

Enjoying books with young children

(2.5-6 Years)

Choosing books for your child

Look for books your child will like and be interested in. These might be picture books or audio books about things like dinosaurs or animals or fairy tales, but young children also enjoy books about first experiences like going to school. As young children get older, they like books with humour! Picture and audio books in your home language also benefit your child.

Read or listen to the book yourself first to see if it will suit your child. A scary book might frighten one child while another will love it. You know your child's likes and dislikes!

Look for stories that give you a chance to talk about family life. Those conversations might be about people or about animals and imaginary characters that show children's differing life experiences and family relationships. Books for this age group can help children explore feelings and to learn about things like fairness, friendship, difference, getting lost, being upset and losing a loved one.

Making the most of story time

If your child likes the book you've chosen, that's a great start to giving him/her a love of reading. When you settle down to read, begin with the pictures on the cover. Talk about the picture and what the story might be about. Look at the name of the book (the title), the name of the person who wrote it (the author) and who drew the pictures (the illustrator).

Your 'reading aloud voice' is part of the fun, so try different voices and sound effects and vary your tone.

At the same time, try not to ask too many questions that need a yes/no, right or wrong answer. Instead, encourage your child to tell you what they think about the book: Why do you think ... I wonder how ...



Bedtime story routines

As with babies and toddlers, having a bedtime routine that includes reading will help your child develop a love of books. Above all, enjoy reading together!

Suggested list of books to read with young children

Dr Mary Roche (education consultant and author of 'Developing Children's Critical Thinking through Picturebooks') compiled this picture book list based on her work with children over many years. This list includes suggestions and there are many other books available, so have a look in the children's section of your local library. Hopefully, some of those on the list will interest your child, and provide opportunities for fun and lots of discussion.

A Bit Lost (2011) by Chris Houghton*

Geansaí Otto (2020) by Sadhb Devlin

This is Our House (2020) by Michael Rosen and Bob Graham*

Percy Peacóg (2018) by Gemma Breatnach agus Tarsila Kruse

Just because (2010) by Rebecca Elliot*

Egg Drop (2003) by Mini Grey*

Elephant and Piggy series/Pigeon series by Mo Willems

Fish is Fish (1987) by Leo Leoni*

Elmer (1990) by David McKee*

Frog and the Birdsong (1991) by Max Velthuijs*

The Gruffalo (1999) by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler*

But really: adventures with a difference (2019) by David King

The Gruffalo's Child (2005) by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler*

The Rabbit Listened (2020) by Cori Doerrfeld*

Night Monkey, Day Monkey (2002) by Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler*

A New Green Day (2020) by Antoinette Portis*

Room on the Broom (2004) by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler*

Little Blue and Little Yellow (1995) by Leo Leoni*

A Squash and a Squeeze (2003) by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler*

You're Snug with Me (2018) by Chitra Soundar and Poonam Mistry *

The Smartest Giant in Town (2002) by Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler*

The Avocado Baby (1999) by John Burningham*

* Available as an audio book

The Sneetches (1961) by Dr Seuss*	The Fish who Could Wish (1993) by John Bush and Korky Paul*
Goldilocks and the Three Bears (2009) by Lauren Child*	The Lonely Beast (2011) by Chris Judge*
Good Little Wolf (2011) by Nadia Shireen	The Princess and the Pea (2005) by Lauren Child*
I Want my Hat Back (2011) by Jon Klassen*	The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs (1997) by Jon Scieszka*
This is not my Hat (2012) by Jon Klassen*	Have You Seen the Dublin Vampire? (2020) by Úna Woods
The Little Red Hen (2001) by Paul Galdone*	Tusk Tusk (1990) by David McKee*
Not Now Bernard (1990) by David McKee*	Two Monsters (1987) by David McKee*
The Magic Bed (2004) by John Burningham*	Voices in the Park (1999) by Anthony Browne
Ready Steady School (2021) by Marian Dubuc*	Happy in Our Skin (2020) by Fran Manushkin and Lauren Tobia*
Where is the Green Sheep? (2004) by Mem Fox*	Bear Shaped (2020) by Dawn Coulter-Cruttenden*
Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge (1992) by Mem Fox*	Only A Tree Knows How to Be a Tree (2020) by Mary Murphy*
Three Little Vikings (2021) by Bethan Woollvin	Go To Sleep, Hoglet! The Adventures Of An Irish Hedgehog (2020) by Bex Sheridan*
Dear Greenpeace (1991) by Simon James*	Will You Be My Friend? (2020) by Sam McBratney and Anita Jeram*
Be Kind (2020) by Pat Zietlow Miller and Jen Hill*	The Chill Skill (2020) by Niall Breslin and Emma Proctor Teckentrup*
Frog and Toad are Friends (1971) by Arnold Lobel*	Lenny and Wilbur (2019) by Ken Wilson Max
It's a Book (2010) by Lane Smith*	Making Friends: A Book About First Friendships (2020) by Amanda McCardle and Colleen Larmour
Something Else (1995) by Kathryn Cave and Chris Riddell*	10 Silly Children (2021) by Jon Lander
The Hueys (2012) by Oliver Jeffers*	You're Safe With Me (2018) by Chitra Soundar and Poonam Mistry*
O! Get off our Train (1989) by John Burningham*	Jabari Tries (2020) by Gaia Cornwall*

* Available as an audio book

Prince Cinders (1997) by Babette Cole*

This Moose Belongs to Me (2012) by Oliver Jeffers*

Scaredy Squirrel Makes a Friend (2008) by Melanie Watt*

The Paper Bag Princess (1980) by Robert Munsch*

Happy in our Skin (2018) by Fran Manushkin *

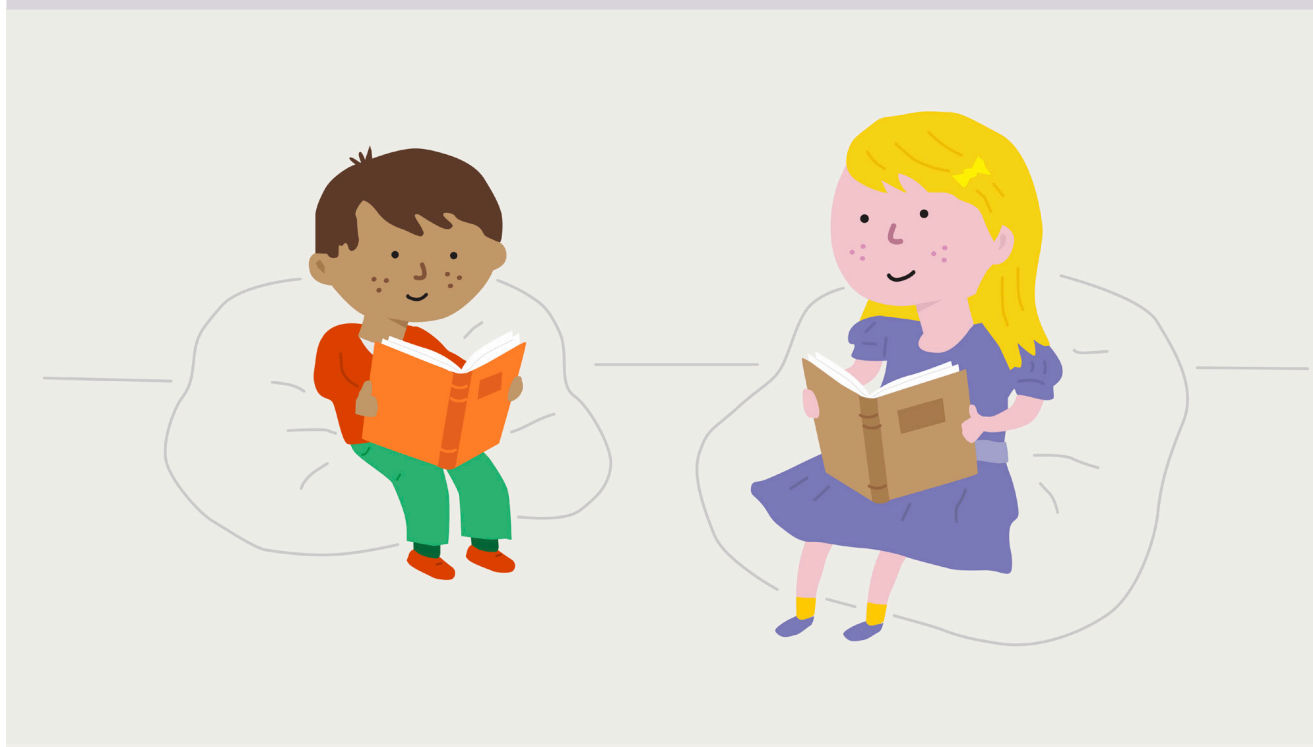
Along Came a Different (2019) by Tom McLaughlin*

Leo and the Octopus (2021) by Isabel Marinov and Chris Nixon

You Can! (2021) by Alexandra Strick and Steve Anthony

The Pirate Mums (2021) by Jodie Lancet-Grant

Dancing with Daddy (2021) by Anitra Rowe and Schulte and Ziyue Chen



* Available as an audio book