

## HOW TO GROW YOUR BABY'S BRAIN WITH READING VIDEO

Did you know that reading to your baby is one of the best ways that you can help them do well in school and grow and become terrific readers? But you may be wondering, "Read to a baby? How do I do that and why should I do that?" In this video, we're going to talk about why it's important to read to your baby and then provide some tips and tricks and some suggestions of how you can share a book with your baby so that they are the most engaged and you make the most of that time of reading aloud.

Hi, I'm Dr. Teresa Caraway from Hearing First and we're here to support you as parents and families of a child who has hearing loss so that they can listen, talk, read, and thrive in life.

Unfortunately, recent data shows that only 30 to 40% of parents are reading aloud to their child. Every single word you read, every book you share helps grow their brain and that's what's important. You are raising a reader when you begin at day one sharing books and reading aloud to your child. But how do you get started? What are some tips and tricks to do for that?

The first thing is you don't have to read word for word. In other words, it's fun to talk about the pictures. It's fun to sing little songs and make up your own songs about the words and about the things that you're seeing. And it's okay to add animal sounds or truck and transportation sounds or funny voices. Remember, being a dramatic daddy or a drama mama is critical. If you were just talking like this the whole time and reading every word, it wouldn't be very engaging, would it? But putting lots of drama in your voice, lots of inflection, pausing and waiting makes a book come alive.

Another suggestion is, is that before you turn the page, talk about what's on the next page. Give a preview of what's coming up. That also holds their attention. Decide to set aside what is gonna be your prize hour or your reading hour? Make it a part of your day, part of your routine. Maybe it's before nap time. Maybe it's right after lunch. Maybe it's in the middle of the afternoon at three o'clock. Whatever that works for you, be purposeful in it as building it in as part of your day. It's that critical and that important for brain development.

Keep a book handy at your fingertips at all times. Keep one in your purse or in your diaper bag or in your backpack so that wherever you go, you have books at your fingertips ready to share to make every single minute count.

Another fun thing for your family is to get a library card. You get all kinds of free great books that you can change out every few weeks. So how do you share a book with your baby? Well, remember, keep it simple. Make your voice interesting. Be a drama mama or dramatic daddy, and stop and pause and make sounds. Announce what's coming on the next page.

For example, brown Bear, brown Bear. What do you see? I see a tweet, tweet, tweet, tweet red bird looking at me. Red bird. Red bird. What do you see? Oh, what is it going to be? Quack, quack, quack, quack. I hear that. It's a yellow duck. Yellow duck. Yellow duck. What do you see? Oh, look, I see his eye. What else do you see? And maybe your child points to the feet. Yes, I see his webbed feet. And for an older child, you can talk about how, "Oh, he doesn't have toes. His feet are webbed. Do you have toes?" And you could count the toes. It's yellow. Oh, he's yellow like a banana. And you can extend the topic. And if you're 15-minute a day for sharing this book gets only stuck on one page, it's okay, because

remember, it's about the number of words your child is hearing. It's about providing access to lots and lots of language and talking and lots of conversation because that's what grows your little baby's brain.

Remember, reading aloud 15 minutes a day makes a significant difference in the life of your little one. And you may even want to expand that by having several 15-minute a day periods of time. It may be that you want a set of goal of sharing or reading X number of books, five, 10 books per day with your child. Whatever that works for your schedule and your family and your routine, that's what's important to build it in so that you're doing it every single day. Because remember, you're raising a reader. If you'd like more tips, suggestions, and resources of how you can raise your little reader, well, check out these resources below.

Wherever you are in the journey, remember, you are not alone. Hearing First is here to support you every step of the way. So subscribe to our YouTube channel and check out our website, [hearingfirst.org](http://hearingfirst.org) on the link below.