

Choosing Books for Children

What to look for when choosing books for infants:

- Simple, clear, and colourful pictures—with or without words
- Bright patterns or pictures with high contrast
- Real life pictures of babies, people, animals, and toys
- Rhythm, rhymes, songs, and simple poems
- Stories told with short, simple sentences—minimal text
- Pictures of familiar objects—teddy bears, trucks, home items
- Board or chubby books manageable for little hands
- Cloth or soft vinyl—easy to wash and grasp

What to look for when choosing books for toddlers:

- Books with objects to name and identify
- Illustrated song books and movement stories
- Stories with sensory appeal—textures, smells, and sounds
- Books with Child's special interests—trains, bears, dinosaurs, pictures of family, friends and special activities
- Stories that encourage interaction—have repeat phrases for child to echo
- Books with pop-ups, flaps, or moveable parts
- High interest topics—bath and bedtime, large vehicles, and animals
- Books that introduce colours and numbers
- Simple plots and predictable endings

What to look for when choosing books for preschoolers:

- Funny characters in silly situations
- Stories that tell about family, friends, school, and relationships
- Books about their concerns, feelings and real life experiences
- Plots with more action and description
- Counting books, ABC books, concept books
- More concept books—colours, opposites, sizes
- Books with repetitive sentences that they can memorize or read
- Non-fiction with accurate information and detailed illustrations
- Books that give them a window into a bigger world
- Most books child enjoyed at a younger age
- Read books to all ages that emphasize diversity, ethnicity, gender equality and different lifestyles. Include people with disabilities and varied occupations.

Excerpted from: The Early Words Initiative, Multnomah County, Oregon, "Let's Talk, Let's Read" Literacy Link Niagara, Speech Services Niagara.