



# Developing reading skills for babies and pre-school children

If you would like to find out more about how you can support our Every child a reader by 7 campaign, either email [ECR7@camdenlearning.org.uk](mailto:ECR7@camdenlearning.org.uk) or look at our web page on <https://camdenlearning.org.uk/ecr7/>

**“One of the greatest gifts adults can give – to their offspring and to their society – is to read to children.”**

**-Carl Sagan**

Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension, necessary for both reading and writing, starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books, stories and non-fiction, they read with them, and enjoy nursery rhymes, poems and songs together.

Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words, decoding, and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. At school these skills are taught in phonics lessons. Sharing nursery rhymes and stories with young children gives them the foundation they need to develop these skills later at school.

Research shows that children who are confident readers later on have been immersed in a rich talking and reading environment from birth. In this booklet you will find strategies for developing this environment at home which will set your child up for success as a confident reader at school and beyond.

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# Top Tips for Talking

## Ten Top Tips for Talking

Here are some simple things we can all do to support the development of babies' and young children's speech, language and communication skills and give them the best start in life.

Talk to me while I am in your tummy.  
I am listening.  
I like to hear your voice.

**TIP 1**



Scan the QR code for more suggestions

Look into my eyes and talk to me face to face.  
I might not be talking back but I like listening and copying.

**TIP 2**



Scan the QR code for more suggestions

Talk to me in our home language.

### TIP 3

Talking in two or more languages helps my brain develop. This makes it easier for me to learn English and other languages.



Scan the QR code for more suggestions

Copy me.  
Repeat my sounds.  
Wait for me to take a turn.

### TIP 4

Respond to my smiles and sounds.



Scan the QR code for more suggestions

Talk with me about the things that interest me.

### TIP 5

This helps me to link the words you say with the things I see.



Scan the QR code for more suggestions

Screens away, it's time to play! Put down phones and ipads.

### TIP 6

When you talk to me it helps me learn about the world around me.



Scan the QR code for more suggestions

is a great way to bond and be together.

Share books with me, talk with me about the pictures.

### TIP 7



Scan the QR code for more suggestions

Talk to me all the time when we are doing everyday things like having a bath, walking to the park or tidying up.

### TIP 8



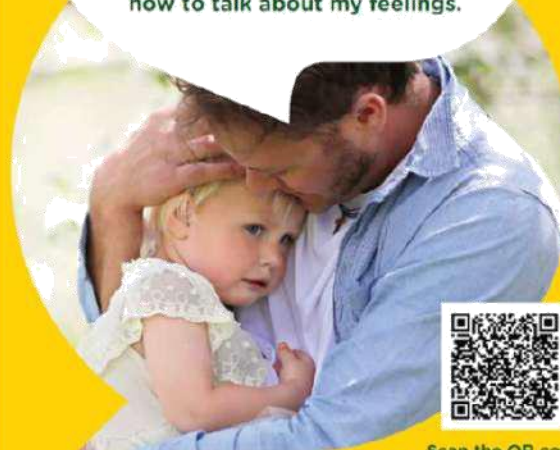
Scan the QR code for more suggestions

Talk to me about how you think I am feeling.

Telling me how you think I feel helps me to feel safe and understood.

These chats help me to learn how to talk about my feelings.

### TIP 9



Scan the QR code for more suggestions

Add extra words to what I say, this helps me learn longer sentences.

### TIP 10



Scan the QR code for more suggestions

## Further Resources:

**Help your baby learn to talk**



**How toddlers come to say their first words**



**Baby's first words:  
What first words are most common for babies and why?**



**The ages and stages of children's communication development**





## The Speech Lab: Investigating Language Learning

**Is speaking in baby talk good for babies' language learning?**



**How can peekaboo help babies to learn?**



**Can you get your baby to babble more?**



**What is my baby interested in? And why is tuning into your child's interests so important?**



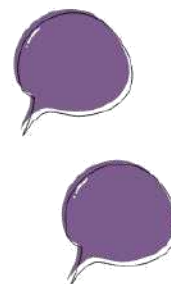
**Should I lead or follow my baby?**



**What's the best way to respond to my toddler's first words?**



**How can you help toddlers say words properly?**



**How does talking about the past help children's language skills?**



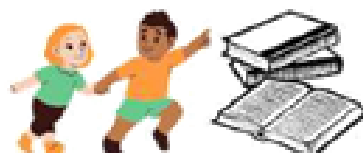
## Nursery Rhymes to Share

Sharing and singing Nursery Rhymes with your child helps them to develop their early language and communication skills. Rhymes help children to expand their vocabulary, articulate words, modulate voices (practising pitch, volume and inflection) and pronounce words clearly by saying them again and again. This also helps to build their memory capacity and expand their imagination. It helps them to hear sounds effectively and this will be really helpful when they start to learn their phonics at school.

In this section you will find a list of some Nursery Rhymes to share with your child. You can get collections of nursery rhymes from your local library or your child's school. Read these again and again with your child.

If you cannot get hold of some nursery rhymes to read, follow the QR codes below where you will be able to access an online reading of each nursery rhyme. You can listen to these with your child, join in and repeat them with your child as often as you can. This will help them to memorise the rhymes in a fun way. These videos have been taken from the BBC website. There are other Nursery Rhymes there for you to explore too.

Click [here](#) to watch a video and find out more about the benefits of nursery rhymes:



### I Hear Thunder



### The Bear Went over the Mountain



### Busy Farmer Ben



### The Big Ship Sails



### Clap, Clap, Hands, One, Two, Three



### Cobbler, Cobbler Mend My Shoe



### Five Currant Buns



### Dr Foster Went to Gloucester



### Five Little Ducks Went Swimming One Day



### Five Little Speckled Frogs



### Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes



### The Grand Old Duke of York



**Here We Go Round the  
Mulberry Bush**



**Hickory Dickory Dock**



**Little Bo  
Peep**



**I Am the Baker Man**



**Humpty Dumpty  
Sat On A Wall**



**Jack and Jill**



**I Can Sing A Rainbow**



**If You're Happy and You  
Know It**



**Incy Wincy Spider**



**It's Raining, It's Pouring**



**I Know An Old Lady Who  
Swallowed A Fly**



**Little Miss Muffet**



**London Bridge is Falling Down**



**The Magic Porridge Pot**



**Mary, Mary Quite Contrary**



**I'm a Little Teapot**



**The Muffin Man**



**Old MacDonald had a Farm**



**Old Mother Hubbard**



**One, Two, Buckle My Shoe**



**1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Once I Caught a Fish Alive**



**One Man Went to Mow**



**One Tomato, Two Tomatoes**



**Goosey, Goosey Goosey**



**Polly Put the Kettle On**



**POP! Goes the Weasel**



**Ring-a-Ring-a-Roses**



**Rock A-Bye, Baby**



**Row, Row, Row Your Boat**



**Rub-a-dub dub**



**Horsie, Horsie, Don't You Stop**



**A Sailor Went To Sea, Sea, Sea**



**Five Little Monkeys**



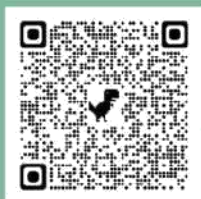
**Ten Green Bottles**



**Ten In the Bed**



**There's a Hole In the Bottom of the Sea**



**This Old Man**



**Diddle Diddle  
Dumpling**



**This is the Way We  
Lay the Bricks**



**Twinkle, Twinkle  
Little Star**



**We're Marching  
In Our Wellingtons**



**The Wheels  
On The Bus**



**When Goldilocks Went  
to the House of the Bears**



**We're Driving In Our Car**



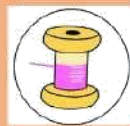
**When I Was One I Sucked  
My Thumb**



**Wiggly Woo**



**Wind the Bobbin Up**



**Yellow Bird**





# Top Tips for Reading

Reading together with your child matters. When you read to your child you are making a positive impact on helping them to develop a love of reading. Helping children to develop a love of reading is extremely important to their later reading success and is one of the greatest indicators of future academic success.

Children need to enjoy reading to have the resilience to tackle more challenging texts as they progress through their school years. They need to be able to read fluently by the age of 7 (end of Year 2) in order to be successful readers throughout primary and secondary school years. Successful readers have better life chances.

Reading a book and talking about it has a positive impact on your child's ability to understand words and sentences, use a wide range of vocabulary and develop listening comprehension skills.

When sharing a book, talk with your child as much as you can. Introduce new and exciting words, encourage your child to use new vocabulary, make up sentences together and find different words to use describe things you see.

Let your child choose books they want to read or for you to read to them. You should also choose books that you can enjoy with your child. It is important that they experience books and reading as a positive thing.



## Frequently Asked Questions:

1

Does it matter how I read with my child?

- Studies show that it's the enjoyment and chat that matters!
- The more you chat together about the book and things that interest your child the more impact it has.
- Looking at the pictures and talking about them is important because it can help your children to understand what the words mean.

2

Does the type of book matter?

- Let your child choose the books. Enjoyment really matters.
- Comics, information books, magazines, story books, picture books, poems and leaflets are all great for sharing.
- Catalogues are fun to share and talk about too.

### 3

## Does it matter which language I use?

- Use your home language.
- It is better for your child to hear expert talk from you in your language.
- Many studies tell it is the back-and-forth talk between adults and children when they are sharing books that makes the difference to children's language and comprehension.
- This impact will translate to better language and comprehension for your child in English.

### 4

## What if they always want to read the same book?

- Repeated reading of books is really beneficial for children. It helps them memorise parts of stories, words and phrases too.
- Knowing a book or poem by heart is fun and powerful for children, they can 'read' the story with you, or join in with words or phrases.
- If you really want to mix it up offer another book alongside the much-loved favourite

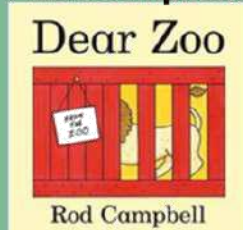
# Story Books to Share

In this section you will find a list of books to share with your child, appropriate for children from age birth to three. These are books they will see in their local Camden library as well as in their Nursery classrooms when they start at school.

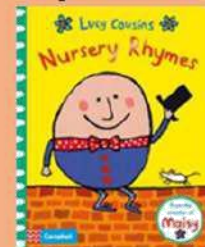
**Wind**  
**Carol Thompson**



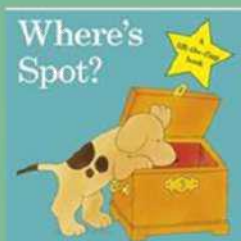
**Dear Zoo**  
**Rod Campbell**



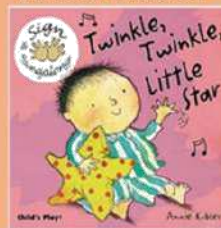
**Nursery Rhymes**  
**Lucy Cousins**



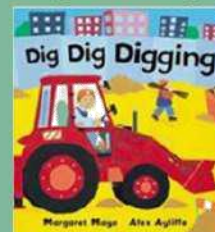
**Where's Spot?**  
**Eric Hill**



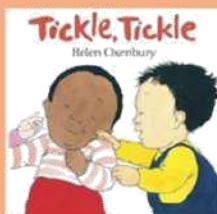
**Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star**  
**Annie Kubler**



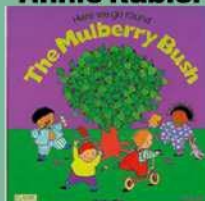
**Dig Dig Digging**  
**Margaret Mayo**



**Tickle, Tickle**  
**Helen Oxenbury**



**Here We Go Around The Mulberry Bush**  
**Annie Kubler**



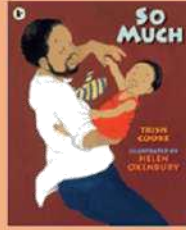
**I Love My Beautiful Hair**  
**Elissa Wentt**



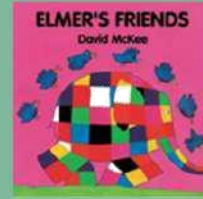
**Five Little Ducks**  
**Yu-hsuan Huang**



**So Much**  
**Trish Cooke**



**Elmer's Friends**  
**David McKee**



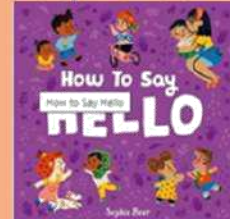
**My Body**  
**Ladybird**



**Getting Ready**  
**Cocoretto**



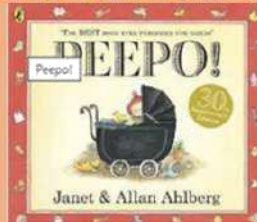
**How To Say Hello**  
**Sophie Beer**



**The Every Baby Book**  
**Frann Preston-Gannon**



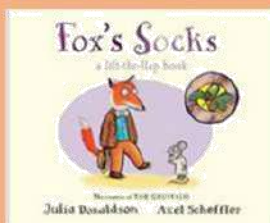
**Peepo!**  
**Janet & Allan Ahlberg**



**The Little Things**  
**Emma Dodd**



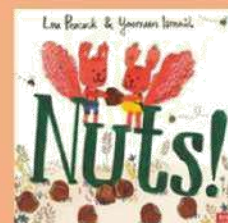
**Fox's Socks**  
**Julia Donaldson**



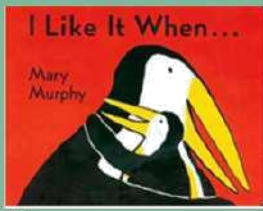
**Lulu Reads to Zeki**  
**Anna McQuinn**



**Nuts!**  
**Lou Peacock**



**I Like It When...  
Mary Murphy**



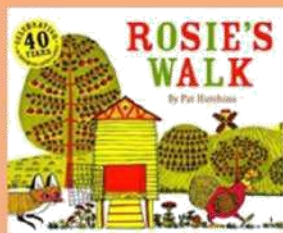
**The Bog Baby  
Jeanne Willis**



**The Very Hungry  
Caterpillar  
Eric Carle**



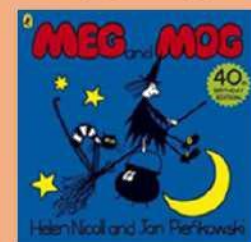
**Rosie's Walk  
Pat Hutchins**



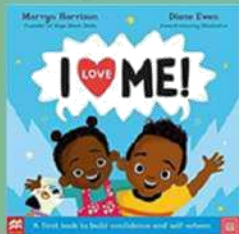
**Lost and Found  
Oliver Jeffers**



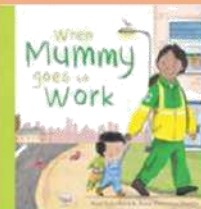
**Meg and Mog  
Helen Nicoll**



**I love Me!  
Marvyn Harrison**



**When Mummy goes to  
Work  
Paul Schofield**



**My Pet T-Rex  
Fabi Santiago**



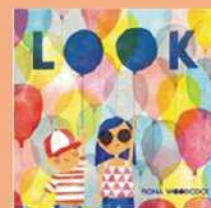
**Meekoo and the Little  
Nursery  
Camilla Reid**



**Joy  
Yasmeen Ismail**



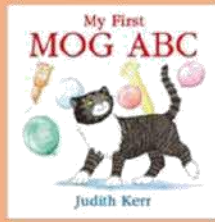
**Look  
Fiona Woodcock**



**Things that make me  
Happy  
Amy Schwartz**



**My First Mog ABC  
Judith Kerr**



**I am the Music Man  
Debra Potter**



**Happy to be Me  
Emma Dodd**



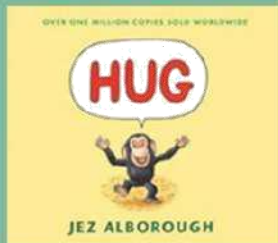
**B is for Baby  
Atinuke**



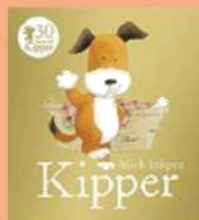
**Are you Sleeping?  
Helen Nicoll**



**Hug  
Jez Alborough**



**Kipper  
Mike Inkpen**



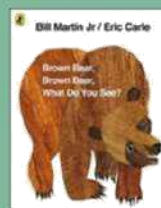
**We're Going on a Bear Hunt  
Michael Rosen**



**Ten Little Fingers and Ten  
Little Toes Nursery  
Mem Fox**



**Brown Bear Brown Bear  
What Do You See?  
Eric Carle**



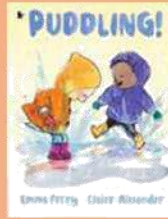
**Guess How Much I Love  
You  
Sam Mc Bratney**



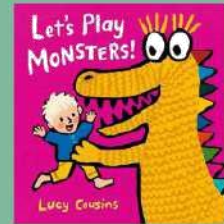
**Just Like Grandpa Jazz**  
Tarah L Gear



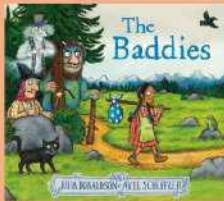
**Pudding**  
Emma Perry



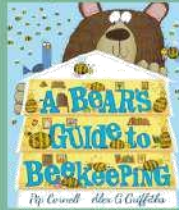
**Let's play monsters!**  
Lucy Cousins



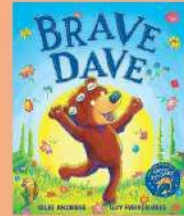
**The Baddies**  
Julia Donaldson



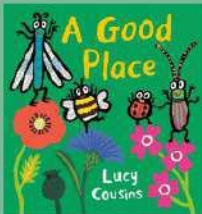
**A bear's guide to beekeeping**  
Pip Cornell



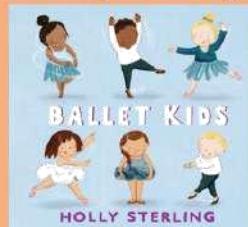
**Brave Dave**  
Giles Andreae



**A good place**  
Lucy Cousins



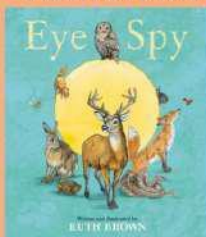
**Ballet kids**  
Holly Sterling



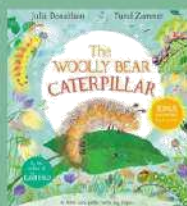
**The three Billy Goats Gruff**  
Mac Barnett



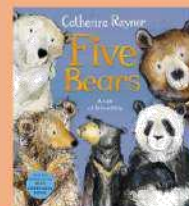
**Eye spy**  
Ruth Brown



**The woolly bear caterpillar**  
Julia Donaldson

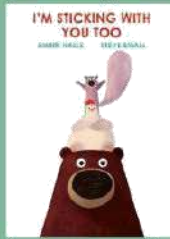


**Five bears**  
Catherine Rayner





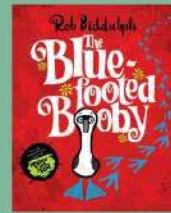
**I'm sticking with you too**  
**Smriti Halls**



**Bears don't cry!**  
**Emma Chichester Clark**



**The blue-footed booby**  
**Rob Biddulph**



**The gecko and the echo**  
**Rachel Bright**



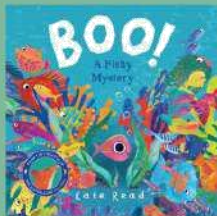
**Mister Toots**  
**Emma Chichester Clark**



**Apple grumble**  
**Huw Lewis Jones**



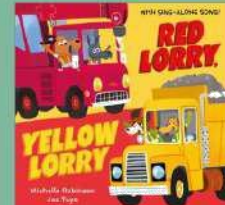
**Boo! a fishy mystery**  
**Kate Read**



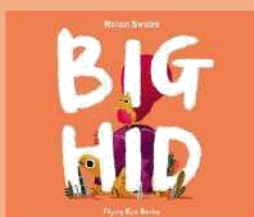
**The pirates on the bus**  
**Peter Millett**



**Red lorry, yellow lorry**  
**Michelle Robinson**



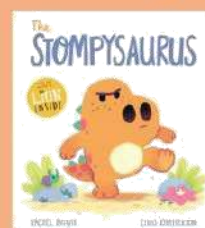
**Big hid**  
**Roisin Swales**



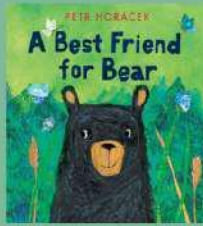
**Little Owl's new friend**  
**Debi Gliori**



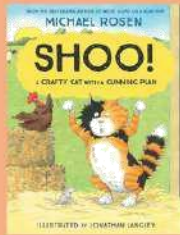
**The Stompysaurus**  
**Rachel Bright**



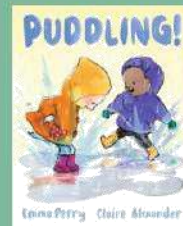
**A best friend for Bear**  
**Petr Horacek**



**Shoo!**  
**Michael Rosen**



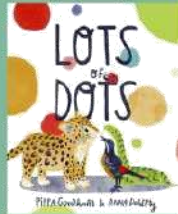
**Puddling!**  
**Emma Perry**



**Let's go outside!**  
**Ben Lerwill**



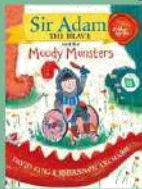
**Lots of dots**  
**Pippa Goodhart**



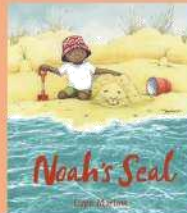
**Look, Puppy!**  
**Mary Murphy**



**Sir Adam the Brave and the moody monsters**  
**David King**



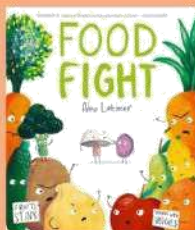
**Noah's seal**  
**Layn Marlow**



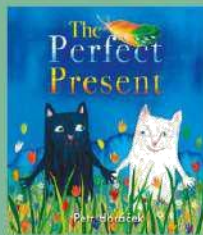
**New baby**  
**Isabel Otter, Sarah Shaffi**



**Food fight**  
**Alex Latimer**



**The perfect present**  
**Petr Horacek**



**The fixer of broken things**  
**Julia Patton**



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