

Books!

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Babies Need Books by Dorothy Butler

In her book, Babies Need Books, Dorothy Butler gives us seven important reasons for reading to our babies, reasons that count whether we are the baby's mom or the baby's teacher.

1. Scientists tell us that 50% of a person's ultimate intelligence is developed by the age of four, 80% by the age of eight. Early childhood is the time when the child's whole being radiates a joyful and receptive enthusiasm for learning. Learning is taking place at a breathtaking speed. And, if you do it right, most babies love to experience books with you. Why would you want to miss this time?
2. Scientists tell us that language stands head and shoulders over all other tools as an instruments of learning. Language is what gives man his lead in intelligence over other creatures. Our thought depends on language - and, if thought depends on language, then we can see that the quality of an individual's thought will depend upon the quality of his language. Language is learned in so many different ways - one is by shared reading of favorite books.
3. It is difficult to get in the habit of reading to nine-year-olds or even six-year-olds if the habit isn't already in place. Babyhood is just the natural place to begin when babies are so uncritical and happy to have the chance to be on an adults lap with a book.
4. Butler says, "It is not possible to gauge the width and depth of the increase in a child's grasp of words that comes with access to books."
5. She also talks about how books bring in a frame of reference that is useful time and time again. This same grandchild grew up in a wilderness area where he and his mom are snowed in for most of the winter. Much of their life together has been filled with books rather than adventures out into the world. But those books form a frame of reference. When he was 22 months and in town for a visit his mom whisk him onto an escalator at a department store. His dismay fast turned to panic until his Mother said, "Don't you remember? Corduroy went on an escalator?" Butler said you could almost see his reinterpretation of the experience as a familiar one. If his good friend Corduroy could go on an escalator so could he!
6. And books give a child experiences he could never have. There is not a lot of company up where they live and his mom has always filled their long hours together with books. Butler says, "At nearly two, he is the most "experienced" toddler I know - and yet a huge proportion of this experience has been second hand. His first visit to the zoo was a journey for rediscovery. "Zebra!" "Giraffe!" "Lion!" Anthony has made joyful acquaintance with countless people, animals, objects and ideas, all between covers of books, in the first two years of his life. Think of the wealth of experience a mom or teacher could give an inner city child by reading, reading, reading.
7. Reading to babies is important for what it does for their reading ability when they get to school. "There is nothing magic about the way contact with books in early years produces early readers. A baby is learning about the way language arises from the page each time his parent opens a book. He is linking the human voice to the print at a very early age. Given repeated opportunity he notices how the adult attends to the black marks, how he can't go on reading if the page is turned too quickly. . . Print is friendly and familiar. He is already unconsciously finding landmarks, noting regular features, predicting patterns. . . This child has had his reading skills handed to him on a golden platter."

Booklist from Books! Books! Books!

- First Books
 - Black on White by Tana Hoban
 - What Is It? by Tana Hoban
 - Tomie's Little Mother Goose by Tomie DePaola
 - Read Aloud Rhymes for the Very Young by Jack Prelutsky

- Five to Nine Months
 - Pets by Jan Pienkowski
 - DK First Words
 - DK Colors
 - What Do Babies Do?

- Nine Months to Twelve Months
 - Goodnight Moon
 - The Little Noisy Book by Katherine Ross
 - Pat the Bunny
 - DK's Touch and Feel Home
 - Boynton's Fuzzy Fuzzy Fuzzy
 - The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle

- Twelve to Eighteen Months
 - My First Word Board Book by Angela Wilkes
 - My First Word Book by Angela Wilkes
 - So Big by Trish Cooke
 - Owl Babies by Martin Waddell
 - Jessie Bear, Jessie Bear by Nancy Carlstrom
 - Brown Bear, Brown Bear by Eric Carle
 - Doggies, A Counting and Barking Book by Sandra Boynton
 - But Not the Hippopotamus by Sandra Boynton
 - Where's Spot? By Eric Hill
 - Tomie's Little Mother Goose Tomie DePaola
 - Books with sounds like The Story of Clifford (Play a Sound)

Booklist from Books! Books! Books! continued

- Eighteen Months to two-years
 - Gobble, Gobble, Grunt and Growl by Peter Spier
 - On Mother's Lap by Ann Scott
 - Ten, Nine, Eight by Molly Bang
 - Read Aloud Bible Stories, Vol 1. by Ella Lindvall
 - Rainbow Fish by Marcus Pfister
 - Any of Eric Carle's wonderful books
 - The Big Red Barn by Margaret Wise Brown
 - Eating the Alphabet by Lois Ehlert
 - I tsy Bitsy Spider by Rosemary Wells
 - Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star by Amazing Baby
 - Wheels on the Bus
 - Dr. Seuss' Cat in the Hat,
 - Hands, Hands, Fingers, Thumbs by Al Perkins
 - The Story of Clifford (Play a Sound)

- Twos
 - Going on a Bear Hunt by Michael Rosen
 - Where The Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak
 - T Is For Texas by Anne Bustard
 - Eating the Alphabet by Lois Ehlert
 - Home made books
 - Books about their families
 - Books about their classrooms
 - A classroom book with the ABC's
 - Chicka Chicka Boom Boom by Bill Martin, Jr.
 - Are You My Mother by P.D. Eastman
 - Is Your Mama a Llama?
 - I Love You, Little One by Nancy Tafuri
 - Carl's Birthday by Alexandra Day

Book Baskets

Book Baskets can be specific for one book

- Eating the Alphabet by Lois Ehlert
 - Add plastic fruits and vegetables such as apples, bananas, carrots, dates, eggplant, figs, grapefruit . . . thru watermelon and zucchini
 - Or bring in some fresh veggies - you don't have to have all of them!
- DK's Touch and Feel Farm Animals or Touch and Feel Pets
 - Add beanie a beanie baby for each animal
- The Big Red Barn
 - Add plastic or soft rubber farm animals
- Chicka Chicka Boom Boom
 - Add plastic letters for kids to manipulate or play with
- You can find ready made book "sets" in some of the learning catalogs - like one with finger puppets for Brown Bear, Brown Bear - but it is fun to make them yourselves

Book Baskets can have a theme and have several books to accompany them

- Mama/Baby Theme
 - Fill a basket with sets of Mama and baby animals.
 - These animals can be small plastic animals or they can be soft plush animals.
 - Some examples are:
 - Mama bear, baby bear; Mama dog, baby puppy; Mama hippo, baby hippo; Mama horse, baby colt
 - You can also use birds, reptiles, whatever . . .
 - Then you add books that go along with the theme
 - Are You My Mother?; Is Your Mama a Llama?
 - I Love You, Little One; Runaway Bunny
- Scriptural themes
 - Use the Fisher Price Noah's Ark and Noah's Ark by Lucy Cousins
 - Use the Fisher Price Nativity Scene and Sleepy Jesus by Kidd and Poole
 - Create a Miriam and the baby Moses basket
- Multicultural Theme
 - A basket full of multicultural dolls
 - Again, these can be small plastic family figures or soft 10" dolls.
 - Add books like:
 - Joy by Joyce Carol Thomas
 - My Nose Your Nose by Melanie Walsh
 - Sori's Harvest Moon Day by Lee, Uk-Bae
 - The children can use the same objects with a multiple of books
- It is also nice to have a small Clifford dog to go with the Clifford Books or a very hungry caterpillar to go with Eric Carle's The Very Hungry Caterpillar, or 3 baby owls to go with Owl Babies. Sometimes there are specific toys made for books, but you don't really need that, you can just find random toys that work as well
- Learning catalogs also offer flannel board materials to go with specific books and these work well for 2-year-olds and up.

