

TIPS FOR EMERGING READERS

Don't worry about when your child learns to read. Age is not the best indicator. Instead take your cue from whether they show interest in text; and if they are able to move their finger left to right and from one word to the next, which indicated they recognize words as separate entities separated by spaces.

- **Go for a picture walk:** For beginners, flip through the book first to familiarize them with pictures, characters and pronunciation of words that might come up. Reassure the child before they begin that you will help with tricky words.
- **Use the “three-second rule”:** Don't wait longer than that when a child is stuck on a word before giving it to them. This keeps the story moving and prevents frustration. If he or she makes a mistakes, wait three seconds before jumping in to correct it. That creates time for self-

correcting and reinforces the message that errors are a normal part of learning.

- **Encourage rereading books:** Don't discourage fidgeting – that's how some kids focus.
- **Avoid telling beginning readers to “sound it out.”:** Too often children who don't know a word are asked to do this before they have the skills.
- **Celebrate when kids use clues:** That includes referring pictures, guessing a word according to common syntax, or memorizing clauses. Assimilating information is part of learning. Have kids read books in their first language. It will benefit reading in English too, because the habit and skills are transferable.

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