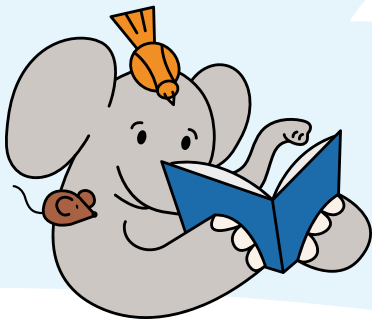




Growing Readers!

*Parent tips brought to you by
Reading Rockets and Colorín Colorado*

Reading Is Social

Reading is a launchpad for conversation, connection, and community. When you share books with your child, you're creating something to talk about, wonder over, and remember together. It brings you closer in ways that go way beyond the page.

Books also help children develop empathy, patience, and the ability to understand someone else's point of view. These are the very skills that bring people together! And the act of reading itself builds the attention and focus that good conversation requires—the ability to listen, wait your turn, and stay with an idea even when it gets complicated.

Sharing books and reading together gives your child a chance to practice those skills every day. Try some of these ideas to make that happen:

- **Talk about what you read together.** Help your child think through how they might react in situations that characters find themselves in. Ask open-ended questions: "What would you have done?" or "How would you solve that problem?"
- **Read the feelings.** When you read together, ask your child what they think a character is feeling. Have them make their own expression of that emotion. What does excited look like? Or nervous? Or sad? Share your own interpretations as well.
- **Play with the story.** Act out a favorite story together, invite family members to try on character voices, or put on a simple performance and bring the book to life for family and friends.
- **Put reading into action.** Connect the books you read to local issues in your community. As your child sees characters who share, support others in need, and spread kindness, help them find their own ways to do the same.

When books connect your child to others, they're growing as readers and as members of their community. Here's how you can help build that social circle:

- **Make reading connections.** Take trips to the library, browse a bookstore together, attend a book festival or author reading and show your child that books bring people together beyond your living room.

- **Model your own social reading.** Let your child hear you talk about your book club, share a funny passage you came across, or mention an interesting fact from something you read. When they see that books are part of your social life, they learn they can be part of theirs, too.
- **Book share.** Encourage your child to retell stories, share recommendations or book swap with friends, and talk with family and friends about characters they love or knowledge they gained. Let grandparents, aunts, uncles, and family friends know what your child is reading and invite them to ask about it. A little encouragement from someone they love can go a long way.

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