

## Reading Age 1 Summary

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### Why Reading?

Children are naturally eager to learn and interested in letters and sounds. The early years are the right time for developing language skills, playing with sounds, and enjoying books together so children will be ready for reading in the future.

**STEP 1**  **GET INPUT**

### Getting to Know and Understand Your Child's Input

- Language and relationship development set the stage for later reading success. Simple questions and interactions can engage your child. Your child may respond with a few simple words, and they can respond with eye contact, facial expression, and body movements.
- Make sounds together: *"What does a cow say? It says Moooo. Can you say Moooo?"* *"What does a duck say? It says Quack Quack. Can you say Quack Quack?"* You could also practice clapping or stomping your feet together.

**Tip:** If your child seems unengaged when you are singing or reading together, don't worry. Young children have very short attention spans, and it is okay for them to look away and then re-engage later.

**STEP 2**  **TEACH**

### Teach New Skills

- Read together.
- Read or chant rhymes or poetry to your child -- particularly ones with repetitive words and sounds.
- Check out storytimes or other activities for children at your local library.
- Make your thinking and emotions explicit. Talk about what you notice, how you feel, why you feel it, and what signs you are giving. *"I have so much fun singing songs with you. La La La La La!"*
- Talk aloud about how you respond to your big feelings. *"That song makes me laugh. It is fun to clap our hands to the music!"*
- Grow a love of playing with language and stories. This might include sharing funny poems and making silly faces every time you make a rhyme. Diaper changing time is a perfect time for silly faces and rhymes.

**Tip:** Don't expect your child to have a long attention span with any one activity. Follow your child's lead.

**STEP  
3**



**PRACTICE**

## Practice to Grow Skills and Develop Habits

- Keep books within reach so your child can enjoy them when they choose. Books that let children press buttons to make sounds give them a chance to take some control of their sound-making.
- Use books, songs, rhymes, and games at home that allow children to hear examples of language and sounds around them.
- Read together. When you read stories together, reflect on the story, and you'll take the learning opportunity one step further. *"Do you think Little Red Riding Hood was excited to go to Grandma's House?"*
- Use your child's dolls or stuffed animals to act out moments of enjoying language and reading: *"Let's bring Teddy over here so he can hear the story too."*
- Provide opportunities for your child to use language and words in a more challenging way than they have done before. If they have already heard you read a favorite book to them many times, ask them to help you make the sounds together. Ask: *"What does a cow say? It says Moooo. Can you say Moooo?"*
- Practice making music together. Clapping or stomping your feet together is a fun activity to engage your child.

**STEP  
4**



**SUPPORT**

## Support Your Child's Development and Success

- Learn about your child's development. Each new age presents different challenges.
- Recognize effort using "I notice..." statements like: *"I noticed you clapping your hands when the music played. Hooray!"*
- Build reading and songs into your daily routines and comment on how important those parts of your routines are. *"I notice you like bedtime stories. Reading books together feels good to me, too."*

**STEP  
5**



**RECOGNIZE**

## Recognize Efforts

- Smile at your child.
- Make eye contact.
- Use caring facial expressions.
- Be physically gentle and caring with your child.

- Use words to celebrate and encourage: “*You were paying attention so well at storytime today -- Love seeing that!*”
- Recognize small steps along the way: “*I see you are making lots of music with your new toy. I love hearing it!*”
- Build celebrations into your everyday routines. Promote joy and happiness by laughing, singing, dancing, hugging, and snuggling to appreciate one another.

**Tip:** The early years are filled with amazing changes, and they are not just for your child. Don't forget to recognize and celebrate your development and milestones as a parent.

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