

Why and "How To" Read Aloud to Keiki



Reading aloud is one of the most valuable gifts you can give children. In the simple act of reading to keiki lies the key to raising children who love and value reading and who grow up to become good readers. In a report by the Commission on Reading entitled *Becoming a Nation of Readers*, one finding stood out:

"The single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children."

How can I help keiki develop skills for success in reading?

- Read aloud every day for *at least* 10 minutes.
- Make sure the readings are interesting and exciting enough to hold your child's interest.
- Let child talk about the pictures or help tell the story.
- Read a variety of books including stories, rhymes, poetry, and nonfiction.
- Re-read a book when your child asks you to.
- Talk with your child about the stories you read.
- Make stories "come alive" by changing the tone of your voice to match the mood of the story.
- Keep books where children can reach them to look at when they want to.
- Keep initial readings short enough to fit child's attention span and gradually lengthen both.
- Let your child turn the pages.

How can I help keiki learn to read if I have trouble reading myself?

- Tell him stories about your own life. Make up or tell traditional stories you heard as a child.
- Look at picture books with your child and make up stories about them together. This helps your child learn that books tell stories, stories begin at the front of the book, are sequential, and logical, and that storytelling is fun.
- Create your own simple books that you can read together. Let your child draw some pictures on several sheets of paper and ask him to tell you about the pictures. Write down what he says on each sheet. Staple or tie the pages together. Read his descriptions as you go through the book together. Encourage him to tell you the story of his pictures.

You can also help keiki enjoy the read-aloud experience as play by extending your reading to him or her to include such activities as:

- Singing (including making your own musical instruments)
- Doing a craft
- Cooking or baking
- Chanting, reciting poetry
- Going on excursions
- Visiting the library
- Writing letters
- Acting out a story
- Buying books at the bookstore or thrift shop



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