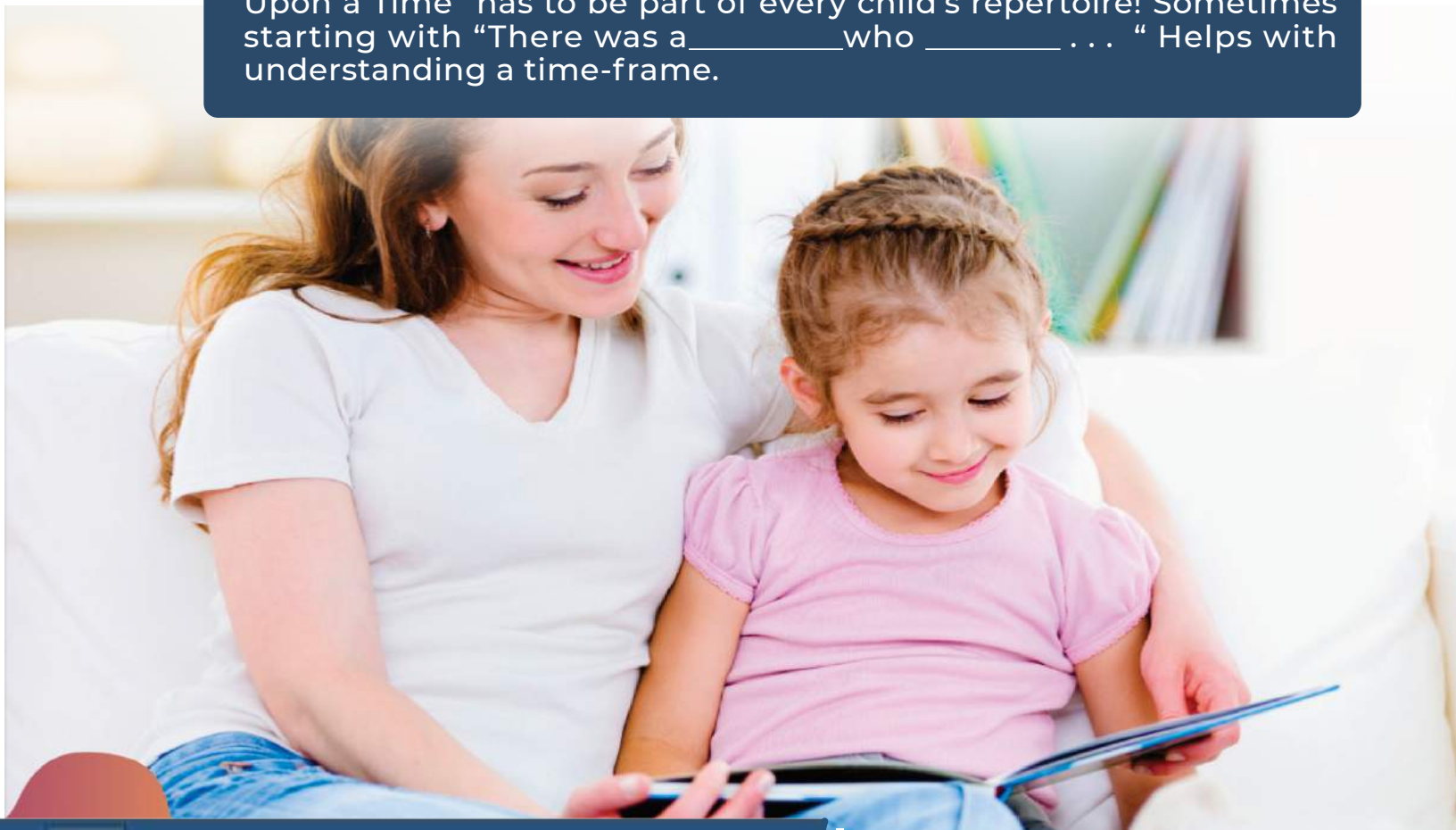
READY TO READ

Reading for Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers

◆ Ages 3-4 -Pre-schoolers-

- ◆ Rhyming books, repetitive books and cumulative books that build (There was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly, Three Billy Goats Gruff)
- ◆ Wordless books (pictures only - the story comes from your own words - you can ask “What do you see?”)
- ◆ Alliterative books -books where the first letters of the word are mostly all the same – Dr. Seuss’s ABC Book.
- ◆ **Fairy Tales:** Goldilocks and the Three Bears, The Three Little Pigs, Cinderella, The Gingerbread Boy, Jack and the Beanstalk, The Little Red Hen, Rapunzel, Chicken Little, Stone Soup, The Ugly Duckling and their numerous versions and variations.

There are friendlier versions of the stories, so it is up to parents to decide what is “too scary” or “too occult” to deal with. Still, many of the Fairy Tales often springboard to many fun stories with similar storylines and similar or completely different outcomes. “Once Upon a Time” has to be part of every child’s repertoire! Sometimes starting with “There was a _____ who _____ . . . ” Helps with understanding a time-frame.



READY TO READ

Reading for Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers

- ◆ **Anytime Stories** - Stories of people you know, or things you've experienced make perfectly acceptable stories. Children love to hear about people they know, giving them an anchor for who they are.
- ◆ **Make Up Your Own Stories:** These stories can take the form of a regular story that has made up characters who encounter a problem and then come to a solution. Or you can teach a concept through the characters such as how to share, how to be kind, how to obey parents, etc. by having good outcomes to scenarios that show how to make a positive decision when faced with a choice.
- ◆ **Theme-based informational text:** Reading about animals in different habitats, space, bugs, community helpers, different kinds of transportation, etc., are ways that children can learn about the world around them. They can see pictures and learn the names of the objects in the pictures or the sounds they make. You don't have to read verbatim what is in the text in order to impart information to children. You can explain the pictures and talk about them to increase a child's vocabulary. They will become more attached to their world and more attuned to what is around them. For example, if you hear a dog bark or hear an airplane or fire truck, children can attach the sound to a picture and/or the real object—visual literacy promotes connection. Connection builds comprehension.

Where to Get Books and Other Print Materials :

- ◆ **Libraries** - Children's sections of most libraries are very robust. Most libraries now have "order online" options, so you can select books to have delivered relatively close to you every week. Or there are even eBooks available for children so you can read online. I don't prefer eBooks to real books for children, but it's better than nothing.
- ◆ **Thrift Stores** have lots of books for children - Take your disinfectant wipes!
- ◆ **Yard Sales** - a lot for so little - same for the disinfectant.
- ◆ **School district giveaways** - When school districts update a Language Arts curriculum, they will often have giveaway days to allow parents to come and pick up the old books before they are destroyed or sold. Call your local District Office.
- ◆ **The Wednesday throw-away** advertisements that come in the mail!

PROVIDING A FOUNDATION #3 - Motivating your child to read:

In kindergarten, 100% of the students want to learn to read. Some, of course, are already reading. However, by fourth grade, less than half of the students are reading at grade level. In a world where technical reading and literacy required for future jobs is a necessity, what is happening? Do students become less motivated to read, or do they have fewer reading skills? The answer is, "Yes." To get better at reading, one has to read! Students who struggle with reading become less motivated to read, and when reading time is reduced, reading practice is diminished, so it is more challenging to improve. Students who do not struggle to read, but do not see the value in reading, will eventually struggle to maintain comprehension at a level needed to progress. The best solution is to make reading exciting and manageable regardless of the reasons for the struggle - be it motivation or skills. Choosing to read over all other distractions available to children is something that can be brought into balance through a few basic strategies:

Educators agree on the following essential points:

1. Giving children a love of books when they are young through the experiences that were discussed earlier.
2. Ensuring that children have ample reading materials at their reading level will entice them to read, read, read (and practice, practice, practice!).
3. Read aloud to children from the time they are babies and continue to read to them even as they become proficient readers and can read independently.
4. Get children specific help with reading difficulties as early as possible. If they are not reading at grade level by 2nd grade, intervention programs should be well underway with targeted instruction to help them practice the skills needed.





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Summary:

For babies, toddlers, and preschoolers, reading should be part of the everyday routine. Providing access to books and reading to your child every day are **THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS** you can do to help your child love reading and have the foundational skills necessary to become a good reader. Consistency is the key and starting early is critical to getting your child on the right path to reading!

INTRODUCTION

Developmental Milestones Checklist

When you engage in working with your child every day, you'll be able to notice the little things he or she is able to do. We've laid out a sequential program for you to follow, but you may want to know if your child is hitting key developmental milestones for reading readiness. So here's a simple checklist of typically developing children.

This checklist will focus on two key areas for reading readiness: Sensory and Communication. These two areas are tied to your child's language development. Spoken language is important to your child's future success as well as skills that will lead to written language development. Spoken language is natural, written language is not and must be explicitly taught. However, if you are focusing on the things we're teaching you, you'll expose, observe, note progress, and repeat.

Exposure leads to familiarity, which leads to understanding for children. At first, they don't get it, then suddenly, they do! There's a tipping point, at which time you'll just review, reinforce, and expose them to the next concept. You'll expose (not push) your child to the next concepts and just wait until the lightbulb comes on, then you'll see what to focus on next. Make it fun - your child will love it no matter what because it's coming from you!



Babies

Sensory

Birth - 3 months

Communication

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tracks movement | <input type="checkbox"/> Turns head to sounds |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Makes eye contact |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Coos and smiles |

Sensory

4 - 6 months

Communication

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Uses hands to touch | <input type="checkbox"/> Notices sounds and responds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brings objects to mouth | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tracks movement | <input type="checkbox"/> Begins babbling |

Sensory

7-9 months

Communication

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Turns head to track sounds or objects | <input type="checkbox"/> Uses more sounds in babbling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Picks up objects | <input type="checkbox"/> Looks at objects and people |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tries to move | <input type="checkbox"/> Recognizes own name |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Puts objects in mouth | <input type="checkbox"/> Imitates some sounds |

Sensory

10-12 months

Communication

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Claps hands | <input type="checkbox"/> Beginning words - "mama" "dada" |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listens to songs | <input type="checkbox"/> Responds to directions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Explores everything with mouth | <input type="checkbox"/> Babbles to communicate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crawls to move | <input type="checkbox"/> Uses hand movements to communicate |

Toddlers & Pre-schoolers

Sensory 13 - 18 months

- Helps with dressing
- Regular sleep schedule
- Variety of foods

Communication

- Can say 5-10 words
- Uses sounds/gestures
- Shows interest in pictures
- Begins to identify body parts
- Understands 50 words
- Nods/shakes head

Sensory 19 - 24 months

- Flips light switches
- Uses writing utensils
- Begins fine motor activity

Communication

- Uses 50 words
- Names objects and pictures
- Understands simple pronouns
- Picks up vocabulary words quickly
- Loves listening to stories
- Begins easy prepositions

Sensory 24 - 36 months

- Becomes increasingly skilled with large and small motor skills
- Begins to dress self
- Can eat independently

Communication

- Begins using two-word phrases
- Follows two-step directions
- Begins to understand pronouns and possessives
- Uses plurals
- Vocabulary is blowing up!

Reading Milestones Checklist



Reading Readiness

- Listens to read aloud stories
- Shows interest in reading related activities
- Recognizes that print carries messages
- Understands left to right movement of reading
- Identifies front and back of books
- Holds book correctly
- Retells information from a story
- Predicts what will happen next in the story
- Can turn pages correctly
- Can point to words
- Will often say the correct word in a favorite story if you pause.

Alphabet

- Identifies upper & lower case letters
- Recites alphabet-sings ABC song
- Matches uppercase to lowercase

Word Play

Phonological
Awareness

- Word Awareness
- Rhyming
- Syllables
- Segmenting words
- Blending sounds
- Delete sounds
- Initial & ending sounds
- Substituting Sounds



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