Leading with Reading

Tips for making the most out of story time

QUALITY START
LOS ANGELES

It's never too early to read to your child!

Reading together is a tried and true habit that takes your imagination to faraway places, supports your child's development, and cultivates a one-of-a-kind bond between you and your child. Here are a few of our favorite tips that will help your child become a confident, joyful reader.

Establish a reading routine

Did you know?

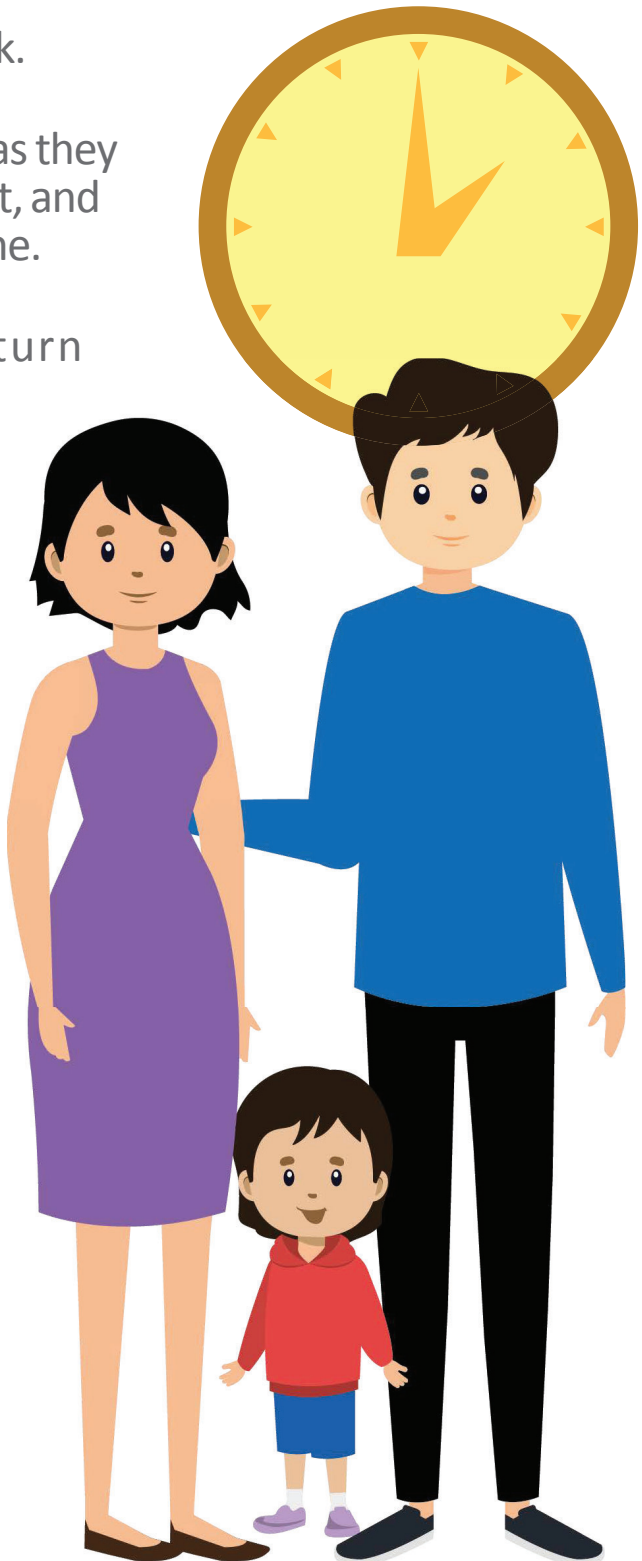
Reading to children at home helps them associate reading with fun, and provides them with a model to follow.

Tips:

Read early, and often! Whether it's morning, bedtime, or anytime in between, build a routine that works best for your family.

For ages 0-3

- Encourage your child to choose the book.
- Read in short increments and add time as they get older. Notice when they lose interest, and come back to the book at a different time.
- Have your child hold the book and help turn the pages.
- Read before bedtime – this helps children relax and transition to sleep.



For preschool and beyond

- Set time for both independent reading and reading together.
- Have a variety of reading materials around your house such as books, magazines, and newspapers.
- When reading, run your finger through the words to show how to read from left to right.

Conversation is key

Did you know?

When you bring conversation into story time you are accelerating your child's vocabulary. By naming an object, using number words, and introducing words that explain emotions, you are helping them understand their meaning, making them more likely to use these words.

Tips:

Use Post-It notes to label objects around the house. This will teach your child new words, and make them more comfortable as you introduce more through reading. As they get older, add adjectives to the labels to broaden their vocabulary.

For ages 0-3

- While reading together, point at pictures and name objects. Repeat sounds of letters, and model sound making.
- Build your child's vocabulary by naming what they see. When you see a plane, for instance, say, "Look at that airplane. The airplane has wings. Why do you think they are called wings?"
- Sing songs in your home language.

For preschool and beyond

- Show your child the words, talk about the pictures.
- Ask open-ended questions and allow time to respond.
- Choose books that help expand their understanding of other people, cultures, race, and beliefs.

Make it fun

Did you know?

Children are more likely to be strong, enthusiastic readers if parents have fun reading to them.

Tips:

Always bring your personal flair to reading time. Be interactive and read with animation – this is where you can spark imagination together.

For ages 0-3

- Use gestures, facial and vocal expressions as you read, using different voices for different characters.
- Use puppets to expand on reading and storytelling.
- Act out different characters in the story with your child.

For preschool and beyond

- As you read, encourage children to retell the story while they look at the pictures.
- Dance or march to show different actions in a story.
- Predict "what would happen next" if they were the author of the story.

Create a book nook

Did you know?

Parents and caregivers play a vital role in a child's life to develop these literacy skills: talking, singing, reading, writing, and playing. "Book Nooks" provide a space that nurtures learning with comfort and fun.

Tips:

Create a quiet, well-lit space with comfortable seating. Provide soft pillows, rugs, a lamp, and a small book shelf or baskets for storage.

For ages 0-3

- Provide board books with objects, numbers, and animals. Let your child touch the books.
- Listen to lullabies and instrumental music.
- Be expressive: infants love expressions and making emotional connections with people.
- Sing songs that recite simple rhymes.

For preschool and beyond

- Read stories aloud and share family stories in your home language that may relate to the story.
- Ask questions using "who, what, where, and how", to enhance conversations.
- Verbalize how much you enjoy the story and spending time with them.

Go beyond the book and integrate storytelling

Did you know?

Any kind of storytelling, whether drawn from pictures in a book, or stories you make up on the spot, helps your child become an active listener and develop great imagination skills.

For ages 0-3

- Cozy up in your book nook while "storytelling". Even if family members are not confident audible readers, this is a great way to build attachment and connection with your child.
- Tell a story about something that happened to you in the past or from your childhood. Stories like these help children understand their culture and learn empathy through others' experiences.

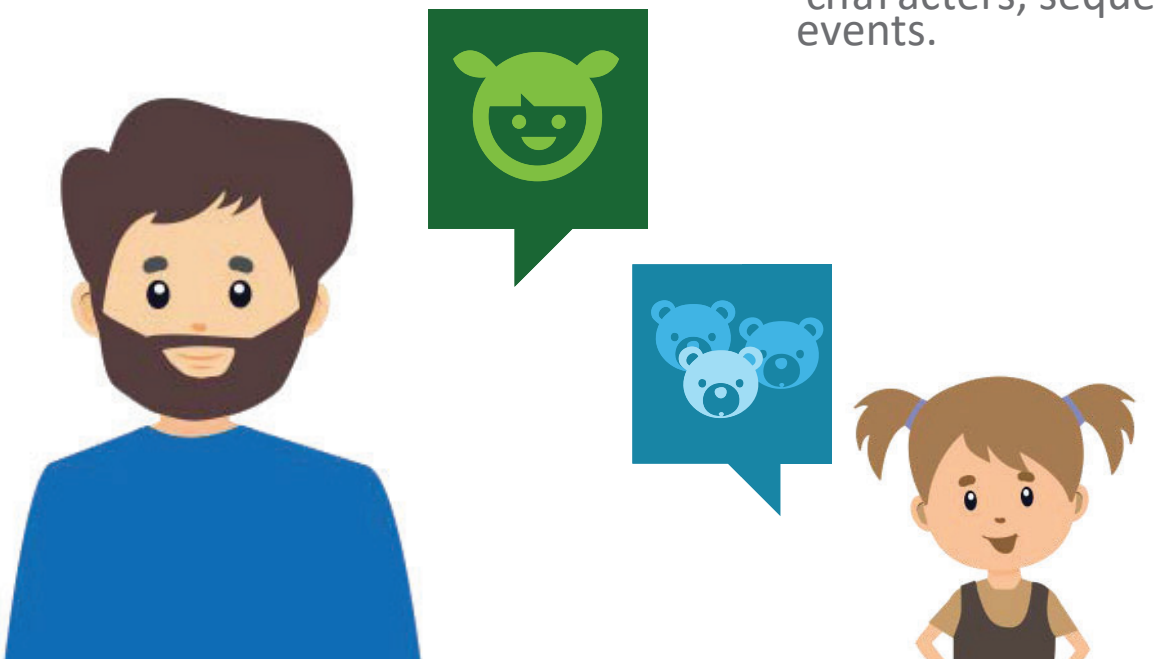
Tips:

Create a story bag, box, or basket with props and soft toys. As you flip through your book, create your own storyline and use your props to tell the story.

For preschool and beyond

- Use wordless books, and have your child tell their own story ba sed on the pictures. This will encourage imagination and boost self-confidence for your preschooler.

- Retell stories that resonate with you. When you have already told the same story several times, have your child chime in with what happens next. This strengthens memory skills by encouraging them to remember characters, sequences, and events.



QUALITY START LOS ANGELES

About Quality Start Los Angeles (QSLA)

Quality Start Los Angeles (QSLA) is a state and nationwide movement to improve the quality of early learning for young children. QSLA is committed to supporting you as a family through access to information, resources, and community events that highlight your role as your child's first teacher and support your child's development.

The initiative is led by a consortia comprised of the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), the County of Los Angeles Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education; the Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles (CCALA); First 5 LA; Partnership for Education, Articulation, and Coordination through Higher Education (PEACH); and the Child Care Planning Committee. To date, QSLA has supported over 1200 providers in LA County.

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