Reading aloud creates a special time for you to bond with your child. It is a time to cuddle together as you share adventures, laugh and cry with characters, cheer for heroes, and get angry with villains. If you read to your child regularly, you will be helping him/her to develop a lifelong appreciation and love of reading.

**Why read aloud?**

Reading to young children promotes language acquisition and literacy development and, most importantly, achievement in reading comprehension and overall success in school. In fact how often a child has been read to can be an indicator of future reading success.

Another two major predictions of future reading success are phonemic awareness and rapid naming of objects. Reading to aloud will also help your child to develop and refine these two important skills.

**Reading together:**

- Is great fun!
- Nurtures your child’s love of both the written and spoken word.
- Gives you a chance to rediscover favorite stories of your own and even find new ones.
- Helps your child develop important language skills that will one day be the foundation for independent reading.

**Read aloud so your child can learn to:**

- Associate reading with warm, pleasant feelings: children love being close to Mum and Dad.
- Learn about words and language and the wonderful world outside the home.
- Learn how to listen attentively.
- Pay attention to the language of books and begin to notice how this language is different from spoken language.
- Listen to the sounds in words and notice how some are the same and some are different.
- Build their vocabularies with words they understand and can use.
- Gain background knowledge about a variety of topics.
- Talk confidently about characters, settings, story lines and eventually relate them to their own lives. This is an important skill for successful comprehension.
- Learn more about how books work. Things such as, print is spoken words written down, letters in words are written in a certain order, and written words are separated by spaces.
Choose books that your child might like:

- Your child will enjoy books that have similar content to his or her life. Books about daily activities, familiar situations and of course,
- Young children have great memories. Read stories with simple story lines that your child can retell in his/her own words to you or even a soft toy! Read pattern books with repetitive and predictable rhymes, phrases, and story lines that encourage participation.
- If you read longer books to your child then you will help to improve listening skills and most importantly the ability to listen for longer periods of time. This increased attention span helps later when your child will need to listen to the teacher for extended periods of time. Read longer picture books and begin chapter books that last for several sessions.
- Young children are also curious. Read information books with facts, explanations, and new people, places, and things.
- Preschoolers know a lot about their own world. Read books that let them use their knowledge to understand books that introduce new topics, facts, and ideas.
- Preschoolers have vivid imaginations. Read folk tales and books with animal characters that think and talk like humans.
- Preschoolers are learning about the sounds of letters and words. Read books with rhymes and alliteration.

What to do! What NOT to do!

✅ To do

- Introduce the book: read the title, author, and illustrator; look at the cover; talk about what the book might be about; suggest things to look and listen for. This preparation helps your child to predict what might happen and who might be in the book. This is also a good reading skill to have later on at school.
- Run your finger under the text, while reading. This shows your child that it is the words, not the pictures, which tell the story.
- Answer only those questions related to the book; save other questions for later.
- Talk about the story during and after a read-aloud session.
- Use information and reference books to answer questions your child asks. Referring to a book for information models that this is the way to find out about things you don’t know.
- Ask your child to look closely at the pictures to help understand the story and make predictions about what might happen next.
- Repeat interesting words and rhymes while reading a book and at other times, like driving in the car.
- When reading a repetitive or predictable phrase, pause and wait for your child to fill in the blank.
- Stop to ask thinking questions: “What might happen next? Where did he go? Why did she do that?”
- Follow up on the story. Invite your child to talk; draw or paint; or even pretend to be one of the characters in the book.
- Keep reading fun. Remember this experience is meant to be a warm, bonding experience. Leave the hard stuff for the school!
Not to do

• Show your child that reading is a chore: something you wish you didn’t have to do.
• Choose books that are too hard or only you find interesting. You are reading to entertain your child, not to teach!
• Interrogate your child. You are not the FBI! If your child thinks every reading session is a test, then you ruin any chance of it being fun.
• Complain when your child wants to read the same book over and over again. This is a good thing. It models fluency and embeds vocabulary. Suffering is what parents do best!
• Expect your child to read independently before he/she is ready. Keep enjoying books together for as long as possible.
• Stop reading to your child once he/she is an independent reader. Kids of all ages still love being read to at night snuggled up to you.