

	6-12 months	12-24 months	2-3 years	3-4 years	4-5 years	5-7 years	7-8 years
What to Read	Board and cloth books; brightly-coloured books; books with photos of baby faces or familiar objects; nursery rhymes	Sturdy books to touch and carry; books with images of children doing everyday activities like sleeping or playing; books with rhyme and simple text	Picture books with stories; books that rhyme; look-and-find books	Picture books with longer stories; alphabet books; counting books	Picture books with more characters, complex themes; poetry; fairy tales and legends	Picture books with more complex themes; poetry; fairy tales and legends; non-fiction	Read chapter books together; read a variety of text; magazines, online; series by favourite authors
Communication and Cognition	Smiles, coos, gurgles and babbles Knows familiar voices Responds to name Responds to photos of baby faces Follows simple requests, like "please" and "wave bye bye"	Speaks basic words; starts to say simple phrases Hands books to parents to read Names and points at pictures Holds book right side up	Tries about 20 new words each week Picks the same book Begins to understand rhyming Can identify familiar things Remembers how familiar stories and sentences end	Recites favourite sentences from stories Begins to learn letter names Pretends to read books Has a vocabulary of 300-1,000 words Recognizes rhyme	Able to sit and listen for longer periods of time Learning numbers, letter names and sounds Retells familiar stories Uses longer and more complex sentences Can rhyme Has listened to 1,000 stories	Begins to read independently Can predict what will happen next Relates to characters Prefers certain books Learns the relation between letters and sounds Tells stories with beginning, middle and end	Begins to read more fluently Begins to read simple chapter books Summarizes stories and recalls main ideas Knows difference between fact and opinion Identifies confusing parts of the text and asks questions
What Can Parents Do	Take turns talking, making eye contact Point at and identify items Read, sing, talk, play and LOVE Play back-and-forth games like peek-a-boo Use lots of repetition Read aloud every day	Let your child choose the book and turn the pages Make books a part of routines like bedtime Name things and familiar pictures Respond when your child points and talks Use books for calming Get a library card	Ask questions that are easy to answer, like "where's the cat?" Read and reread favourite books Continue using books as part of daily routines Talk about the pictures and the story Encourage your child to choose books	Ask "what do you think happens next?" Create your own stories from the pictures Look for words and pictures that begin with the same sound Point out numbers and letters	Connect the stories to your child's life Encourage your child to tell the story Draw and write together Identify the letters in your child's name "Can you find an 'A?' "Can you find a letter in your name?" Buy books as gifts	Continue to read with your child Talk about the characters and messages in the stories Encourage and praise your child for figuring out new words Encourage writing stories, letters, and emails. Don't worry too much about spelling	Continue to read to your child Keep reading fun Read to find answers to questions Discuss big ideas using how and why questions Encourage self-selection Use books to talk about feelings and complex issues like death and divorce
Social Emotional Development	Comforted by a familiar adult Cries when upset and seeks comfort Quiet when picked up Laughs aloud May comfort self with blanket or thumb sucking Expresses different emotions Gives affection and love	Able to play alone for a few minutes Starts to show independence Says "NO!" Plays next to other children but doesn't share Reacts to changes in routine Hugs and kisses familiar people	Expresses wants Starts to show awareness of own feelings and other's feelings Rapid mood shifts May show some fears (dark) Begins to show empathy for other children Likes routines Begins to separate more easily from parents May become shy and start to whine	Shares toys and takes turns with help Can be bossy and defiant Less self-centred More even tempered Begins to form friendships Begins to name emotions	Emotions can quickly swing May stretch the truth Strong desire for independence May develop a favourite friend Become more cooperative with peers May have trouble taking turns	Able to share and take turns Play is more involved and includes roles and props Shows lots of affection towards others Shows empathy for a hurt child or pet Proud of accomplishments Likes to entertain others and make them laugh Greater sense of right and wrong	More comfortable spending time at other's houses Compares performance against others By age 8 prefers being around peers Start to feel sensitive about how other children feel about them Able to identify more kinds of emotions

