

## MAKING THE MOST OF A BOOK WITH YOUR CHILD

When you read to your young child, ***take time for you both to get to know the book even before you read the first page.*** Look at the cover and read the title. Tell your child the name of the person who wrote the book. Have you read other books by this author?

Notice who drew or painted the illustrations. See if the author and the illustrator dedicated their work to someone. At the beginning of the book, they may have written something that tells you who they were thinking of when they made their book.

***Reading the dedications can help little children realize books are written by real people and that the author and artist had someone special in mind when they made this book.*** Maybe they made it for their own little girl or boy!

Next, ***“take a walk” through the book’s pictures. See what you can tell about the story just by looking at the illustrations.*** Who’s this story about? What seems to be happening at first? And what happens next? Can you guess? Does the story look funny or serious? How do you guess it will end? ***Ready to find out? Now it’s time to READ!***

Don’t worry if your child won’t sit quietly while you read. ***Just like you, children can listen while they do other things.*** Your child might want to play on the floor beside you while you read the book and he might only come back to see the pictures from time to time. That’s o.k.

Every now and then, as you’re reading, ***stop to ask your child questions that make her think.*** For example, look at a picture and ask what she thinks will happen next or how she thinks the characters are feeling or why she thinks they did what they just did. Ask your child what she might do if she were in the same situation. Remember: ***these questions aren’t a test.*** And reading a story book ought to be fun. So follow your child’s lead—if she wants you to turn the page and get on with the story, then do it!

***Read the book once and, if your child wants, read it again and again.*** You might hear your child begin to say the words along with you. Are there phrases that the author repeats? And does your child seem to know when they’re coming? Does he say those phrases along with you? If you pause or leave out a word, does your child fill in the blank? And do you sometimes find your child pretending to read the book himself? ***That’s great!***

**Your child is thinking of himself or herself as a reader. And there’s no better way to start reading than that!**