

# How to Choose Read Aloud Books: Babies to Third Graders

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How do you choose books to read aloud with your child? There are many things to think about: how interesting the topic or characters might be for your child; an intriguing setting, time period, or plot; the liveliness or beauty of the language; or how engaging the illustrations are. Some books are more appropriate based on social and emotional development at each stage of a young child's life. Find guidance here in choosing great read alouds.

## Read alouds for babies and toddlers

It's never too early to start reading to young children. Babies and toddlers are listeners, building their vocabulary before they can even talk.

### What to look for in choosing books for babies and toddlers:

- Brightly colored pictures of simple objects.
- Simple texts, rhyming, and repetition.
- Books that introduce colors, shapes, counting, and letters.
- Lift-the-flap and sturdy pop-up books to encourage exploration.
- Board books and cloth books — perfect for young hands to manipulate.

See some of our favorites:

*All Fall Down* by Helen Oxenbury

*All of Bab, Nose to Toes* by Victoria Adler

*Diggers Go* by Steve Light

*I Kissed the Baby* by Mary Murphy

*Lots of Lambs* by Laura Numeroff

*Lullaby & Kisses Sweet: Poems to Love With Your Baby* Edited: Lee Bennett Hopkins

*Maisy's Animals/Los animals de Maisy* by Lucy Cousins

*Max's First Word* by Rosemary Wells

*One, Two, Buckle My Shoe* by Jane Cabrera

*Peek-a-Who?* By Nina Laden

*Say Goodnight* by Helen Oxenbury

*Tickle Tickle* by Helen Oxenbury

## Read alouds for preschoolers

Preschoolers are acquiring language skills quickly. They enjoy the sound of language — even nonsensical words — and a good laugh; after all, they're developing a sense of humor!

What to look for in choosing books for preschoolers:

- Bright, big illustrations.
- Simple stories with basic plots.
- Books that help answer a preschooler's "why?" questions about their world.
- Rhyming text, including the classics like Mother Goose and Dr. Seuss.
- Classic stories with universal themes such as friendship and generosity.
- Activity books that encourage exploration, observation, and play.
- Bedtime stories to calm preschoolers after their busy days!

See some of our favorite:

*Froodle* by Antoinette Portis

*If Your Were a Dog* by Jamie Swenson

*Kitten's First Full Moon* by Kevin Henkes

*Llama Llama* titles by Anna Dewdney

*Tippy-Toe-Chick Go!* By George Shannon

*Whistle for Willie* by Ezra Jack Keats

*Yoo-Hoo, Lady Bug* by Mem Fox

<http://www.readingrockets.org/booklist/great-read-alouds-for-preschoolers>