



Booktrust's Top Tips for Bedtime Reading

Sharing a story at bedtime is a chance for you and your child to relax and enjoy a special moment together. Children will benefit immensely if you read aloud with them, even once they have started to read themselves. They will learn new words that are beyond their reading ability and will love the time you spend with them. Try to read the books brought home from school and books you have at home; maybe borrowed from the library. Make it something to look forward to — and remember to have fun!

- Sit close together, somewhere cosy. It doesn't have to be in bed and it's best to switch off the TV.
- For babies and younger children, choose books with rhyme and repetition – this encourages them to join in and will help them later when they are learning to read.
- Share both stories and non-fiction books about things they like – trains, footballs and fairies. Point to the pictures and talk about them.
- Try telling a story. Children love traditional fairy tales, or you could make one up together.
- Children love poems, they're like songs and nursery rhymes and are good fun to listen to – there are great books offering a poem for every day of the year.
- You don't always have to "read" a book. Talk about the pictures or characters and try asking questions like: 'Can you tell me what happened to ...' 'What do you think will happen next?' 'How do you think she feels about that?' Give plenty of time for younger children to answer.
- Let them ask questions – it helps children to understand what's happening in a story, which is an essential part of learning to read.
- Try to relate a story to real life: 'Do you remember when we saw a dog like that...?'
- Try to use funny voices and make silly noises. Your child loves the sound of your voice so try not to be embarrassed or shy. Don't worry if you can't, just remember to make it fun and laugh a lot.
- Involve your child by letting them choose the book - don't worry if you think it's too young!
- Read children's favourite books over and over again. It's good for children who are starting to read to hear old favourites – they may start to read them to you.
- As children get older share exciting books with chapters – continue reading loud even when they can read by themselves as this helps them learn new words.
- If a child keeps asking you to read the same book, **celebrate!** You have a child who loves books and who is well on the way to becoming an enthusiastic reader.

For more tips and advice on great rhymes and books to share with your child visit our website at www.bedtimereading.org.uk