



Choosing Beginning Readers

Aim for reading confidence not just reading level.

Read-alouds are the perfect time to encourage your child to practice reading – this gives them confidence and opens up a dialogue about what they like and don't like about their book. Kids can be reluctant to read on their own. Encourage them to 'read' the pictures and tell you about the book. If they use some of the words that are in the book, you can point those out.

Match book characteristics to your child's reading progress

When choosing books for your child, consider where they are in their reading journey and which book attributes would best benefit their unique needs. Look for what will draw them to the page. For beginners, those are often books with bright illustrations and limited words. They can move more quickly through the book. This builds stamina.

Ask yourself some questions before giving your child the book.

Having your child use the Five Finger Rule is a great start! But ask yourself questions too because YOU know your child best. Are the sentences too complex for your child? Do they understand the content and theme of the book? Can they follow the structure of a book? How is their reading comprehension?

The Five Finger Rule

Before your child starts reading, ask them to turn to a random page in the book and read it. For every word that they don't know, they should hold up a finger.

- **0 or 1** – Probably too easy for your child. That's not a bad thing sometimes!
- **2** – A good choice that will give your child a reasonable challenge and allow them to learn new words.
- **3** – Your child might need some help, but still a good choice if they're up for a challenge.
- **4** – May be too difficult for your child to read on their own.
- **5** – Probably too advanced but it would be a great shared reading book!