

# Reading as a Family to Give Your Children an Educational Boost

A friend of mine recently mentioned that her one-year-old daughter was finally starting to get interested in books, even to the point of interacting with them. She then imitated her daughter's toddler voice as they delved into a Bible storybook the other day, her little girl scolding and admonishing Adam and Eve not to eat the forbidden fruit.

We found such perception at such a young age quite amazing ... and yet, why should we? Children are able to understand far more than we give them credit for, especially when reading is a regular part of their families.

November is National Family Literacy Month, and as such, it's a great time to remind ourselves just why we should take time to read aloud to our children, young and old alike.

For starters, reading with children boosts vocabulary. [According to Dr. Laura Phillips from the Child Mind Institute](#), "books expose children to vocabulary and grammar that they wouldn't normally hear." The more books you read to your children, the more it's like they're living in a household of adults with varied backgrounds and language patterns. Hearing this variety broadens a child's own language ability.

Reading to your children also expands their understanding intellectually and emotionally. Books introduce children to a wide variety of subjects, broadening their knowledge base, Phillips says, and they "also help kids learn how to handle their own feelings in healthy ways."

But perhaps most importantly, reading fosters physical

connection between parent and child:

*'The physical contact that you get from being held by your parent while you're reading actually helps to engage neurons in the brain, which make kids more receptive to the language and the cognitive stimulation that they're getting from that experience,' Dr. Phillips says.*

So if you want to see your child to succeed in school and life in general, why not pick up a book this evening or weekend and begin reading together as a family? If you're not sure where to start, then I have good news: I recently ran across an old reading list that my mom used for book ideas when I was a little girl. Here are a few options from that list to get you started:

1. *The Perilous Road*, by William O. Steele
2. *Henner's Lydia*, by Marguerite de Angeli
3. *Strawberry Girl*, by Lois Lenski
4. *The Cabin Faced West*, by Jean Fritz
5. *Amos Fortune, Free Man*, by Elizabeth Yates
6. *Justin Morgan Had a Horse*, by Marguerite Henry
7. *Follow the Drinking Gourd*, by Jeanette Winters
8. *Wilderness Journey*, by Ruth N. Moore
9. *Five Little Peppers and How They Grew*, by Margaret Sidney
10. *Understood Betsy*, by Dorothy Canfield Fisher

—

This [article](#) appeared first on [OAKMN.org](http://OAKMN.org) under a [Creative Commons \(CC BY 4.0\) license](#).

Image credit: [Pexels](#)