

Beginning readers: Look! I can read this!

It can be so exciting when a child begins to read! Beginning readers are starting to put it all together, and are often eager to do it all by themselves. As a parent, it's important to support their efforts in a positive way and help them along the reading path. Here's a little information about beginning readers, and a few pointers to keep in mind.

A beginning reader:

- can name the letters in the alphabet and can tell you many of the letter sounds
- understands the concept of a "word"
- is beginning to recognize a few words within text or from a list
- is beginning to represent the first and maybe last sound of a word when trying to spell

When reading with a beginning reader:

- Model fingertip reading. That means to follow the words with your finger from left to right as you read them. Your beginning reader will do the same thing for awhile.
- Practice patience! Beginning readers may read slowly. Give your child time to decode the words, and avoid jumping in too quickly.
- Encourage attention to letters and sounds. If your child is stuck on a word, prompt them to look at the first letter of the word and make the letter's sound. Of course, only do this for words that can be sounded out! If the word can't be sounded out, just supply the word for them.
- Talk about the story. When your child is finished with a book, be sure to talk about what happened in the story, and maybe re-read favorite parts.
- Let them know how proud you are! By sharing a book with a child, you're sharing the joys and excitement of reading.

For more parent tips on how to help your beginning reader, visit:
<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/7834>

