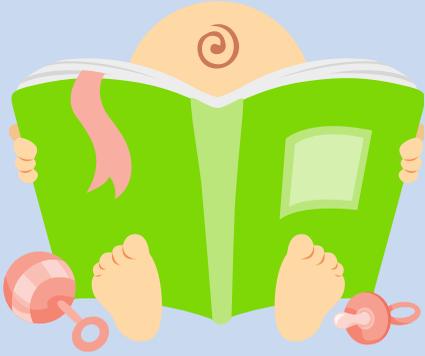


Raising a Reader *Baby's First Year*



At a Glance

Birth to 4 months

Newborns can't see well. High-contrast books help vision develop.

At 4 to 5 months

Baby can grasp objects now. Give her cloth and soft vinyl books she can hold without hurting herself.

At 6 to 9 months

Baby may become more interested in the story than chewing the book.

At 8 to 9 months

Baby can turn the pages of books. Provide colorful board books as your baby becomes more active.

At 12 months

Baby can turn the pages and name familiar objects.

Talk and Sing to Your Baby.

Your baby is comforted by the sound of your voice. Hold her as you sing and say rhymes. Echo her "coos" and baby sounds. Make eye contact to let her know you are talking to her.

Read to Your Baby.

To share a book with your infant, cuddle up and hold the book about a foot from your baby's face. Hold it still for her to look at while you talk about the picture. Let her reactions guide you. When she has had enough she will let you know.

Baby's First Books.

First books don't need a story. Point to pictures and ask, "What's that?" Make up a story or repeat the name of the object again and again in a singsong voice.

Babies' eyes are not fully developed at birth. They can't see details. They can't really see color until about 5 months of age. High-contrast book images send strong signals to babies' brains. These signals help the visual part of her brain develop.



"Tactile" books provide lots of different textures for Baby to touch. They give you a chance to introduce new words like "fuzzy," "smooth," "soft" and "rough."

By 4 to 5 months of age, Baby is able to hold objects. She will enjoy cloth and soft vinyl books. Books go straight to the mouth just like every other object. It's ok. It's natural.



Babble Back!

By 7 or 8 months your baby will make sounds such as "ba-ba," "da-da," and "ma-ma." Echo the sounds back. Take turns making the sounds. Add new sounds. Now you're talking!

Sounds are the basis of speech and language. Language is the foundation of literacy.



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